

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish

## Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **18 February 2015** in **Committee Room 1 at the Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL**

### Membership:

Councillors Gerard Rice (Chair), Barry Johnson (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Clare Baldwin, Sue Gray and Susan Little

Gemma Riddles, Housing Tenant Representative

### Substitutes:

Councillors Terry Brookes, Robert Gledhill, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly and Susan Shinnick

### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Minutes</b>	<b>5 - 12</b>
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 January 2015.	
<b>3 Urgent Items</b>	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
<b>4 Declaration of Interests</b>	
Members are reminded that they should declare any interests as appropriate and in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.	

Members are also reminded to declare existence and nature of Political Party Whip, as set out in Chapter 4, Part 3, Paragraph 12 of the constitution.

<b>5</b>	<b>Sheltered Housing Decommissioning - Next steps</b>	<b>13 - 18</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Draft Housing Strategy 2015-2020</b>	<b>19 - 126</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Work Programme</b>	<b>127 - 128</b>

**Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:**

Please contact Jan Natynczyk, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

Agenda published on: **10 February 2015**

## **Information for members of the public and councillors**

### **Access to Information and Meetings**

Members of the public can attend all meetings of the council and its committees and have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

### **Recording of meetings**

This meeting may be recorded for transmission and publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

### **Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings**

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at [CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk) before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

## Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, Smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

The ICT department can offer support for council owned devices only.

## Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an emergency, you should evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point at Kings Walk.

## How to view this agenda on a tablet device



You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#), [Android Device](#) or [Blackberry Playbook](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

## Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

## When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

### Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

**Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish**

To achieve our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities:

**1. Create a great place for learning and opportunity**

- Ensure that every place of learning is rated “Good” or better
- Raise levels of aspirations and attainment so that local residents can take advantage of job opportunities in the local area
- Support families to give children the best possible start in life

**2. Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity**

- Provide the infrastructure to promote and sustain growth and prosperity
- Support local businesses and develop the skilled workforce they will require
- Work with communities to regenerate Thurrock’s physical environment

**3. Build pride, responsibility and respect to create safer communities**

- Create safer welcoming communities who value diversity and respect cultural heritage
- Involve communities in shaping where they live and their quality of life
- Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and safeguard the vulnerable

**4. Improve health and well-being**

- Ensure people stay healthy longer, adding years to life and life to years
- Reduce inequalities in health and well-being
- Empower communities to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing

**5. Protect and promote our clean and green environment**

- Enhance access to Thurrock’s river frontage, cultural assets and leisure opportunities
- Promote Thurrock’s natural environment and biodiversity
- Ensure Thurrock’s streets and parks and open spaces are clean and well maintained

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7 January 2015 at 7.00 pm

---

- Present:** Councillors Gerard Rice (Chair), Barry Johnson (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Clare Baldwin and Susan Little
- Apologies:** Councillors Sue Gray
- In attendance:** Barbara Brownlee, Director of Housing - Thurrock Council  
Kathryn Adedeji, Head of Housing, Investment and Development  
Mike Jones, Management Accountant  
Leanna McPherson, Senior Democratic Services Officer
- 

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

### **12. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 10 December 2014, were approved as a correct record.

In response to a question, the Director of Housing advised that clarification had been sought regarding the family connection criteria as requested at the last meeting. Members would be updated in due course.

### **13. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items of business

### **14. Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

### **15. Housing Revenue Accounts Base Estimates 2015/16**

The Management Accountant introduced and explained in detail a report to Members which set out the provisional assumptions regarding the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Base Estimates 2015/16.

Members attention was drawn to the forecast out-turn 2014/15, as detailed in the report, and it was noted following questions that the loss of dwelling rent was an approximation and a natural shortfall from right to buy properties. It was further noted that it was not due from loss in relation to voids or non-payment.

In response to questions regarding the cost of utilities remaining the same, Members were advised that in the past not enough money had been placed into the budget to cover this cost therefore despite introducing energy saving efficiencies into the service, it was prudent to ensure the Council could cover its utilities costs. The Committee requested information from the Director of Housing on how many streetlamps were now energy efficient within the Housing remit.

The Committee raised questions as to why the insurance policy had increased when they were advised it would be reduced due to the link with the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. In response the Management Accountant advised the Committee that the staff from Europa had come back to the Council and therefore this had increased the Councils insurance costs.

The Committee were concerned that the garage review was still ongoing and were advised that the review started approximately a year ago with each garage individually inspected and the waiting list reduced following consultation with those who were still requesting garage. Members were further advised that the tender contract for replacing the doors closed on 14 January 2015 and work would be able to take place once a contractor had been appointed.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That it be noted the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is estimated to generate a net surplus of £0.617m from operational and financing for the 2014/15 financial year.**
- 2. That the projected movement on the HRA reserves (Para 3.2 Table 3) be noted.**
- 3. That the provisional base estimates for 2015/16 for inclusion in the overall rent setting strategy for the HRA be noted.**

**16. Responsive Repairs and Maintenance Policy**

The Director of Housing introduced the report to Members which considered a number of proposals for the revisions to Thurrock Council's Housing Repairs Policy.

Members were advised that the policy had already been considered and approved by Cabinet, however it was brought before Members to provide the Committee with an update on progress.

The Director of Housing further advised the Committee that following the previous meeting where this policy had been considered, changes had been made to shift the balance of responsibility to provide more help for the vulnerable and elderly and to encourage those who were considered to be young and healthy to become more responsible for themselves, following property modernisation.



The Chair asked how the Council was dealing with mould issues around the Borough within the Councils own housing stock and the Head of Housing – Investment and Development advised Members that officers were working to identify the cause of damp and mould issues and taking appropriate remedial action as necessary, with the intention of eradicating the issue.

In response to a question regarding the higher demand for repairs within properties in the Borough compared to the national average, Members were advised that this was due to the age of the stock. It was also noted that Thurrock Council had a comprehensive approach to repairs and maintenance and therefore went beyond other Councils and the standard for decent homes in terms of the nature of repairs that were undertaken for residents.

Members raised concerns at the level of responsibility that the Council expected tenants to take on under the new policy and were advised that only items considered within paragraph 3.15 page 25 of the agenda were to be introduced. Furthermore, Members were informed that the responsibility fell to the residents once the transforming homes programme had been undertaken and therefore it was considered that residents would have to maintain the property and specifically listed items to the standard set by the Transforming Homes programme.

Concerns were also raised by Members with regard to fence panel replacements and it was noted that the planned programme of replacement would still be taking place, however the responsive repairs service would be undertaken on a case by case base depending on the vulnerability of the resident.

Finally, Members expressed their dismay that the policy had already been to and been approved by Cabinet before it could be considered by the housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, however did note that this was an exceptional circumstance due to the pre election period held in late 2014.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the introduction of an enhanced service provision for vulnerable residents as outlined in Appendix A be noted.**
- 2. That a reframing of shared responsibility for maintenance of internal property elements post-Transforming Homes, and for other elements specified, be noted.**
- 3. That the shift of non-urgent repairs as specified in Appendix A from responsive to planned programme thus increasing the council ability to deliver an efficient responsive service, be noted.**

## **17. Recharging Tenants Audit - Update**

The Head of Housing - Investment and Development introduced the report to Members which provided an update response to the Re-Charging Tenants Internal Audit Report of February 2013. There were two key areas to the report, a revised recharge policy and governance & processes implementation.

The Chair questioned the Head of Housing - Investment and Development as to why the collection rates were not higher. In response, the Committee were advised that there were several reasons, which included residents moving out of the Borough and payment plans which the Courts may put in place for residents.

Members considered that an insurance policy could be taken out to assist the Council in instances such as this. The Director of Housing advised this would be looked into.

**RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report.**

## **18. Managing Damp & Mould - Update on Housing Investment & Development Actions**

The Head of Housing - Investment and Development introduced the report to Members, briefly outlining the update on the progress of a number of programmes implemented to tackle issues of damp and mould in Thurrock Council housing stock.

Members were concerned that there was a significant amount of properties across the Borough that had issues with damp and mould and there had been reports of properties having remedial action undertaken and then having contractors needing to return to the properties to undertake further works.

The Committee were advised that due to the age of the Council's housing stock, there were issues across the Borough of damp and mould occurring. Remedial works were being undertaken according to the programme and if contractors were required to return to a property following remedial works, there would be no charge to the Council. Furthermore, Members were advised that the current programme was targeted, with the least efficient properties being considered first.

The problem of damp and mould within properties needed to be tackled on an ongoing basis and the Chair noted that there were many issues with condensation causing mould, rather than damp. Members' attention was drawn to Appendix A of the report which was a leaflet providing advice of how to reduce condensation within the home which had been distributed to residents of the Borough.

The Committee were further advised by the Head of Housing – Investment and Development, that additional funding, approximately £0.5m, would enable

to Council to irradiate the problem, however this would need to be approved through the appropriate channels.

Democratic Services advised the Committee that they did not have the delegated authority to approve such funding, however they could include a recommendation to support the Director of Housing to ensure the scheme is finished if required. The Chair moved and it was seconded that an additional recommendation be included within the report to show the Committees support for the programme to be completed.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the programmes being undertaken to address issues of damp & mould, as described in this report, be noted.**
- 2. That the Committee support the move to a more planned, efficient and effective means of asset management.**
- 3. That the Committee supports the Director of Housing in ensuring the programme to deal with damp and mould issues within the Councils Housing Stock is completed and would recommend support from Cabinet to obtain additional funding if required.**

**19. Programme Update for the Transforming Homes Programme**

The Head of Housing – Investment and Development – introduced the report to the Committee, updating Members on one of the Council’s key strategic housing programmes – Transforming Homes.

The report demonstrated progress in:

- Accessing and utilising external funding sources in furthering improving thermal efficiency;
- Developing and progressing programmes which address damp, mould and condensation issues;
- The continued and expanding delivery of tangible benefits to the local economy and community;
- Meeting headline performance indicators in the Transforming Homes programme – which met its Year 1 targets and continues to perform well during the first three quarters of Year 2.

The Committee were concerned that they had received reports from residents that works had not been undertaken properly. In response, Members were advised that every property that had gone through the programme was signed off by a Council Officer who had visited the property. Retentions monies for contractors were in place and were released one year after the works to the property had been completed. If tenants were not happy with the works undertaken then they should contact the Council and a resolution would be sought.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the progress of the Transforming Homes programme be noted.**
  - 2. That the progress in meeting key targets across a range of programme measures be noted.**
  - 3. That the success in maximising connections with and benefits to the local community be noted.**
  - 4. That the success of the Housing Service in accessing available funding in order to best protect and develop Council homes be noted.**
- 20. Progress on Gloriana - Proposed Development of St Chad's site, Tilbury and Belmont Road site, Grays**

The Director of Housing introduced the report to Members concerning an update of the proposals for Gloriana to develop St Chad's Road site in Tilbury and Belmont Road in Grays. Members were informed that subject to planning permission, contractors would be onsite at St Chad's in April.

The governance arrangements for Gloriana provided for a series of Gateway approvals which broadly followed scheme progress. The St Chad's site was now at Gateway 2 where the scheme was progressing through to planning and receipt of construction tenders. Belmont Road was at Gateway 1, initial feasibility, and would progress through to development of the design for planning submission and preparation of more detailed scheme costs.

Members were pleased to see the report before them, however noted that there still parking issues that needed to be resolved at the Belmont Road site.

In response to a question regarding the purchase of houses, Members were advised that whilst some local authorities were purchasing houses within their boundaries due to the lack of sites to build on, this would not be appropriate currently in Thurrock due to the age of the housing stock and the damp problems that many properties, including private, were facing. However, if the need did arise and the market conditions were correct, then the Council would consider purchases properties.

In response to further questions, Members were advised that the new build properties would not contain drying rooms and would be built to Code Level 4. Properties would also be orientated to the South and have decent sized gardens to enable the drying of linen.

The Committee were concerned that some of the report had been redacted and therefore the cost of building the homes was not available at the meeting. The Chair requested that the redacted information contained within the report

be circulated to Members of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee as soon as possible.

**RESOLVED:**

1. **Note the Partnering Board's recommendations that Cabinet has supported Gloriana in taking forward:**
  - **St Chad's site in Tilbury through Gateway 2 to receipt of planning approval and construction tenders; and**
  - **Belmont Rd site in Grays through Gateway 1 to development of scheme design in readiness for planning submission, including incurring design fees, at risk, on Gloriana's behalf until approval to commit the schemes is given at Gateway 3.**

**21. Work Programme**

Members noted the next items on the work programme.

**RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.**

**The meeting finished at 8.59 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

This page is intentionally left blank

<b>18 February 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 5</b>
<b>Housing Overview and Scrutiny</b>	
<b>Sheltered Housing Decommissioning – Next steps</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> Aveley and Uplands Stanford East and Corringham Stifford Clays	<b>Key Decision:</b> NA
<b>Report of:</b> Richard Parkin – Head of Housing Community and Needs	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Richard Parkin – Head of Housing Community and Needs	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Barbara Brownlee – Director of Housing and Commercial Services	
<b>This report is public.</b>	

## Executive Summary

This report follows a previous report presented to Housing Overview and Scrutiny on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The report was a review of the Sheltered Housing Service and the committee agreed that:

1. The outcome of the Sheltered Housing Consultation were noted
2. That the current policy whereby sheltered housing properties are not generally let to people aged less than 60 year be maintained.
3. That the decommissioning of some hard to let and/or unsuitable sheltered housing properties, as outlined in the report, be recommended for approval
4. That a new sheltered housing service model, as outlined, be recommended for approval
5. That one of the options for future funding is recommended for approval.
6. That the consultation outcomes be published

There was a commitment to the Committee that the Housing Department, when looking to progress with decommissioning, would return with details of how it was to do this.

Due to the double purdah periods that the council experienced in 2014 the department was delayed in this process and is now looking to move forward.

This report outlines the intention of how the department intends to complete the decommissioning.

## **1. Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 That the committee notes the report and endorses the approach to decommissioning of the identified units/schemes.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 On 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014 the Housing Department reported back to the Committee on the Sheltered Housing Review and consultation that had taken place. The committee supported the items put forward, including the decommissioning of select Sheltered Housing units due to lack of desirability or due to them being unfit for purpose.
- 2.2 The initial report highlighted seven potential schemes to be decommissioned and this report proposes to move forward on three schemes or part schemes and how this will be completed.

## **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 Although initially seven schemes were recommended for decommissioning, Housing are intending to have a dedicated officer for the decommissioning and due to Thurrock not wanting to have a high level of void properties, decided to complete this process in phases. Phase 1 being the three schemes highlighted below.
- 3.2 Any decommission that will take place will have the following principles:
- I. It is intended that no tenant will be forced to move from their current accommodation.
  - II. Tenants will receive a disturbance payment which will cover the cost of moving, storage and reasonable new furnishings needed in their new property.
  - III. Tenants will be supported by a dedicated officer to help them with the decommissioning.
- 3.3 The approach to the three suggested schemes are documented below

### Langland and Nottage

- 3.4 Langland and Nottage is a Sheltered Housing Scheme in Corringham consisting of 4 three story blocks with 11 properties each. The blocks are separated by a major road meaning that two blocks aren't within the bounds of the Sheltered Housing Scheme and have no direct or convenient access to the communal facilities.
- 3.5 Added to the issues highlighted in 3.4 due to the nature of the block, three stories and no lift, they are very difficult to let to older residents. This is



particularly so in the properties which are distant from the Sheltered Housing Scheme.

- 3.6 The intention with this scheme is to decommission the two blocks that are distant from the scheme (22 properties) and at some point turn the block into general needs properties.
- 3.7 The department is intending to take a phased approach with the process. In the first instance we will work with the tenants who already had identified that they wish to move (of which there are a significant amount) and try to find them suitable accommodation elsewhere. These tenants will still receive the disturbance payment. Decanted properties will remain void and not be filled at this time.
- 3.8 Once this part of the process has been completed we will review who is left in the properties and set a reasonable date (3 to 6 months) for when the Sheltered Housing Service will be removed from the properties. This will give the remaining tenants time to be supported in moving, or will give them the opportunity to remain in their current home. The date set is the date that the properties will revert to General Needs and we will fill any void properties through the usual lettings policy.
- 3.9 Any tenant who wishes to stay in their property will be able to pay the current £8 a week fee if they wish to still have access to the Sheltered Communal Hall and a Sheltered Housing Officer who will support them on an outreach basis.
- 3.10 If after a period of time (up to 1 year) the tenants who have stayed find that they have changed their mind and wish to move then they will be given dedicated support and will receive a disturbance payment for doing so.

#### St Cedds

- 3.11 St Cedds is unique in that the scheme is already mixed with general needs properties. It has 34 sheltered flats on the ground floor with general needs accommodation above (studio flats and three bedroom maisonettes).
- 3.12 Given that the scheme is already co-located with general needs properties there is no intention that the voids properties will be held in this scheme but will be filled as soon as they become vacant through the usual lettings route.
- 3.13 In the first instance we will once again work with people who already want to move and support them to move. Once we have completed this we will set a date (3 to 6 months) before the removal of the Sheltered Housing service.
- 3.14 As with Langland and Nottage, use of the hall and a sheltered housing outreach service will be offered at a fee. Equally people will have up to a year after the removal of service to opt into moving out of their property and receiving a home loss payment.

## Chichester Close

- 3.15 Chichester Close in Aveley consists of two blocks containing 4 flats. It is annexed to the Sycamores and New Maltings however is entirely separate from the schemes. The first floor flats in these blocks have been difficult to let.
- 3.16 Tenants at Chichester have previously complained about their living conditions and the quality of their properties and although work has taken place to remedy some of the issues a full technical assessment will need to take place on the future of the blocks.
- 3.17 It is intended that the decommissioning of Chichester Close will follow the same lines of Langland and Nottage, however the properties when void will receive a comprehensive survey before deciding their future.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 This report is for noting. It is believed that a very fair approach will be taken towards decommission with as little stress and impact to tenants as possible.

### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 Full consultation took place and was fed back in July 2014.

### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 None

### **7. Implications**

#### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jo Beard**  
**Finance Officer**

The HRA will need to find the disturbance payments from within their budget next year. However with savings made through the Sheltered Housing restructure these won't create a budget pressure.

It is also worth noting there will be a loss of rental income on the decommissioned properties until they revert to general needs stock and are re-let.

#### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Alison Stuart**  
**Principal Solicitor**

There are no legal implications for this report.

### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Teresa Evans**

#### **Equalities and Cohesion Officer**

Decommissioning has the potential to seriously impact the lives of older people living in these properties. It is thought that through the approach to decommissioning in two phases we can reduce the impact this may have. The structures and mechanisms we have put in place to support individual tenants during this phase will also mitigate some of the impact.

### 7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

### 8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

### 9. **Appendices to the report**

- None

#### **Report Author:**

Richard Parkin

Head of Housing – Community and Needs

Housing

This page is intentionally left blank

<b>18 February 2015</b>	<b>ITEM: 6</b>
<b>Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	
Draft Housing Strategy 2015-2020	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Report of:</b> Barbara Brownlee, Director of Housing	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Not applicable	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Barbara Brownlee, Director of Housing	
<b>This report is public</b>	

## Executive Summary

This report presents the first draft of a new Housing Strategy for Thurrock which will set out the vision and direction for housing over the next five years. The aim is to create an engaging and aspirational document for both internal and external stakeholders. The Strategy will define the inherent relationship with health and wellbeing and support Thurrock Council's Corporate Plan and five strategic priorities. The vision for the strategy is:

*Thurrock is a destination of choice with growing healthy and prosperous communities, living in high quality housing across all tenures where residents are empowered to help themselves, and supported with consistently excellent services.*

There are three core priorities that underpin the Housing Strategy vision:

- Core Priority 1 – Raising the Bar: Delivering high quality housing and services
- Core Priority 2 – In on the Ground Floor: Proactively supporting residents to maximise health, wellbeing and employment outcomes
- Core Priority 3 – Looking Ahead: Creating sustainable communities and boosting housing supply

Each core priority is supported by objectives and an action plan detailing how this will be realised between 2015 and 2020. The Strategy has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and is supported by a robust evidence base.

The Housing Strategy is enclosed as Appendix 1 together with the supporting Evidence Base as Appendix 2.

## **1. Recommendations**

### **That Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

#### **1.1 Endorse the Housing Strategy and proposed actions to 2020.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 The housing landscape has seen extensive change in recent years with the recovery after the economic recession and extensive public spending cuts to reduce the deficit together with a series of reforms to get Britain's economy moving again. The devolution of power with the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 represented a significant change for housing together with radical reforms to the Welfare System. Against a backdrop of diminishing funding, this has presented new challenges for the delivery of homes and services.
- 2.2 At a local level, Thurrock has seen high levels of population growth in the ten years to 2011. The population of Thurrock is relatively young with a large proportion of the population of working age. Nearly a third of households are families and lone parents with dependent children. With the current housing market, this means more young people are living at home for longer and unable to move on from the family home.
- 2.3 The number of growing families and above average levels of overcrowding indicates a need for an increase in the supply of family homes to support these families. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicates 42% of all housing required is three bedroom homes.
- 2.4 With the projected increase in the older population and in particular those over 75, there is a requirement to ensure there is suitable support and accommodation to enable older people to remain independent from training staff on dementia to new homes built to HAPPI standard. Over 65s are forecast to increase by 58% between 2012 and 2031, bringing the percentage of older people more in line with regional and national averages. Dementia is currently below average although hospital admission rates are high. It is estimated the number of older people with dementia will increase by up to 70% over the next 15 years as a result of the growing population.
- 2.5 Thurrock suffers from high levels of unemployment and this is particularly evident in the more deprived areas of the borough demonstrating the need for targeted interventions. In the most deprived wards, youth unemployment is prevalent and above average numbers of the working age population are long term unemployed. This is reflected in benefit claimants with high levels of those claiming key out of work benefits. Nearly half of all our general needs tenants are unemployed, reflecting the higher levels of worklessness in social housing. This increases to over 60% when excluding those registered as retired or living in sheltered housing.

- 2.6 The historical skills gap in Thurrock is evident through the high number of residents in elementary occupations and administrative roles with a lack of those in senior positions and professional occupations. Qualifications are below average at all levels with over 10% of residents having no qualifications, reducing employment prospects. However, through significant educational investment, young people are achieving more, with GCSE attainment rising year on year and now ahead of regional and national averages.
- 2.7 Across Thurrock, there are significant variances in health and wellbeing. The life expectancy of residents living in the most deprived areas in Thurrock is up to 8 years lower than for those living in the least deprived. Obesity is prevalent in Thurrock for both children and adults, compounded by poor levels of healthy eating and low levels of participation in sport. This has health implications in both the short and long term and can impact on a child's development and educational attainment. In addition, there are above average levels of child poverty at 22%.
- 2.8 Violent crime in Thurrock is significantly worse than the national average and can result in people becoming unintentionally homeless following a breakdown in a relationship. For tenants living in council homes, public order offences are most common, followed by reports of domestic abuse.
- 2.9 Safeguarding our residents is of critical importance and preventing crime can help residents avoid crisis. Targeted preventions and support is needed to reduce inequalities across different wards. Close working with health partners will enable an evidence based approach to tackling health issues experienced by residents. Increased measures are needed to reducing violent crime and ASB together with raising awareness on safeguarding amongst staff.
- 2.10 The private rented sector has grown considerably in the ten years to 2011 and is set to continue despite previously representing a below average proportion of homes in Thurrock. Grays Riverside now has a third of households renting privately in the local area.
- 2.11 Homelessness in Thurrock is significantly better than the national average with an increase in the number of cases prevented. The termination of an assured shorthold tenancy is the most common reason for homelessness and with the growth in the private rented sector this is likely to become more prevalent. An above average number also become unintentionally homeless due to families no longer being able to accommodate the individual emphasising the need for suitable accommodation to accommodate large families and enable young people to move on to sustainable housing. There is a shortage of homes in the private rented sector that can be offered to residents at risk of becoming homeless and this pressure is further increased with the London authorities using financial incentives to attract landlords.

- 2.12 Increased engagement with private sector landlords is critical as this market continues to expand. This includes exploring the use of incentives to increase the availability of homes in the private rented sector for the council to utilise.
- 2.13 Affordability is key issue for residents. The average income to be able to buy or rent a property in Thurrock is estimated to be £25,000 and the ratio of earnings to household price remains consistently above average, highlighting the challenges for first time buyers looking to enter the housing market. Private sector rents are comparatively high with Local Housing Allowance not keeping pace, and there has been an increase in the number of households claiming housing benefit in the private sector.
- 2.14 Conversely, the average house price in Thurrock is comparatively low at £180,974 and has not yet reached levels seen at the peak before the recession. This has impacted on the number of starts on site with low land values discouraging private developers from investing in the area. Thurrock needs to work collaboratively with the private sector to boost the supply of housing in the borough.
- 2.15 For social housing, there is a demand for one bedroom homes, indicating the need for affordable housing for young people and single households. In addition, interventions in school will allow young people to be educated earlier on their housing options with the aim of reducing demand on social housing and enabling them move into suitable accommodation.
- 2.16 Thurrock council owns over 10,000 homes, dating back as far as 1920s. This includes over 1,000 sheltered housing properties across the borough. Half of the general needs properties are three bedroom homes and the remaining majority comprise one and two bedroom flats. There are large pockets of stock in some of the most deprived areas in the borough including Tilbury, Belhus, Chadwell St. Mary and Ockendon. Due to the age of properties, many are less energy efficient, increasing health risks for residents. The Transforming Homes Programme will play a significant role in improving the quality of our stock together with wider regeneration on key estates.
- 2.17 The core priorities for the Strategy have been developed in response to both the national drivers and local context reflecting the needs of residents. The evidence base will continue to be reviewed and updated to ensure that we can use our limited resources to best effect. This includes conducting a housing needs survey to better understand the demand for housing in Thurrock which is expected to be completed by mid-February.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

#### **Housing Strategy Objectives**

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy vision is: *Thurrock is a destination of choice with growing healthy and prosperous communities, living in high quality housing*



*across all tenures where residents are empowered to help themselves, and supported with consistently excellent services.*

- 3.2 Three core priorities have been developed to support this vision and represent the key focus over the next five years:
- **Raising the Bar:** Delivering high quality housing and services
  - **In on the Ground Floor:** Proactively supporting residents to maximise health, wellbeing and employment outcomes
  - **Looking Ahead:** Creating sustainable communities and boosting housing supply
- 3.3 The Strategy has a clear approach that underpins the delivery of each objective:
- Partnership Working
  - Evidence Based
  - Maximise Resources
  - Proactive
- 3.4 The SMART Action Plan will provide a mechanism to monitor the Strategy on a monthly basis internally to ensure we are delivering against the objectives. Quarterly updates will be provided to Members on progress against the Strategy and an annual report will be produced to report on success to date. This will be made available to all stakeholders to ensure accountability and transparency. For each objective, 'key measures of success' are being developed to report on the progress of the overall Strategy and ensure we are delivering.

### **Core Priority 1: Raising the Bar**

- 3.5 Delivering high quality housing and services across all tenures is central to ensuring positive health and wellbeing outcomes for our residents. There are four objectives that support this:
- Deliver tailored and needs led services to all residents
  - Provide high quality council housing
  - Enhance the quality of housing in the private sector
  - Deliver value for money with high levels of customer satisfaction
- 3.6 Increasing engagement with residents will enable more tailored and needs led services. In particular, there is a focus on working with specific communities, including Gypsy and Travellers, to understand their needs and how best to support them. Increasing the use of digital channels will enhance the accessibility of the council to a wider audience. By working with partners, including adult social care, interventions can be evidence based to ensure a needs led approach.

- 3.7 The £68m Transforming Homes Programme is central to increasing the quality of council housing and will be delivered over the five years of the Strategy. This is supported by a strategic approach to asset management to ensure the maintenance of all properties. The revised repairs policy will encourage residents to undertake low level repairs themselves to reduce the current above average number of repairs per property and enable enhanced support for vulnerable residents.
- 3.8 Raising standards within the private sector is also critical. This is of particular importance in the private rented sector with the growth seen and as the council becomes increasingly reliant on this sector to discharge its homeless duty. The Well Homes Programme will continue to be delivered to support residents living in the private sector and reduce potential hazards impacting on health and wellbeing. Increased engagement with landlords through the development of structured forums will be a priority together with exploring financial incentives for landlords and the setting up a social lettings agency. A licencing scheme for landlords will aim to reduce rogue landlords and issues with ASB together with a strengthening of the enforcement team.
- 3.9 Taking a proactive and evidence based approach to services will enable best use of resources and a value for money service. Investment in housing staff with training and development opportunities, setting out clear career pathways, will increase the quality of our services. This together with a transparent and auditable approach to customer contact will increase customer satisfaction across services. Through continual review of contracts and re-procuring services, it will be ensured that services continue to represent value for money with maximum benefits to the community.

### **Core Priority 2: In on the Ground Floor**

- 3.10 Through our preventative approach, we can use our limited resources more effectively and enhance residents overall wellbeing. Health and Employment is intrinsically linked to housing and we want to work in partnership to maximise the opportunities for our residents addressing social and health inequalities across the borough. The key objectives are:
- Empower residents to make informed choices with access to advice and support
  - Support our residents through prevention and early intervention to sustain their homes and avoid crisis
  - Support residents to maintain and improve their independence
  - Create employment pathways and support residents to access these
- 3.10 As part of the 'Digital First' approach taken by the council, investment in digital tools, for example HED, will empower residents to make informed housing choices and reduce demand on call centres and offices. Training staff and volunteers based at community hubs on housing advice will increase accessibility of information and staff will be equipped with mobile technology to enable them to be out in the community providing support.

- 3.11 Preventative services will be maximised to prevent residents from reaching crisis. This will be achieved through understanding the key challenges facing local people and working with partners to provide a joined up approach. This will include exploring working with credit unions to increase financial inclusion and continuing to utilise our three tiers of financial support. The viability of a mortgage rescue scheme will be explored to support people who are struggling to keep up with mortgage repayments. A working group will also be set up to review the extent and support for those with leave to remain in the country but no recourse to public funds.
- 3.12 Targeted health interventions in Sheltered Housing will support independent living – a model which is planned to be rolled out to general needs and private sector. Staff will also be trained on dementia to aid early diagnosis and support. Working with adult social care, residents with learning disabilities and mental health issues will be supported to live in suitable accommodation, maximising the use of community based interventions. Increasing awareness of safeguarding and strengthening the approach to ASB will be expanded upon to ensure the safety of residents.
- 3.13 Through the procurement of services, further employment opportunities will be created for residents. This will include targeting tenants on estates being regenerated to support those suffering from long term unemployment with the opportunity to enhance their skills and train as an apprentice. Working with partners, including DWP, will enhance employment and training advice and opportunities for residents. Apprenticeships will also continue to be created in house for residents.

### **Core Priority 3: Looking Ahead**

- 3.14 Increasing the supply of housing is central to this Strategy – and with the reduction in government funding together with the current housing landscape in Thurrock – we need to find innovative new approaches, working across both the public and private sector to tackle this growing issue. The key objectives are to:
- Boost the housing market delivering new affordable homes to meet local need
  - Increase housing supply, working collaboratively with the private sector
  - Enhance local communities through estate regeneration
  - Ensure the sustainability of our homes to meet residents' needs now and in the future
- 3.15 With the development of Gloriana Thurrock Limited, the strategy will deliver 1,000 new affordable homes over the next five years. This will be supported with funding from the HCA and the additional borrowing in the HRA. Gloriana will provide the opportunity to unlock sites and kick start the housing market. With high levels of youth unemployment and child poverty in Tilbury and the surrounding areas, a 30 unit Foyer will be developed to empower young

people to gain the life skills needed to move into the community. Working with Adult Social Care, additional extra care and HAPPI schemes will also be explored to ascertain the most appropriate support for older people and vulnerable residents.

- 3.16 Working collaboratively with the private sector is critical to increasing housing supply. This will include establishing strategic partners including a regeneration partner and working with the sector to identify land available for development, maximising opportunities for new affordable housing.
- 3.17 Seabrooke Rise represents a first significant wholesale estate regeneration for Thurrock and is being developed in the context of the wider masterplanning for Grays. This is being followed over the five years by development of a strategy for the regeneration of further estates across the borough including Flowers and Broadway. Working with Regeneration, the Garrison Estate will also be regenerated increasing housing provision.
- 3.18 All homes will be built to 'Lifetime Homes' and Sustainable Homes standards, and reflect high quality design and materials. To enable people to remain in their own homes for longer, schemes for older people will adopt HAPPI standards. A Green Space Strategy will enhance open spaces for residents increasing community gardens and vegetable patches. Our housing stock will continue to be assessed to ensure homes are fit for purpose. This will include decommissioning Sheltered Housing that is no longer suitable for an increasingly older client group. Energy efficiency homes will be built, minimising the impact on the environment and funding through the Green Deal will be explored to enable retrofitting of existing homes.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy is required to set the strategic vision for housing and ensure our ambitious targets are realised over the next five years. This Strategy will be for external and internal stakeholders.

#### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 The Strategy has been produced in consultation with our key stakeholders including council tenants and Members together with our partners as demonstrated below:
  - Tenant Excellence Panel
  - Health and Wellbeing Board
  - Leadership Group
  - Youth Cabinet
  - Community Safety Partnership
  - Overview and Scrutiny – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2015
  - Cabinet – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 Thurrock Council's vision is to create a place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish. The core priorities set out in this Housing Strategy reflect this ambition and run across all five priorities from Thurrock's Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013-16.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: Mike Jones  
Management Accountant  
mxjones@thurrock.gov.uk

We have developed a 30 year HRA business plan to identify resources needed to improve our existing stock and deliver much needed new housing. Through robust financial management, we will ensure that our housing objectives and action plan are appropriately resourced. We will endeavour to access funding, both from central government and by working in partnership with the third sector and private business, to support our objectives.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: Alison Stuart- Principal Lawyer  
Tel : 01375 652 040

The Strategy will ensure that we deliver on our legal duties as a council and Legal Services should be consulted to provide ongoing advice and assistance in relation to these legislative requirements.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: Natalie Warren  
Community Development & Equalities Manager  
nwarren@thurrock.gov.uk

The Strategy seeks to reduce health and wellbeing inequalities across the borough. An impact assessment is being completed to ensure accessibility of housing and services to all protected characteristics.

**Report Author:**  
Barbara Brownlee  
Director of Housing

This page is intentionally left blank

# Unlocking the door to healthy, happy homes and lives

---

## **A Housing Strategy for Thurrock Council**

First Draft – January 2015

DRAFT

## Contents

FOREWORD .....	3
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION .....	4
SECTION 2: BACKGROUND .....	7
Thurrock: A Diverse and Growing Borough .....	9
SECTION 3: ACHIEVEMENTS .....	14
SECTION 4: CORE PRIORITY 1 – RAISING THE BAR.....	15
SECTION 5: CORE PRIORITY 2 – IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR .....	21
SECTION SIX: CORE PRIORITY 3 – LOOKING AHEAD.....	28
SECTION SEVEN: HOW WILL WE GET THERE?.....	32
SECTION EIGHT – APPENDIX 1 ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING STRATEGY .....	34

DRAFT



## Foreword

---

I am delighted to present Thurrock Council's Housing Strategy for 2015 – 2020. It sets out our plans over the next five years together with our longer term vision over the life of our 30 year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan.

It demonstrates our approach to housing and services, working in partnership with others, to maximise opportunities for our residents, supported by a clear evidence base to make best use of our limited resources.

Thurrock is a diverse place that has seen enormous growth over the past ten years – representing both challenges and opportunities for our residents. There is huge investment planned in Thurrock to support this growth and housing is a central part of that change.

Through our Transforming Homes Programme, we are already investing substantially in our own stock to improve the overall quality of our housing, totalling £68 million over five years. This includes a range of measures through our Damp and Mould Programme to improve housing standards and the health of our residents.

The Housing Team has undergone considerable change within the past year to ensure we can support and provide services to residents to prevent them from reaching crisis. We want to empower our residents to make informed housing choices and our growing relationship with Adult Social Care and Health has enabled us to enhance health and wellbeing outcomes for those we support.

We are leading the way in kick starting the housing market with the creation of Gloriana Thurrock Limited which will support our ambitious target to deliver 1,000 affordable homes over the next five years.

We have also secured grants of nearly £6 million from recent HCA Funding Programmes. This, together with our successful bid to increase the HRA borrowing cap with over £11 million of additional borrowing capacity, will result in the development of over 400 new homes.

However, we know that there remain challenges for housing in Thurrock, both now and in the future, and this Strategy sets out how we hope to overcome these covering three core priorities:

- Raising the Bar – Delivering high quality housing and services;
- In on the Ground Floor – proactively supporting residents to maximise health, wellbeing and employment outcomes;
- Looking Ahead – creating sustainable communities and boosting housing supply.

I look forward to working with our partners to build on our successes over the next five years, and realise our vision set out in this Strategy, creating healthy and prosperous communities for all our residents.

*Insert Signature*

Councillor Lynn Worrall  
Housing Portfolio Holder

---

*“There is huge investment planned in Thurrock to support this growth and housing is a central part of that change.”*

---

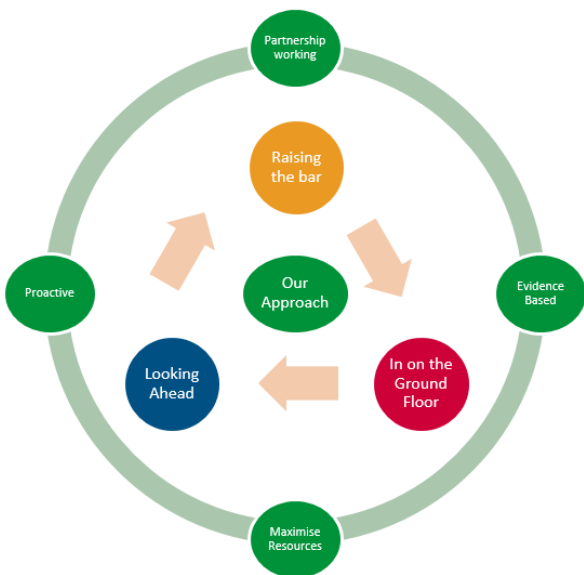
# Section 1: Introduction

Housing creates opportunity: providing good quality housing is key to enabling our residents to live healthy and happy lives. This Strategy sets out our vision for housing of all tenures, across the borough and how, by working together, we can improve the health, wellbeing and life opportunities for our communities.

Our vision:

*Thurrock is a destination of choice with growing healthy and prosperous communities, living in high quality housing across all tenures where residents are empowered to help themselves, and supported with consistently excellent services.*

We have developed three core priorities that represent our key focus areas over the next five years from 2015 to 2020 to support our vision.



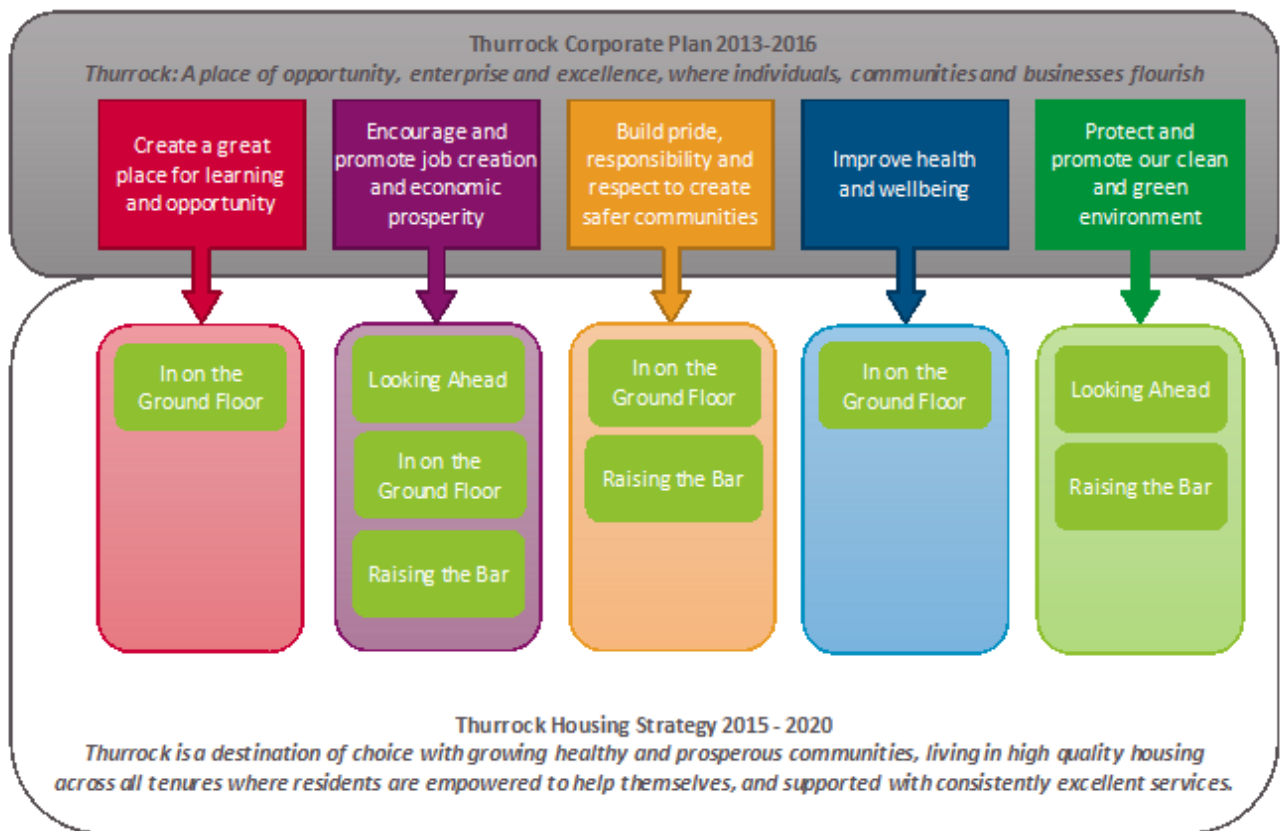
This Strategy has been produced in consultation with our key stakeholders including council tenants and Members together with our partners. The Strategy is supported by a robust evidence base (supplementary document available on our website) to identify how best to target our resources. It is intended that our Strategy is for both internal and external distribution to be shared with our partners and stakeholders to enable effective delivery of the actions.

We will be proactive in our service delivery, informed by a clear evidence base to deliver maximum value through our limited resources. Critical to our success is our ability to work in partnership to deliver the aims of this Strategy. This is by engaging and working across departments within the council together with external stakeholders to maximise opportunities for our residents.

**How this Strategy links to our Corporate Objective**

Thurrock Council’s vision is to create a place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish. The core priorities set out in this Housing Strategy reflect this ambition and run across all five priorities from Thurrock’s Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013-16 which aims to:

- Creating a great place for learning and opportunity
- Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity
- Build pride, responsibility and respect to create safe communities
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Protect and promote our clean and green environment



**Related Strategies:**

- Corporate Plan
- Private Sector Housing Strategy 2014-17
- ASB Strategy
- Repairs Policy
- Homelessness Strategy
- Allocations Policy

- Tenancy Strategy
- Local Development Framework
- Core Strategy
- South East LEP Economic Plan

**Who is this Strategy for?**

We want this strategy to be a live document that is utilised by both internal and external stakeholders. Internally, it sets out a clear vision for our housing team to lead the strategic direction of housing across the borough and demonstrates our approach to our Members. For our tenants and residents, it highlights our commitment to deliver excellent services and high quality housing to the benefits of the local community. The Strategy sets out how we will work in partnership with other departments and external partners, emphasising their role in helping us to deliver our vision.

DRAFT

## Section 2: Background

### National Drivers

The Housing Landscape has seen extensive change in recent years with the recovery after the economic recession and extensive spending cuts, announced by the Coalition Government after their election in May 2010, to reduce the deficit together with a series of reforms to get Britain's economy moving again.

### Devolution of Power

The Localism Act 2011 and the concept of the 'Big Society', set out the Government's aim to devolve power, giving councils more freedom to make decisions at a local level. Subsequent to this, the Government published 'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England' in November 2011 setting out their ambition to *'drive local economies and create jobs'* together with *'spreading opportunity in our society'*. It highlights the scale of the problem in the current housing market where *'we have not built enough new homes for more than a generation and the impact of the credit crunch has simply compounded this challenge'*.

Housing demand outstrips supply across all sectors and this gap is increasing. The Strategy identified the importance of housing as central to social mobility, health and wellbeing. It represented significant reforms for the housing sector from changes to allocations and homelessness duties to fixed term tenancies and the introduction of the Affordable Rent Model. Right to Buy was reinvigorated to enable tenants to own their own home. The policies aimed to kick start the housing market and make best use of the limited social housing available to ensure it was prioritised for those that need it most.

As part of the devolution of power, the government ended the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system enabling councils to 'self-finance' by retaining all rental income collected. Councils were required to develop a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 year Business Plan to manage their housing assets and investment in their stock.

The Homes and Communities Agency became the Social Housing Regulator with a focus on co-regulation and empowering tenants to hold their landlords to account. This saw a revised Regulatory Framework and risk based approach to regulating social landlords.

### Simplified Planning

To further support the delivery of new homes, the Government published a National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to simplify the planning process and achieve sustainable development through an economic, social and environmental role. The framework provides people with the ability to influence and shape their local area through local and neighbourhood plans to meet their need. The priority of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy allows local authorities to raise funds from owners and developers of land undertaking build projects.

### **Ensuring Work Pays**

The Welfare Reforms represent significant changes to the benefit system. The reforms seek to reduce benefit dependency, simplify the benefit system and increase incentives to work. It introduced caps on the level of housing benefit and restrictions on entitlement for those tenants under occupying. Central to the reforms is the introduction of 'Universal Credit', 'an integrated working-age credit' to replace a range of existing benefits including Housing benefit and Job Seekers Allowance.

### **Delivering Sustainable Homes**

The Government set out ambitious targets for all new homes to be 'zero carbon' from 2016 with the introduction of the Code for Sustainable Homes. This is set against a backdrop of the 'Red Tap Challenge' and a fundamental review into building standards and regulations to improve cost efficiency and reduce complexity in the house building process.

In addition, the government established the Green Deal in 2013 to enable energy improvements to be made to existing properties. The golden rule that is fundamental to the scheme is the annual repayments on the loan to undertake retrofit works should not exceed the savings made on energy bills. The Green Deal has experienced challenges to date with low levels of take-up and there has been uncertainty in the level of funding available for retrofitting properties with cuts to the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO).

### **Transforming Health and Social Care**

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 redefined local authorities' role in health services and saw the introduction of Clinical Commissioning Groups following the demise of the Primary Care Trusts. Under the reforms, local authorities were required to establish health and wellbeing boards to assess community needs and work together to reduce health inequalities.

The Care Act 2014 places limits on the amount anyone will have to pay towards the costs of their care up to £72,000. It sets out a series of criteria to make it clear as to how local authorities will have to provide support to people placing a minimum threshold on councils. It places a duty on councils to have regard for an individual's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing when in need of care delivering preventative services. The Care Act emphasises the connection to housing in delivering health outcomes for residents.

### **Delivering Economic Growth**

The government created Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP), to replace Regional Development Agencies, and establish a link between private sector businesses and local authorities as part of their Local Growth agenda. Their role is to facilitate a relationships between local authorities and businesses to work together and drive economic growth, identifying the priorities for investment in road, buildings and facilities. LEPs are able to bid for funding to support their growth priorities and through the establishment of enterprise zones, take advantage of tax incentives and simplified local planning.

## Thurrock: A Diverse and Growing Borough

- 165 sq. km
- 70% green belt land
- 18 miles of riverfront
- 20 wards
- 157,705 residents living in the borough
- 62,353 households
- 36 mean age
- 191,000 the total number of residents projected by 2031
- 7.2% of the working population are unemployed
- 2.8% claiming job seekers allowance
- £25,000 income required to buy or rent a home in Thurrock
- 20,600 additional homes required by 2031

### A History by the River

Thurrock has a unique location: benefiting from large areas of green belt land and riverfront whilst being in close proximity to the nation's capital. Thurrock's position by the River Thames has long since made it a strategic location and hub for industrial growth.

Thurrock's connection to the River has remained a prominent feature of Thurrock with the development of Tilbury Port in 1886 which now comprises 850 acres and boasts 130 firms, acting as a central gateway for London to transport bulk products.

The positioning of the River Thames in relation to Thurrock is not without its problems – most significantly, the 1953 East Anglian floods which devastated the local area and people. This led to flood defences being erected in later years, and the loss of visibility of the river in some areas.

Quarrying has also played a prominent part in Thurrock's history and contributes to the varied landscape of the borough seen today. For over 50 years, the Mucking Landfill Site took the waste of six London boroughs, after all the gravel was extracted from the quarry, before recently being transformed into a nature park.

### An exciting growth agenda

Today, Thurrock is a key development area as part of the Thames Gateway giving rise to industrial, commercial and residential growth and opportunity. It is home to one of the largest shopping centres in Europe and London Gateway represents the key port development for the country. The Strategic Economic Plan for the South East LEP details the ambitious growth plans for the borough and highlights the pivotal role Thurrock plays in this economic growth. Six growth hubs were identified in Thurrock to drive the regeneration across these strategic locations namely: Purfleet, Lakeside, Grays, Tilbury, London

Gateway and Thames Enterprise Park. Thurrock's growth hasn't gone unnoticed and we have attracted key institutions to the area including Dubai World Ports, Royal National Opera and National Academy for Back Stage Skills together with a new campus for South Essex College. These sit alongside existing businesses in the area including Unilever and Proctor and Gamble.

For our residents, it signifies opportunity. By attracting new businesses and working with the private sector, we can create new employment opportunities to drive economic growth. We can fund new housing and regenerate our existing homes. Residents will benefit from improved access to local services and enhancements to the environment in which they live. Ultimately, it represents improved life choices for all those that reside and work in the borough, tackling the health and social inequalities in our society.

### **Growing Families**

Thurrock has experienced extensive growth over the past ten years, the greatest in the Thames Gateway subregion and this trend is set to continue. The population of Thurrock is relatively young with a large proportion of the population of working age. Nearly a third of households are families and lone parents with dependent children. With the current housing market, this means more young people are living at home for longer and unable to move on from the family home. Over time, Thurrock has become more diverse as a borough, in particular with the growth of Black and Black British ethnic group. The older population is projected to grow significantly by 2031, placing additional pressures on housing and social care services.

### **Employment and Education**

Thurrock suffers from high levels of unemployment and this is particularly evident in the more deprived areas of the borough demonstrating the need for targeted interventions. Youth unemployment is prevalent and above average numbers of the working age population are long term unemployed. This is reflected in benefit claimants with high levels of those claiming key out of work benefits. Nearly half of all our general needs tenants are unemployed, reflecting the higher levels of worklessness in social housing.

The historical skills gap in Thurrock is evident through the high number of residents in elementary occupations and administrative roles with a lack of those in senior positions and professional occupations. Qualifications are below average at all levels with over 10% of residents having no qualifications, reducing employment prospects. However, through significant educational investment, young people are achieving more, with GCSE attainment rising year on year and now ahead of regional and national averages.

Thurrock is home to a relatively large number of medium and large business units creating employment opportunities for residents. We need to capitalise on these opportunities and ensure there is suitable housing for their employees as businesses grow. Equally, this can represent a risk where large organisations employ large number of residents as any decision by the business to move away or close



will have a significant impact on local people. We have to work with local businesses to understand and mitigate any impact.

### **Staying Healthy**

The overall health of the population in Thurrock is good with fewer residents experiencing long term health conditions or disabilities. However, at a local level there are clear health inequalities with life expectancy over 8 years lower for men and 7 years lower for women living in the in the most deprived areas when compared with the least deprived. Smoking related deaths is high together with the cardiovascular and cancer rates for under 75s.

The mental health of our residents is good with low levels of depression and the majority of people with a mental health need or learning disability are in settled accommodation. Dementia amongst adults is below average, however, the support available for these adults needs improving due to the high level of hospital admission relating to dementia.

Obesity is prevalent in Thurrock for both children and adults, compounded by poor levels of healthy eating and low levels of participation in sport. This has health implications in both the short and long term and can impact on a child's development and educational attainment.

### **Staying Safe**

Violent crime in Thurrock is significantly worse than the national average and can result in people becoming unintentionally homeless following a breakdown in a relationship. For tenants living in our homes, public order offences are most common, followed by reports of domestic abuse. Safeguarding our residents is of critical importance and preventing crime can help residents avoid crisis.

### **Our Housing Stock**

Two thirds of households in Thurrock live in semi-detached and terraced houses with fewer detached properties. The majority own their own home but Thurrock has nearly double the regional and national averages renting from the council with a small minority renting from Registered Providers.

Overcrowding is a problem in Thurrock and indicates the need for larger homes to accommodate our growing population together with affordable accommodation for young people to move onto.

As a council, we own over 10,000 homes, dating back as far as 1920s. This includes over 1,000 sheltered housing properties across the borough. Half of our general needs properties are three bedroom homes and the remaining majority comprise one and two bedroom flats. There are large pockets of stock in some of the most deprived areas in the borough including Belhus, Chadwell St. Mary and Ockendon. Due to the age of our homes, many are less energy efficient, increasing health risks for our residents. Thurrock benefits from comparatively low levels of empty homes with the majority in the private sector.

## **The Housing Market**

The private sector has grown considerably in the ten years to 2011 and is set to continue despite previously representing a below average proportion of homes in Thurrock. Grays Riverside now has a third of households renting privately in the local area.

Homelessness in Thurrock is significantly better than the national average with an increase in the number of cases prevented. The termination of an assured shorthold tenancy is the most common reason for homelessness and with the growth in the private rented sector this will become more apparent. An above average number also become unintentionally homeless due to families no longer be able to accommodate the individual emphasising the need for suitable accommodation to accommodate large families and enable young people to move on to sustainable housing. There is a shortage of homes in the private rented sector that can be offered to residents at risk of becoming homeless and this pressure is further increased with the London authorities using financial incentives to attract landlords.

Affordability is key issue for residents. The average income to be able to buy or rent a property in Thurrock is estimated to be £25,000 and the ratio of earnings to household price remains consistently above average, highlighting the challenges for first time buyers looking to enter the housing market. Private sector rents are comparatively high with Local Housing Allowance not keeping pace, and there has been an increase in the number of households claiming housing benefit in the private sector.

The average house price in Thurrock is comparatively low and has not yet reached levels seen at the peak before the recession. This has impacted on the number of starts on site with low land values discouraging private developers from investing in the area.

## **Delivering new homes for the future**

The growing population will place additional pressure on the housing supply with 20,600 new homes required to 2031, equating to 980 per year. This is the highest of any local authority in the subregion and requires collaborative working with the private sector to deliver these much needed homes.

With the large number of families in the borough, nearly half of the new homes required are estimated to be three bedroom properties. For affordable housing, the demand is for one bedroom homes indicating the need for increased affordable accommodation for younger, single households.

An additional 3,400 homes are required to accommodate the growing older population.

## **What does this mean for Thurrock?**

- Increasing the supply of family homes to support growing families
- Enabling young people to access the housing market
- Ensuring there is suitable support for the growing population of older people
- Provide homes that are able to support independence for longer

- Support residents to access employment opportunities
- Increasing opportunities for young people to enter the labour market
- Reducing health inequalities across the borough through targeted interventions
- Equip our staff with the skills to recognise and support those with dementia
- Work with our health partners to maximise health outcomes for residents
- Safeguard our residents and provide support for those experiencing domestic abuse
- Deliver preventative measures to reduce violent crime and ASB
- Improve the quality of our own stock
- Increase the availability of homes in the private rented sector for those at risk of becoming homeless by engaging with private landlords
- Working with schools to educate young people on their housing options
- Ensure that residents living in the private sector benefit from high quality housing
- Deliver affordable housing to meet the growing demand
- Attract and work collaboratively with private developers to boost housing supply
- Regenerate existing estates to improve and increase housing provision

We have developed our core priorities in response to both the national drivers and local context reflecting the needs of our residents in the borough now and in the future. We will continue to review and update the evidence base which informs our Housing Strategy to ensure that we can use our limited resources to best effect. The following sections details our three core priorities and headline actions over the life of the strategy to 2020 setting ambitious targets to enhance the housing and services available to our residents increasing positive outcomes for our communities.

## Section 3: Achievements

*Propose this is presented as double page spread with a diagram of statistics and imagery. Consider use of additional case studies.*

### How are we performing?

- 99.73% of rent collected in 2013/14
- 83% satisfaction with our repairs service in 2013/14
- Increased the number of accredited landlord to 70
- Secured £6,000 from the New Initiatives Fund to deliver a Well Homes Project which has reached 663 people so far and conducted 225 Well Homes Surveys to improve people living in the private sector.
- Completed over 20 ASB multi agency patrols to identify concerns of residents and reduce crime
- Established wholly owned housing company, Gloriana Thurrock Limited to deliver affordable homes for rent and sale
- Secured over £6m in HCA funding to deliver new homes
- Increased the HRA borrowing cap by £11.58m to fund additional homes
- Restructured the housing teams to deliver more customer focussed services
- Passed the peer review as part of the Gold Standard Challenge
- More transparent customer engagement with the introduction of the customer slip
- Standardising services to deliver consistent customer
- Recruited 10 apprentices in house through our caretaking team
- New call centre established with a triage to provide support
- New allocations policy developed May 2013
- Procured contractor framework to deliver savings
- Secured Mears as new repairs partner
- Developed healthy 30 year HRA Business Plan
- 2,058 council homes improved in the first year of our Transforming Homes programme
- 60 previous NEETs or long term unemployed completed employment programmes with 40 securing jobs or moving onto further training
- 25 apprenticeships across all programmes
- 1200 welfare reforms visits
- 144 households facing homelessness prevented or relieved in 2013/14

## Section 4: Core Priority 1 – Raising the Bar

Delivering high quality housing across all tenures is central to ensuring positive health and wellbeing outcomes for our residents. We want to make every contact with our residents count, providing services that are personalised and address individual's specific needs. We will ensure that our service represent value for money, going over and above our statutory duties, with high levels of customer satisfaction.

**Our objectives are to:**

- **Deliver tailored and needs led services to all residents**
- **Provide high quality council housing**
- **Deliver value for money with high levels of customer satisfaction**
- **Enhance the quality of housing in the private sector**

**Key Measures of Success:**

- **20% increase in number of residents engaged through variety of channels**
- **100% of homes surveyed and works completed on transforming homes programme**
- **Increase customer satisfaction to 80%**
- **20% increase in engagement with private landlords**

**Objective 1a: Deliver tailored and needs led services to residents**

We want to ensure that our services are flexible to meet the individual needs of our residents. This can only be achieved through better understanding of our customer's requirements.

Resident engagement is central to this understanding giving people the opportunity to influence our services, highlight opportunities for improvement and have their voice heard. This is both for our own tenants and the wider population who access our services and support. From our own tenants, we know 80% wish to be involved and we need to create a range of communication channels. Our Quality Excellence Panel provides council tenants with the chance to attend regular meetings to discuss key issues and hold us to account.

As part of our drive to be a 'Digital First' council, we want to encourage residents to engage with us through digital channels including social media. Through use of our Facebook page, twitter, website, and email, we will increase our accessibility and provide opportunities for all those who wish to get involved. In addition, we will look to develop online forums and groups to engage with specific groups of residents, for example, an online forum for leaseholders to address their particular needs.

We are working with our partners in health to ensure that services are resident led. Though our Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach we are increasing the ability to work with all in our local communities to enhance the local services. Community Builders act as a key point of contact, strengthening the connections between people and informal associations. This enables residents to

access services in their local community and support one another. We have invested in Local Area Coordinators who are key to supporting the most vulnerable in our community to access personalised and tailored services. Building relationships at an individual, family and community level, they aim to create a more inclusive community providing vulnerable people with access to the services they need.

In Sheltered Housing, we have undertaken extensive consultation to enhance our service offering and have a better understanding of individual needs. This has enabled us to start delivering bespoke activities that will best benefit residents and that they have chosen. We want to enhance our tenant engagement further with a structured approach through regular formal and informal meetings.

Our Neighbourhood Action Plans represent an annual additional investment of nearly £400,000 to deliver improvements to residents based on local need. Through working with the community, we can identify works to enhance the local area, driven by our tenants. This has included the installation of a new car park in Averley, following tenants concerns that parking was a particular issue on the estate. The Neighbourhood Action Plans enable us to target improvements where they are needed most, with tenants deciding how best to use the investment.

We will work with specific groups to understand individual requirements. We wish to engage further with the Gypsy and Traveller community to better define our service provision and the responsibilities of both parties exploring additional support service to enhance health, employment and wider community outcomes.

We manage over 800 leasehold units and will seek to increase engagement of leaseholders to review our current service provision to ensure that we continue to meet their needs. We need to develop a stronger approach that is transparent and accountable to our residents.

### **Objective 1b: Provide high quality council housing**

As a council, we own 10,140 properties across the borough with a quarter built before 1950s. The average SAP rating is 57 with many older terraced and semi-detached homes with lower levels of energy efficiency. In 2000, the government introduced The Decent Homes Programme was a national minimum standard introduced to improve the quality of social housing by 2010. However, we recognised that this did not go far enough in addressing the key housing risks being faced by our tenants.

Through stock condition surveys, we established that damp and mould are prevalent in many of our homes representing health risks for residents. In response, we developed 'Transforming Homes', a £68m ambitious housing improvement programme to address these issues and enhance the quality of our stock. This includes £2m that has specifically been ring-fenced to address the damp and mould issues in our stock. Through our evidence based approach, we are targeting geographical areas based on the current stock condition to ensure those with the greatest need are prioritised.

Over the next five years, we will survey all our properties and identify the improvements required for each property including:

- New Kitchen units and worktops
- Ceramic wall tiling and vinyl flooring to kitchens and bathrooms
- New toilet and bath with shower attachment
- Redecorating of kitchens and bathrooms
- Electrical Rewiring
- Renewing of consumer units
- Renewing of boilers
- Installation of new extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom
- Improving the overall thermal efficiency of the home

As a landlord, we have a responsibility to repair and maintain our stock however our service seeks to deliver over and above our core duty. The demand for repairs services is above the national average across our stock at 3.7 repairs per property compared to 2.5. In particular, there are specific groups of residents that request over 5 repairs per year. This is in part due to certain properties that require more extensive repair work through the capital programme but analysis of the repairs identified that the council were also undertaking very low level repairs including changing light bulbs and unblocking sinks.

We want to support and educate our non-vulnerable residents to understand the shared responsibility between landlord and tenant to encourage them to undertake these more basic works themselves. By doing so, we can better manage our resources and residents will develop skills to help them live independently. This will enable us to prioritise and provide an enhanced level of service for the more vulnerable residents living in our homes.

Creating a safe and clean environment for our tenants also contributes to their overall quality of the area in which our communities live. Our caretaking teams are out on our estates, ensuring all areas represent a clean environment. We have provided training to all our staff to ensure a consistent approach across all our stock – investing time to maintain our communal areas and grounds to a high standard all year round. This is reflected in our customer satisfaction which exceeds 80%. We will continue to enhance this service, identifying key people within our caretaking team to drive this standard forward.

Our Anti-Social Behaviour team (ASB) work closely with residents to reduce nuisance and crime in their local area. We see this as a critical service for housing and work closely with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and East and West Local Action Groups to address crime. We support the core priorities of the CSP to reduce youth offending, safeguard vulnerable victims and prevent violent extremism. We conduct multi-agency patrols around our larger estates to increase our engagement with residents and listen to their concerns, enabling us to better tackle issues. Many of our staff have signed up to become Crime Stopper Ambassadors to support this agenda.

**Objective 1c: Raise standards within private sector housing**

Improving housing standards within our own stock is not enough. Two thirds of our residents own their own and the private rented market has grown from representing just 5.9% of households in 2001 to 13.2% in 2011. This extensive growth is faster than both regional and national averages and signifies the growing relevance of this sector. This is a particular challenge for more vulnerable residents accessing the private rented sector where they are at risk of living in poor quality homes from rogue landlords. As a council, we have a duty to assess and take action where homes present serious health and safety hazards.

As we become increasingly reliant on the private rented sector to discharge our homeless duty, we need to ensure that the homes are in a good state of repair and support the resident to re-integrate back into the community. Engagement with private sector landlords is critical to ensuring this and we will establish formalised forums to retain a two way communication. This will enable us to support landlords in raising the standards of their homes and increase the number of available properties.

Well Homes is a council initiative funded by the New Initiatives Fund which represents a new innovative approach to delivering services in Thurrock's private sector. Through this targeted intervention, vulnerable residents owning their own home or renting privately are eligible for a free assessment of their home to identify potential hazards impacting on their health and wellbeing. Working with Public Health, Well Homes aims to tackle health inequalities caused by poor quality housing conditions and improve access to a wide variety of services from health to employment services.

In the first six months of the project, we have contacted over 5,000 eligible residents and completed 225 Well Homes Surveys. Across both private rented properties and owner occupied, the surveys highlighted 64 Category 1 hazards that are now being resolved including inadequate heating and poor security. This has also resulted in the identification of 18 long term vacant properties to increase the supply of housing available.

We want to build on the success of our Well Homes pilot and continue to deliver this service to residents across the borough. We will work with our partners in health to identify funding to support the delivery of the service longer term, delivering savings to the NHS longer term.

There is a clear link between anti-social behaviour in the private rented sector and licencing of private landlords. We have invested in an evidence based review to support the development of a licencing scheme for private landlords and better manage issues faced by residents living in the private rented sector. We will strengthen this service offering further, using new powers under revised legislation to hold those responsible to account. This will form part of our new ASB Strategy that is being developed.

**Objective 1d: Ensure services represent value for money with high levels of customer satisfaction**

We continually review our services to ensure they represent value for money. This means making best use of our resources to deliver high quality services for our residents raising customer satisfaction.

Our staff are our greatest asset in improving customer satisfaction – they are on the front line delivering services to residents each day and supporting them to address their needs. We will invest further in our



staff to deliver training and development opportunities: providing clear career pathways for progression, hosting conferences to share best practice and build working relationships together with providing relevant training so staff are equipped with the skills to support our customers. We will review the scope of roles within the team clearly defining responsibilities to ensure that residents receive a joined up approach.

We have undergone extensive restructure as a department to focus our services around our customers. This has included standardising services to ensure that there is consistent quality across the borough and enhancing our monthly reporting to monitor our performance. We conduct customer satisfaction surveys on a quarterly basis to understand our own tenants' needs and take action on the feedback received. We will continue to collect information and, more importantly, use this to inform our decision making and shape services so that it delivers high levels of customer satisfaction.

Through our new transparent approach to customer contact, we have increased customer satisfaction in the first year by 9%. Our 'customer slip' tracks all correspondence with our residents to increase our accountability and ensure that the relevant action is taken in a timely manner.

We are developing community hubs to better support our communities and closing offices where we have identified that footfall was low. We are working with the community to set out the scope of the hubs to ensure it meets their needs whilst generating savings through the increased use of volunteers. South Ockendon represents the first community hub, delivering cost savings of £200,000 with the closure of the estate offices.

As part of the digital agenda, we will be moving more services online and using mobile technology to enable our staff to be out and about in the community. This will reduce the need for static offices, and we will put a strategy in place to close all estate offices within the next two years, representing significant cost savings.

With our new repairs partner, Mears, we are reshaping our repairs service in consultation with our residents to deliver value for money. Together with promoting the shared responsibility to our tenants in maintaining their property, we are shifting previously responsive services to batched planned works that maximise the use of resources. With the investment through our Transforming Homes programme, we expect to see a reduction in the number of associated repairs. We are moving to a more proactive evidence based approach to asset management with preventative and planned investment to reduce revenue expenditure on responsive repairs. We expect to see up to a 10% reduction in repairs per property as a result of our new approach, delivering savings of £265,850 per property contract each year.

We have placed requirements on contractors working with us to enhance the social value being delivered under our contracts from creating employment opportunities to renovating historical memorials. This provides additional benefits for our communities delivering value for money. Through re-procurement of our services, we will continue to ensure that we can deliver more for less. We have

made savings of £150,000 through reshaping the delivery of our hostels in partnership with Family Mosaic.

Ensuring we make best use of our limited resources can also present challenges – for example, investing in estate regeneration to improve our stock delivers improvements and savings longer term but for the residents it means waiting for these to be realised rather than seeing improvements in their own home sooner. We will ensure that we consult with all our tenants and wider resident groups on an ongoing basis, firstly to be transparent in our expenditure and investment decisions and secondly, to manage their expectations on our services and programmed works.

### Case Study

*A GROUP of residents will be benefiting from more secure homes thanks to funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Essex.*

*The Thurrock Well Homes Project was given a £6,000 grant via the New Initiatives Fund (NIF) which is cash made available by the PCC to encourage local organisations to develop ways to prevent and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.*

*Using the money, the Thurrock Well Homes Project has provided security improvements – such as fence repairs, upgrading external doors, fitting locks and security lights – to homes in the Tilbury, Grays Riverside, Thurrock Park, West Thurrock and South Stifford wards of the borough.*

*Lindsay Whitehouse, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex, visited the home of one couple – 86-year-old Alfred and 80-year-old Doreen Osborne – in Hobart Road, Tilbury to see first-hand the improvements the OPCC money has paid for. The couple have had a new front door, back door and security light installed and locks and fencing replaced.*

*Mr Whitehouse said: “The Well Homes Project is very worthwhile as such a large proportion of the population in Thurrock live in privately rented or owned homes and there is no doubt that people’s living conditions has a huge impact on their health, wellbeing and feelings of safety.*

*“There is nothing more important than feeling safe and secure in your own home and I am pleased that the New Initiatives Fund money has contributed towards this.”*

*Louisa Moss, Housing Enforcement Manager at Thurrock Council, said: “Under the new Care Act 2014, councils have a duty to promote well-being and this project is a good example of where we work with a lot of partners to do just that.”*

*Mr and Mrs Osborne said: “We are very pleased with all the help we have received and feel safer in our home. We did not realise such help was available, until the Well Homes advisor knocked on the door.”*

*Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities have a new duty to ensure homes – including privately rented or owned properties – are suitable and up to standard so as not to affect residents’ wellbeing.*

*In Thurrock, since June 2014, partnership work has been carried out to identify the most vulnerable residents supported by an assessment to identify risk, hazards and harm at their homes. Letters are then sent to each householder, followed up by a visit where serious hazards are identified as well as other needs such as gardening requirements, health checks and energy efficiency checks*

DRAFT

## Section 5: Core Priority 2 – In on the ground floor

We are changing the way we deliver our services, supporting residents early on to sustain their home and prevent them from reaching crisis – empowering them to be as independent as possible. Through our preventative approach, we can use our limited resources more effectively and enhance residents overall wellbeing. This is of particular importance in the current landscape where funding continues to diminish. Health and Employment is intrinsically linked to housing and we want to work in partnership to maximise the opportunities for our residents addressing social and health inequalities across the borough.

### **Our objectives are to:**

- **Empower residents to make informed choices with access to advice and support**
- **Support our residents through prevention and early intervention to sustain their homes and avoid crisis**
- **Support residents to maintain and improve their independence**
- **Create employment pathways and support residents to access these**

### **Key Measures of Success:**

- **50% reduction in number of residents contacting council through office or call centre**
- **Over x number of residents supported to sustain their tenancy**
- **Over x number of residents supported to remain in their own home**
- **Over 50 young people and long term unemployed supported to gain employment and access training**

### **Objective 2a: Empower residents to make informed choices with access to advice and support**

We want to provide residents with the information and tools to be empowered and help themselves. Our 'Digital First' approach will lead the way in achieving this. We are implementing a new housing management database which will enable residents to access a range of services online. We want to provide our tenants with easy online access to report repairs and pay their rent. We are currently trialling a new approach to advice through the use of an online service as the initial point of contact, whereby residents input their information and receive a bespoke action plan on their next steps. It is hoped that this will reduce demand on our call centres and offices whilst providing residents with the advice to support themselves. We are monitoring the impact of this service with a view to implementing this approach longer term.

Our call centre, established in 2014, now acts as a triage, signposting residents to the right information. But we want to go further. This new approach gives us the opportunity to redefine our relationship with residents: by empowering residents and reducing the demand on our call centres and office, our staff

can be embedded into the community to provide advice and support to those who need it most using mobile technology. Through increasing investment in technology, we will redesign our civic offices to provide residents with self-service points and access to information, identifying best practice from neighbouring boroughs.

A key part of empowering residents is educating and informing them on the options available to them. In response to the introduction of the Localism Act, we have made changes to our Allocations Policy to improve the choice and quality of homes and address the limited housing options available to residents.

With many young people facing difficult in accessing the housing market, there is an increasing pressure on the limited supply of social housing. Through targeted interventions, working with local schools and colleges, we will demonstrate that social housing is not the only option to young people. We want to support young people to understand the housing choices available to them and prepare for moving on from the family home.

The accessibility of advice and information to support people to remain as independent as possible is one of the key themes from the Care Act 2014. Local Area Co-ordinators act as a local point of contact enabling vulnerable people to access information and be empowered to take control to enhance their overall wellbeing. Currently there are local area co-ordinators in Grays Riverside, Purfleet, South Ockendon and Stanford le-Hope. We will work with our partners in Adult Social Care to increase the prevalence of these co-ordinators and better support our residents.

We are redefining our services with community hubs to enable communities to support one another with access to advice and support as part of a wider council initiative. Longer term, there will be 9 such hubs across the borough, working with the third sector and community to determine the scope of the services. Our first community hub in South Ockendon is staffed by over 20 local volunteers who we have provided with training to support residents with housing advice. The hub provides computers to help residents get online to access information and services.

**Objective 2b: Support our residents through prevention and early intervention to sustain their homes and avoid crisis**

Wherever possible, we want to prevent residents from reaching crisis through prevention and early intervention. For those residents that approach us in crisis, we will ensure that we respond promptly to enable them to integrate back into the community as soon as possible.

By understanding the pressures and challenges faced by our residents, we can shape our services to support them early on. This requires a proactive approach – assessing why people reach crisis and reviewing the impact of our services. We know that many residents become homeless as a result of termination of an assured shorthold tenancy together with families that are unable to or no longer willing to accommodate.

We shall work more closely with landlords in the private rented sector and start the conversation with young people early on, informing them of their housing options. For those that become homeless, we

will avoid bed and breakfasts and increase the use of hostels with the aim of providing more holistic support. With competition from London Boroughs using financial rewards to attract landlords, we need to explore the ability to offer our own incentives to private landlords to increase the provision of homes in the private rented sector that are available for the council to use. We will also explore the use of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) to support single households and young people and work with Youth Offending Team to identify vulnerable young people.

We have identified 45 properties from our own stock to provide quality temporary accommodation but will aim to limit the use and support people to sustainable housing alternatives. We will also ensure we have established pathways to signpost those that are non-statutory homeless.

Supporting residents across all tenures that are facing financial difficulties is a key priority, particularly with the impact of the Welfare Reforms and introduction of Universal Credit. Local Housing Allowance is not keeping pace with rising rents and we need to ensure services are in place to support people to manage their finances.

We currently provide a three tier approach to financial support, supporting people at every stage to be financially included. Our Welfare Reforms Assistant provides initial advice to our tenants. We have taken a proactive approach, identifying those at risk from the Welfare Reforms, supporting 105 households to downsize. Our Financial Inclusion Officer provides more tailored benefit advice support, working in the community to engage with both our tenants and those renting in the private sector. This has resulted in tenants securing on average £209 in discretionary housing payments.

For those facing crisis, we deliver a more intensive support in partnership with Family Mosaic. Where tenants have been issued with a Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP), we work with them to understand their individual needs to prevent eviction wherever possible. We want to expand on these services further, linking in with employment services to provide a joined up approach.

Credit Unions also play a vital role in supporting financial inclusion and we will look to work more closely to enable residents to access a range of affordable financial products and support.

For owner occupiers experiencing significant difficulties in keeping up with their mortgage repayments and at risk of becoming homeless, we will develop a new mortgage rescue scheme to support them to stay in their home.

We are taking a continuous improvement approach to our services, as part of The National Practitioner Support Service (NPSS) framework: a government led initiative to improve front line housing services with early intervention and prevention. We have currently working towards the Gold Standard Challenge following a successful peer review. There are ten commitments, for which we have developed an action plan on how we will achieve these over the next year. A new Homelessness strategy will support the progress towards the Gold Standard, setting out our approach to supporting those who are, or at risk of becoming, homeless.

A growing area of concern is residents with leave to remain but no recourse to public funds. This represents a significant challenge for the council as they are not entitled to benefits to support them to pay for accommodation and living expenses. We will set up a working group to explore the extent of this issue across the borough and identify how we can best support these residents.

Where enforcement action is required, we will strengthen our approach to anti-social behaviour, tenancy fraud and rogue landlords, making example cases to deter others.

### **Objective 2c: Support residents to maintain and improve their independence**

Supporting people to remain independent in their own homes enhances the wellbeing of our residents and reduces demand on wider services.

Following the establishment of Thurrock's Health and Wellbeing Board, the council introduced our programme, 'Building Positive Futures' which sets out the aims of the Board:

- Better health and wellbeing – helping people stay healthy and independent
- Improved Housing and Neighbourhoods – to give people more and better choice over how and where they live as they grow old
- Stronger local networks – to create more hospitable, age-friendly communities

The focus is on enabling people to live independent lives in their own homes through wellbeing services, rather than crisis responses. A critical part of this change is the co-ordination of adult social care and health with housing. Only by working together can we achieve truly personalised services that support independence. We want to expand our work with health services further, for example, linking in with GPs to increase referrals to our Well Homes projects where residents have health complaints as a result of their living conditions. We want to understand the health of our residents to better target services and maximise their wellbeing.

Our Sheltered Housing service has been revised to offer a consistent approach that delivers support to enhance their independence. Our aim is to create a pro-active service which caters for the needs of the residents and empowers them to be independent for longer, with choice over how they are supported. By understanding individual health concerns and needs, our officers can work more closely to support our older residents and provide services to address their health priorities. Our Health Eating vitality is one such example that is a health and weight management project delivered in partnership with the NHS. It promotes health eating and exercise, monitoring weight and blood pressure over a 12 week period. The pilot was a great success with residents losing a total of 6 stone in the 12 weeks. We are continuing to run classes and identified the addition of chair exercise classes to increase fitness amongst residents. We now plan to roll this out to other schemes, tailoring the project to meet specific resident's needs.

We want to not only support older people in our sheltered housing accommodation but those in the wider community using our schemes as hubs to resource the activity. Our aim is to roll out our sheltered

housing service to those in general needs accommodation and the private sector, to improve health outcomes for all, increasing independence.

Dementia is a growing concern among older people and despite Thurrock having below average number of sufferers, the hospital admission rates indicates further support is needed early on. We have trained all our staff on dementia and will continue to provide more specific training to identify and support residents at the onset. Many of our staff are also Dementia Friends learning how to better to support those experiencing dementia and raising awareness.

Social inclusion is a key part of remaining independent and we look to create opportunities for residents to engage with the local community. Our 'All Our Yesteryears' event raises the profile of our sheltered housing and encourages people to come along and find out more. The event is themed each year by the residents who choose a decade, this theme follows through to the decoration of the hall, band and promotion, with residents dressing up in the era depicted. Over 350 people attend each year and it provides the opportunity for residents to get together in a safe and supportive environment.

Installation of computers at our schemes also increases social and digital inclusion, assisting residents to contact family and friends via the internet with the use of easy learning tools, set up on the computer. Through such initiatives together with Community Engagement Days and partnership working, we can promote wider health and wellbeing outcomes for residents.

We provide aids and adaptations through a contractor to support disabled and older people to remain at home, identifying this as part of our Transforming Homes programme where possible.

Through the use of our own stock and the development of new housing, we will ensure residents with learning disabilities and mental ill health are supported to access accommodation. This will enable a distinction between the landlord and care function increasing choice for the residents to personalise their care and support. We will work with adult social care to identify community based solutions and support people to transition into independent living, moving away from residential care. We anticipate a rise in the number of people with Autism Spectrum Condition and will work with partners to ensure we can provide suitable accommodation. All our supported accommodation that we deliver will meet REACH standards. We will also work in partnership with Thurrock Coalition to engage with understand the needs of disabled people and older people together with their families and carers.

The introduction of our Asset Based Community Development initiative brings communities to together to understand their 'community assets', connecting local people with informal associations around common interests and concerns. This includes recognising the skills and connections of local residents and the power of local associations and clubs to the heritage and culture of the local community. Together with Local Area Co-ordinators, residents can access more support locally and rely on one another to remain part of the community.

Housing plays an important role in ensuring the safety of our most vulnerable residents. We are part of the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) which works with local agencies to safeguard children and



have invested in a Housing Domestic Abuse Officer. We want to embed safeguarding further into our approach to Anti-Social Behaviour to ensure that residents are protected in their local community.

In our Sheltered Housing schemes, we facilitate coffee mornings which provides an informal forum to discuss signs of abuse and who to raise any safeguarding concerns to. In conjunction with the community safety partnership board, we have purchase a wide range of home security equipment, which is offered free of charge to residents to increase their safety and security.

Our Sanctuary Scheme which is now delivered in house provides those at risk of violence to feel safe in their own home with the installation of security measures. This also provides the opportunity for referral onto our Well Homes initiative to identify further enhancements to properties to reduce housing hazards.

#### Case Study:

##### *Sports for All*

*This bi-monthly project was set up with our local disabilities coalition, the local labour councillor and sheltered housing service with its residents. We have some very active residents at our schemes playing indoor bowls, darts and table tennis on a regular basis who were asked if they would like to work with people with disabilities to play these different sports. The residents have shared their knowledge in darts, indoor bowls and table tennis and the disabled groups have shared their knowledge in indoor cricket and soft archery. The project engages different age groups and abilities to participate in sporting activities to maintain a level of fitness.*

#### **Objective 2d: Create employment pathways and support residents to access these**

Housing can create and improve employment opportunities for our residents. With over 10,000 homes in the borough, we are in a unique position to engage with tenants furthest from the labour market and support them to find sustainable employment. Youth and long term unemployment is high within areas of Thurrock and through our support and investment, we can help our residents to access employment and training opportunities.

We have already delivered a number of employment programmes working with partners. We jointly funded a scheme with the Princes Trust to support 18 – 25 year old NEETS back into work through training, employment skills and work experience. 22 young people completed the programme with 10 moving into employment or training.

Through our contractors and procurement processes, we are able to place requirements for those delivering services with us to create employment pathways for local people. This has enabled us to support 60 previous NEETS or long term unemployed residents with employment training of which 40 moved into jobs or training.

Our significant investment in estate regeneration and the transforming homes programme provides a real opportunity for local people to access apprenticeships and boost local businesses. 25 apprenticeships have been created across all programmes with 14 gaining permanent employment. A further 83 local people have been employed across our contracts. We are working with our partners in regeneration to maximise employment opportunities and ensure first refusal to those tenants living on the estate. We have also created apprenticeship in house, including 10 caretaker apprentices that are working across our stock.

Supporting and signposting residents to access employment and training support is also fundamental to our approach, from those in the private sector through our Well Homes initiative or our own tenants. We want to enhance our relationship with the Department for Work and Pensions to increase the employment support that we can offer. We are working together to target the most vulnerable with DWP co-located in our civic office and plan to expand on this.

We also create opportunities to support young and ex-offenders to move into employment including renovating empty homes and decorating communal facilities used by our sheltered housing residents. By working with schools and private businesses, we can improve access to employment training, through targeted intervention.

### Case Study:

*Seventeen year old Ian Venn from Stanford-le-Hope, is currently in the first year of his apprenticeship with Keepmoat. Ian, who attended Sinclair School, is currently working towards an NVQ Level 2 in Maintenance Construction.*

*Ian said: "I am thoroughly enjoying my work. I am learning lots and the people who I work with are really supportive. I have had so much experience already. I have worked in Grays, Tilbury and Ockenden doing painting, joinery, plumbing, plastering and carpentry. I really enjoy learning and experiencing multi-trades, although my ambition is to eventually specialise in plumbing."*

*Senior Contact Manager, Lee Anderson, commented: "Ian has really progressed well since joining us in the summer and is a real asset to the team in Thurrock. He is highly regarded by his colleagues, and his 'can do' attitude and eagerness to learn will ensure that he completes a successful apprenticeship".*

## Section Six: Core Priority 3 – Looking Ahead

We need to ensure that our communities have access to a range of housing options both now and in the future. Increasing the supply of housing is central to this – and with the demise of government funding together with the current housing landscape in Thurrock – we need to find innovative new approaches, working across both the public and private sector to tackle this growing issue.

**Our objectives are to:**

- **Boost the housing market delivering new affordable homes to meet local need**
- **Increase housing supply, working collaboratively with the private sector**
- **Enhance local communities through estate regeneration**
- **Ensure the sustainability of our homes to meet residents' needs now and in the future**

**Key Measures of Success:**

- **1,000 new affordable homes delivered over the next five years**
- **X number of new homes delivered through private sector**
- **Regeneration of the Garrison Estate**
- **100% of new homes built to London Design Standards**

**Objective: Boost the housing market delivering new affordable homes to meet local need**

Through our HRA business plan, we have the resources to not only improve our own stock but deliver much needed housing for the borough. We will deliver 1,000 affordable homes over the life of this strategy.

We have been successful in securing just under £6m of funding through HCA Funding programme which will deliver 212 new homes. In addition, we have been able to increase our HRA borrowing cap by £11.58m through the HRA extra borrowing programme, delivering an additional 193 homes.

Affordability is a significant issue for residents in the borough, in particular for young people, moving into their own accommodation. We want to ensure that our young people can find suitable accommodation and remain in the local area.

We want to kick start the market and support first time buyers and young people to access affordable housing in Thurrock. We have established a wholly owned housing company, Gloriana Thurrock Limited to achieve just this and deliver affordable housing to rent and for sale. Gloriana represents an exciting new venture for the council and a bold approach to tackling housing supply. We will unlock sites and lead the way in house building. Through our allocations policy, we will ensure that the new homes are prioritised for local people, supporting young people to access the housing market. We will explore new financial models including 'Rent to Buy' to support those that wish to move onto the property ladder.

For Tilbury and the surrounding areas where there are high levels of youth unemployment, the transition for young people to independent living is that much harder. For vulnerable young people at risk of becoming homeless, we need to intervene early on to prevent further crisis. Only by equipping these young people with the skills to live independently can we support them to integrate into the local community. Foyers present the opportunity to empower young people to access employment and training opportunities while providing them with the life skills to live independently. We will build a Foyer for young people in West Thurrock to give them the best start in their adult life. We have secured funding as part of the Extra HRA Borrowing Programme to provide a 30 unit scheme and will identify a Registered Provider partner to deliver this with us.

We are currently working with adult social care to review the provision of extra care housing in the borough as a means to support older people and those with learning disabilities. This includes an extra care scheme for older people with dementia in West Thurrock and one for residents with learning disabilities. Subject to the findings from the review, we will then identify extra care schemes across the borough to meet residents' needs.

**Objective: Increase housing supply, working collaboratively with the private sector**

We know we can't deliver all the housing that is needed alone. We need to work with the private sector to unlock sites with planning permission to increase housing supply. Gloriana is designed to show what can be achieved in Thurrock, attracting developers into the area, and raising land values. We want to lay the foundations for a new wave of housebuilding that is ultimately driven by our partners including Registered Providers and private developers. Thurrock has a significant number of unimplemented planning permissions which represents new homes for local people to reduce the gap between supply and demand. We will work with the private sector to identify the land available for development, maximising opportunities for new affordable housing in the borough.

We want to develop key strategic relationships with partners to take this forward. We will identify a Registered Provider partner to support our aim to increase housing provision and engage with all local RPs through regular forums. We will increase our profile as a borough through participating in external forums, engaging with private sector partners at a strategic level.

By working with private sector developers, we can access funding to deliver both new homes and regenerate existing estates to the benefit of our residents. We have applied for Housing Zone status in Thurrock through a new government initiative to create 30 housing zones on brownfield sites nationwide. If successful, we will need to identify a developer partner to access funding through this programme.

Thurrock is a key component of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Growth Deal and Economic Plan. It supports our 'Big Skies, Big Thinking' initiative: an integrated approach connecting housing, transport, planning and landscape to deliver growth for the borough, taking a holistic view of Thurrock. Through working with businesses and developers, we can increase economic growth in the borough, driving new housing and raising land values for residential development.

**Objective: Enhance local communities through estate regeneration**

Estate regeneration provides the opportunity to enhance estates, address issues of health inequalities and deprivation whilst increasing the provision of housing on site. The council has identified key estates that require significant investment over that of the Transforming Homes Programme, which would benefit from wider regeneration delivering better quality housing for existing tenants and new homes.

Seabrook Rise is the first estate in our borough that we have developed a wholesale regeneration plan. Tenant consultation throughout the process is critical to managing expectations and delivering real change for the local community that is resident led. Estate surgeries provides residents with the opportunity to discuss their concerns and issues. To ensure that residents are represented throughout the works, we have also set up a Resident Steering Group to review new housing development, improvements on the estate, strategies for maximising employment and training opportunities. We will work with regeneration to ensure our works support the wider South Grays masterplanning. Homes in the first phase of the estate have already benefitted from our Transforming Homes Programme and we are addressing other issues now that are of concern to residents and impact on the wider regeneration, for example, parking.

The Garrison estate represents a unique opportunity with the wider regeneration of the Purfleet to work with a private sector partner and deliver improvements in the local area. We have applied for funding through the Estate Regeneration fund to support the works and will work closely with regeneration and Purfleet Centre Regeneration Ltd (PCRL) to deliver this significant project. The regeneration will increase accessibility to the town centre and increase connectivity, re-connect the estate with the river and local historical monuments and provide more diverse commercial and community space. We will be able to offer a range of tenure choice for residents on the estate and improve the quality of existing housing.

We want to develop a strategy to regenerate and improve all council estates in Thurrock, most significantly the Flowers estate in South Ockendon and the Broadway estate in Tilbury in the next five years. However, we recognise that this requires significant resources and investment and only by working together with a regeneration partner can we enhance our existing communities and create new housing. Through the HCA Delivery Partner Panel, we will identify a regeneration partner to deliver the much needed estate improvements in partnership with the council.

**Objective: Ensure the sustainability of our homes to meet residents' needs now and in the future**

We need to make sure that our homes – new and existing – are suitable for our residents both now and in the future, supporting the local environment and sustainable living.

We will build all new homes to London Design Standards, striving to deliver carbon neutral homes in line with government targets. We will explore innovative new housing methods and materials to reduce our impact on the environment including system built and self-build housing. We will build 100% of our new schemes on brownfield sites, working with the local landscape, making best use of river views and conserving Thurrock's abundance of wildlife.

We will build adaptable homes that can support people now and in the future. Following a government review by 'Housing Our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation' (HAPPI), it was identified that to meet the needs and aspirations of an ageing population required a holistic approach from planning to construction. It covers ten key design elements with a focus on making best use of the space in the home. This included shared spaces and 'hubs', together with adaptability and 'care ready' designs. We have developed one scheme using this standard and have secured funding to deliver a second. We will review the scope to utilise this standard on generic schemes to deliver housing that is fit for the future.

Our housing can also influence sustainable living through the development of community gardens and allotments. By 2018, the council has the ambition for 50% of residents to grow their own vegetables and provide all schools with regular access to allotments and gardens. We have already provided vegetable gardens in three of our sheltered housing schemes to encourage sustainable living and healthy eating. We will develop a green space strategy to identify opportunities to maximise outdoor space to the benefit of our residents from community gardens to vegetable patches.

We will continue to assess our housing stock to ensure that it meets need, including stock rationalisation. In our sheltered housing schemes, we identified properties that were not fit for purpose due to their accessibility and have begun a programme of decommissioning schemes over the next five years. We will replace any units that are removed with suitable accommodation and support those that wish to move on from the scheme. One site has already provided the opportunity to provide shared living for those with learning disabilities who can more easily access the properties.

We will enhance our existing stock, making use of the Green Deal and other external funding streams, to improve the energy efficiency of our homes. This will be delivered in conjunction with educating our tenants on how to live more sustainably to reduce our impact on the environment. Residents will be less at risk from fuel poverty and through changing behaviour reduce energy consumption and save money.

Understanding our residents' needs is crucial to be able to predict future demand. We will work closely with individual communities to understand the housing demand and undertake detailed assessment of housing need. WE will increase the engagement with our Gypsy and Traveller community to identify the services and homes they need, and taking enforcement action where needed.

# Section Seven: How will we get there?

## How we will achieve the Strategy?

We have developed a 30 year HRA business plan to identify resources needed to improve our existing stock and deliver much needed housing. Through robust financial management, we will ensure that the housing objectives are appropriately resourced. We will endeavour to access funding, both from central government and by working in partnership with the third sector and private business, to support our objectives.

## How will we know we are achieving?

This Strategy is the responsibility of the Director of Housing. Our Action Plan will provide a mechanism to monitor the Strategy on a monthly basis internally to ensure we are delivering against the objectives. We will provide quarterly updates to our Members on progress against the Strategy and produce an annual report on success to date. This will be made available to all our stakeholders to ensure accountability and transparency.

We will monitor our housing performance on a monthly basis to ensure we are delivering against our key performance indicators. In addition, we have highlighted a number of high level indicators over the life of this Strategy to report against each objective as demonstrated below. We will use this to report on the progress of the overall Strategy:

	Objective	KPI
Raising the Bar	Deliver tailored and needs led services to all residents	20% increase in number of residents engaged through variety of channels
	Provide high quality council housing	100% of homes surveyed and works completed on transforming homes programme
	Deliver value for money with high levels of customer satisfaction	Increase customer satisfaction to 80%
	Enhance the quality of housing in the private sector	20% increase in engagement with private landlords
In on the Ground Floor	Empower residents to make informed choices with access to advice and support	50% reduction in number of residents contacting council through office or call centre
	Support our residents through prevention and early intervention to sustain their homes and avoid crisis	Over x number of residents supported to sustain their tenancy
	Support residents to maintain and improve	Over x number of residents supported to remain

	their independence	in their own home
	Create employment pathways and support residents to access these	Over 50 young people and long term unemployed supported to gain employment and access training
Looking Ahead	Boost the housing market delivering new affordable homes to meet local need	1,000 new affordable homes delivered over the next five years
	Increase housing supply, working collaboratively with the private sector	X number of new homes delivered through private sector
	Enhance local communities through estate regeneration	Regeneration of the Garrison Estate, Flowers Estate and Broadway Estate
	Ensure the sustainability of our homes to meet residents' needs now and in the future	100% of new homes built to London Design Standards

DRAFT



## Section Eight – Appendix 1 Action Plan for Housing Strategy

	Objective	Action	Expected Outcome	Measurement Criteria	Target Date	Lead
Raising the Bar Page 63	Deliver tailored and needs led services to all residents	Increase the ways residents can engage with the council with the use of Facebook, twitter, email and website with a structured approach including targeting specific communities.	Thurrock tenants have the opportunity to influence policy and strategy through quarterly forums	20% increase in the number of tenants across sheltered, general needs, leasehold engaged.	March 2020	
		Continue to deliver tailored local support through Neighbourhood Action Plans	Residents influence the improvements in the local area that are of concern to them.	Improvements to all estates on annual basis. % of residents satisfied with local area.	March 2020	
		Continue to work with partners in health to deliver services to meet residents needs	Residents benefit from a joined up service	Number of residents supported by LAC	March 2020	
	Provide high quality council housing	Assess all council homes and deliver improvements as per the Transforming Homes Programme	Residents live in high quality social housing	100% of properties assessed and improved. Increase in SAP rating.	March 2020	
		Educate and support residents to take responsibility for low level repairs, with extra support for the most vulnerable.	Resources maximised and residents take shared responsibility for maintaining property	2.5 repairs per property	March 2018	

Enhance the quality of housing in the private sector	Establish a private sector landlord forum on a regular basis and support landlords to raise standards	Increase standards and supply of homes in PRS	Number of landlords engaged.	March 2016	
	Roll out Well Homes initiative to ensure 100% of vulnerable people live in decent homes in private sector	100% of vulnerable people live in decent homes in private sector	Number of Well Homes visits per year. % of residents satisfied with quality of living.	March 2018	
	Develop licencing scheme for landlords to better manage the private rented sector	Residents live in safe and secure accommodation in the PRS	% of landlords accredited	March 2016	
Deliver value for money with high levels of customer satisfaction	Train and educate our staff with clear development and progression opportunities within Housing including senior roles, sharing best practice through conferences and workshops.	Staff have development opportunities and there is succession planning	% employee satisfaction within housing	March 2017	
	Monitor our performance, complaints, surveys and analyse information to inform our service provision	Services are responsive to customer needs	Increase customer satisfaction to 80%	March 2020	
	Deliver a proactive and evidence based approach to repairs and maintenance to reduce the need for ongoing responsive repairs	Reduce responsive repairs	10% reduction in repairs per property	March 2020	

		Develop strategy to close all estate offices across the borough	Staff are embedded into the local community	All estate offices closed	March 2017	
		Maximise benefits to community through social requirements when procuring services, procuring contracts to ensure they represent value for money	All providers/contractors deliver social benefits to community.	£x of additional social value delivered through contracts. £x savings in re-tendering services.	March 2020	
In on the Ground Floor Page 65	Empower residents to make informed choices with access to advice and support	Roll out of digital agenda providing residents with a range of online tools for advice and action	Residents are able to access services online reducing demand on resources	Installation of online system for all residents	March 2016	
		Increase investment in mobile technology to enable staff to go out in the community and explore potential to redesign the civic offices to accommodate new approach with automatic pay points and use of ICT.	Residents are able to access services more easily online reducing demand on resources	100% of frontline staff equipped with mobile technology. Redesign of civic offices.	March 2020	
		Educate young people on housing options through target interventions in schools and colleges	Young people understand housing options available, reducing demand on social housing	Number of school interventions per annum.	March 2018	

		Support the council with the development of 9 community hubs across the borough, providing training to volunteers on housing advice	Residents can access advice and support in the local community	9 hubs established across Thurrock	March 2020	
Support our residents through prevention and early intervention to sustain their homes and avoid crisis		Investigate the scope to provide incentives to private sector landlords to increase engagement and supply of homes for council to discharge homelessness duty	Increase the number of properties available to the council in the PRS	Number of homeless households supported into PRS	March 2018	
		Work collaboratively with credit unions to support residents at risk of financial inclusion and those affected by universal credit	Residents have access to affordable financial products and advice	Strategic relationship with credit union. Number of residents referred to credit union.	March 2018	
		Develop a mortgage rescue offer to support people to enable to remain in their own home	Prevent homelessness for those unable to afford mortgage repayments	Number of residents prevented from becoming homeless through mortgage rescue	March 2018	
		Achieve the Gold Standard Challenge and develop new homelessness strategy	Continual improvement of frontline services	Gold Standard awarded	March 2016	
		Establish a working group to identify the support available for those with leave to remain that cannot access financial support	Residents with leave to remain are supported and impact assessed by council	Number of residents with leave to remain supported	March 2017	

		Strengthen our approach to enforcement with a new ASB strategy and team covering tenancy fraud, ASB and CCTV.	Residents understand action will be taken in extreme cases	ASB Strategy. Enforcement case examples publicised.	March 2016	
Page 67	Support residents to maintain and improve their independence	Work more closely with partners in health linking in with GPs and understanding the health of our residents to inform our services	Residents benefit from holistic approach maximising health outcomes	% of residents supported to improve health	March 2020	
		Roll out of Sheltered Housing model and services to deliver wider support to those in private sector and general needs	Older people supported to remain independent	Number of older people supported in private sector and general needs	March 2018	
		Ensure specialist support for older people with dementia through training and awareness building	Older people are supported to access local services to manage their condition	Number of dementia friends. Decrease in hospital admissions through dementia.	March 2018	
		Support those with mental health needs, autism and learning disabilities through working in partnership with Adult Social Care and identify suitable accommodation and support services meeting REACH standards.	Residents are supported to remain as independent as possible and part of the community	% of residents with MH, LD, ASC in suitable accommodation	March 2020	
		Embed safeguarding into housing team further through appointing champions, providing training	Vulnerable residents are safeguarded through increased staff awareness	100% staff trained on safeguarding. Safeguarding champions identified.	March 2016	

Looking Ahead Page 68	Create employment pathways and support residents to access these	Ensure additional social value is delivered in procurement with offers of apprenticeships and local labour and recruit in house	Local residents access employment opportunities	10 apprenticeships per year through contracts and in house services	March 2020	
		Provide opportunities for local residents through estate regeneration, working with partners to target interventions	Local residents access employment opportunities on their estate	10% of local residents on estates supported into employment	March 2020	
		Enhance relationships including DWP and private sector to target residents and support to find employment. Increase employment support through co-location of DWP in offices.	Targeted interventions working in partnership for residents	No of residents supported to access employment support through partners	March 2018	
	Boost the housing market delivering new affordable homes to meet local need	Deliver 1,000 affordable homes through Gloriana Thurrock Limited and funding secured prioritising local people	Residents access affordable homes for rent and sale	1,000 new affordable homes	March 2020	
		Develop housing incentives to support young people onto the property ladder with 'Rent to Buy' scheme	Young people and first time buyers can access housing market	Number of residents supported with Rent to Buy Scheme	March 2020	
		Develop a foyer in partnership with a RP to support vulnerable young people to access employment opportunities and move on to independent living	Vulnerable young people supported to move onto independent living	Development of Foyer with 90% of young people moving onto independent living in 2 years	March 2019	

		Review provision of extra care housing and schemes for older people and vulnerable residents in the borough in conjunction with adult social care	Adequate housing options for older people and vulnerable residents	Viability of Extra Care Schemes	March 2017	
Increase housing supply, working collaboratively with the private sector		Identify sites that are suitable for development and have planning permission working with developers to bring sites forward	Developers invest in new housing in the borough for residents, raising land values	% of sites with planning started on site	March 2020	
		Establish relationship with key Registered Providers to deliver additional affordable housing and engage at a strategic level	Increase affordable housing working with RPs	Registered Provider partner secured	March 2020	
		Identify developer partner to support Housing Zone status and access additional funding	Increase supply of homes with private developer	Developer Partner secured	March 2017	
Enhance local communities through estate regeneration		Complete estate regeneration of Seabrook Rise estate in line with the wider South Grays masterplanning	Residents have improved housing and new housing is created	Completed regeneration of estate % of residents satisfied with estate	March 2020	
		Work with our partners to develop Garrison estate as part of the wider Purfleet Town Centre Regeneration	Residents have access to a range of housing across tenures on the estate	Completed regeneration of estate, % of residents satisfied with estate	March 2020	

Ensure the sustainability of our homes to meet residents needs now and in the future	Identify a regeneration partner through the HCA DPP to enable the regeneration of further developments including Flowers and Broadway	Strategy for delivering regeneration across our estates to the benefit of residents	Regeneration partner and strategy in place for regeneration of all estates	March 2020	
	Build all new homes to London Design Standards reviewing new methods of construction and materials	Homes are built to a high standard that minimise impact to environment	100% homes built to London Design Standards	March 2020	
	100% of new housing is developed on brownfield sites working to enhance access to river	Greenbelt is conserved and make best use of existing land	100% of developments built on brownfield sites	March 2020	
	Identify schemes to build homes to HAPPI standard to ensure they remain accessible for vulnerable residents	Vulnerable residents are able remain independent in own home	No of units built to HAPPI Standard	March 2020	
	Identify green spaces across the borough and develop a Green Space Strategy to maximise open spaces creating opportunities for community gardens, allotments and vegetable patches	Residents have access to outside space	Green space strategy devised	March 2018	
	Access funding through the Green Deal to retrofit homes and increase SAP rating in conjunction with educating tenants	Residents benefit from energy efficient homes and reduce impact on environment	Average SAP rating increased to 70. 100% tenants educated on sustainable living.	March 2020	



		Conduct stock rationalisation and decommission units that are not fit for purpose	Homes are fit for purpose	Complete review of housing stock and decommission identified sheltered housing	March 2020	
--	--	---	---------------------------	--	------------	--

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

# Evidence Base

---

Thurrock Council Housing Strategy

Draft V2 – Updated January 2015

DRAFT

## CONTENTS

<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. POPULATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Change in Population .....	5
1.2 Age of Population .....	6
1.3 Population Projections .....	8
1.4 Ethnicity .....	9
1.5 Religion .....	10
1.6 Migration .....	10
1.7 Armed Forces.....	11
<b>2. EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Labour Supply .....	12
2.2 Employment by Occupation .....	15
2.3 Enterprises and Local Units .....	16
2.4 Earnings by Residence .....	17
2.5 Qualifications.....	17
2.6 GCSE Attainment .....	18
2.7 Key Benefit Claimants.....	18
<b>3. HEALTH .....</b>	<b>21</b>
3.1 General Health.....	22
3.2 Long Term Health Conditions and Disabilities.....	23
3.3 Life Expectancy and Causes of Death .....	25
3.4 Obesity.....	25
3.4.1 Child Obesity .....	25
3.4.2 Adult Obesity.....	26
3.5 Lifestyle.....	27
<b>4. DEPRIVATION .....</b>	<b>28</b>
4.1 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).....	28
4.2 Income Deprivation Map.....	30
4.3 Household Income.....	30
4.4 Health and Wellbeing Indicators .....	31
<b>CURRENT HOUSING STOCK.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>5. EXISTING HOUSING STOCK.....</b>	<b>33</b>
5.1 Household Composition .....	33
5.2 Accommodation Type.....	34
5.3 Local Authority Dwelling Stock.....	34

5.4	Local Authority Dwelling Stock Condition .....	36
5.5	Occupancy Rating .....	36
<b>6.</b>	<b>TENURE .....</b>	<b>37</b>
6.1	Home Ownership.....	37
6.2	Empty Homes .....	39
6.3	Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).....	39
	<b>CURRENT HOUSING MARKET.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>HOUSING SUPPLY .....</b>	<b>40</b>
7.1	Supply of New Homes .....	40
7.1.1	Dwelling Started and Completed .....	40
7.1.2	Net Additional Dwellings.....	41
7.1.3	Net Affordable Housing Completions .....	41
7.1.4	Planning Decisions.....	42
7.2	Private Rented Sector.....	42
7.3	Housing Waiting List .....	43
7.4	Homelessness.....	44
7.4.1	Homeless Acceptances.....	44
7.4.2	Homeless Causes.....	45
7.4.3	Homeless Outcomes .....	45
7.4.4	Households in Temporary Accommodation.....	46
<b>8.</b>	<b>AFFORDABILITY .....</b>	<b>47</b>
8.1	Average House Prices .....	47
8.2	Rents.....	48
8.2.1	Private Sector Rents .....	48
8.2.2	Social Housing Rents .....	50
8.3	Income and Benefits.....	50
8.3.1	Income to House Price .....	50
8.3.2	Council tax and housing benefit claimants .....	51
<b>9.</b>	<b>RIGHT TO BUY.....</b>	<b>52</b>
	<b>HOUSING NEED AND DELIVERY.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>HOUSING NEED .....</b>	<b>53</b>
10.1	Specialist Housing.....	54
10.2	Gypsy and Traveller .....	54

## Highlights

### Growing Families

Thurrock has a relatively young population, growing by 10% to 2011, of which a large proportion comprise couples and lone parents with dependent children, indicating a need for family housing in the borough. Across all tenures, 42% of all housing required is estimated to be three bedroom homes.

### Supporting Young People

Further support is required for young people, particularly in the most deprived wards with high levels of child poverty and youth unemployment. These factors significantly impact the longer term health and wellbeing of the young person and interventions at school age can help to mitigate this. There is a need for more affordable accommodation for young people to enable them to move on from the family home and prevent homelessness.

### Affordability

Affordability is a key issue, with high private sector rents and numbers claiming housing benefit together with above average lower quartile earnings to house prices. For affordable housing, there is a growing demand for one bedroom properties reflected in the housing waiting list demand. It is estimated that 43% of affordable housing requirements are one bedroom properties.

### Housing Supply

20,600 new homes are required by 2031. Housing starts have been slow in recent years and the private rented sector has experienced significant growth. Low land values have acted as a barrier to attracting private development in the borough.

### Maximising Health, Wellbeing and Employment Outcomes

Thurrock suffers from high unemployment above the regional and national average and low skill levels, with 11.4% of the population having no qualifications. With the large number of families and lone parents in Thurrock, childcare is likely to be a key barrier to employment. There are high levels of child and adult obesity, indicating increased levels of health problems in future years. Mortality rates for smoking are also above average. There is a continued need to work with partners in health to tackle the health inequalities experienced.

### Preventative and Targeted Approach

There is a need for targeted intervention at a ward level to recognise the significant variances locally where the most deprived wards experience poorer health, high levels of unemployment and lower household income. Prevention of homelessness has increased versus relief in recent years, showing the proactive approach taken by Thurrock. Thurrock suffers from high levels of violent crime, which have the potential to lead to increased numbers becoming homeless and those entering crisis.

### Supporting Older People

The older population is below national averages currently but is projected to grow significantly to 17.5% of the overall population by 2031. A key priority will be supporting those with dementia. We have a below average number of those with mental health and/or a learning disability. We need to ensure that vulnerable people are supported to be as independent as possible.

## Socio-Economic Context

### 1. Population

#### 1.1 Change in Population

The population of Thurrock has increased by over 10% in the ten years to 2011, which is above average for East of England and England, demonstrating the significant growth in the borough. This is also the largest increase seen in the Thames Gateway South Essex subregion.

Area	2001	2011	Change 2001 to 2011	Percentage Change 2001 to 2011
Thurrock	143,128	157,705	14,577	10.18%
East of England	5,388,140	5,846,965	458,825	8.52%
England	49,138,831	53,012,456	3,873,625	7.88%

Figure 1 – Change in Population from 2001 to 2011, Source: Census 2001 and 2011, Office for National Statistics

This can be further analysed at a ward level to show the significant local variances in the population. South Chafford experienced the largest growth in population from just 2,968 in 2001 to 7,384 by 2011 representing a 149% increase. The Homesteads and Corringham and Fobbing experienced slight decreases in population at 6% and 4% respectively.

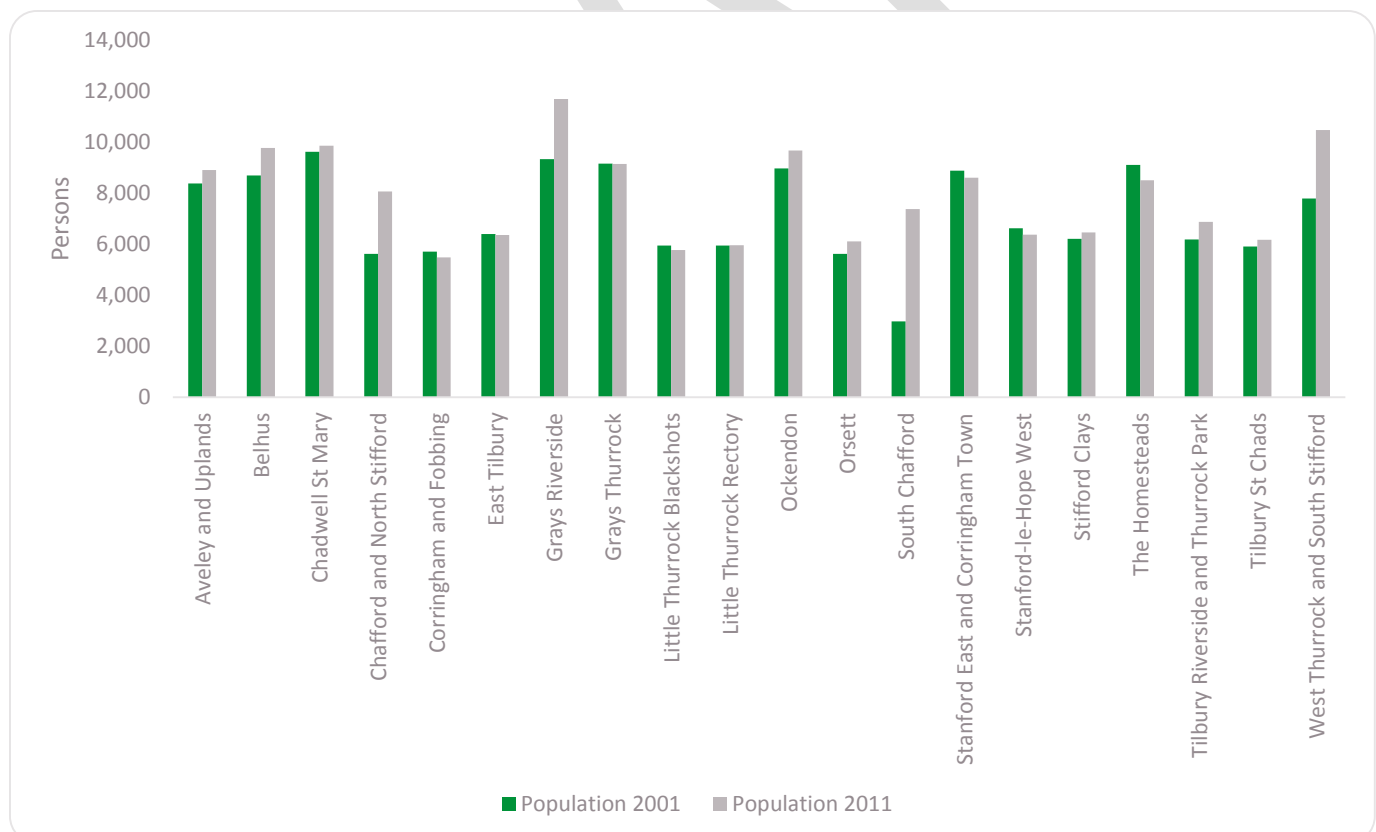


Figure 2 – Ward Population Change from 2001 to 2011, Source: Census 2001 and 2011, Office for National Statistics

In the same period, the number of households increased by 6.6% to 62,353. The total number of households per ward is shown in Figure 3 with Grays Riverside representing the greatest number at 4,914 and Cobbingham and Fobbing the smallest with 2,240 households. South Chafford, which saw the greatest increase in population, had 2,680 households as of 2011.

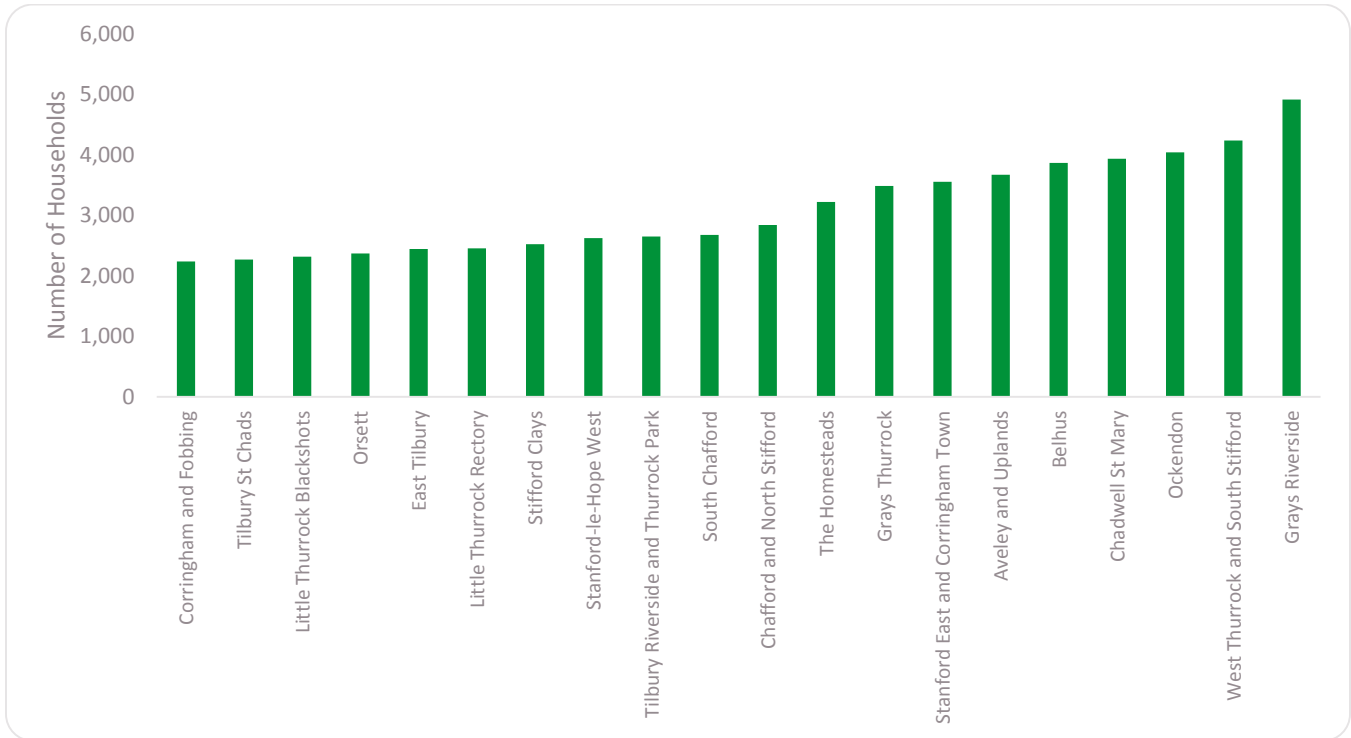


Figure 3 – Total Households 2011, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

## 1.2 Age of Population

The population growth has been across all age groups. The increase in the population aged 65 and over is below average for both East of England (15.52%) and England (10.92%). Thurrock’s above average increase in population relative to the region is largely due to the high percentage of young children aged 0 to 15. Thurrock experienced an increase of 9.13% in the ten-year period compared with just 2.39% for East of England and 1.22% for England. This highlights the need for both family housing to continue to accommodate these growing families and ensuring there is suitable and affordable accommodation for the young people to move on to. This is also reflected in the mean age for Thurrock, which in 2011 was below average at 36 compared with 40 for East of England and 39 for England. Thurrock has a healthy working age population at 65% of the total population, which has also grown faster (11.14% increase) than the East of England (8.64%) and England (19.23%).



Age range	2001		2011		Change 2001 to 2011	% Change 2001 to 2011
	Count	% Population	Count	% Population		
<b>0-15</b>	31,428	21.96%	34,298	21.75%	2,870	9.13%
<b>16-64</b>	93,021	64.99%	103,386	65.56%	10,365	11.14%
<b>65 and over</b>	18,679	13.05%	20,021	12.70%	1,342	7.18%
<b>16-24</b>	15,362	10.73%	17,544	11.12%	2,182	14.20%

Figure 4 – Change in Population by Age Group, Source: Census 2001 and 2011, Office for National Statistics

There are more significant variances in age distribution at a ward level. South Chafford (28.2%), Tilbury Riverside (27.4%) and Chafford and North Stifford (27.2%) all have a large proportion of under 16 year olds, and above the average for Thurrock. These wards have significantly lower proportions of residents aged 85 and over, with this group representing just 0.1% in South Chafford. Conversely, in Stifford Clays and Little Thurrock Blackshots the age distribution is shifted towards the older population, with 4.0% and 2.9% aged 85 and over.

Grays Riverside has the highest proportion of the population at working age (16-64) compared with the rest of the wards at 70% and Stanford East and Corringham, the least, at 59%.

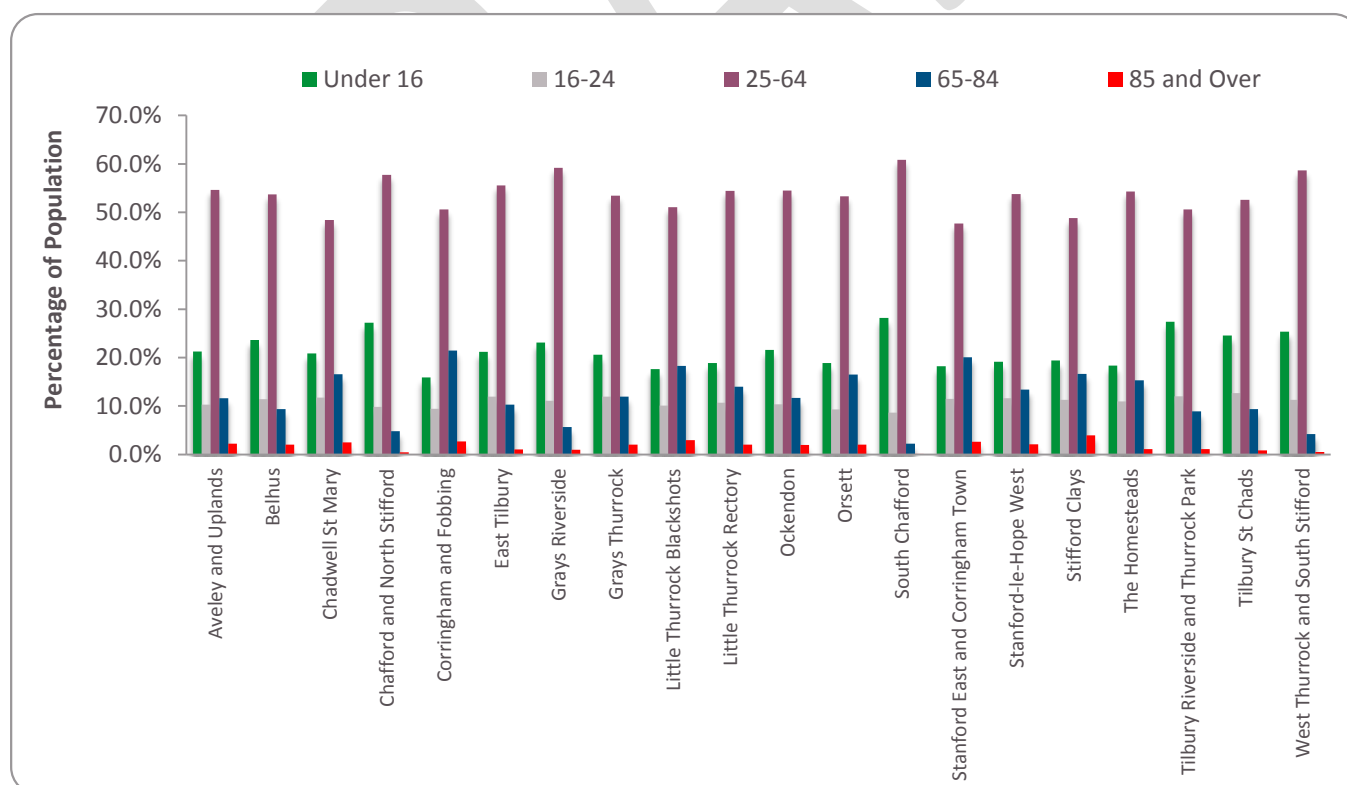


Figure 5 – Population by Age Group 2012, Source: Local Health, Public Health England, ONS 2013

For tenants in council housing, the age distribution demonstrates that 39% are aged 24 to 49, which reflects the overall younger population in Thurrock, and 57% are aged 16 to 64. However, there is a high percentage of older people aged 65 and over living in council housing (18%) when compared with the age distribution at 12% of the population. This could in part be due to the specific number of sheltered housing and extra care housing available in the borough but could also indicate the increased need of this age group for affordable housing.

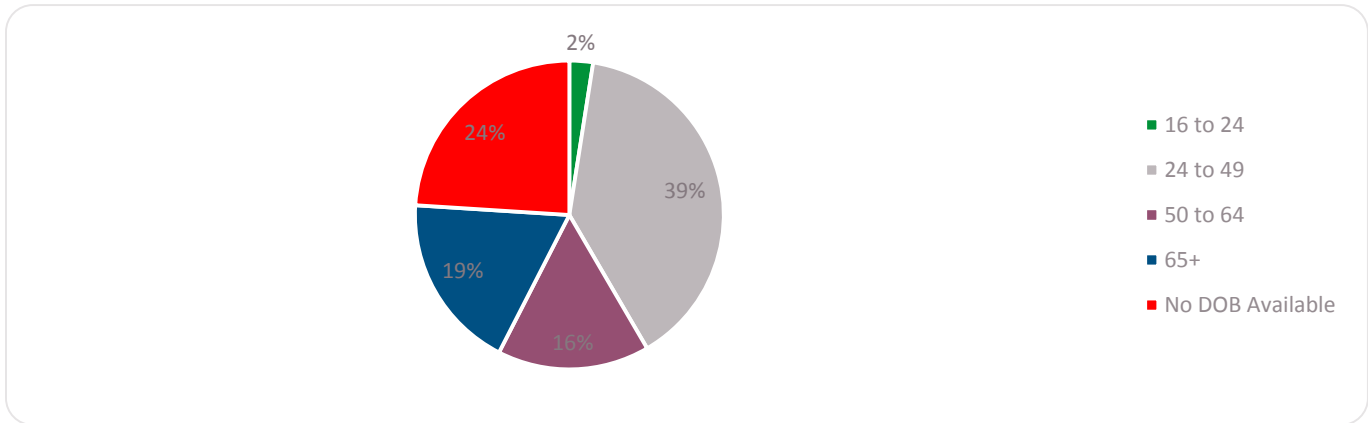


Figure 6 – Thurrock Tenants by Age, Source: Thurrock Council Statistics, December 2014

### 1.3 Population Projections

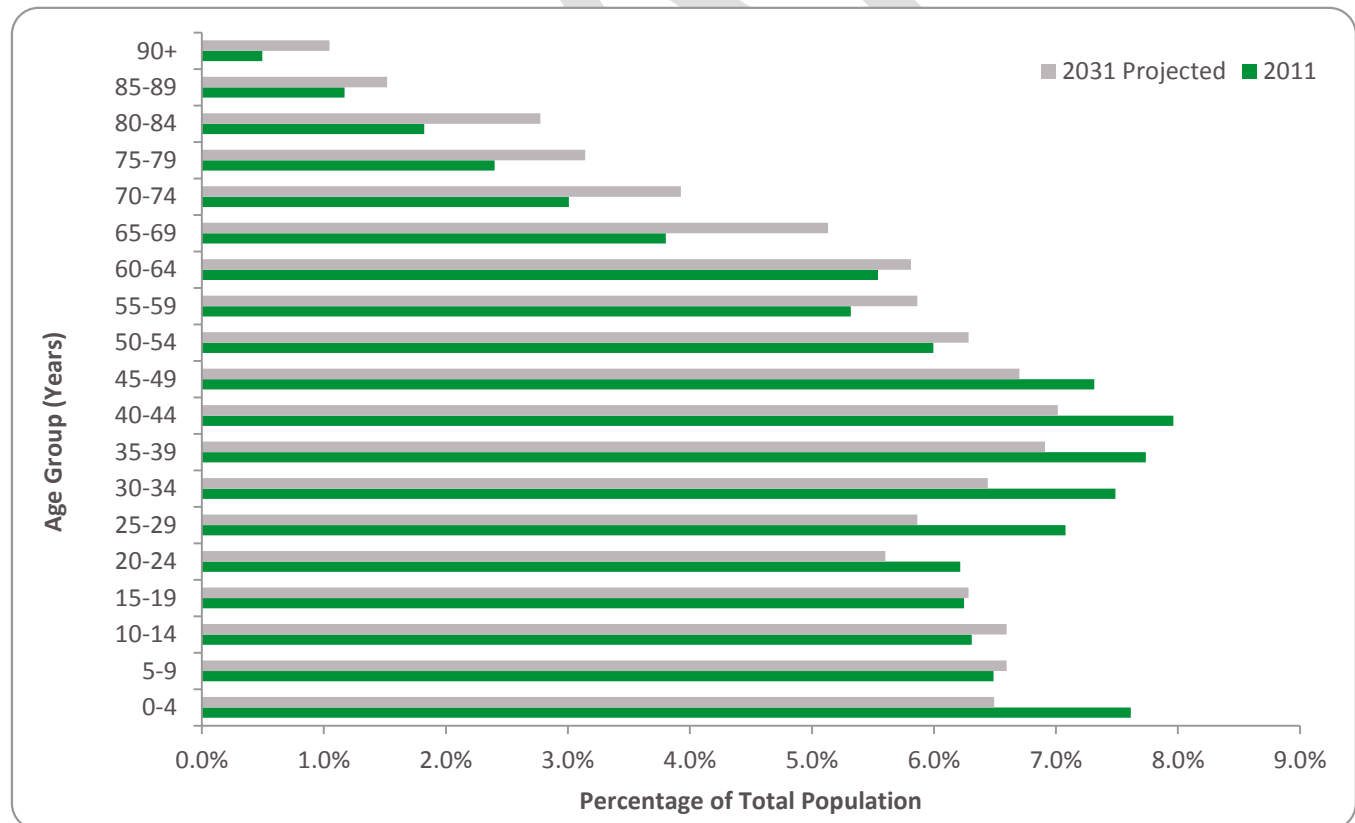


Figure 7 – Population Distribution by Age Group for 2011 and Projected for 2031, Source: 2012-based Substantial Population Projections for Local Authorities in England, Office for National Statistics, May 2014

Figure 7 demonstrates the population distribution as of 2011 and the projections for 2031. This highlights the growing population of older people aged 65 and over projected by 2031. This projected increase will result in Thurrock having 17.5% of its population aged 65 and over compared with 12.7% in 2011. In the same period, it is projected that the percentage of the population aged 25 to 64 will decrease from 54.4% to 50.9%, moving more in line with the regional and national averages of 47.6% and 48.3%. The older population aged 65 and over is still projected to be below the average population distribution projections for East of England (22.4%) and England (24.1%), although this is less significant than in 2011. This highlights the need for suitable support for older people to remain in their own homes together with keeping pace with requirements for sheltered accommodation.

#### 1.4 Ethnicity

Thurrock has become more diverse over the ten year period, with the greatest increase seen for Black or Black British residents becoming the second largest ethnic group in the borough after White, growing from 1.16% to 7.81%. The ethnicity is also reflected in Thurrock Council tenants with the large majority white (89%) and the second largest ethnic group at 3% being Black African.

Ethnic Group	2001		2011	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
<b>White</b>	136,399	95.30%	135,429	85.87%
<b>Mixed</b>	1,319	0.92%	3,099	1.97%
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	3,405	2.38%	5,927	3.76%
<b>Black or Black British</b>	1,659	1.16%	12,323	7.81%
<b>Other Ethnic Group</b>	346	0.24%	927	0.59%

Figure 8 – Ethnicity Count and Percentage of Population for 2001 to 2011, Source: Census 2001 and 2011, Office for National Statistics

## 1.5 Religion

Christianity is the most prevalent religion in Thurrock at 63.3%, which is slightly above the regional and national average. Overall, there is a greater percentage of the population of Thurrock stating they have a religion versus the East of England and England. Muslim, Jewish and Hindu are all below average, with Jewish representing the smallest percentage of the population at 0.1%.

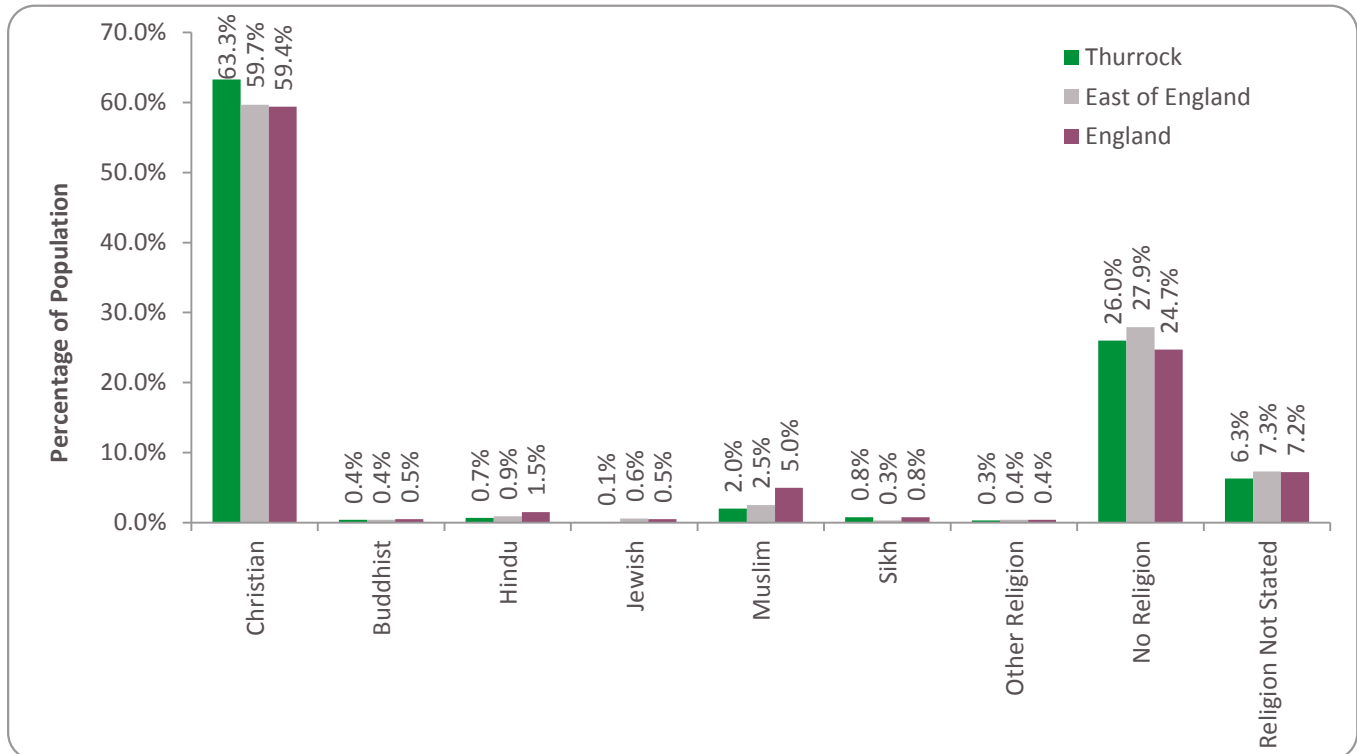


Figure 9 – Religious Status as Percentage of Population 2011, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

## 1.6 Migration

Thurrock has experienced a net migration increase over the past five years, demonstrating the growth of the borough. Many residents migrating into the borough are moving out from London boroughs. In addition, international migration is higher in Thurrock compared with other boroughs in the sub-region. This could be part due to Thurrock’s location and the high number of businesses in the local area representing new employment opportunities for migrants. This places additional pressure on affordable housing in the borough and migrants need to be supported to access local services and support networks to enable them to integrate into the community.

## 1.7 Armed Forces

The number of residents employed in the Armed Forces in Thurrock is relatively small, comprising 0.04% of the population compared with 0.35% regionally and 0.28% nationally. All residents employed in the armed forces reside in a household rather than a communal establishment or military accommodation. This would indicate that there would be a relatively low demand for affordable accommodation for residents leaving the army, even when considering the reductions to army personnel nationally.

	Thurrock	East of England	England
<b>All Usual Residents Employed In The Armed Forces (Persons)</b>	66	20,655	146,348
<b>All Usual Residents Employed In The Armed Forces; Lives in a Household (Persons)</b>	66	14,753	112,447
<b>All Usual Residents Employed In The Armed Forces; Lives in a Communal Establishment (Persons)</b>	0	5,902	33,901

Figure 10 – Armed Forces Population 2011, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

## 2. Employment and Skills

Enabling residents to access employment opportunities is key to improving residents' wellbeing and supporting them to sustain and access a home. *'Finding the right home, in the right place, can be an essential platform for people seeking to support their families and sustain work'*<sup>1</sup>.

This has proved ever more critical with the introduction of the Welfare Benefit Reforms, resulting in a reduction for many in the financial support received in benefits. Long term unemployment and worklessness can significantly impact a person's overall wellbeing and health, and housing plays an important role in supporting positive employment outcomes – *'a homeless or badly housed person is in a better position to find and keep a job if they can first gain access to a stable, affordable and secure home.'*<sup>2</sup> For young people, long-term unemployment can have *'devastating effects'*, ultimately leading to *'poverty, homelessness and depression'*<sup>3</sup>.

Furthermore, it is recognised that worklessness together with labour market disadvantage is more prevalent amongst residents living in social housing, with 56% of work age social residents not working in 2011<sup>4</sup>. This is compared with 25% for those living in private rented or owner occupied housing. This is evident in Thurrock where 47% of council tenants are not working (excluding those in sheltered housing) and only 19% are employed full time.

Residents from all tenures can face barriers to employment from childcare to access to transportation. This is particularly apparent for residents in social housing who face further barriers *'summarised under six headings: health, childcare, drug and alcohol dependence, debt, criminal records; and multiple disadvantage.'* For those facing multiple disadvantages, including *'mental health problems, physical health conditions, substance misuse, low skills, lengthy spells out of the labour market, family problems and criminal records'*, the impact was compounded with *'each disadvantage adding extra burdens.'*<sup>5</sup>

In addition, building new housing creates more employment opportunities, with a *'direct impact on economic output - for every new home built, up to two new jobs are created for a year'*<sup>1</sup>.

### 2.1 Labour Supply

The percentage of the working age population who are economically active is marginally below the regional average at 79.4% but above the national average. However, the unemployment rate is 7.2%, above the regional average of 5.4% and the national average of 6.8%.

---

<sup>1</sup> Laying the Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England, November 2011

<sup>2</sup> Policy: Briefing, Worklessness and Social Housing, Shelter, October 2008

<sup>3</sup> The Impact of Long Term Youth Unemployment, Princes Trust, October 2013

<sup>4</sup> Housing Providers Approaches to Tackling Worklessness, Assessing Value and Impact, A report by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion for HACT, Laura Gardiner and Dave Simmonds, May 2012. Worklessness describes all residents that are not currently working including those that are economically inactive.

<sup>5</sup> Social housing and worklessness: key policy messages, Research Report No 482, DWP, Del Roy Fletcher et al, 2008

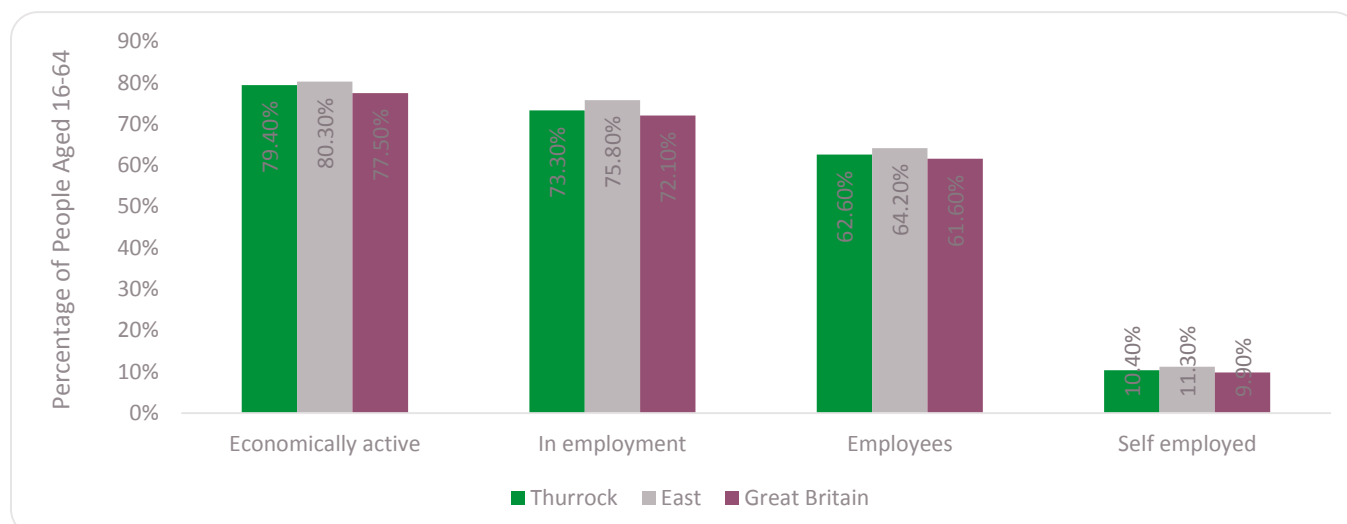


Figure 11 – Employment July 2013 to June 2014, Source: Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey

There are significant variances at a ward level. South Chafford has the highest percentage of any ward for full time employed residents at 57% followed by Chafford and North Stifford at 50%. The unemployment rate for economically active population is highest for Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park and Tilbury St Chads at 9.7% and 7.9% respectively. This is well above the average for Thurrock at 5.4% together with the regional and national averages. Both these wards have the lowest employment rates for those employed (full time, part time and self-employed collectively). The percentage of economically active residents that are unemployed is least in Orsett at 2.7%, below the regional and national averages.

There are only five wards that have a below regional average percentage of economically active residents who are unemployed, namely: Orsett, Corringham and Fobbing, The Homesteads, South Chafford and Little Thurrock Rectory. The remaining fifteen wards are all above the regional average for unemployment (3.8%) with ten above both the regional and national averages (4.4%).

Thurrock has a below average number of retired people that are economically active, which would correlate with the overall younger population. However, the number of full time students both economically active and inactive is below the regional and national averages. For those that are economically inactive, Thurrock as a borough has an above average number of residents looking after the home or family at 5.2% compared with the regional average of 4.5%. This is most noticeable for Tilbury St Chads and Tilbury Riverside, where 7.6% and 7.9% of residents respectively are not economically inactive as they are looking after the home or family. The percentage of residents economically inactive as a result of long term sick or disabled is 3.5% for Thurrock, below the national average of 4.0% but above the East of England at 3.1%. Tilbury St Chads (5.9%) and Belhus (6.2%) have the highest levels of economically inactive residents as a result of health issues.

For Thurrock Council Tenants living in non-sheltered accommodation, just 19% are working full time with a further 10% working part time. 47% of residents are not working but this rises to over 60% if those classed as retired and living in non-sheltered housing are excluded. This provides an indication that 60% of the working age population in council housing are not working, highlighting the need for employment initiatives specifically for those in council housing to support them in entering the labour market.

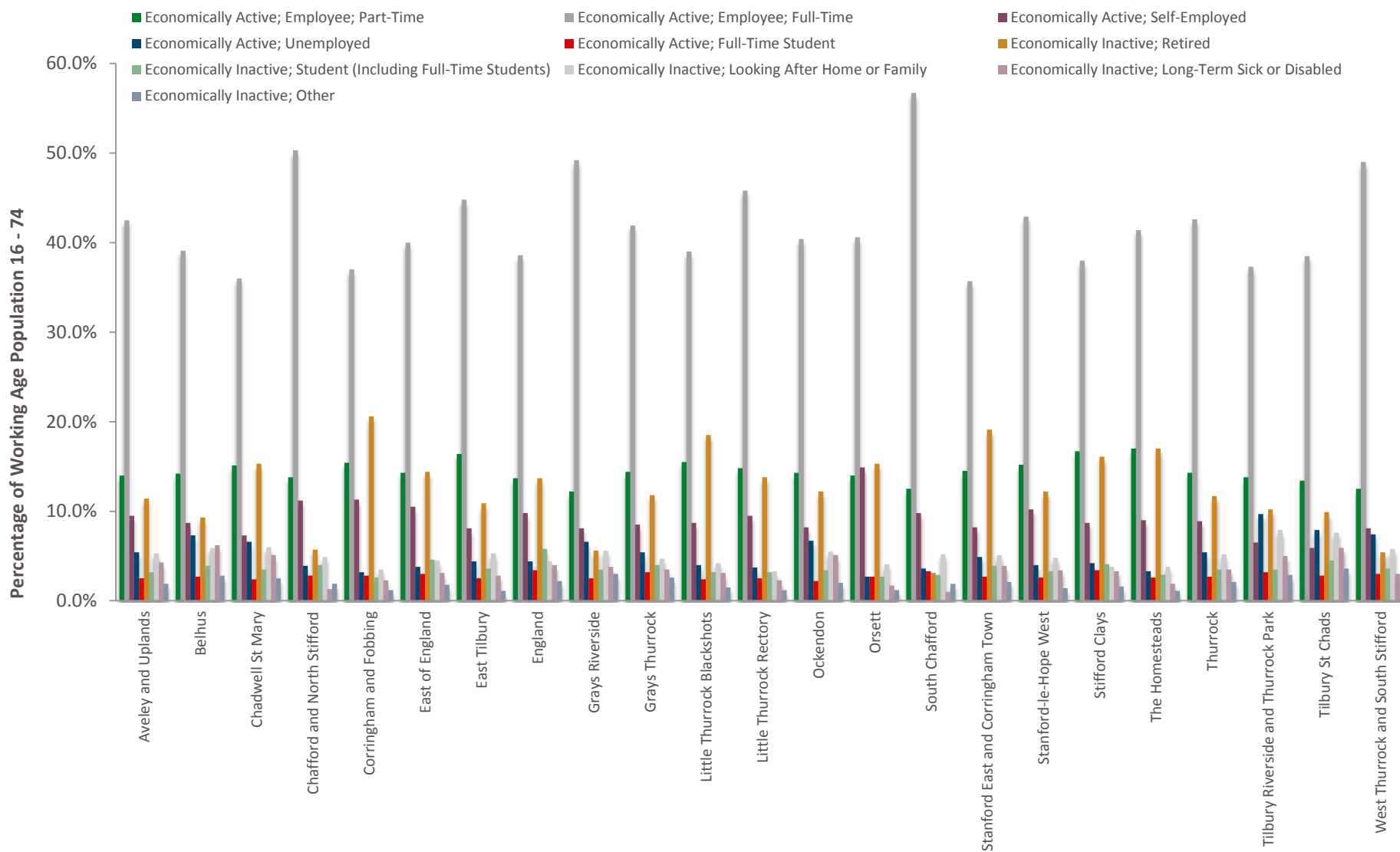


Figure 12 – Percentage of Working Age Population that are Economically Active and Inactive by Ward, Source: Economic Activity 2011, Office for National Statistics, Updated January 2013. Includes all residents in the area at the time of the 2011 Census aged 16 – 74.



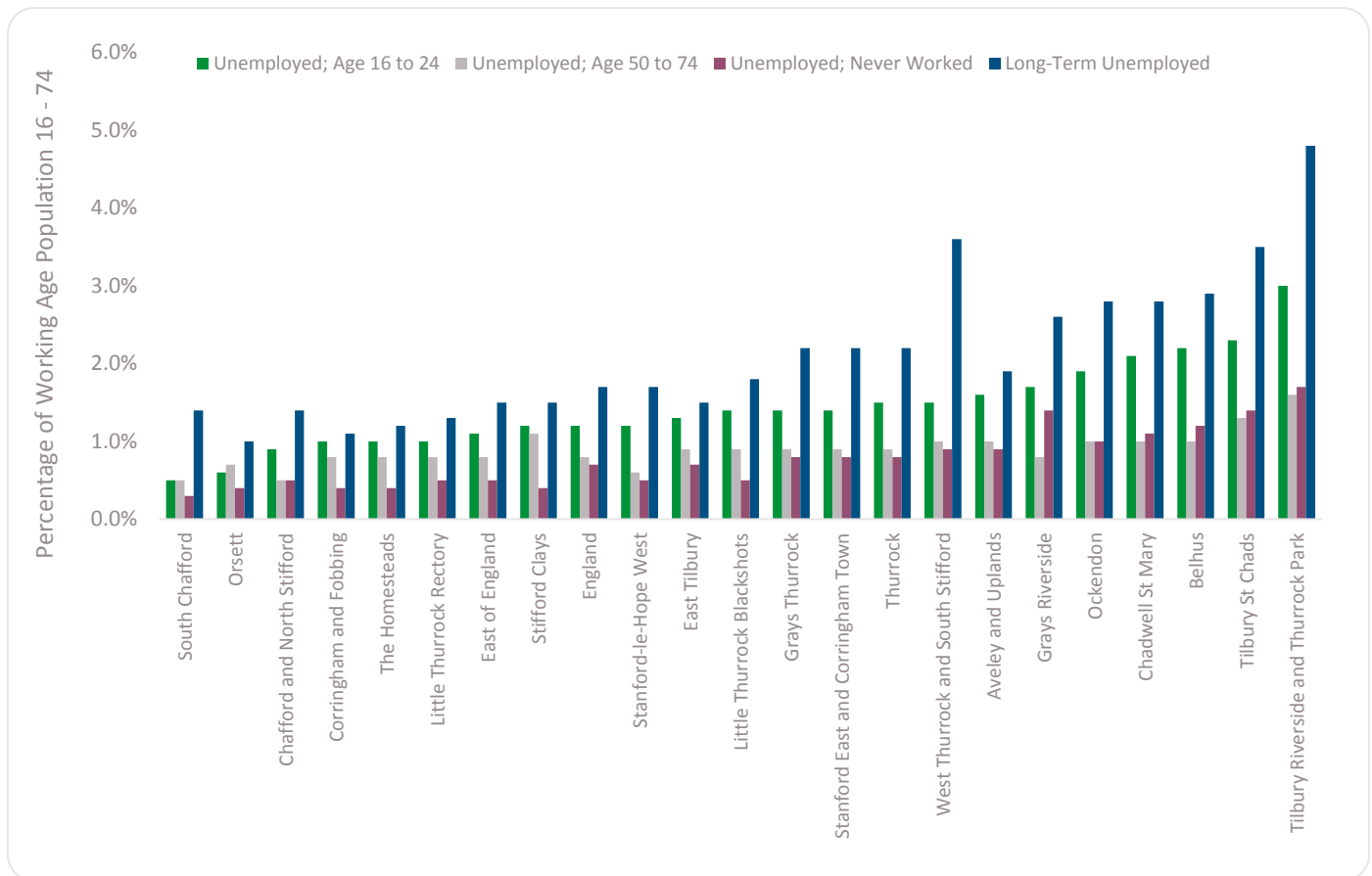


Figure 13 – Percentage of Working Age Population Unemployed by Ward, Source: Economic Activity 2011, Office for National Statistics, Updated January 2013. Includes all residents in the area at the time of the 2011 Census aged 16 – 74.

Further analysis of unemployment at a ward level demonstrates the higher numbers of residents that are long term unemployed. This is particularly marked for Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park which has the greatest proportion of residents that are considered to be long term unemployed at 4.8%, over three times the regional average of just 1.5%, followed by West Thurrock and South Stifford and Tilbury St Chads at 3.6% and 3.5% respectively. 3% of those unemployed are aged 16 to 24 in Tilbury Riverside and 2.3% in Tilbury St Chads compared with 1.1% regionally. This highlights the need for targeted employment support for young people to prevent the resulting impacts of long term unemployment.

## 2.2 Employment by Occupation

For those in employment, the most prevalent occupation for Thurrock residents is administrative and secretarial at 15% above the average for the East of England and England. The number of managers, directors and senior officials together with those in professional occupations are below the regional and national averages indicating a potential skills gap. This is supported by the above average number of residents that are in elementary occupations at 13%.

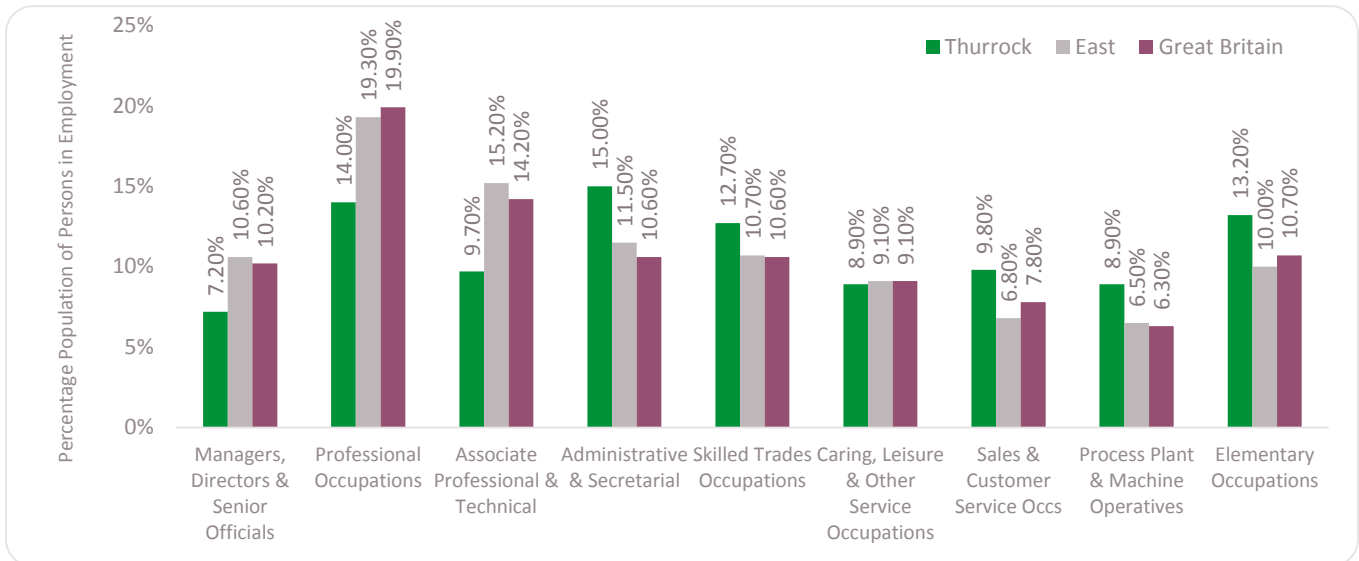


Figure 14 – Percentage of Population in Employment by Occupation, Source: Employment by Occupation July 2013 to June 2014, Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey

### 2.3 Enterprises and Local Units

Thurrock has an above average number of micro enterprises demonstrating the ability for the borough to attract new and developing businesses. Equally, Thurrock has a significantly higher proportion of medium businesses at 2.1%, which can represent more employment opportunities for local residents. However, the number of large enterprises in the borough is half that of the average for the East and nationally at 0.2%. Despite the lower number of large enterprises, the number of local units, defined as an individual site in an enterprise such as a factory or shop, is in line with the regional and national average.

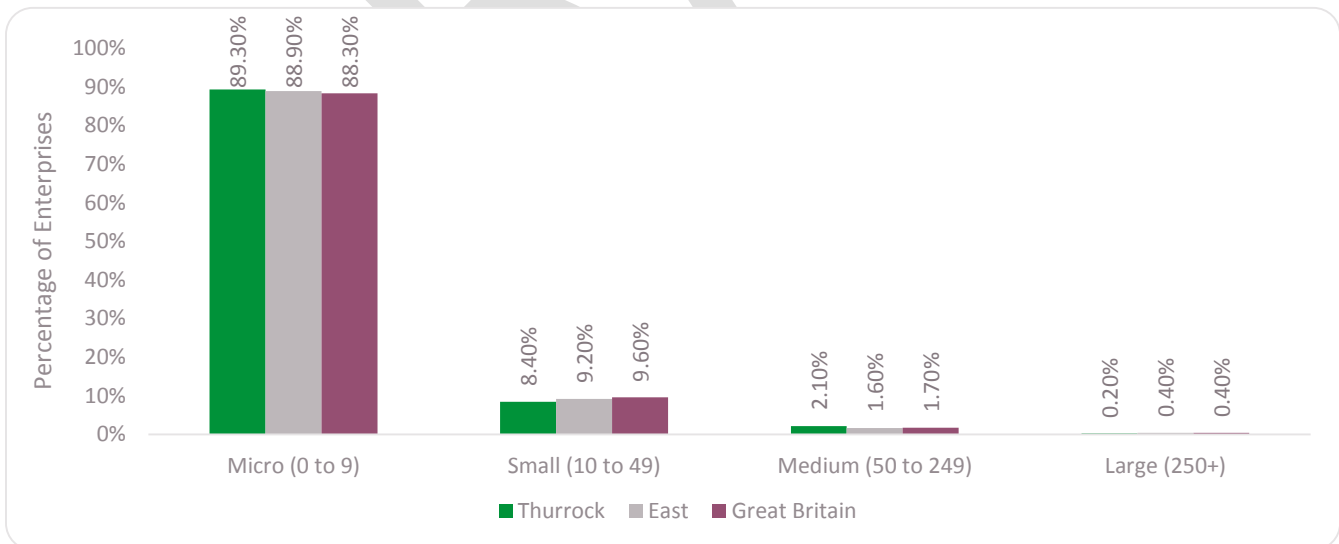


Figure 15 – Business Counts: Percentage of Enterprises by Size an Enterprise is defined as the smallest combination of legal units (generally based on VAT and/or PAYE records) which has a certain degree of autonomy within an Enterprise Group). Source: UK Business Counts 2014, Interdepartmental Business Register, Office for National Statistics

### 2.4 Earnings by Residence



Figure 16 – Earnings by Residence 2014, Source: Office for National Statistics Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

The weekly earnings of employees living in Thurrock is above the regional and national average, which would in part be due to the close proximity to London. This is consistent for both male and female workers although female workers earn on average £104.20 less per week compared to their male counterparts, a trend also seen at a regional and national level.

### 2.5 Qualifications

As indicated by the employment occupations of residents, Thurrock has a below average number of residents achieving an NVQ or equivalent at all levels. In addition, 11.4% have no qualifications, significantly higher than the regional and national averages. This lack of skills leads to reduced employment opportunities for residents and the resulting lower incomes acting as additional barriers to employment.

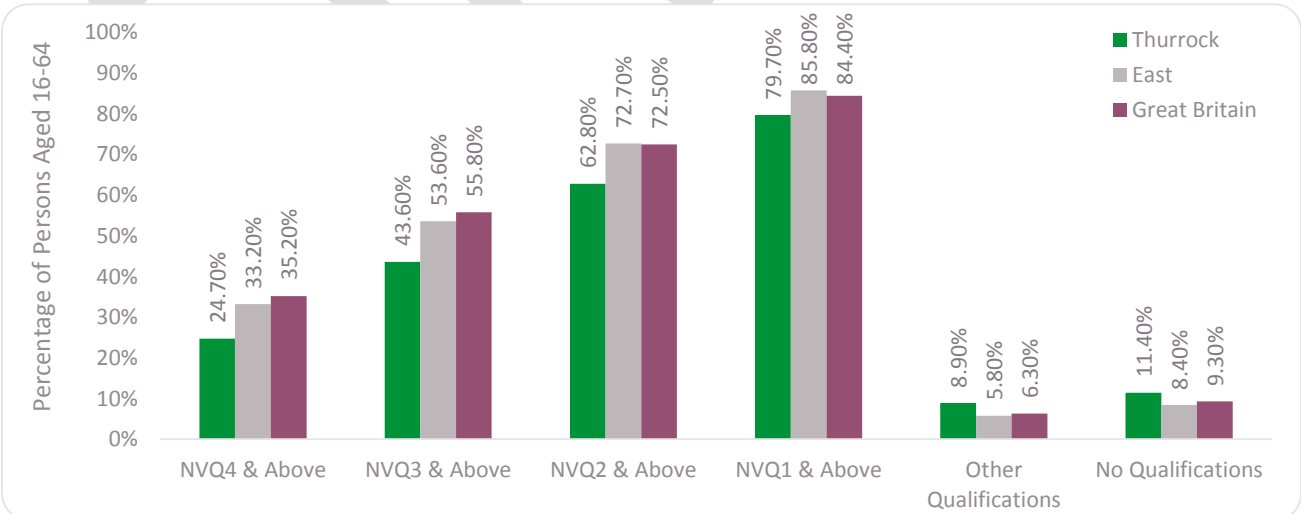


Figure 17 – Qualifications as a percentage of working age population, Source: Qualifications January to December 2013, Office for National Statistics Annual Population survey

## 2.6 GCSE Attainment

The GCSE Attainment for key stage 4 pupils demonstrates that there has been extensive improvement over the past ten years where the percentage of pupils achieving five A\* to C grades (including Maths and English) were well below the regional and national average in 2005/06 and are now ahead for both the region and nationally. This increased attainment should increase employment prospects for young people compared with previous generations.

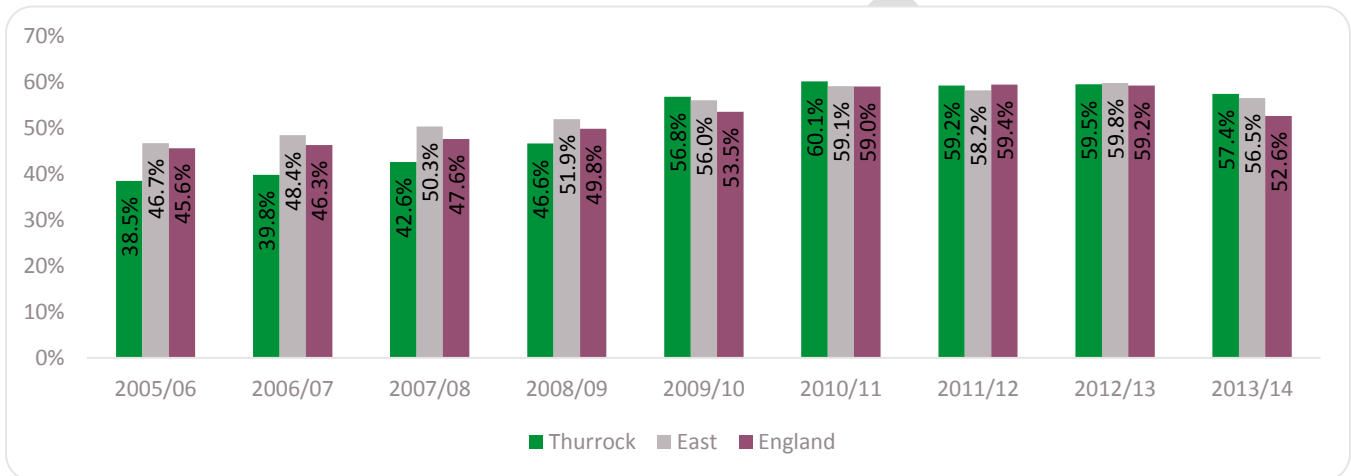


Figure 18 - Percentage of pupils at the end of key stage 4 achieving at GCSE and equivalent: 5 A\* - C grades including English and mathematics, source: department for education, December 2014

## 2.7 Key Benefit Claimants

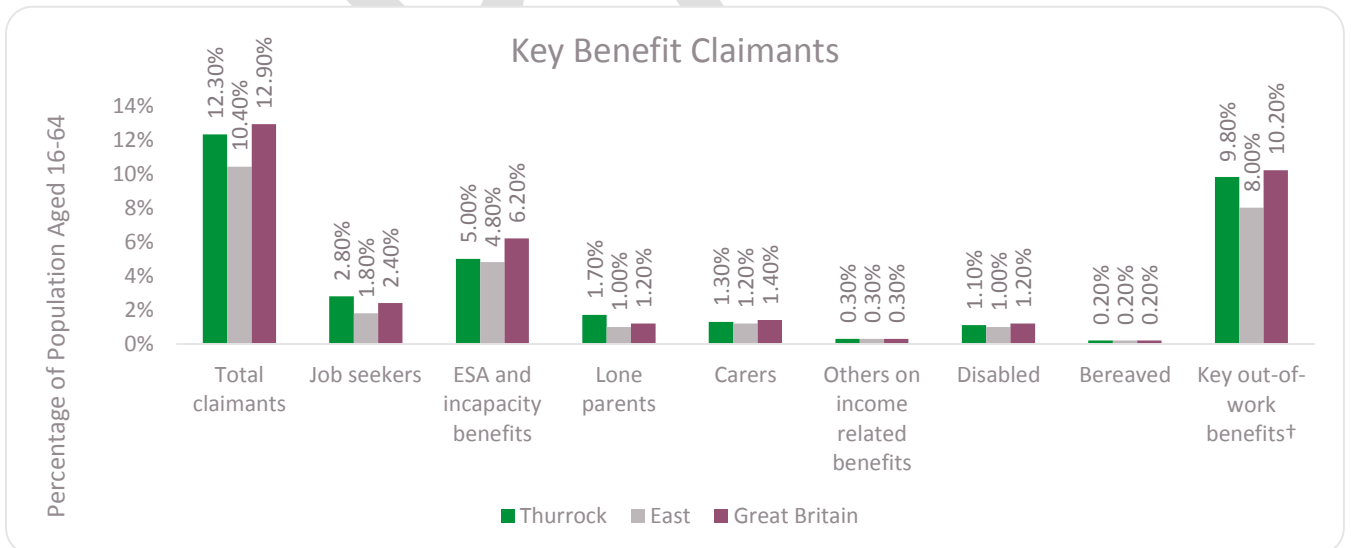


Figure 19 – Key Benefit Claimants as a Percentage of Working Age Population by Ward (data labels show total claimants and key out of work benefits for each Ward). Source: Working Age Client Group Key Benefit Claimants 2014, DWP Benefit Claimants

Key Benefit Claimants also gives an indication as to the labour market in Thurrock. At a borough level, the total percentage of claimants is above the regional average and marginally below the national average, largely due to the above average percentage of residents claiming key out of work benefits. Jobseeker's Allowance is above both the regional and national average as are those claiming lone parent benefits. Key Out of Work Benefits includes the groups: job seekers, ESA and incapacity benefits, lone parents and others on income related benefits.

At a ward level, the percentage of residents claiming key out of work benefits reflects the unemployment rate, with Tilbury St Chads and Tilbury Riverside having the greatest percentage at 16.2% and 18.6% respectively. This is mainly due to above average numbers of lone parents and those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance.

Equally, South Chafford and Orsett have the lowest percentage of residents aged 16 to 64 claiming benefits which correlates with the below average unemployment rates in these wards as demonstrated in Figure 20.

DRAFT

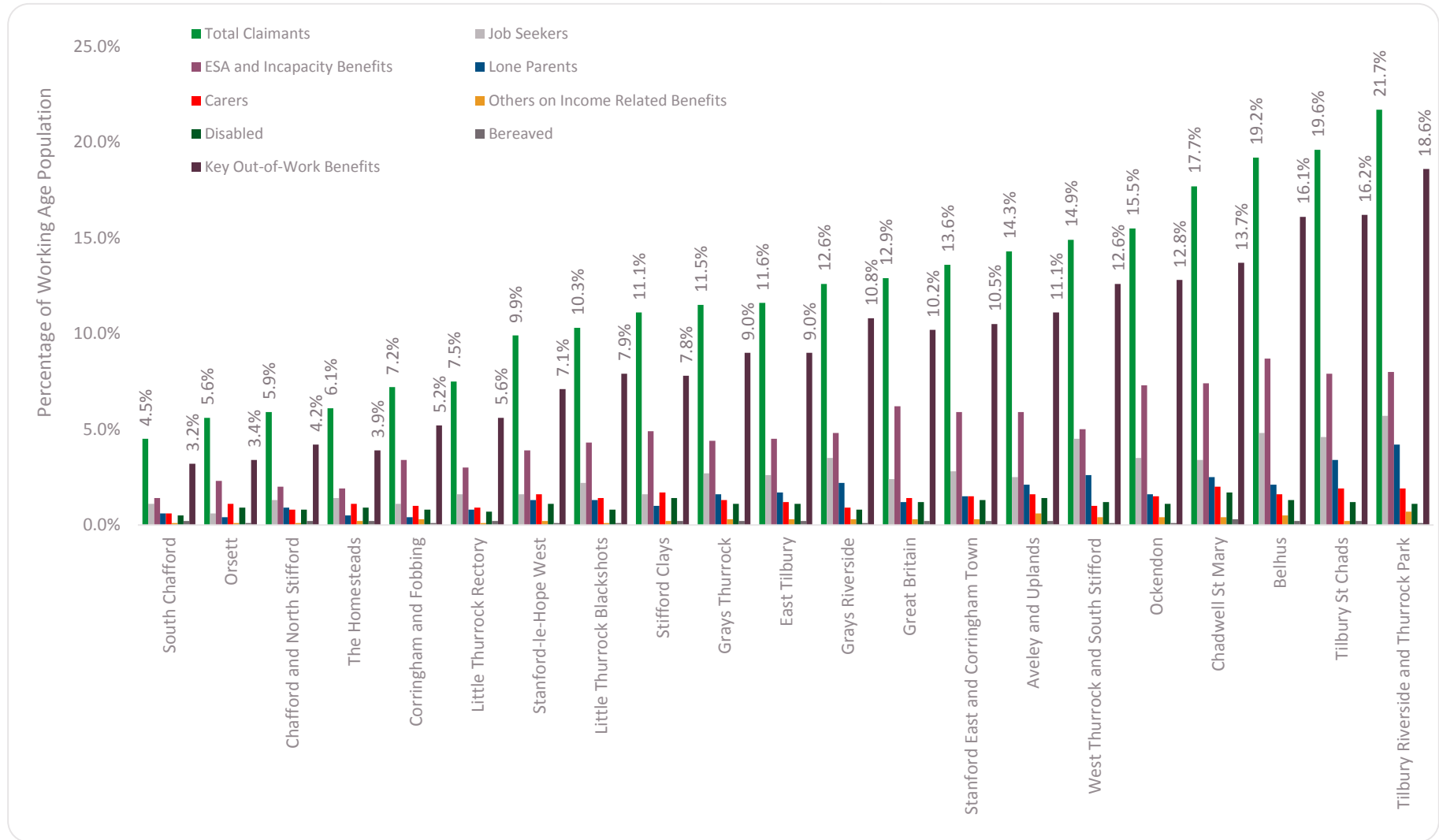


Figure 20 – Key Benefit Claimants as a Percentage of Working Age Population by Ward (data labels show total claimants and key out of work benefits for each Ward). Source: Working Age Client Group Key Benefit Claimants 2014, DWP Benefit Claimants

### 3. Health

The Care Act 2014 specifically references housing as a key part of defining wellbeing and approach to Health and Care, recognising the intrinsic link between health and housing.

Understanding the health and wellbeing of Thurrock residents enables housing to work better with health services to tackle health inequalities across the borough. In addition, the health of the population has implications for housing related support and independent living, from the number of people with long term illnesses to the health of the older population.

Fair Society, Healthy Lives reported on the health inequalities seen in England, identifying that *'the more favoured people are, socially and economically, the better their health'* and equally, *'the lower a person's social position, the worse his or her health'*<sup>6</sup>. As a result, the report recommended action on six policy objectives:

- *Give every child the best start in life;*
- *Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives;*
- *Create fair employment and good work for all;*
- *Ensure healthy standard of living for all;*
- *Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities;*
- *Strengthen the role and impact of ill prevention*<sup>6</sup>.

Housing can influence all six of these objectives and it further demonstrates the role of housing in reducing health inequalities. It highlights the relationship between health, housing and employment – all of which impact on one another. In particular, the six objectives refer to the importance of 'healthy and sustainable places and communities' together with a 'healthy standard of living for all'.

Poor quality housing, in both the private and public sector, costs the NHS at least £600 million per year – increasing the risk of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases together with depression and anxiety. Key housing related hazards that increase the risk of illness include damp, mould and excess cold. Equally, structural defects such as poor lighting or no stair handrail increase the risk of an accident and falls<sup>7</sup>.

Addressing these risks and increasing housing standards can improve people's health and in turn can also support those more vulnerable residents to remain independent in their own homes for longer. The improvement of housing standards must be across all tenures and requires joint working to achieve positive health outcomes for residents. For the private rented sector, which has a history of poor quality housing, engagement with private landlords is critical to enhancing the condition of homes.

---

<sup>6</sup> Fair Society, Healthy Lives, The Marmot Review, Executive Summary, February 2010

<sup>7</sup> Housing and Health, Houses of Parliament, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, January 2011

### 3.1 General Health

At a borough level, the overall health of the population is slightly above average with 48% experiencing very good health compared with 47% regionally and nationally. Equally, the number experiencing bad and very bad health is in line with regional averages and below the national averages. While this indicates that Thurrock’s population as a whole is quite healthy, it does not demonstrate the differentials at a ward level that residents experience.

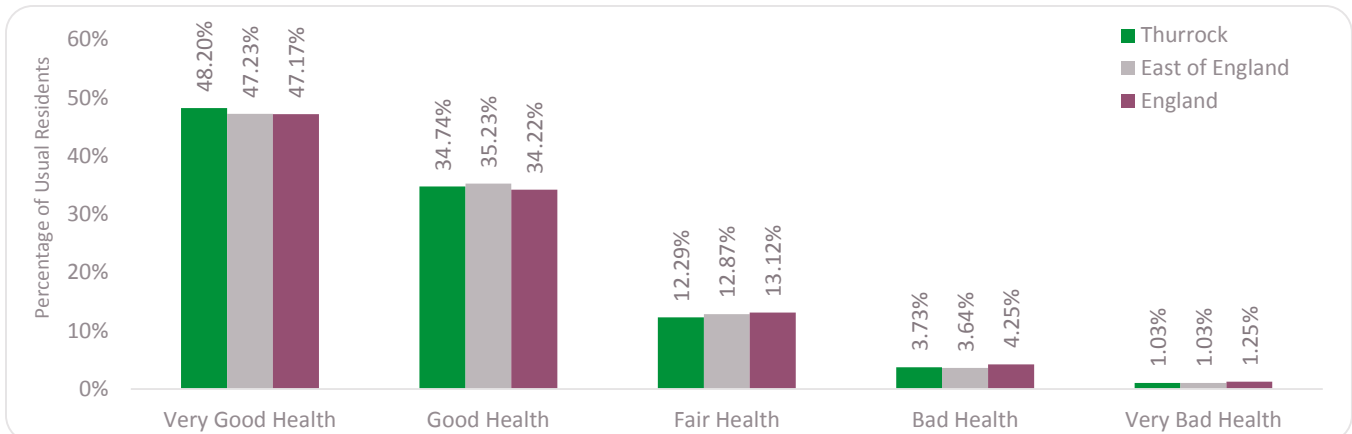


Figure 21 – General Health as a percentage of usual residents, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

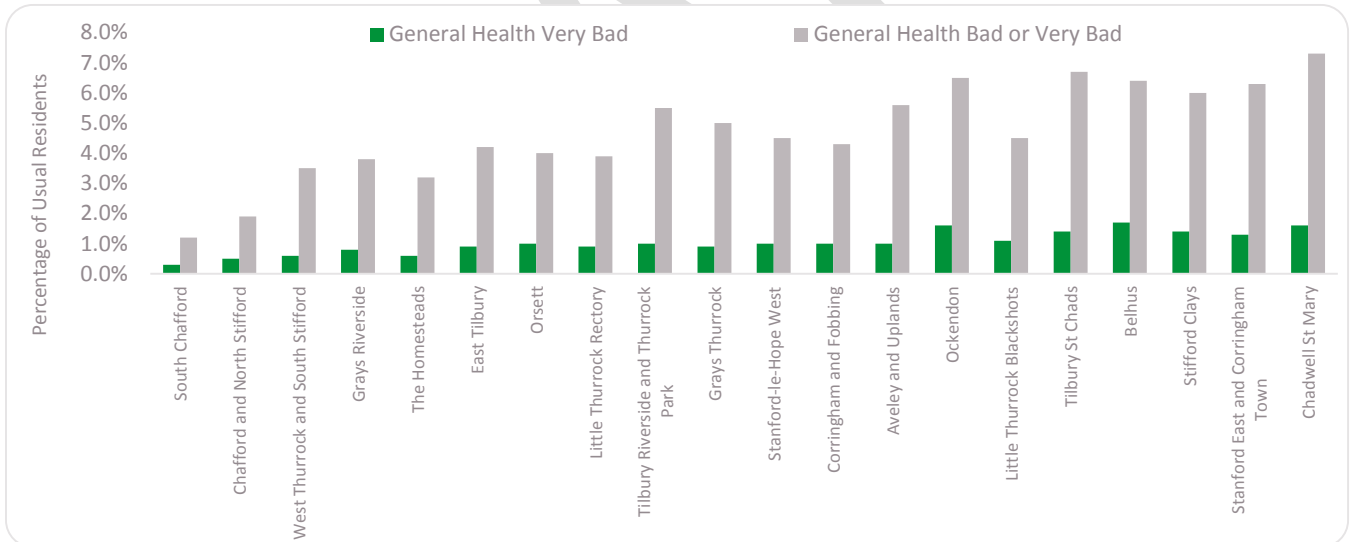


Figure 22 – General health as a percentage of usual residents by ward, Health and Care Indicators 2011, Local Health, Public Health England, Office for National Statistics Census 2011

Despite Thurrock having only 1% of the population experiencing very bad health, Belhus has 1.7% of residents with very bad health which is well above average, followed by Chadwell St Mary and Ockenden. When combining both those with either bad or very bad health, Chadwell St Mary has the highest percentage of residents at 7.3% compared with 4.8% for Thurrock. South Chafford (1.2%) has the fewest percentage of residents with poor health followed by Chafford and North Stifford (1.9%).



### 3.2 Long Term Health Conditions and Disabilities

As with general health, Thurrock as a borough has a below average number of residents with long term health problems or disabilities that limit their day to day activities. Overall, 15.6% of Thurrock residents report having a long term health condition or disability, below the national average of 17.6%.

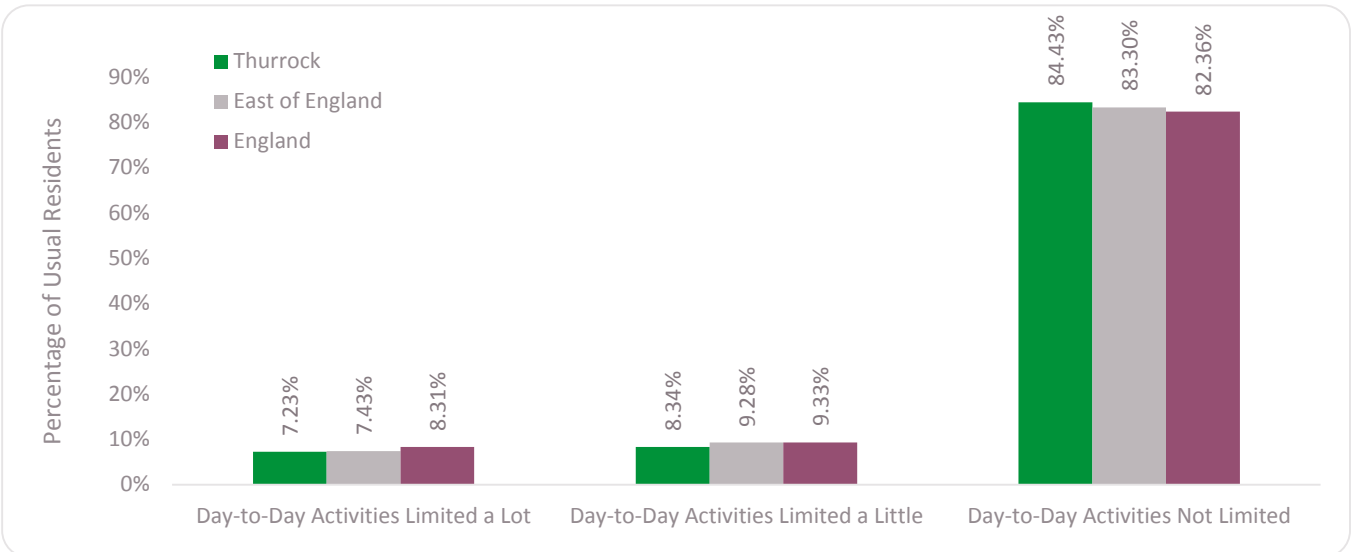


Figure 23 – Percentage of Residents with Long Term Health Problem or Disability, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

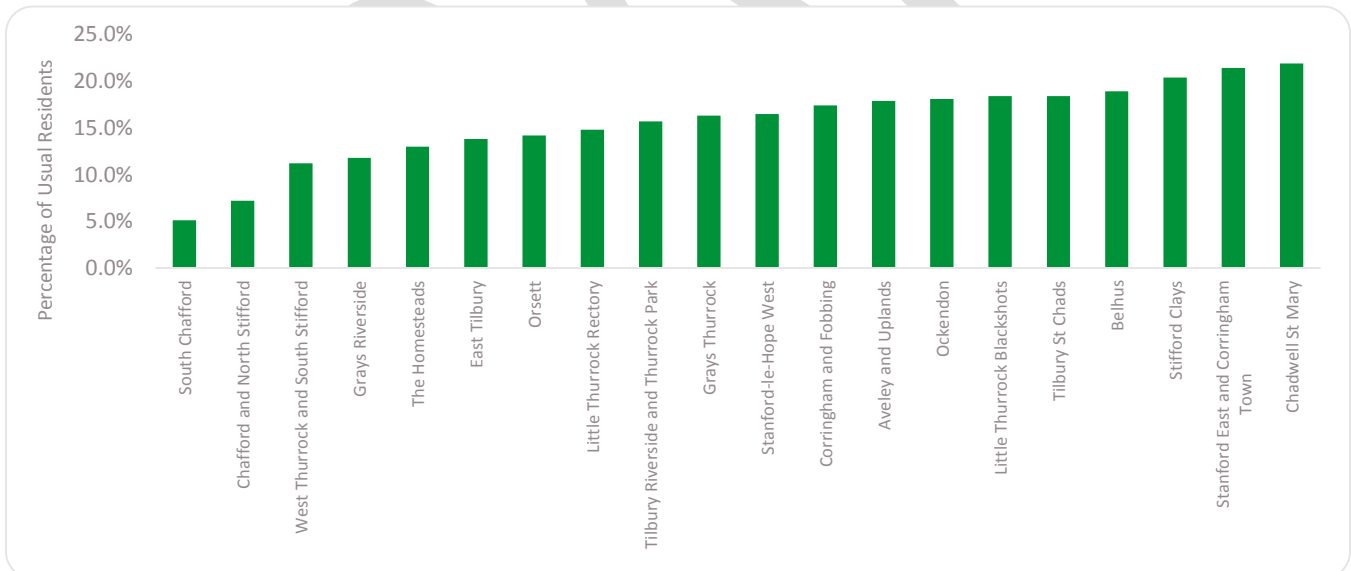


Figure 24 – Percentage of Residents with Limiting Long Term Illness or Disability by Ward, Source: Health and Care Indicators 2011, Local Health, Public Health England, Office for National Statistics Census 2011

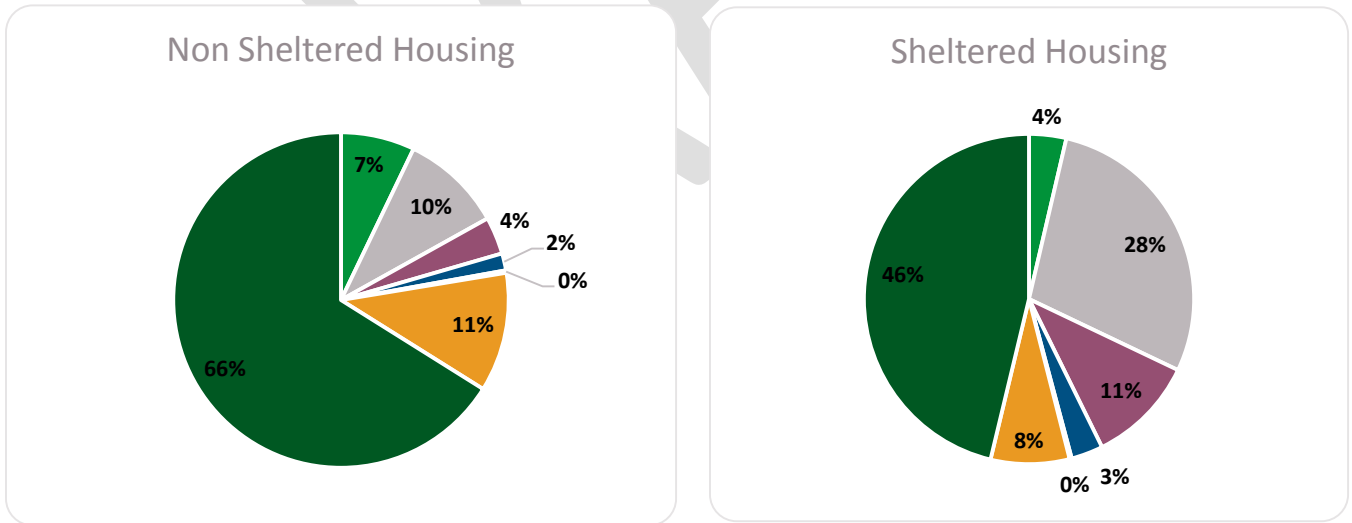
However, again at a ward level, the number of residents varies significantly with 21.9% of residents in Chadwell St Mary suffering from long term health conditions or a disability. As expected, the percentage of residents with long term health conditions and disabilities in each ward correlates with those reporting bad or very bad general health. Residents suffering from long term health conditions and disabilities require more support to live

independently at home together with physical adaptations to ensure they can remain in their own home for as long as possible.

The Community Mental Health Profile 2013 for Thurrock highlights that the borough is performing significantly better than the national average for the percentage of adults with dementia and those with depression. However, the standardised rate for hospital admissions for Alzheimers and other related dementia is significantly worse. This could indicate an underlying issue with the number of adults seeking treatment for their condition. The percentage of those with learning disabilities is also in line with national averages. The outcomes for those with mental health conditions compares with the national average, with 70% of people with mental illness and or disability in settled accommodation<sup>8</sup>.

Thurrock’s Autism Strategy reported that the number of people with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) is circa 992 but expected to rise over the coming years with the increase in population and the reputation Thurrock has established for supporting children with autism. This will result in more adults in the borough requiring support from 24 hour to low level need and it must be ensured that a range of accommodation is available as a result.

For council housing tenants, a survey of 2214 residents identified stated needs. Two thirds in non-sheltered housing reported having no need. 10% reported experiencing mobility issues with a further 7% identifying a mental health need. In Sheltered Housing, there is an increase in the number of those that have mobility needs and those with hearing impairments, which would be expected among the older population. Only 4% reported having a mental health need, although, as this was a self-diagnostic survey (i.e. the tenants had to say if they thought they had a need rather than stating a medical condition), this may not be fully representative. Understanding the needs of residents ensures that they are supported to be as independent as possible and that specialist housing is available where required.



■ Mental Health Needs ■ Mobility ■ Hearing impairment ■ Visual impairment ■ Speech impairment ■ Other ■ No need

Figure 25 –Council Housing Tenants surveyed reporting need, Thurrock Council Statistics, December 2014

<sup>8</sup> Community Mental Health Profiles 2013, Department of Health, 2012-13

### 3.3 Life Expectancy and Causes of Death

The number of excess winter deaths, which provides an indication of fuel poverty, is marginally below the national average. Infant mortality is well below the national average as is the suicide rate. However, the rate of smoking related deaths was 350 per 100,000 population, worse than the average for England and reflected in Thurrock’s core priorities to reduce smoking. The mortality rate for those under 75 for cardiovascular and cancer is above the national average.

Life Expectancy for Thurrock residents is, on average, 78.7 years for men and 82.2 for women in line with the national averages of 78.9 and 82.8. This is reduced by nearly five years for men and women living in Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park. The below average life expectancy for men and women is also significantly reduced in Tilbury St Chads and Grays Riverside, while South Chafford and Little Thurrock Rectory benefit from above average life expectancy. According to the Health Profile 2014, *life expectancy is 8.2 years lower for men and 7.7 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Thurrock than in the least deprived areas*<sup>9</sup>.

### 3.4 Obesity

#### 3.4.1 Child Obesity

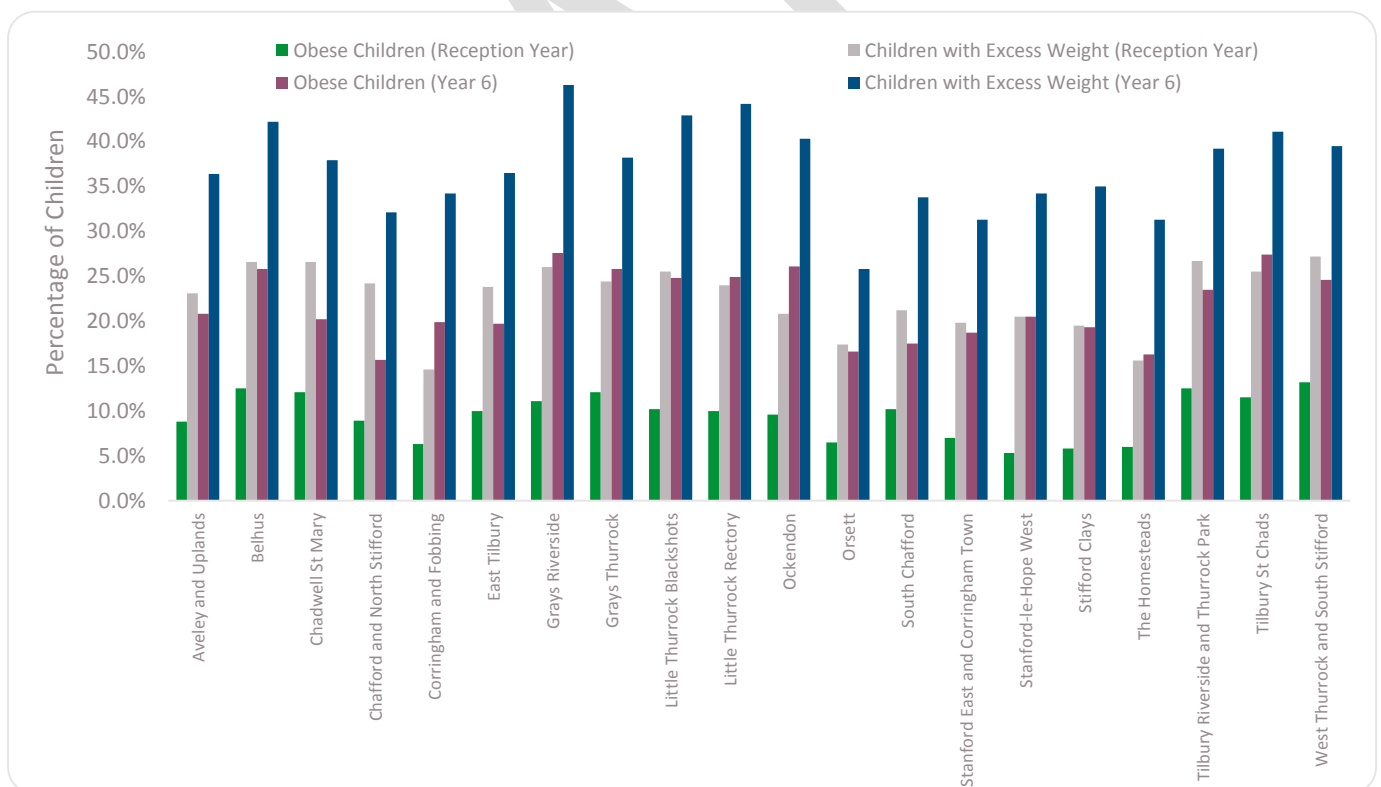


Figure 26 – Percentage of children in reception year and year 6 that have excess weight, Source: Children’s Weight Indicators 2010/11 – 2012/13, Public Health England

<sup>9</sup> Health Profile 2014, Thurrock Unitary Authority, Public Health England, 12 August 2014

Thurrock has an above average number of obese children at 10.2% compared with the national average of 9.4%. West Thurrock has the greatest proportion of children in reception that are classed as obese at 13.2%, followed by Belhus and Tilbury Riverside both at 12.5%. However, at year 6, Grays Riverside and Tilbury St Chads have the highest proportion at 27.6% and 27.4% respectively. As a borough, the number of children with excess weight in year 6 is 37.4% compared with 33.5% for England. This is most evident in Grays Riverside where nearly half the children in year 6 (46.3%) have excess weight. Only four wards are below the national average, namely Orsett, The Homesteads, Stanford East and Corringham Town and Chafford and North Stifford.

Child obesity has health implications both in the short and long term. As well as the development of physical health conditions, it can have an emotional and psychological impact too. In addition, Public Health England state that it can also be linked to educational attainment with a *'general trend in rising obesity prevalence with decreasing levels of education'* and social care with children developing longer term health conditions that places extra demand on social care services. Obesity in children is also an indicator of socioeconomic status with *'children from more deprived backgrounds having higher levels of obesity.'*<sup>10</sup>

### 3.4.2 Adult Obesity

Adult obesity is also above average for Thurrock at 28.1% compared with 24.1% nationally. This is also seen at a ward level with the lowest percentage of obese adults in Chafford and North Stifford at 24.5%, still above the national average. As with child obesity, Belhus and Tilbury St Chads together with Tilbury Riverside have the highest levels of adult obesity at 30.2% and 29.9% respectively.

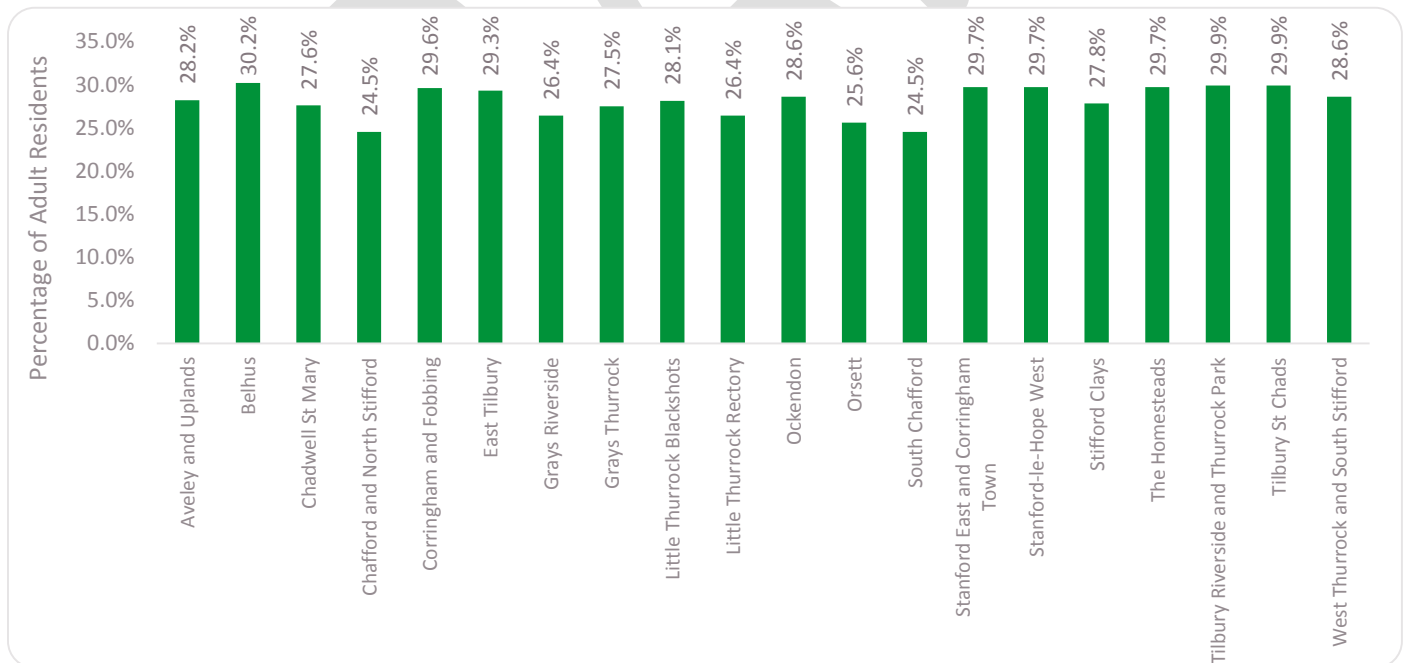


Figure 27 – Percentage of Adult Residents that are Obese, Source: Adults’ Lifestyle 2006-08 (Estimated from MSOA Level Data), Public Health England 2010

<sup>10</sup> The Impact of Obesity, Public Health England website, <http://www.noo.org.uk/LA/impact/health>, accessed December 2014

### 3.5 Lifestyle

Public Health England produce data on binge drinking and healthy eating as indicators of adults' lifestyles. As a borough, Thurrock has below average levels of binge drinking at 18.4% compared with the national average of 20.0%. Only four wards have above average levels of binge drinking with East Tilbury the highest at 24.7%, Aveley and Uplands (22.4%), Grays Riverside (22.0%) and West Thurrock (21.4%). Hospital stays as a result of alcohol related harm are also below the national average, as is drug misuse.

Conversely, the percentage of adults that eat healthily is below average for Thurrock at 25.1% compared with 28.7% nationally. Chafford and North Stifford (30.4%), South Chafford (30.4%) and Orsett (32.5%) are the only wards to have an above average number of adults eating healthily. This can be seen to contribute to both the high adult and child obesity rate across the borough. Tilbury Riverside and Tilbury St Chads have the lowest proportion of adults both at 18.4%. Both these wards also have high levels of adult obesity.

There is also some correlation between those wards that have high levels of obesity and poor levels of healthy eating with the general health of the residents. In particular, Tilbury Riverside, Tilbury St Chads, Chadwell St Mary and Belhus together with Chafford and North Stifford and South Chafford at the other end of the spectrum.

The percentage of adults participating in physical activity is also below average in Thurrock at 53%, potentially contributing to the high levels of obesity, compared with 56% nationally.

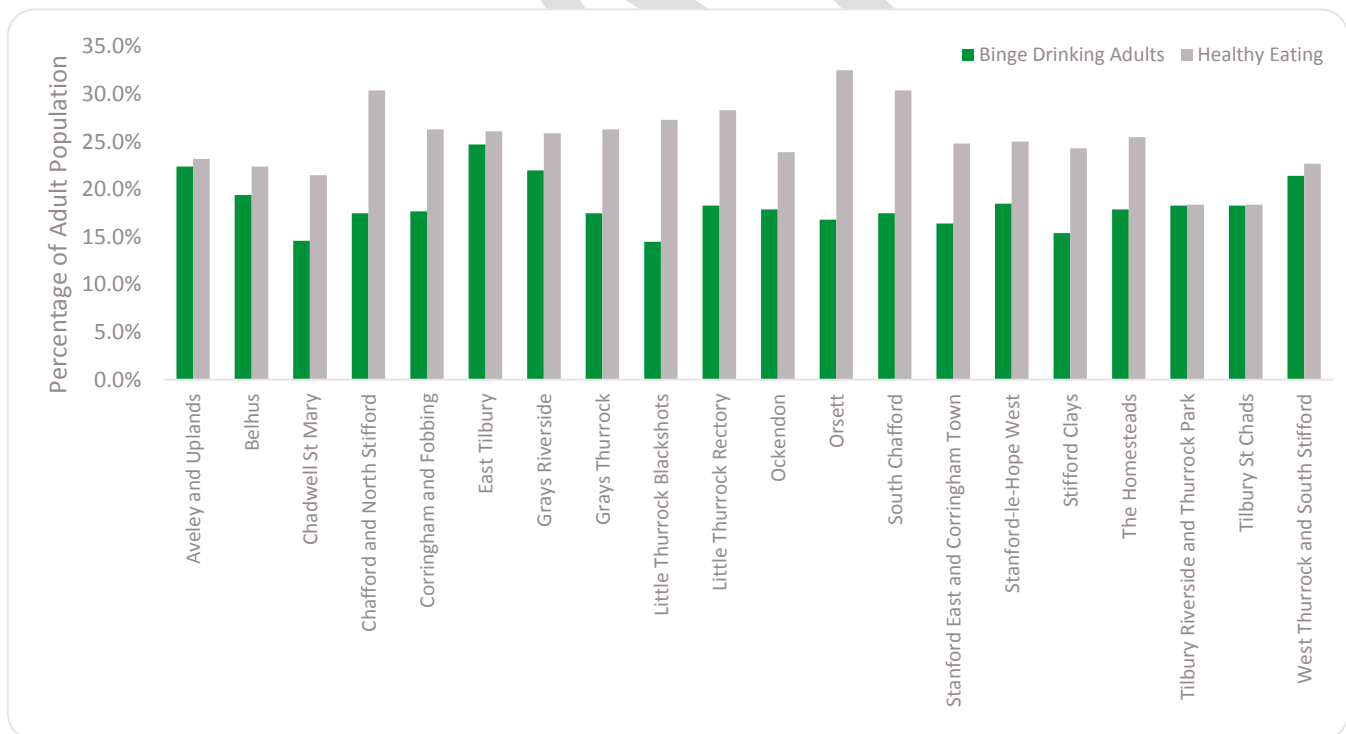


Figure 28 – Percentage of Adults that Binge Drink and Eat Healthy, Source: Adults' Lifestyle 2006-08 (Estimated from MSOA Level Data), Public Health England 2010

## 4. Deprivation

### 4.1 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

Thurrock is ranked 146<sup>th</sup> in the index of multiple deprivation 2010 out of 326 local authorities for average rank. For employment, Thurrock is ranked at 116 and for Income at 111. Five lower super output areas (LSOAs) are in the top 10% of the most deprived and 18 are in the top 25%. In total, 12.4% of people in Thurrock live in the 20% most deprived areas in England. Figure 29 demonstrates the overall IMD rank of each Ward in the borough relative to one another from 1 to 20 together with the following individual domains:

- Income
- Employment
- Health Deprivation and Disability
- Education, Skills and Training
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Crime
- Living Environment

This provides a greater understanding at a ward level as to the specific deprivation being faced by residents. Tilbury St Chads is the most deprived ward followed by Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, and Belhus. Chafford and North Stifford and South Chafford are the least deprived wards in the borough. This follows the trends seen in the socio-economic data analysed. This is also reflected in the ranking for individual domains for income, employment, health, education and crime. A direct correlation can be seen for employment and health ranking, indicating the intrinsic link between these two outcomes.

However, for access to housing and services, Chafford and North Stifford is the most deprived, ahead of Corringham and Fobbing and West Thurrock. There is not a direct correlation between barriers to housing and services and other indicators. This indicator measures physical and financial accessibility to housing and key local services. It relates to geographical barriers to physical proximity of GP surgeries, schools, shops and post offices together with wider barriers relating to housing from affordability to homelessness and overcrowding. For Chafford and North Stifford, this can be assumed to be in part due to lack of affordable housing as it is one of the least deprived areas overall together with its geographical proximity to key services as it is more likely to rely on services from the neighbouring area of Grays with a large town centre. This would present challenges for first time buyers and young people, moving to or wishing to remain in the area, and vulnerable people's ability to access local services. For Belhus, which is ranked third overall for deprivation, and 5<sup>th</sup> for barriers to housing and services, there would be concern that the lack of access to local services together with potentially higher levels of overcrowding and homelessness are contributing to the deprivation in the ward.

The rank for living environment also differs from the trend, with West Thurrock and South Stifford ranked the worst followed by Grays Riverside and Aveley and Uplands. The score assesses the overall environmental quality considering social and private housing in poor condition, houses without central heating, air quality and road traffic accidents.

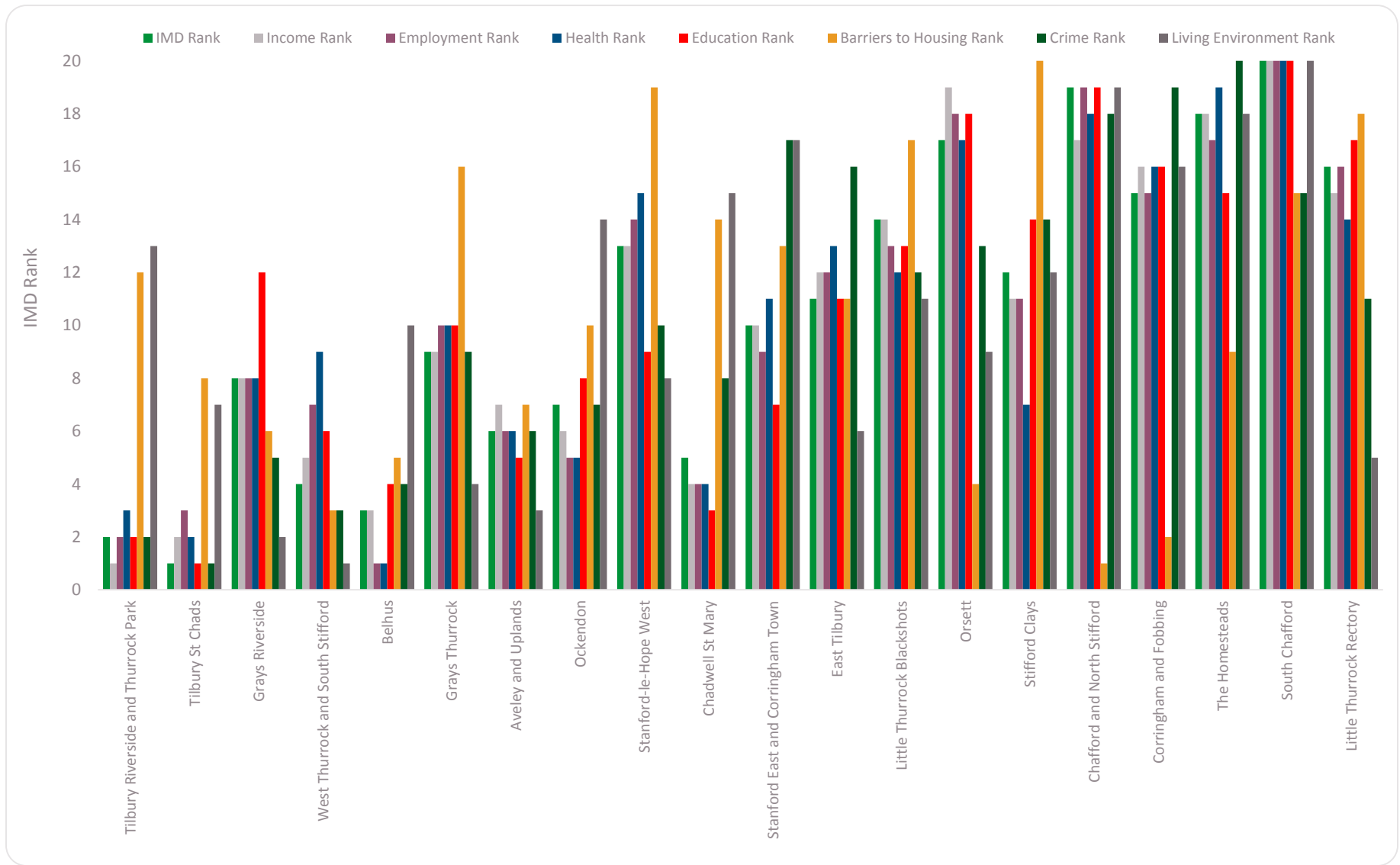


Figure 29 – Indices of Multiple Deprivation Rank by Ward (where 1 is most deprived and 20 is the least deprived ward), Source: English Indices of Deprivation 2010

## 4.2 Income Deprivation Map

The map below visually demonstrates the overall levels of deprivation in each ward across Thurrock. The South West of Thurrock, in particular, has higher levels of deprivation including Ockendon, Aveley and Uplands, Belhus, West Thurrock and South Stifford, Grays Riverside and Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, Tilbury St Chads and Chadwell St. Mary.

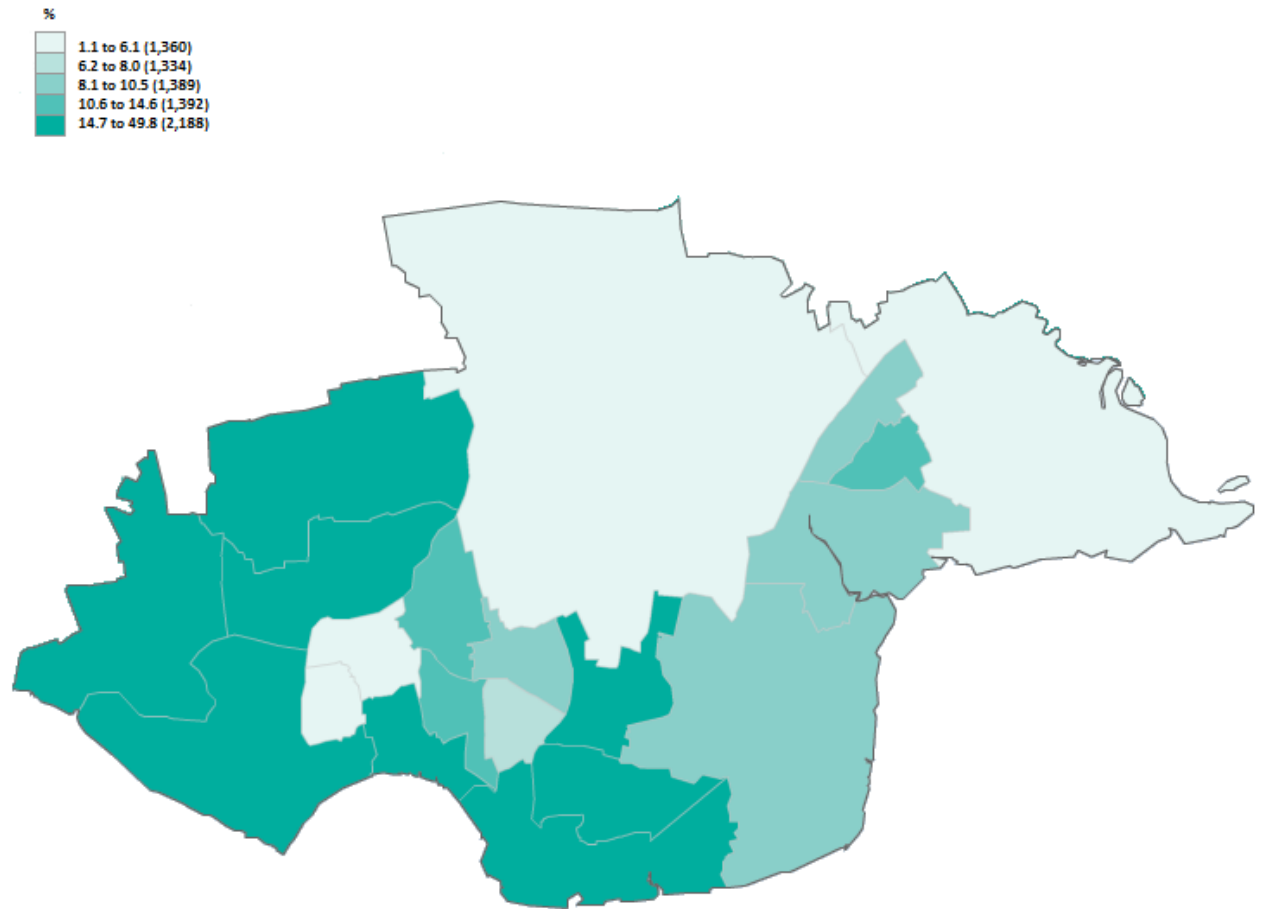


Figure 30 – Income Deprivation Map, Indices of Multiple Deprivation Rank by Ward, Source: English Indices of Deprivation

## 4.3 Household Income

The mean household income ranges from £30,293 in Tilbury St Chads to £62,742 in South Chafford. This significant differential in income is also reflected in the lower quartile income which ranges from £12,321 (close to minimum wage) to £33,588 in South Chafford. Low household income can result in higher numbers of residents claiming housing benefit, which is above average for Thurrock at 11.27% compared with 9.46% nationally, and ultimately impact on their health, wellbeing and ability to sustain a home.



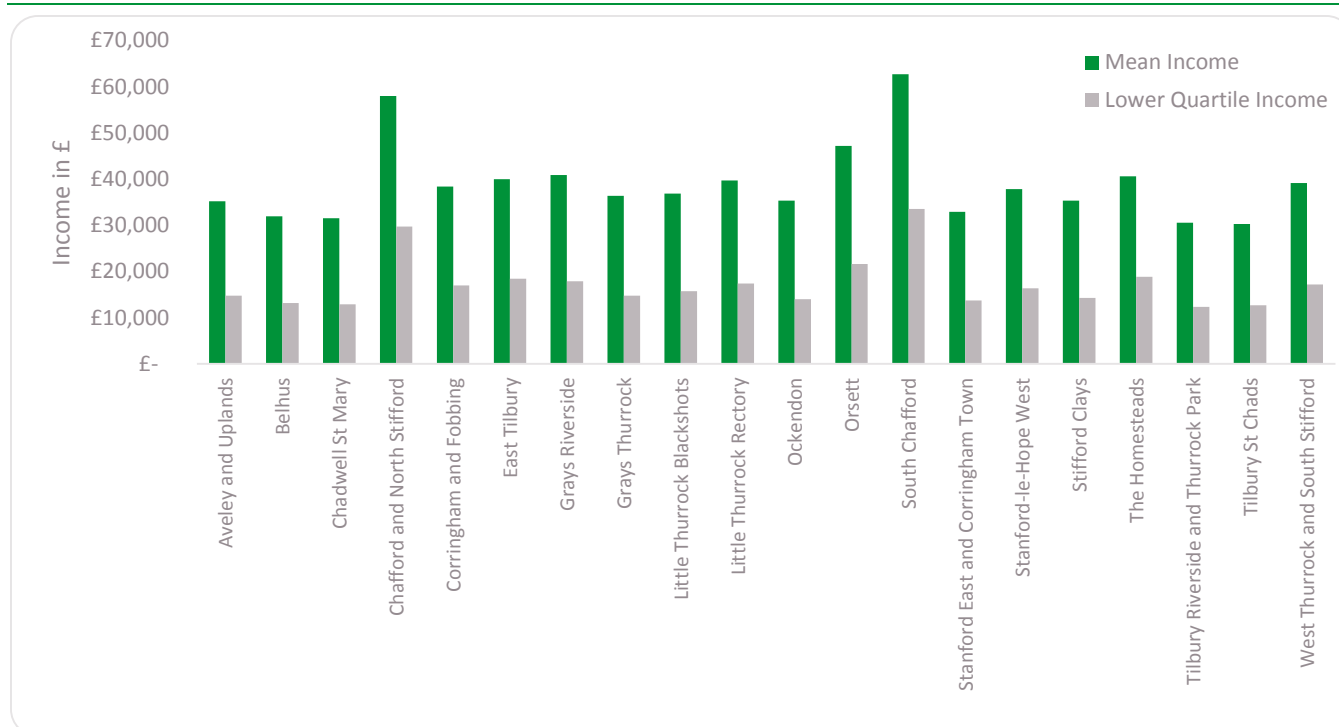


Figure 31 – Mean Income and Lower Quartile Income by Ward, Source: Office for National Statistics

#### 4.4 Health and Wellbeing Indicators

It is recognised that there is an inherent relationship between housing and wider health and wellbeing outcomes. *A stable home provides a building block for everyone as they try to improve their lives and meet their aspirations for a better future*<sup>11</sup>. By understanding the specific challenges faced by residents, the council can better support their needs, preventing crisis and maximising their health and wellbeing.

The Health Profile for Thurrock provides an indication of some of the challenges faced by residents. For Thurrock, the key indicators which are significantly worse than England are shown in Figure 32:

Indicator	Local No Per Year	Thurrock Value	England Value	England Worst	England Best
<b>Child in poverty (under 16s)</b>	7,510	22.0	20.6	43.6	0.0
<b>Violent Crime (violence offences)</b>	1,907	12.0	10.6	27.1	3.3
<b>Breastfeeding Initiation</b>	1,662	69.5	73.9	40.8	94.7
<b>Obese Adults</b>	-	31.4	23.0	35.2	11.2
<b>Excess weight in adults</b>	269	70.8	63.8	75.9	45.9
<b>Life Expectancy at Birth (Female)</b>	-	82.4	83.0	79.5	86.6
<b>Smoking Related Deaths</b>	229	350	292	480	172

Figure 32 – Health Indicators 2014, Source: Health Profile 2014, Source: Thurrock Unitary Authority, Public Health England, 12 August 2014

<sup>11</sup> Laying the Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England, November 2011

## Evidence Base

---

The number of children living in poverty is above the national average and at a ward level varies significantly, with Tilbury St Chads and Tilbury Riverside together with West Thurrock estimated to have the greatest numbers of children living in poverty at 41% and 33.2% respectively. Child poverty has a significant impact on the children's potential from educational attainment to life expectancy. *In addition, children living in poverty are almost twice as likely to live in bad housing*<sup>12</sup>. This highlights the importance of school interventions and working with families to tackle the inequalities faced by children before they present issues in later life and require crisis intervention.

Violent crime, in terms of violent offences, is above average for Thurrock and includes physical attack and threats of assault such as sexual violence, alcohol and drug related violence, gang violence, domestic violence and hate crimes. Comparison of crime statistics from 2012/13 and 2013/14 demonstrate that overall crime is decreasing but sexual offences has seen a 13% rise and violence against a person a 16% rise. Being a victim of violent crime can lead to homelessness with 43% of homeless people a previous victim of violent crime<sup>13</sup>. Tackling violence and anti-social behavior is critical to preventing homelessness, helping residents to feel safe in their local community and be protected from persecution. Housing plays a key role in preventing crime and creating communities that are safe and inclusive.

Breastfeeding initiation is below average in Thurrock and can impact on other health indicators as it has many health benefits for both the mother and infant. It protects against childhood illnesses and also reduces the risk of childhood obesity – for which Thurrock has above average levels. In addition, it has also been shown that breastfeeding can be associated with high intelligence quotient, impacting on educational attainment<sup>14</sup>.

The life expectancy for females is significantly below the average for England and male life expectancy is also slightly below average. Life expectancy provides an indication of the overall health of the population and deprivation. By supporting, educating and empowering residents to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, low life expectancy can be overcome and the inequalities between wards reduced. Housing and regeneration plays a central role in achieving this and highlights the importance of a holistic approach to supporting residents.

Obese Adults and Excess Weight in Adults are two indicators that are well above the national average with obese adults one of the worst in England. This has been recognised in Thurrock's Corporate Strategy, together with the high levels of smoking, as an issue to tackle.

---

<sup>12</sup> Child Poverty Action Group, The Impact of Poverty, <http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/impact-poverty>, accessed December 2014

<sup>13</sup> Tackling homelessness and exclusion: Understanding Complex Lives, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Theresa Mc Donagh, September 2011

<sup>14</sup> Early Initiation of Breastfeeding, World Health Organisation, [http://www.who.int/elena/titles/early\\_breastfeeding/en/](http://www.who.int/elena/titles/early_breastfeeding/en/), accessed December 2014

# Current Housing Stock

## 5. Existing Housing Stock

### 5.1 Household Composition

Thurrock has above average numbers of couples (married, civil partnerships and cohabiting) with dependent children compared with the East of England and below average numbers with no dependent children. This would suggest greater number of families with younger children as mirrored in the population statistics. Lone parents with dependent children is also above average at 7.6%. Equally, the number of older people aged 65 and over living alone is below average at 10.2% as are families all aged over 65 at 6.4% as reflected in the age distribution for the borough. This demonstrates the need for family housing together with affordable accommodation for younger people as they move out from the family home.

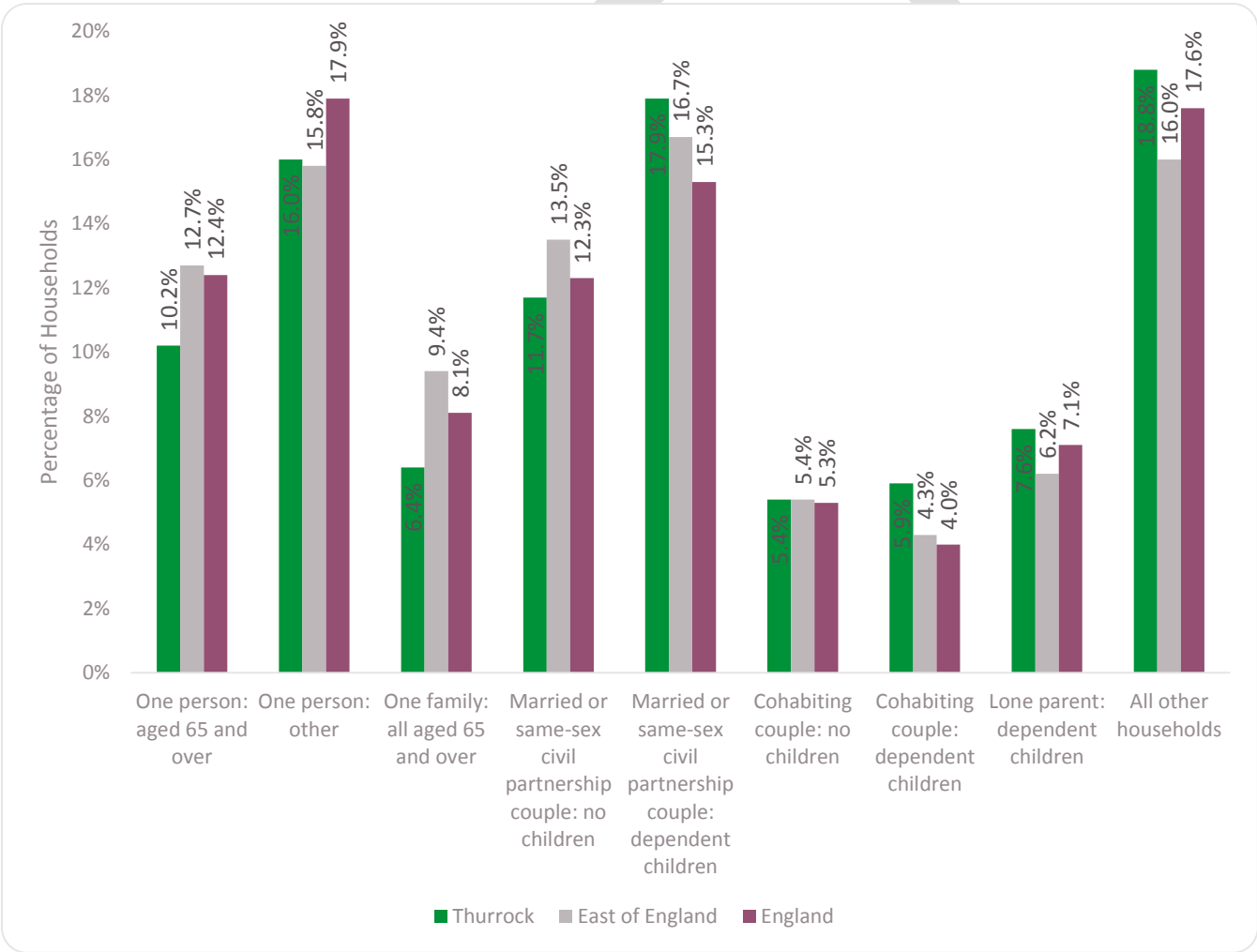


Figure 33 – Household Composition, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

## 5.2 Accommodation Type

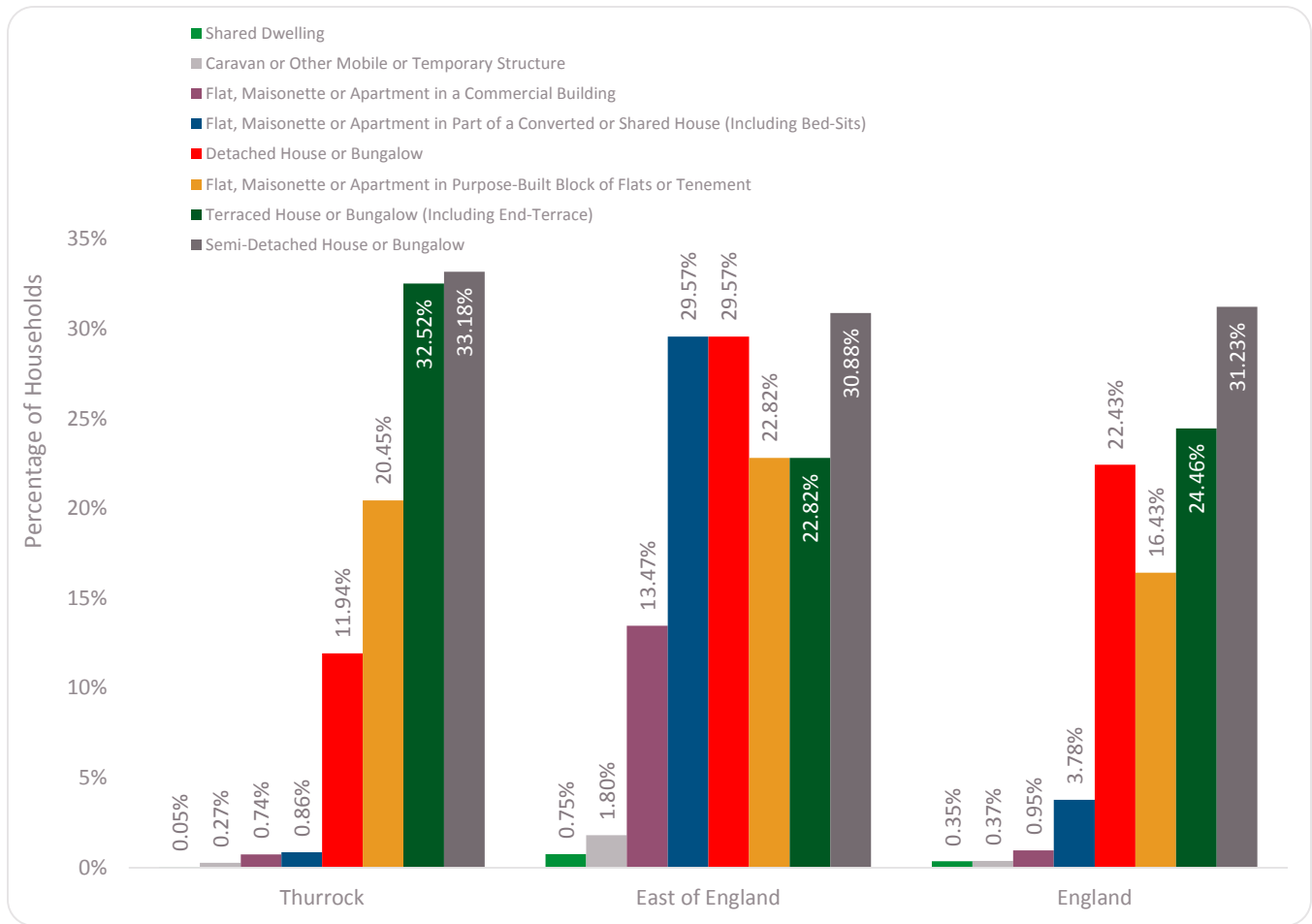


Figure 34 – Accommodation Type, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

Two thirds of houses (65.7%) in Thurrock are semidetached and terraced houses or bungalows, above average for the region (53.7%) and nationally (55.7%). In contrast, Thurrock has much lower proportions of detached houses (11.94%) compared to the East of England (29.57%) and England (22.43%). Flats in purpose built blocks are the third largest proportion of households at 20.45%, below the regional average but above the national average of 16.43%. Only 0.05% of households comprise shared dwellings compared with a regional average of 0.75% and temporary structures account for 0.27% of households compared with 1.8% for the region and 0.37% nationally.

## 5.3 Local Authority Dwelling Stock

Council owned stock totals 10,140 properties for Thurrock, of which 1,222 is sheltered housing and extra care housing and 8,918 general needs homes. Half of the general needs properties are three bedroom homes with 25% two bedroom and 18% one bedroom. The large majority of one and two bedroom properties are medium and high rise flats with Thurrock having above average proportions compared with the regional average. This would be in part as a result of the close proximity of Thurrock to London compared with other local authorities in the East of England. The number of houses is also above the regional and national average.

Bedrooms	Sheltered Housing	General Needs Housing	Total
Studio	-	249	249
One Bed	1,211	1,649	2,860
Two Bed	11	2,296	2,307
Three Bed	-	4,520	4,520
Four Bed	-	199	199
Five Bed	-	3	3
Six Bed	-	2	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>8,918</b>	<b>10,140</b>

Figure 35 – Thurrock Council Owned Stock, Source: Thurrock Council, December 2014

The table below demonstrates the spread of council housing across Thurrock. The bigger pockets of stock largely correlate with those wards that are more deprived.

Stock by Ward			
Ward	Sheltered	General Needs	Total
Aveley and Uplands	107	646	753
Belhus	62	1222	1284
Chadwell St. Mary	131	1256	1387
Chafford and North Stifford	0	10	10
Corringham and Fobbing	0	52	52
East Tilbury	0	78	78
Grays Riverside	0	600	600
Grays Thurrock	236	405	641
Little Thurrock Blackshots	0	269	269
Little Thurrock Rectory	72	33	105
Ockendon	32	1068	1100
Orsett	0	114	114
Stanford East and Corringham Town	201	376	577
Stanford-le-Hope West	22	217	239
Stifford Clays	125	452	577
The Homesteads	0	54	54
Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park	137	787	924
Tilbury St. Chads	38	772	810
West Thurrock and South Stifford	67	532	599
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1230</b>	<b>8943</b>	<b>10173</b>

Figure 36 – Local Authority Stock, Thurrock Council Statistics, January 2015

### 5.4 Local Authority Dwelling Stock Condition

Figure 37 below demonstrates the SAP rating of Thurrock’s stock by ward. Corringham and Fobbing and Orsett have the lowest SAP ratings on average with Little Thurrock Rectory representing the highest. Overall the average SAP rating for Thurrock stock is 57. Nearly a quarter of Thurrock’s stock was built pre 1950s which would typically be associated with less energy efficient homes. These tend to be semi-detached and small terraced homes built pre 1945. The SAP rating is an important indicator of the energy efficiency of the home with more energy efficient homes reducing the risk of fuel poverty.



Figure 37 – Local Authority Stock, Thurrock Council Statistics, January 2015

### 5.5 Occupancy Rating



Figure 38 – Occupancy Rating (Bedrooms) 2011, Source: Office for National Statistics, Updated 2014

Thurrock has above average number of households that are overcrowded, totaling 5.4% compared with 3.4% for the East of England and 4.6% for England. With the large number of families with dependent children in the borough, this could suggest the need for larger family housing together with affordable accommodation to enable children to move on from the family home. Nearly two thirds of households were under occupying but an above average number of households have the exact number of rooms required.

## 6. Tenure

### 6.1 Home Ownership

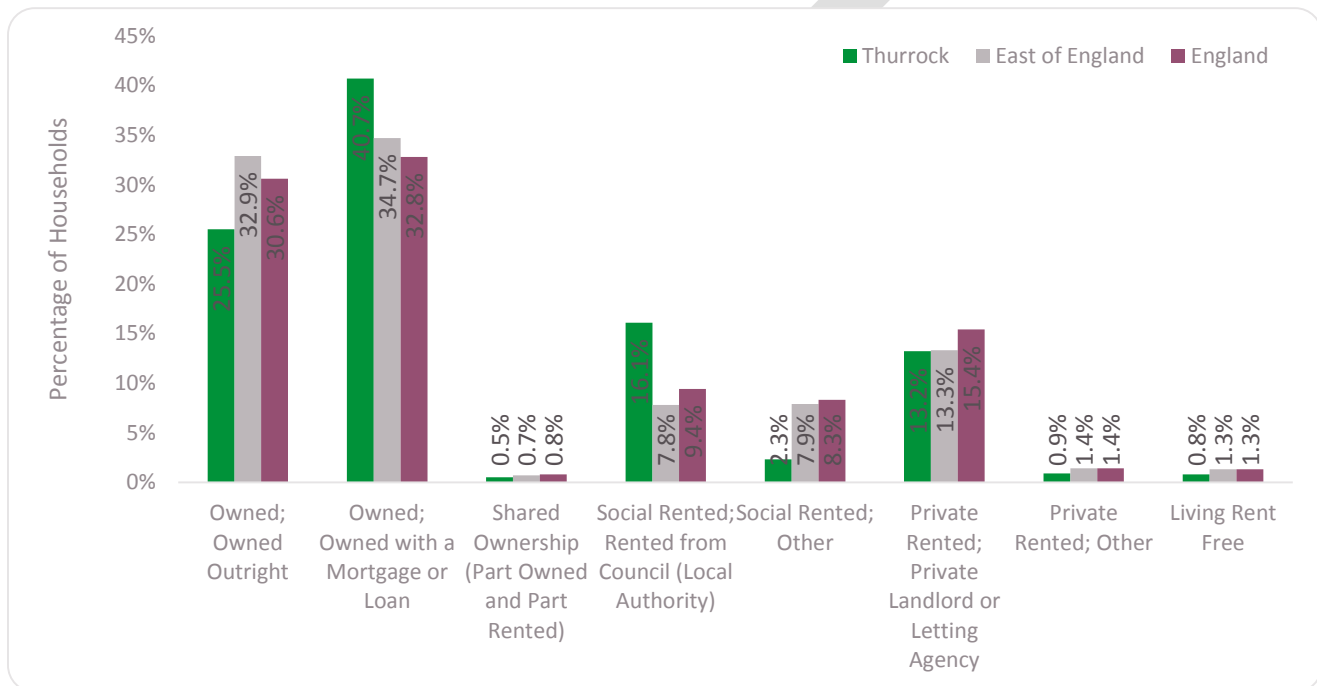


Figure 39 – Home Ownership 2011, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

Two thirds of households in Thurrock own a home with the majority (40.7%) owning with a mortgage or loan, significantly above the regional and national averages. Equally, Thurrock has over double the percentage of households socially renting from the council at 16.1% compared with the regional average of 7.8%. The percentage of social rented properties from Registered Providers is considerably lower at 2.9%. The number privately renting is in line with the regional average at 13.2% and below the national average of 15.4%. Further details of home ownership at a ward level demonstrates that The Homesteads has high proportions of home ownership totaling 89.5% whilst Grays Riverside and Tilbury Riverside have significantly lower percentages at 47.9% and 45.5% respectively. For Tilbury Riverside, the lower levels of home ownership are due to the above average number of households renting from the council at 32.5%, however, for Grays Riverside, it is the high proportions of households renting privately from a landlord or letting agent at 32.9%. Tilbury St Chads and Chadwell Mary have the highest levels of council housing in Thurrock at 34.5% and 34.9% respectively, well above regional and national averages. South Chafford and Chafford and North Stifford have the lowest levels of council housing at just 0.7% and 0.8%. This can be considered to contribute to Chafford and North Stifford having the highest IMD rank for barriers to housing and services due to the lack of affordable social housing in the area.

**Evidence Base**

Chafford and North Stifford also has below average levels of private rented housing (14.9%) whilst South Chafford has the third highest proportion of private rented housing of any ward at 25.1%.

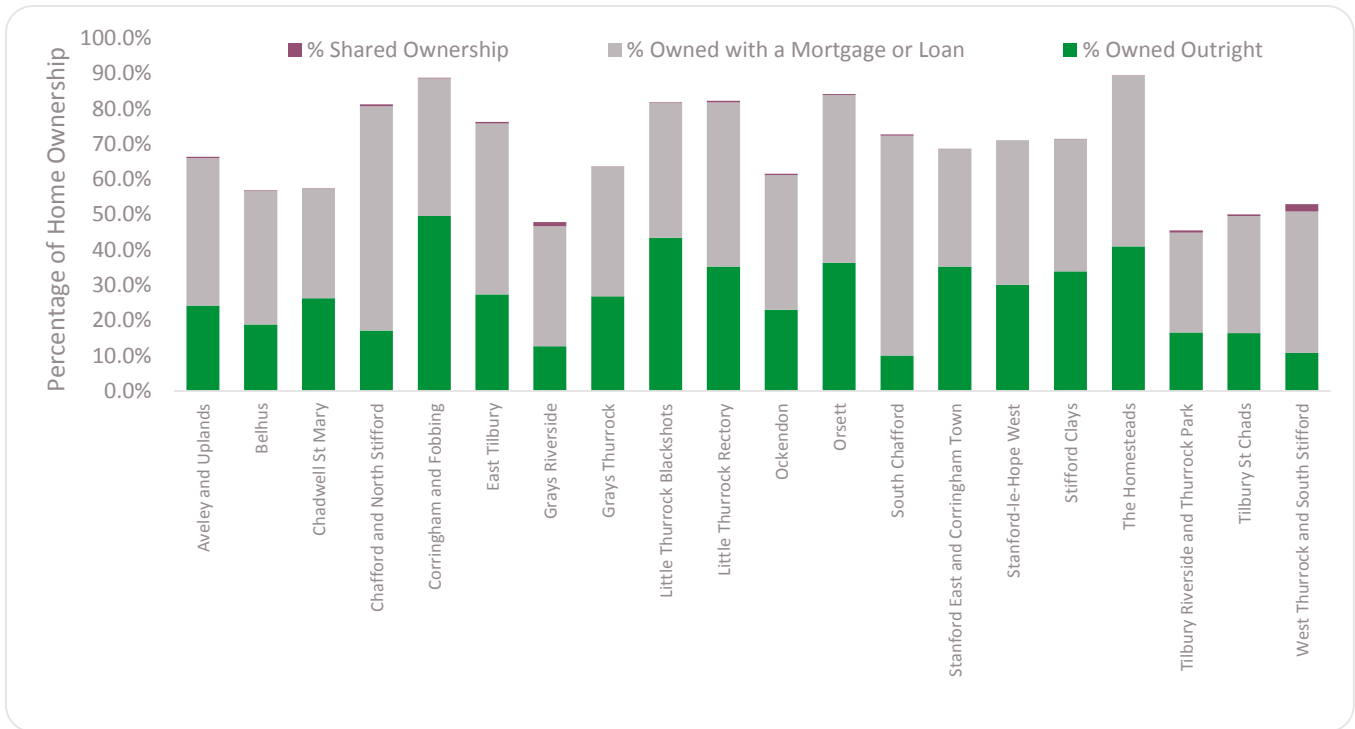


Figure 40 – Home Ownership by Ward, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics



Figure 41 – Renting by Ward, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics



## 6.2 Empty Homes

The number of empty homes in the borough has reduced from 2001 to 2011 with comparatively low numbers compared to the rest of the Thames Gateway South Essex region. The majority of empty homes remain in the private sector at 87%.

## 6.3 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The number of households living in HMOs has seen a significant increase in the ten year period to 2011, most noticeably for students with a six fold increase.

	2001	2011	Change from 2001 to 2011	Percentage Change from 2001 to 2011
<b>Students</b>	6	44	+38	633.3%
<b>Other Households</b>	1,517	2,532	+1,015	66.9%
<b>Total</b>	1,523	2,576	+1,053	69.1%

Figure 42 – Houses in Multiple Occupation, Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics

## Current Housing Market

### 7. Housing Supply

#### 7.1 Supply of New Homes

##### 7.1.1 Dwelling Started and Completed

The total number of starts on site in Thurrock for 2013-2014 was 260, of which 84.6% was by private enterprises and the remainder from housing associations. This has been the trend from 2011/12 onwards. In the last financial year 2013-14, there were 330 starts on site and 260 completions, of which 270 and 220 were private enterprises respectively. Housing Associations accounted for 70 of the dwellings started and 40 of those completed in the period. The lower level of activity from housing associations corresponds with the below average percentage of stock held by Registered Providers in Thurrock, however, within the past three years there has been a steady increase in the number of dwellings started.

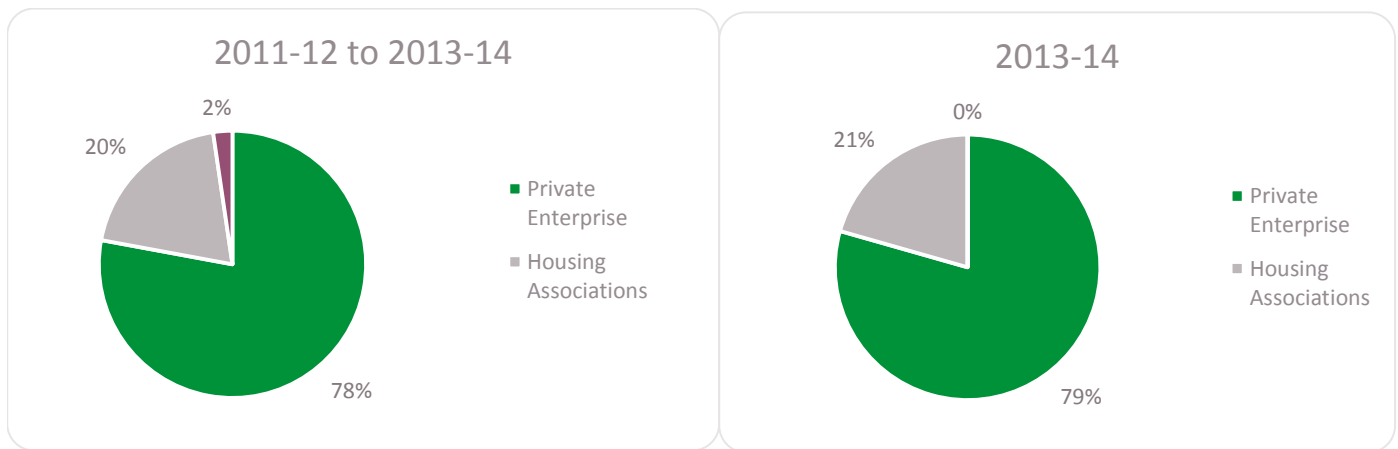


Figure 43 - Starts on Site 2011-12 to 2013-14, Source: DCLG

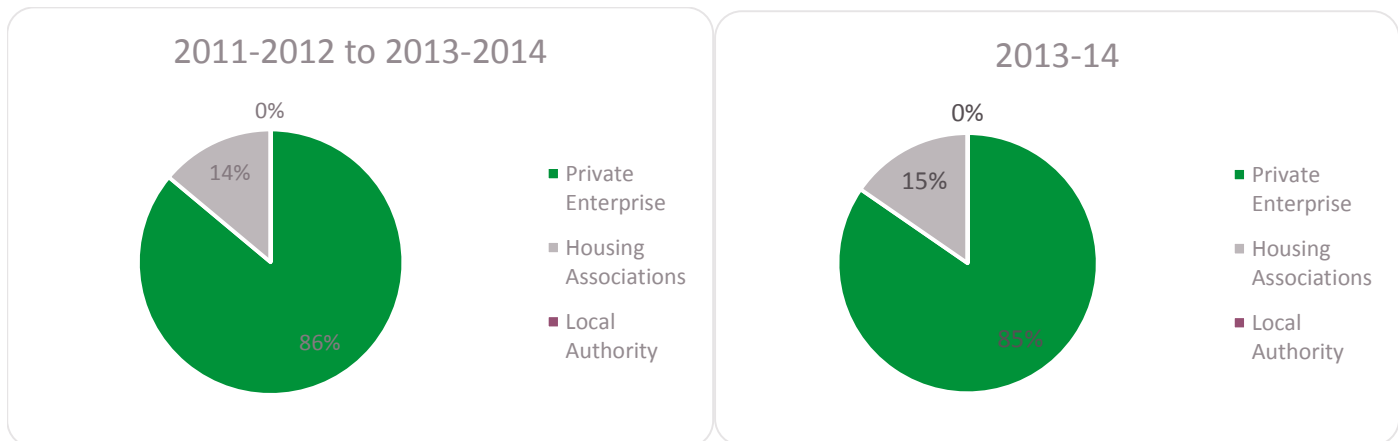


Figure 44 – Completions on Site 2011-12 to 2013-14, Source: DCLG

### 7.1.2 Net Additional Dwellings

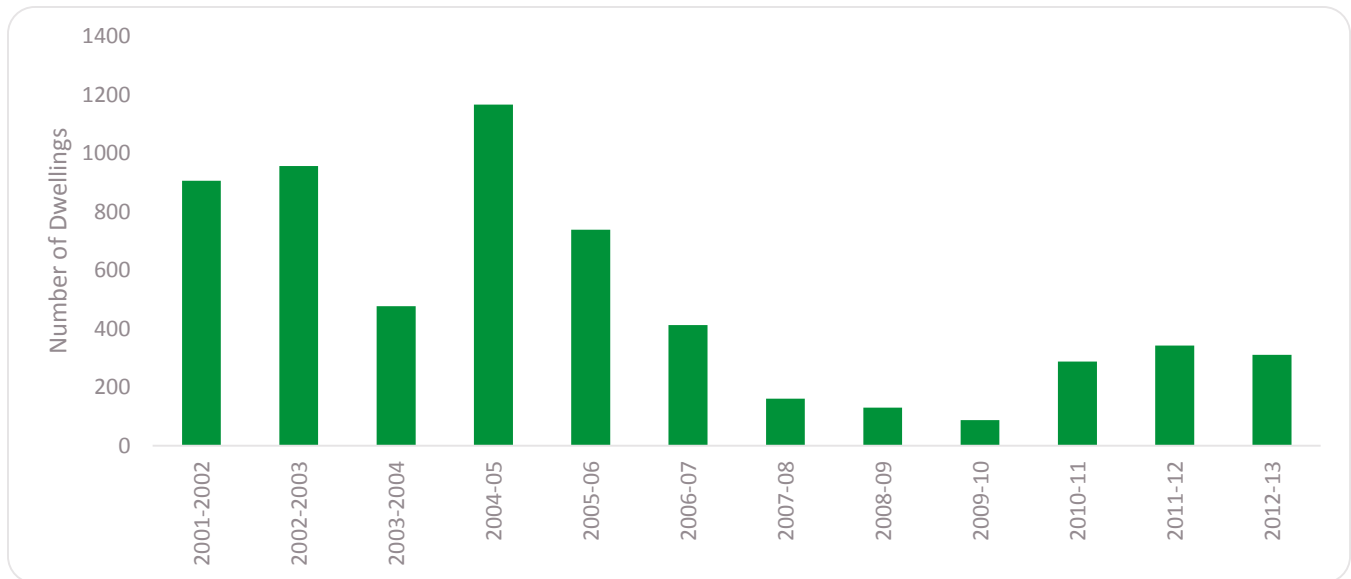


Figure 45 – Net Additional Dwellings Per Year, Source: Annual Monitoring Report 2013

In the period 2001 to 2013, 5980 net additional dwellings were completed representing an average build rate of 498 per annum. There were 311 net additional dwellings during 2012/13. This figure accounts for the dwelling losses of 90 flats at Marston House, New Road, Grays that were demolished as part of the Thurrock Learning Campus scheme.

### 7.1.3 Net Affordable Housing Completions

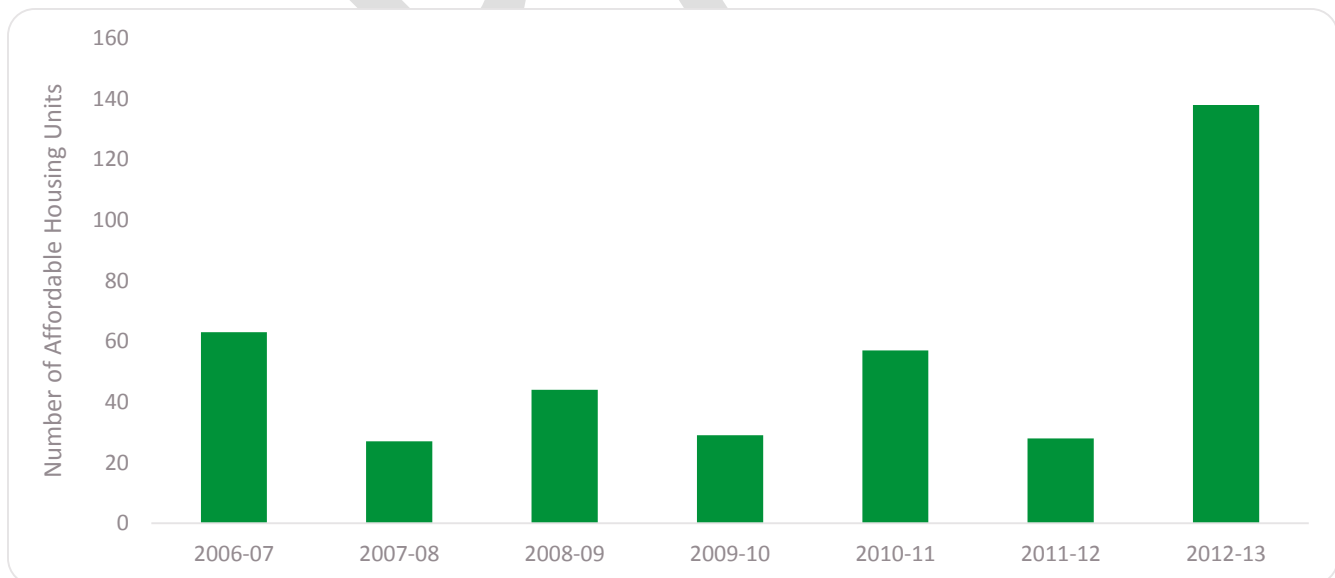


Figure 46 – Net Affordable Housing Completions, Source: Annual Monitoring Report 2013

## Evidence Base

The number of affordable homes completed increased considerably in 2012-13 to 138 compared with an average of 41 units per annum for the previous year 2006-07 through to 2011-12. This sharp increase was in part due to all of the affordable housing element of two sites being completed in 2012-13. Overall in 2012-13, 38.1% of the total number of dwellings on site liable to affordable housing provision was delivered as so. The Local Development Framework states *'the Council will seek a minimum provision of 35% of residential units to be provided as Affordable Housing'*<sup>15</sup>.

### 7.1.4 Planning Decisions

In the year to September 2014, 45 major planning decisions were made by Thurrock, 82% of which were granted. 73% of the decisions were made within 13 weeks, slightly below the national average of 77% in the same period. In total, 72% of all major and minor planning decisions were granted<sup>16</sup>. For residential development, Thurrock granted 10 major and 62 minor residential development decisions in the year ending September 2014, equating to 63% and 29% of applications respectively. Of the major residential development decisions, 81% were granted within 13 weeks (or agreed time) in line with the national average and 94% of minor residential decisions were granted within 8 weeks (or agreed time) compared with 62% nationally<sup>17</sup>.

## 7.2 Private Rented Sector

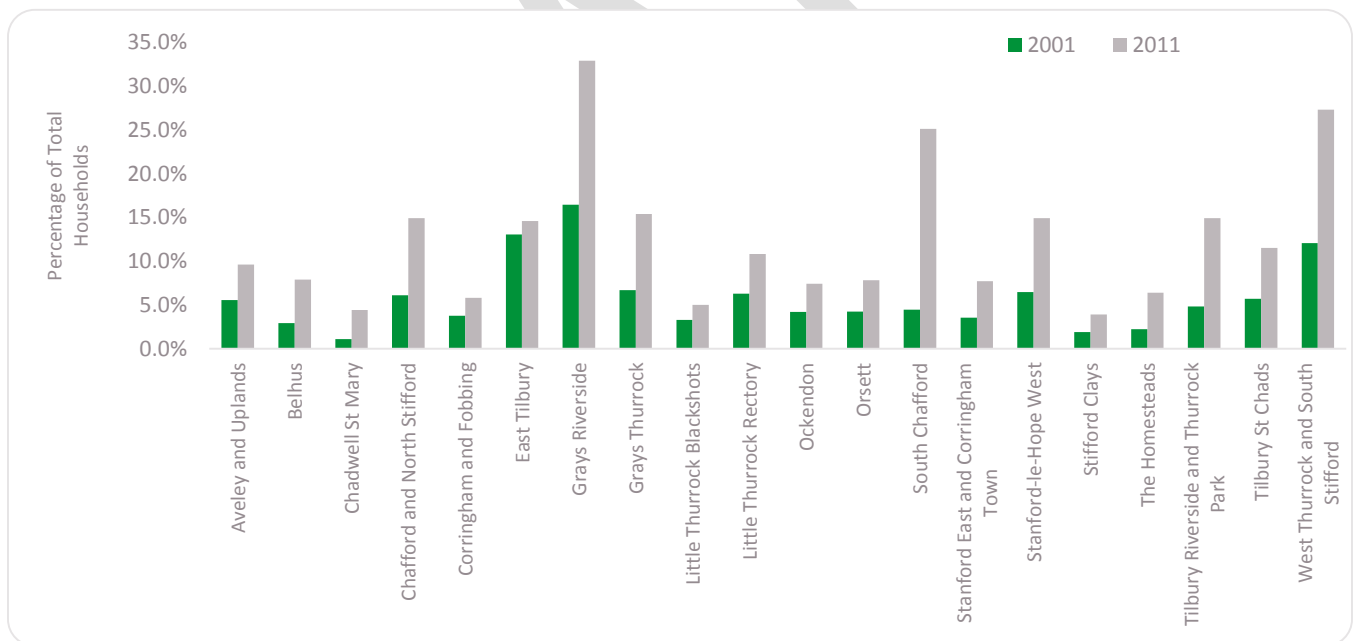


Figure 47 – Number of Households Privately Renting from Landlord or Letting Agency as a Percentage of Total Households, Source: Census 2001 and 2011, Office for National Statistics, January 2013

<sup>15</sup> Annual Monitoring Report, For the Local Development Framework, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, Thurrock Council

<sup>16</sup> Table P132: Planning Decisions, by development type, speed of decision and district planning authority, DCLG, December 2014

<sup>17</sup> Table P136: District Planning Authorities – Planning Decisions on Major and Minor Residential Development and Speed of Decision by District Planning Authority, DCLG, December 2014

There has been a significant rise in the number of households privately renting from 2001 to 2011 seen at a national and local level. In Thurrock, the private rented sector has grown from 5.9% in 2001 to 13.2% in 2011, representing a marked increase and is greater than the growth at a regional and national level in ten year period, bringing the percentage of households renting from a private landlord or letting agent in line with regional average of 13.3% for 2011. At a ward level, Tilbury Riverside, Chadwell St Mary and South Chafford have seen the greatest growth in the private rented sector with the number of households in South Chafford privately renting increasing from less than 5% in 2001 to 25% in 2011. Only three wards have seen below average increases in the private rented sector, most interestingly East Tilbury which started with well above average levels in 2001 at 13.1% but grew to only 14.6% in 2011. As of 2011, South Chafford together with West Thurrock (27.3%) and Grays Riverside (32.9%) have the greatest percentage of households privately renting of any wards.

### 7.3 Housing Waiting List

In Thurrock, over 650 households are in urgent need for re-housing and can only move to affordable housing. Nearly half of the demand (49%) is for one bedroom properties, highlighting the lack of affordable accommodation for single households in the borough, with only 18% of the current council stock one bedroom properties. 94% of applicants aged 65 and over required a one bedroom property and comprised 10% of total applicants. Across all ages, 35% of applicants on the waiting list required a two bedroom property and 12% a three bedroom.

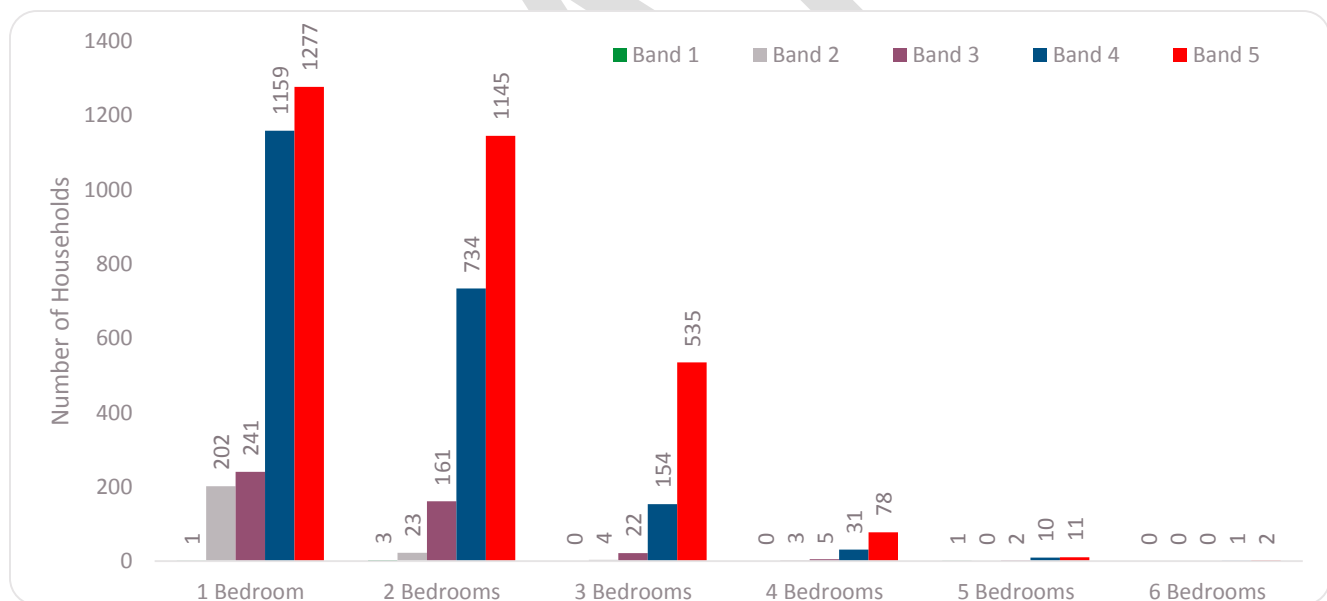


Figure 48 – Number of Households on Waiting List, Source: Thurrock Council, December 2013

## 7.4 Homelessness

The rate of Statutory Homelessness in Thurrock is 1.7 compared with 2.4 for England, indicating that it is significantly better than the England average<sup>18</sup>. Figure 49 summarises the levels of homelessness in Thurrock within the past year.

	First part of 14-15	Second part of 13-14	Variance
Average number of new approaches made to the team	200	155	0.29
Average no. of cases where homelessness is prevented/relieved	85	59	0.44
Average number of prevention cases closed	77	45	0.71
Average number of households in Temporary accommodation	74	65	0.14
Average number of homeless applications received	29	38	-0.24
Average number of homeless decision taken	29	38	-0.24
Average period living in self-contained accommodations in weeks	28	40	-0.31
Average period living in furnished lets in weeks	18	14	0.26
Average period living in a Hostel in weeks	16	12	0.33
Average number of duty accepted	13	10	0.3
Average period living in a B&B in weeks	8	8	0.02
Average number of households assisted to move to PRS	3	9	-0.67

Figure 49 – Homeless Data, Source: Thurrock Council Statistics, January 2015

### 7.4.1 Homeless Acceptances

Thurrock Homelessness Acceptances per 1,000 households are generally in line with the national figures when taken as year on year average, although, at a local authority level on a quarterly basis, the numbers fluctuate due to the smaller counts of homeless people. This has remained fairly consistent between 2011 and 2014.

<sup>18</sup> Health Profile 2014, Thurrock Unitary Authority, Public Health England, 12 August 2014

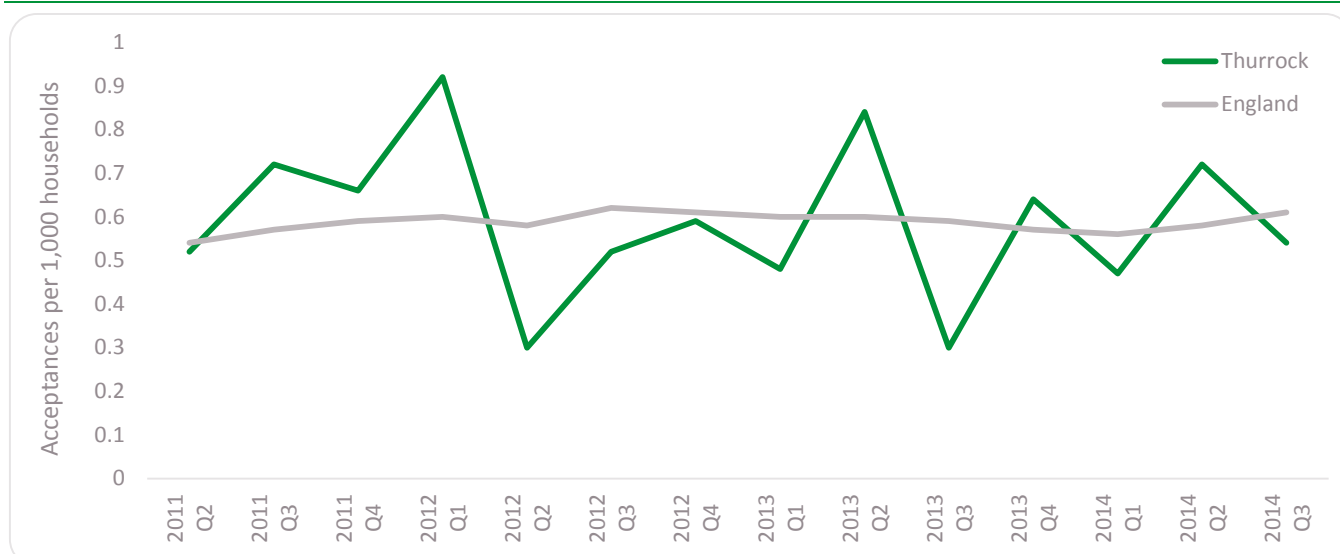


Figure 50 – Homeless Acceptances per 1,000 Households for Thurrock and England, Source: Homelessness Acceptances per 1,000 Households, DCLG, December 2013

#### 7.4.2 Homeless Causes

The most common cause of homelessness is the termination of assured shorthold tenancy at 29%, demonstrating the importance of engaging and working with private landlords. This is followed by ‘parents no longer willing or able to accommodate’ at 23%, higher than the regional and national averages. This would indicate the need for suitable affordable accommodation for young people in the borough to enable them to move on from the family home. In comparison, the number of people that become homeless as a result of other relatives and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate is below average.

#### 7.4.3 Homeless Outcomes

As of December 2014, 224 homeless households were awaiting housing, of which 2.6% were aged 65 and over and 8% aged 18 to 24. 45% of households awaiting housing were due to medical needs. From 2007 to 2013, the average number of homeless households housed was 108, of which on average the greatest proportion were on medical grounds.

Reason for housing need	Average number of Households Housed per annum
Medical grounds	71
Living in overcrowded housing conditions	18
Living in unfit housing condition	29
All categories	108

Figure 51 – Average number of homeless households housed by reason, averages are based on applicants housed by Thurrock Council between 2007 and 2013, Source: Thurrock Council, December 2014

## Evidence Base

The graph below demonstrates the number of cases where positive action was successful in preventing or relieving homelessness. Prevention of homelessness through supporting people to remain in their existing home or sourcing alternative accommodation has seen a marked increase in 2013-14 and is now above the national average. This highlights the positive approach taken by the council in recent years, focusing on prevention.

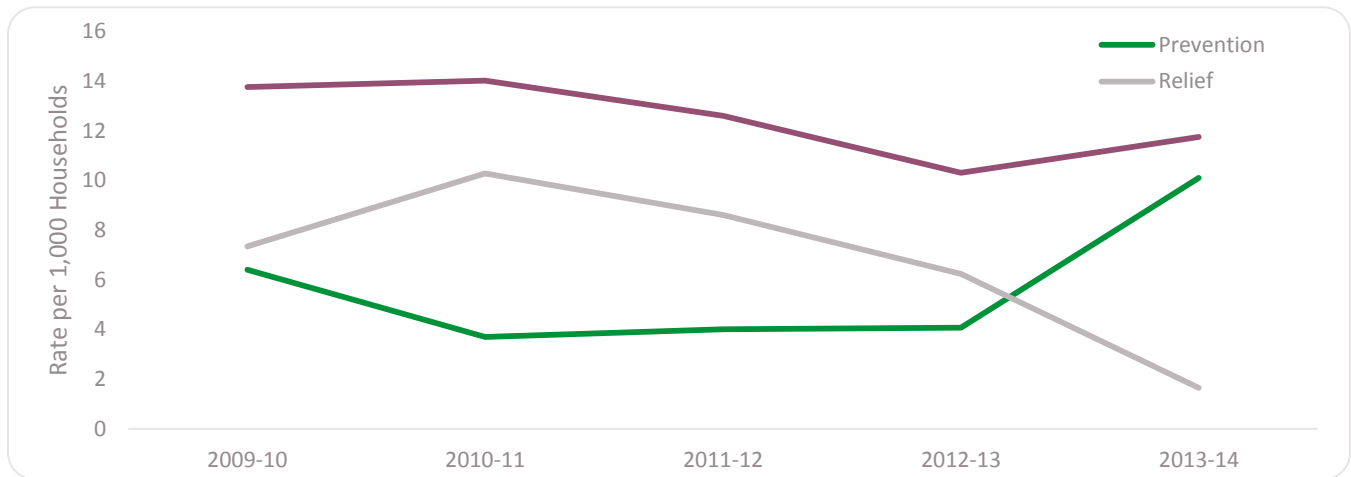


Figure 52 – Homelessness Prevention and Relief, Source: Table 792 - Total reported cases of homelessness prevention and relief by outcome and local authority, 2013/14, DCLG

### 7.4.4 Households in Temporary Accommodation

The large majority of households in temporary accommodation comprised furnished lets and hostels. In total, 65 households were in temporary accommodation with an average time of 19 weeks. The use of Bed and Breakfasts are minimal and the average time six weeks.

Temporary Accommodation	No. of Households	Average of Weeks in TA
<b>Total</b>	65	19
<b>in B&amp;B</b>	2	6
<b>in Hostel</b>	23	9
<b>in Furnished let</b>	37	23
<b>in Self-Contained</b>	3	47

Figure 53 – Households in Temporary Accommodation, Source: Thurrock Council Statistics, January 2015



## 8. Affordability

### 8.1 Average House Prices

The average house price in Thurrock is behind the national average and those for the Thames Gateway South Essex Sub Region, and as of 2012 had not reached levels seen at the peak before the recession. The SHMA demonstrates that over the longer term to 2011, house prices have doubled in the borough, although this rate of growth has not been felt in recent years. This impacts on the ability to attract developers into the borough and the viability of schemes values with low residential land values.

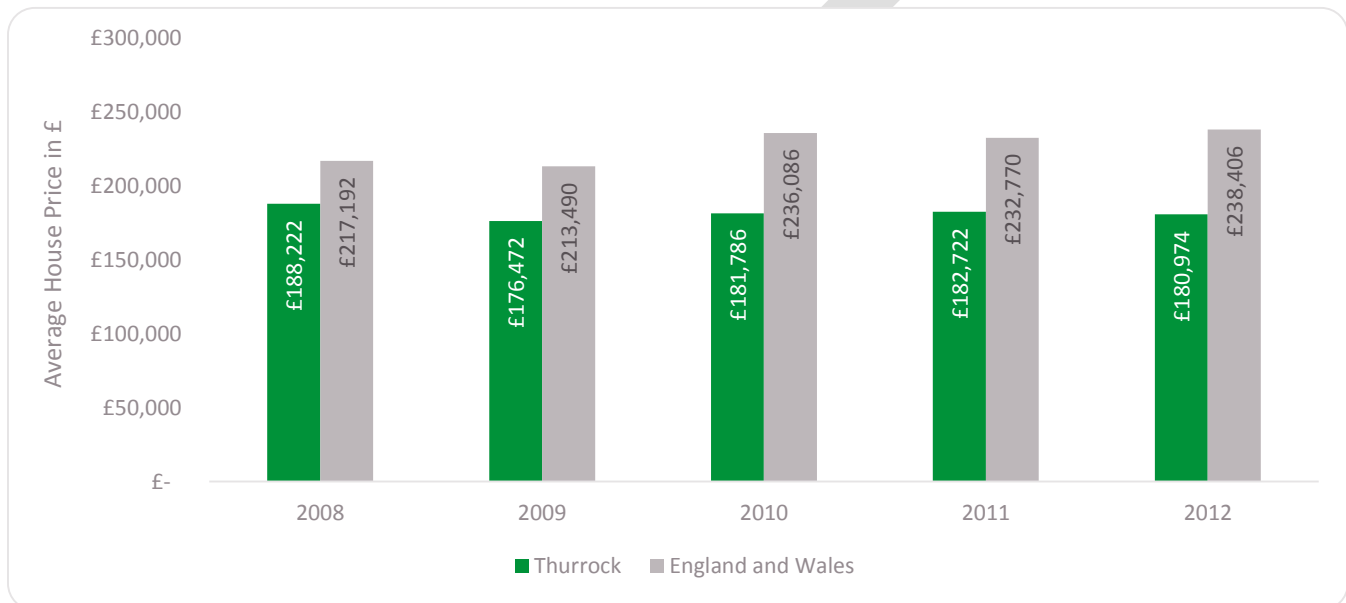


Figure 54 – Average House Prices, Source: Mean House Prices Based on Land Registry, Office for National Statistics

**Evidence Base**

In 2012, the average house price across Thurrock was £112,000 for a one bedroom flat, £145,000 for a 2 bedroom flat and £244,000 for a three bedroom home in the context of the below areas within the borough. Tilbury represents the area with the lowest values across the spectrum. Chadwell is the most expensive for houses and flats although Grays represents the highest average value for one bedroom flats at £129,127.

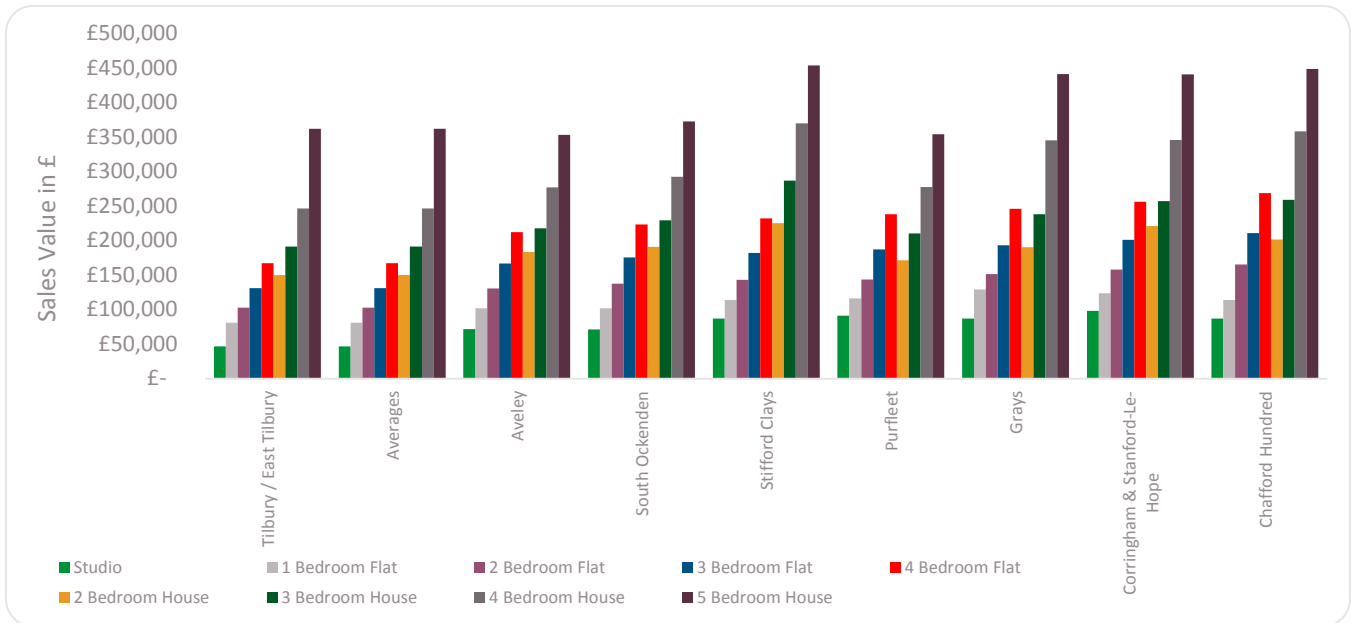


Figure 55 – Sales Value in LSOA 2012, Source: Stage 1: Market Research and Affordability Analysis, pod LLP, September 2012

**8.2 Rents**

**8.2.1 Private Sector Rents**



Figure 56 – Monthly Average Private Sector Rents, Source: Private Rental Market Statistics 2014, Valuation Office Agency

The average private sector market rent as of September 2014 across all categories was £781 per month, above the regional and national averages of £705 and £742 pcm. This is most apparent for 3 bedroom homes, potentially indicating increased demand for this property size. The mean and lower quartile weekly rental prices for all categories remain above the Local Housing Allowance demonstrating the lack of affordability in the private rented sector and increased demand amongst social housing. There has been an above average increase in the number of households claiming housing benefit in the private rented sector at 6.7% above the national average of 5.1%.

Category	Mean Weekly Rent	Lower Quartile Weekly Rent	Local Housing Allowance
1 bedroom	£139.62	£ 129.23	£ 65.65
2 bedrooms	£174.00	£ 161.54	£ 126.92
3 bedrooms	£217.62	£ 196.15	£ 159.66
4 bedrooms	£296.08	£ 276.92	£ 256.39

Figure 57 – Weekly Rent (calculated) compared to LHA, Source: Private Rental Market Statistics 2014, Valuation Office Agency

Despite the above average rental values, the 7% growth in average monthly rental value in recent years is below the national and regional figures of 12% and 8% respectively. However, in the last quarter, growth was in line with the national increases.

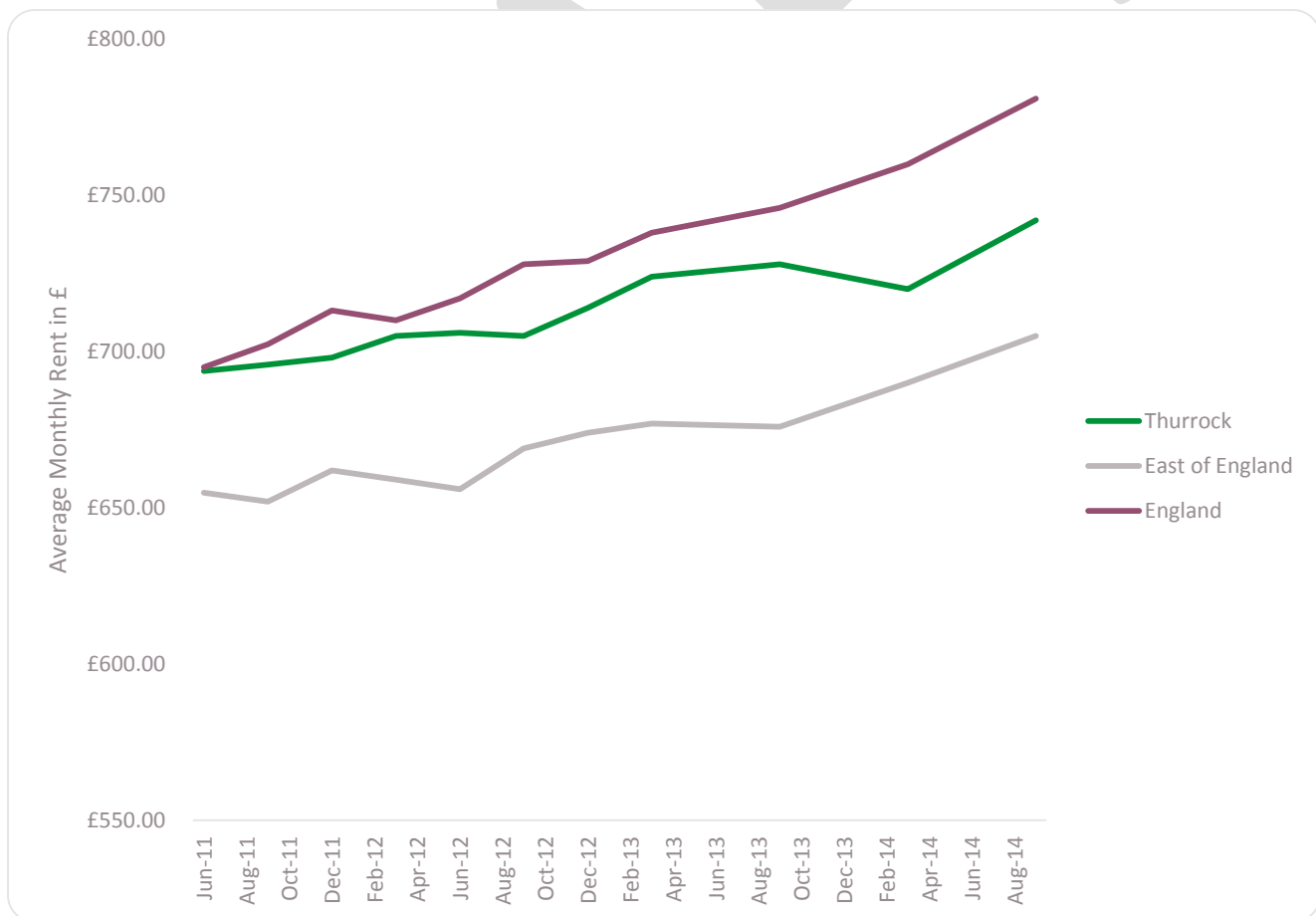


Figure 58 - Monthly Average Private Sector Rents from 2011 to 2014, Source: Private Rental Market Statistics 2014, Valuation Office Agency

### 8.2.2 Social Housing Rents

The graph below demonstrates the average weekly Local Authority and Registered Provider rents over the last ten years. Local authority rents have moved in line with the national average, however, registered provider rents have been consistently higher than the average.

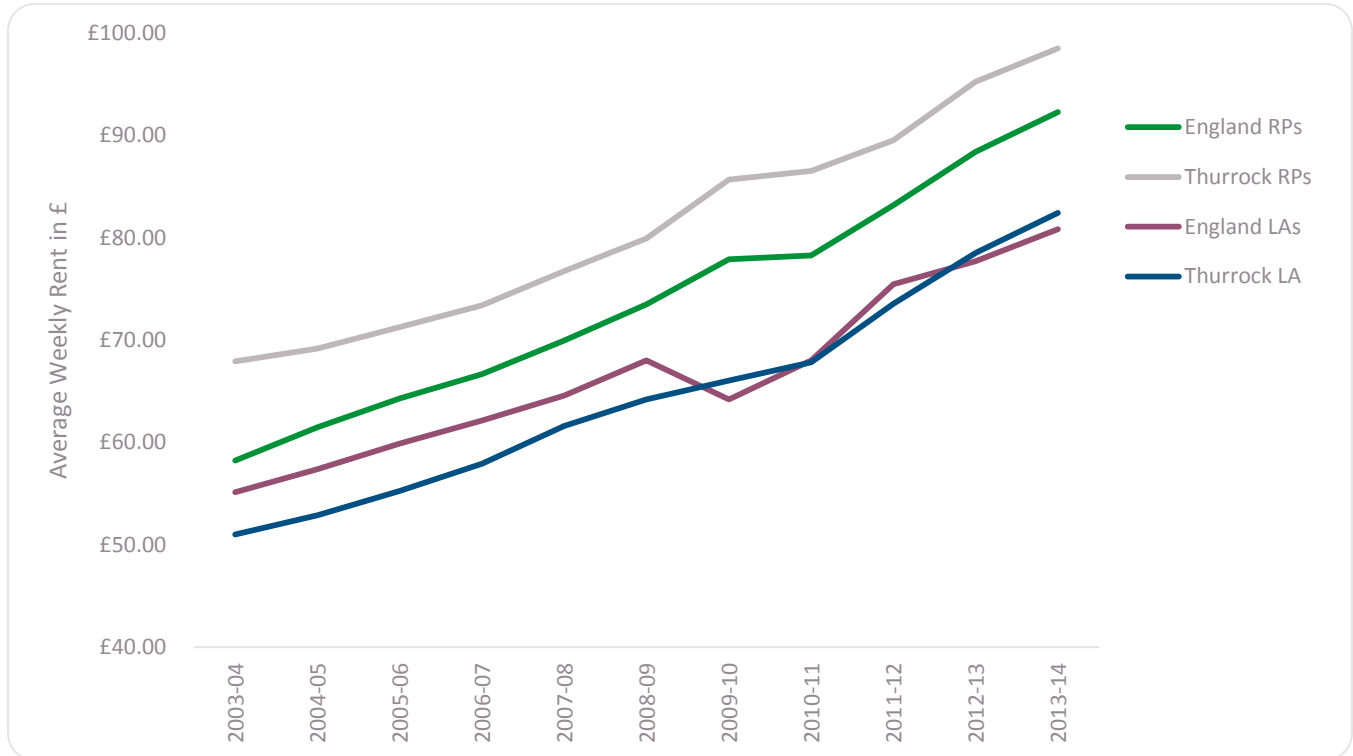


Figure 59 - Weekly Average Rents for Local Authority and Registered Providers, Source: Table 702 and 704 Rents, DCLG

### 8.3 Income and Benefits

#### 8.3.1 Income to House Price

The income required for a household to be able to buy or rent a property in Thurrock was estimated to be £25,000. The ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings has followed the trend but consistently remains above the national average ratio since 2002. This highlights the challenges for buyers, particularly first time buyers purchasing at the lower end of the housing market. Whilst the increase has slowed since the recession, Thurrock has a ratio of 7.00 compared with 6.45 for England in 2013.

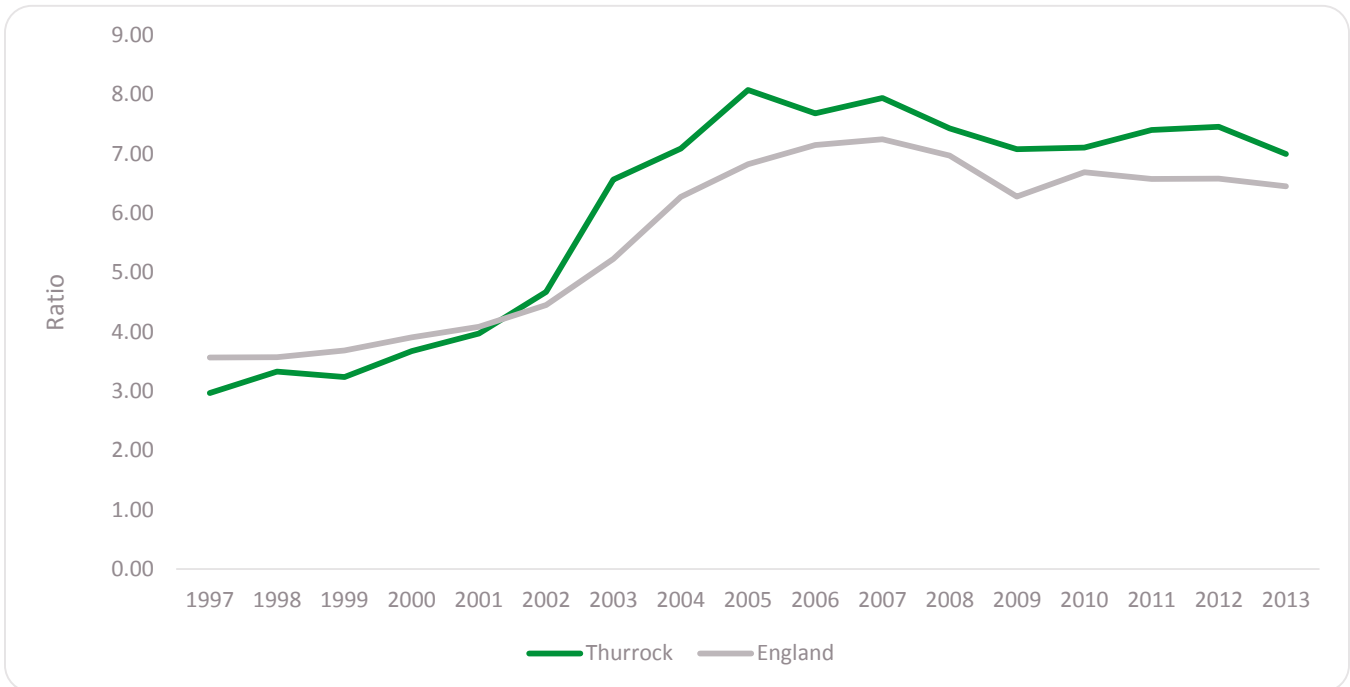


Figure 60 – Ratio of Lower Quartile House Price to Lower Quartile Earning, Source: Table 576, Office for National Statistics

### 8.3.2 Council tax and housing benefit claimants

The number of households claiming housing benefit and council tax is in line with regional and national averages, however the number claiming housing benefit only is decidedly higher at 11.27% than the East of England (9.25%) and England (9.46%). Thurrock has seen a steady increase in the number of households claiming housing benefit equating to an average increase of 600 households per annum indicating a growing lack of affordability in the borough.

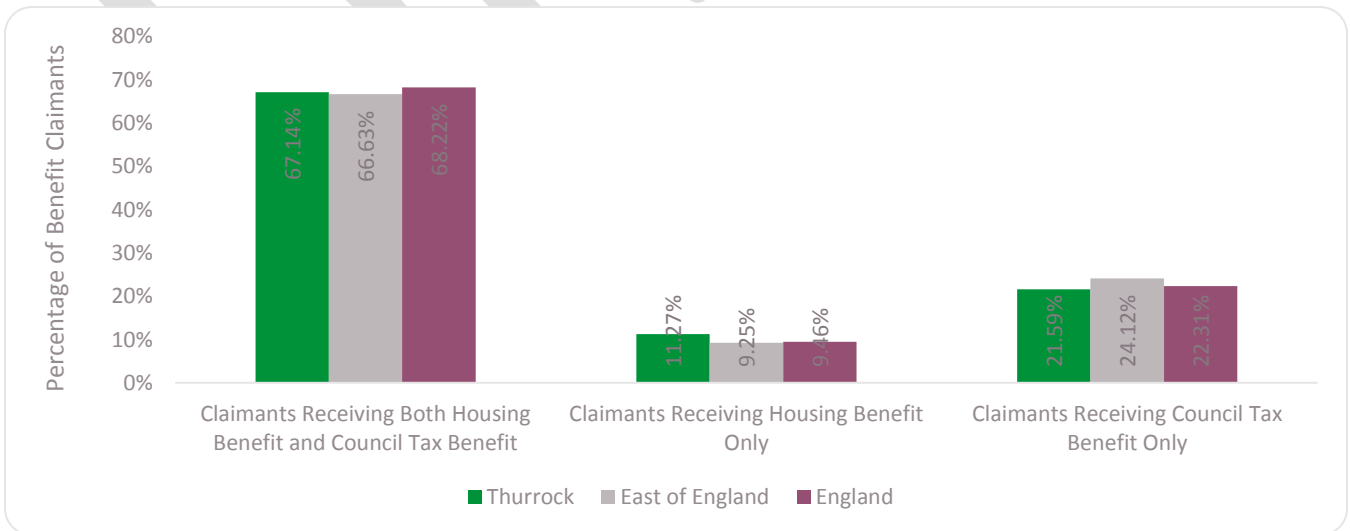


Figure 61 – Council Tax and Housing Benefit Claimants, Source: Office for National Statistics 2012

## 9. Right to Buy

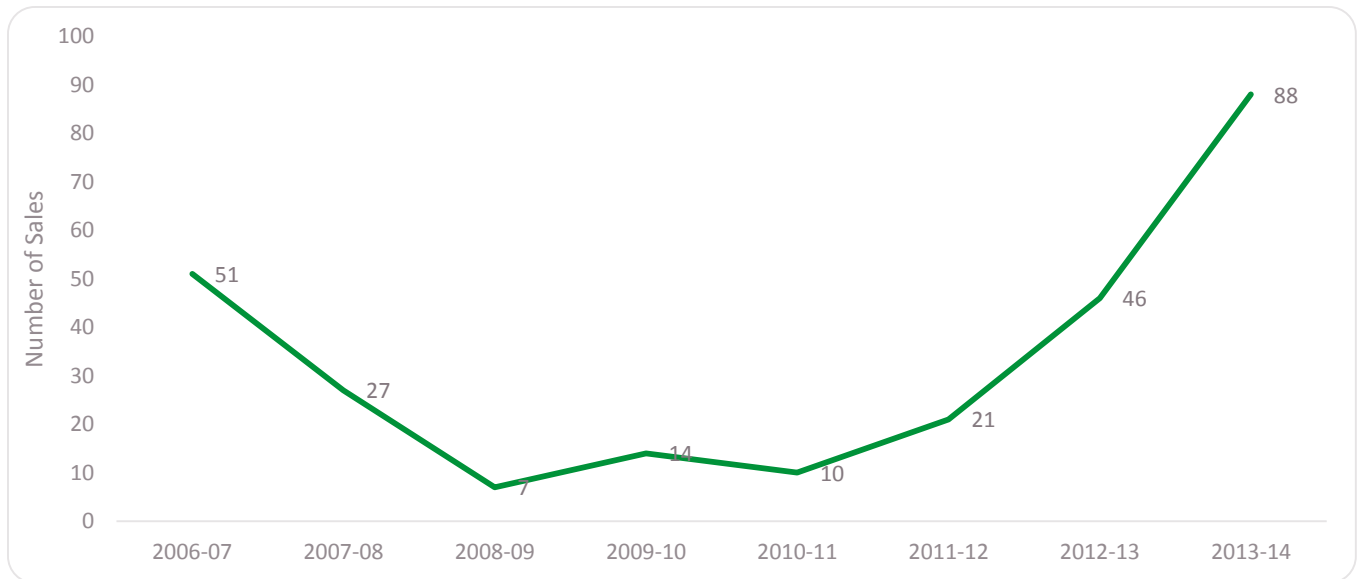


Figure 62 – Annual Right to Buy Sales, Source: Annual Right to Buy Sales by Local Authority, Table 685

Sales have increased since 2001 following a previous decline in line with the Government revitalisation of Right to Buy. In the past three years, the sales have doubled each year with 88 sales in 2013-14, further decreasing the supply of affordable housing in the borough.

## Housing Need and Delivery

To be updated following Housing Needs Analysis

### 10. Housing Need

The changes in population and households indicate the extensive growth in Thurrock. Thurrock households are projected to grow by an annual average of 980 per year over the next 20 years from 2011 to 2031, the highest of any local authority in the Thames Gateway Sub Region. This will place increasing demand on housing with an estimation that 20,600 new homes will be required by 2031, equating to an annual average housing requirement of 1,030<sup>19</sup>.

	Market Housing	Intermediate Housing	Social Housing	Overall Requirement	Affordable Housing	Percentage of Overall Requirement	20 year Total
<b>Thurrock</b>	13,200	2,500	4,900	20,600	370	36%	7,400
<b>TGSE</b>	31,100	13,100	10,800	55,200	1,200	43%	23,900

Figure 63 – Housing Need to 2031, Source: SHMA, Thames Gateway South Essex, December 2013

Nearly half of all housing required in Thurrock is estimated to be three bedroom homes (42%) supporting the evidence for more family housing. In contrast, the demand for affordable housing is for smaller homes with 43% required to be one bedroom homes. This could in part be due to younger, single households that are unable to access the housing market due to lack of affordability as indicated by the population and household statistics.

	One Bed	Two Bed	Three Bed	Four Bed
<b>All Housing</b>	20.0%	31.0%	42.0%	6.0%
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	43.0%	27.0%	28.0%	2.0%

Figure 64 - Estimate of housing required (by size), Source: ORS Housing Model Note

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) demonstrates the five year supply of deliverable sites to be 3,909 dwellings, 59% of the required level of housing. Thurrock's Adopted Core Strategy demonstrates 23,520 dwellings are required to be built during the life of the plan from 2001 to 2026. 5,980 dwellings were completed between 2001 and 2013 and the remaining 17,270 required has been identified in the following phases for expected completions on deliverable and developable sites.

Phase	Number of Expected Dwelling Completions
<b>2013-14</b>	474
<b>Deliverable Sites Year 1 to 5</b>	3,909
<b>Developable Sites Year 6 to 15</b>	8,387
<b>Total</b>	17,311
<b>Target</b>	17,270
<b>Difference</b>	+41

Figure 65 – Housing Supply to the end of the Plan period, Annual Monitoring Report 2013

<sup>19</sup> Fundamental Review of Strategic Housing Market Assessment Review, Thames Gateway South Essex, December 2013

## 10.1 Specialist Housing

The table below demonstrates the demand for specialist housing to 2033 to support the growing older population. 3,400 homes are estimated in total to 2033.

	Extra Care	Enhanced Sheltered	Dementia	Leasehold Schemes for the Elderly	All Types
<b>Gross Requirement (2033)</b>	800	400	100	2100	3400
<b>Annual Growth (2001-33)</b>	120	50	20	330	520

Figure 66 – Specialist Housing Need to 2033, Source: SHMA, Thames Gateway South Essex, December 2013

## 10.2 Gypsy and Traveller

As of June 2013, Thurrock has 149 Gypsy and Traveller households of which 89 (60%) were on permanent pitches and 15% were on unauthorised pitches. The Essex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show people Accommodation Assessment indicates the needs from 2013 to 2033 and predicts a gross requirement of 104 with 34 as current need. In 2013, there were 3 authorised public and private sites in Thurrock, namely Gammon Fields, Pilgrims Lane and Ship Lane.



### Housing Overview & Scrutiny work programme – 2014-15

Meeting Dates: 16 July 2014, 10 December 2014, 7 January 2015, 18 February 2015, 18 March 2015

ITEM	RESOLUTION	DATE REQUESTED BY COMMITTEE	Lead Officer	Brought to Committee by (Officer/ Member/ Statutory Reason)	PROPOSED DATE FOR SUBMISSION TO COMMITTEE
<b>Gloriana Progress Report</b>	Agreed that the item be included in the work programme for the following Municipal Year (minute 34(1), 2/4/14 refers)	2 April 2014	Angela Housham	Members	7 January 2015
<b>Repairs Policy Report</b>	n/a	n/a	Kathryn Adedeji	Officers	7 January 2015
<b>Recharging Tenants Audit Update</b>	Agreed that a re-audit takes place during 2014/15 and the results be reported back to this Committee (minute 33 (1), 2/4/14 refers)	2 April 2014	Kathryn Adedeji	Barbara Brownlee	7 January 2015
<b>Transforming Homes Programme Update</b>	Agreed that an item on the progress of the Refurbishment Programme be included on the Work Programme for January 2015	16 July 2015	Kathryn Adedeji	Members	7 January 2015
<b>Damp and Mould Update</b>			Kathryn Adedeji		7 January 2015

ITEM	RESOLUTION	DATE REQUESTED BY COMMITTEE	Lead Officer	Brought to Committee by (Officer/ Member/ Statutory Reason)	PROPOSED DATE FOR SUBMISSION TO COMMITTEE
<b>Right to Buy &amp; Leasehold Update</b>	Agreed that the item be included in the work programme for the following Municipal Year (minute 34(1), 2/4/14 refers)	2 April 2014	Richard Parkin	Members	Briefing Note circulated on 19/12/2014
<b>Budget</b>	n/a	n/a	Sean Clark	Ongoing requirement	Ongoing
<b>Decommissioning Sheltered Housing</b>	Agreed that a report on decommissioning of Sheltered Housing be included on the Work Programme for an appropriate date.	16 July 2014	Richard Parkin	Members	18 February 2015