

County Housing Strategy Questionnaire

Summary Analysis of Results January 2010

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Introduction

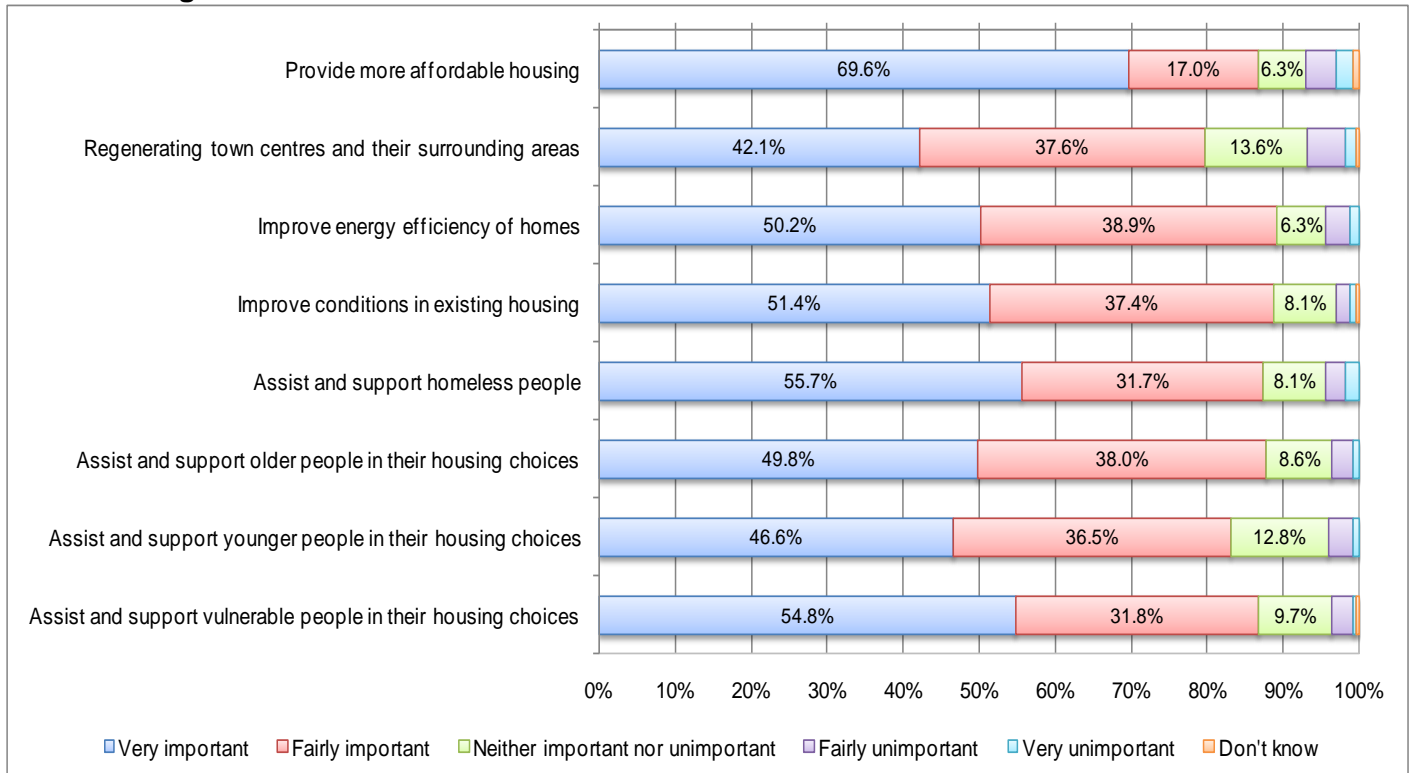
The District Councils across Worcestershire have consulted on what are the big housing issues that need to be included within the County Housing Strategy, which will set out the priorities for the delivery of Housing and related services across the County over the next five years. An online questionnaire was used to gauge the views of various different people.

A total of 235 responses were received by the deadline of Friday 15th January. The following document provides a summary analysis of the results.

Section One: Housing Priorities

Q1: The list below highlights housing issues that might be tackled by the District Councils through the County Housing Strategy. How important do you think these statements are?

Figure 1



Base: All valid responses

88.6% of respondents think providing more affordable housing is an important issue for the District Councils to tackle through the County Housing Strategy. More respondents said this issue was 'very important' than any other.

However, in terms of overall importance, more respondents answered to improve energy efficiency of homes (89.1%). This was followed by 88.7% of respondents saying to improve the conditions in existing homes was important. To assist and support older people in their housing choices was seen as important by 87.8% of respondents.

The least important issue was seen to be Regenerating town centres and their surrounding areas.

Section Two: Housing Delivery

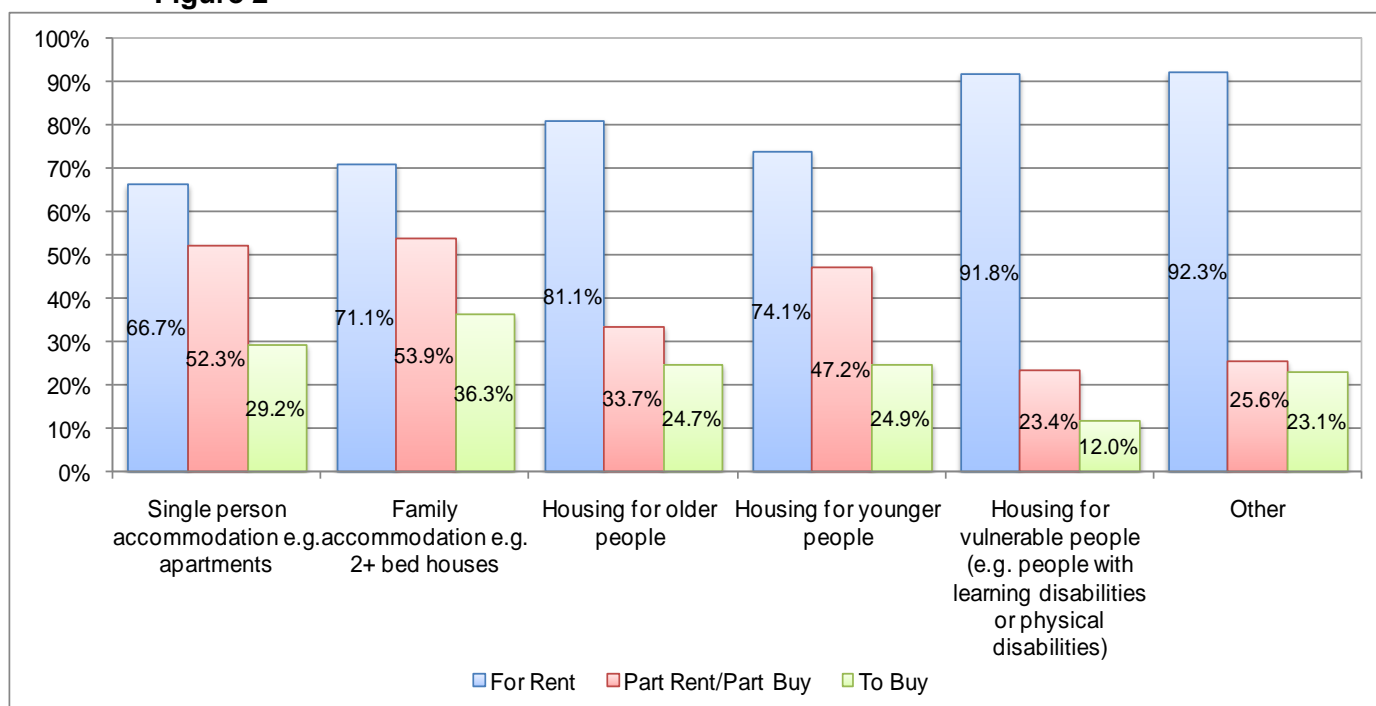
Q2: If more affordable housing was to be developed in your local area, what do you think should be provided?

Table 2

	Number of Respondents
Single person accommodation e.g. apartments	197
Family accommodation e.g. 2+ bed houses	206
Housing for older people	192
Housing for younger people	195
Housing for vulnerable people (e.g. people with learning disabilities or physical disabilities)	186
Other	39

Base: All valid responses

Figure 2



Base: All valid responses

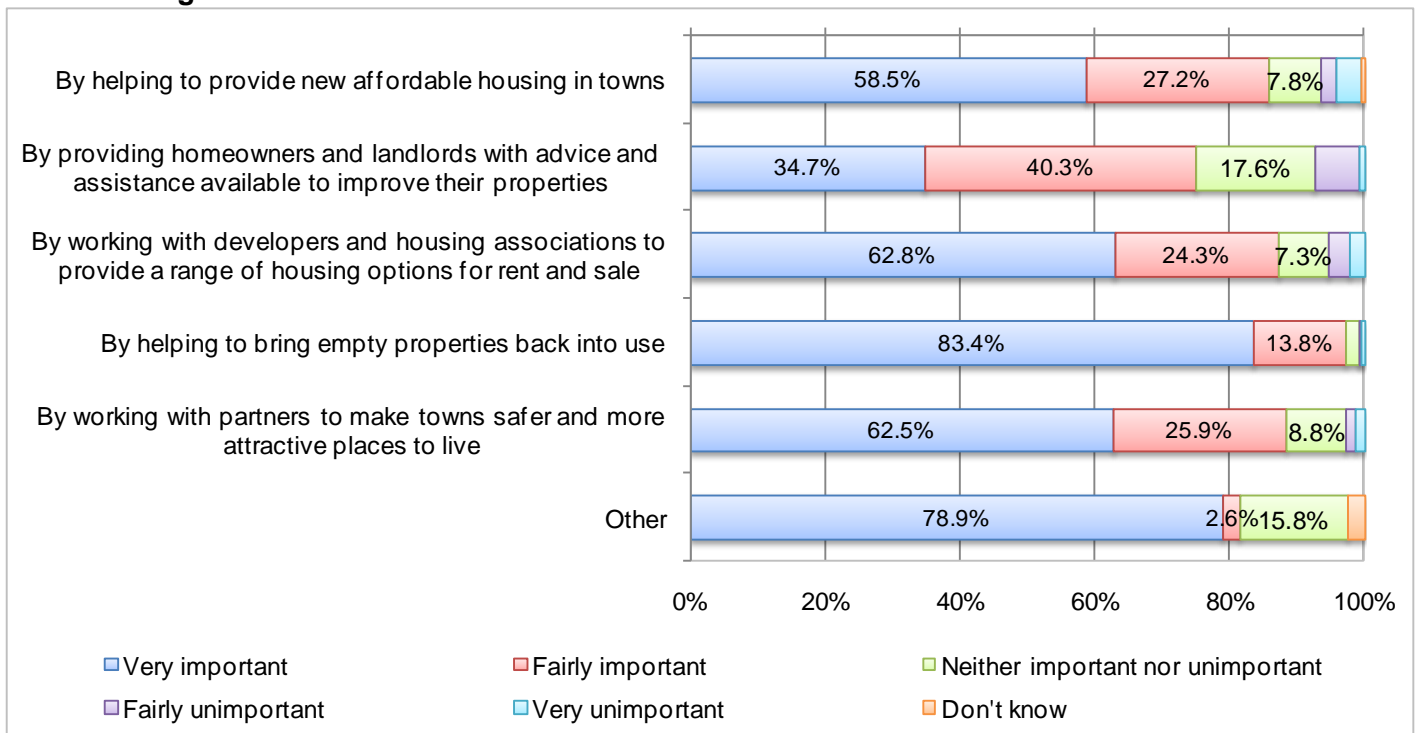
The most popular type of affordable housing to be developed in respondents' local area is family accommodation (206 respondents). The most popular type of family accommodation to be developed was accommodation to rent (71.1% of respondents who initially selected family accommodation). Family accommodation is also the most popular to be made available to buy (36.3% of respondents who initially selected family accommodation). Family accommodation is also the most popular type of accommodation to be made available to part rent/part buy (53.9% of respondents who initially selected family accommodation).

The most popular type of accommodations to be made available to rent are housing for vulnerable people (91.8% of respondents who initially selected housing for vulnerable people) and housing for older people. Understandably, these types are least preferable to be made available to buy.

39 respondents said other and 33 respondents wrote a comment to explain. Please see Appendix 1 for a list of these comments.

Q3: In your opinion, which of the following actions do you think are most important for Local Authorities to contribute to when regenerating towns and their surrounding areas?

Figure 3



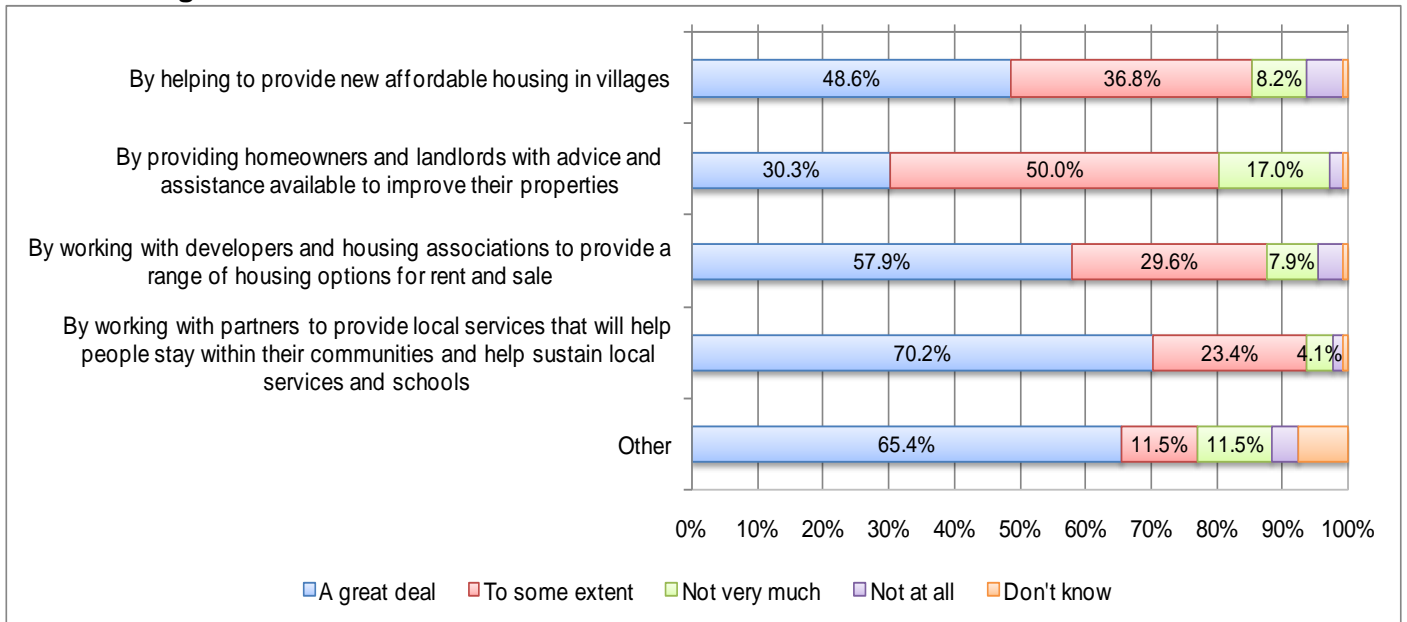
Base: All valid responses

Figure 3 shows how opinions for each of the available options varied. 97.2% of respondents think helping to bring empty properties back into use is important. This is compared to 75.0% of respondents who think providing homeowners and landlords with advice and assistance to improve their properties as important.

38 respondents selected other and 35 wrote comments to elaborate. Please see Appendix 2 for a list of these comments.

Q4 In your opinion, how much should Local Authorities contribute to regenerating villages and other rural areas?

Figure 4



Base: All valid responses

Respondents consider providing homeowners and landlords with advice and assistance to improve their properties as the action Local Authorities should contribute least too (80.3% saying a great deal or some extent of contribution). Respondents feel that more contribution should go towards working with partners to provide local services that will help people stay within their communities and help sustain local services and schools (93.6% saying a great deal or some extent of contribution).

28 respondents said other and 20 respondents left a comment. For a list of these comments, please see Appendix 3.

Section Three: Improving the Condition of Existing Housing

Q5: With the cost of heating and lighting rising each year what do you think your local authority should do to help you keep your home warm?

Table 3

	Number of Respondents	% of Total Respondents
Provide advice on how to keep your accommodation warm	162	73.6
Help clearing loft space to allow loft insulation to be installed	121	55.0
Raise awareness of grants and loans available for energy efficiency measures	194	88.2
Provide information regarding renewable technology (e.g. solar panels)	153	69.5
Other	33	15.0

Base: 220 respondents

88.2% of respondents think their local authority should do more to raise awareness of grants and loans available for energy efficiency measures. The suggestion to help clear loft space to allow loft insulation to be installed was the least popular with only 55.0% of respondents thinking their local authority should be involved.

For a list of comments expressed by the respondents who said other, please see Appendix 4.

Q6: How can Local Authorities help improve the condition of existing housing?

Table 4

	Number of Respondents	% of Total Respondents
Provide advice and assistance that might be available to homeowners and landlords to improve their properties	154	70.0
Bring empty properties back into use	203	92.3
Use legal powers to force property owners to improve properties in poor condition	161	73.2
Other	19	8.6

Base: 220 respondents

As reflected in question 3, bringing empty properties back into use is seen as important. 92.3% of respondents think Local Authorities should bring empty properties back into use to help improve the condition of existing housing.

19 respondents said other but 22 respondents in total wrote comments, these can be read in Appendix 5.

Section Four: Providing Housing and Housing Related Support

Q7 If you were ever threatened with homelessness, what options would you like to be available?

Table 5

	Number of Respondents	% of Total Respondents
Advice and assistance to help you stay in your current accommodation	177	80.8
Temporary accommodation until you could sort out an alternative solution	132	60.3
Permanent accommodation provided by a social landlord	147	67.1
Help you to access suitable accommodation in the private rented sector	128	58.4
Other	16	7.3

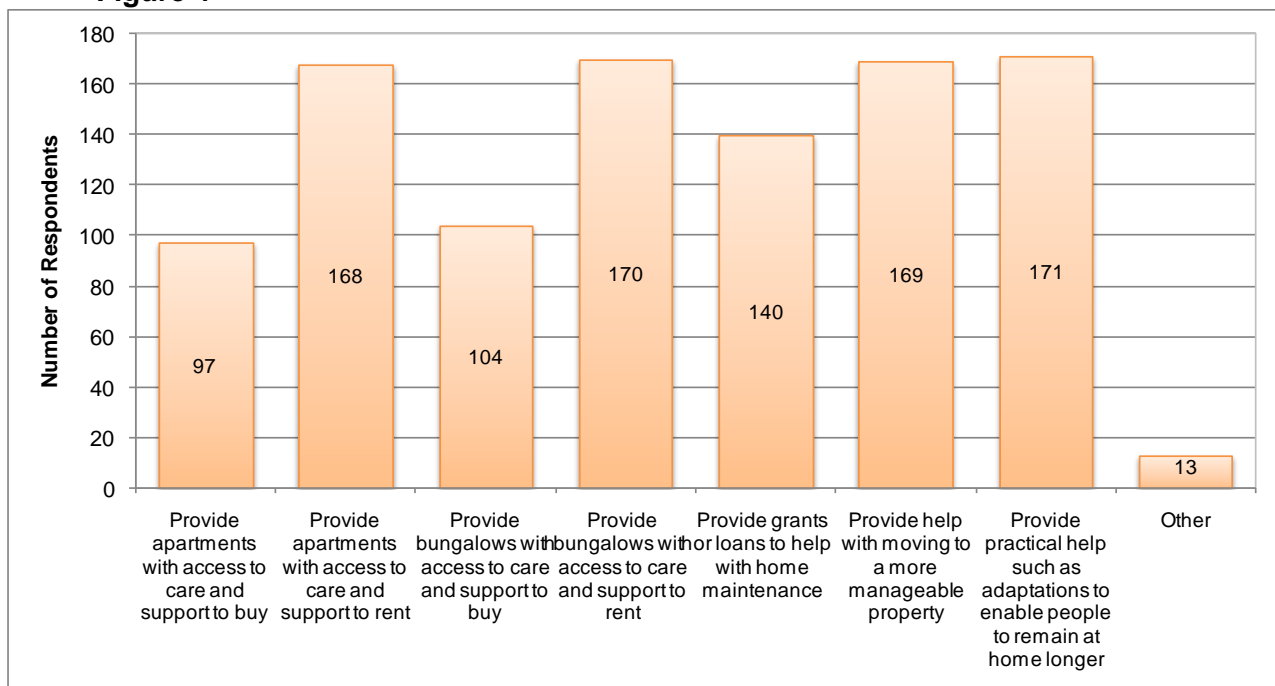
Base: 219 respondents

The most popular option with respondents is to be given advice and assistance to help stay in their current accommodation (80.8%).

16 respondents said other but 18 respondents wrote comments. These can be read in Appendix 6.

Q8: With the population in general getting older what do you think your local authority should do to help older people plan for their housing needs in the future?

Figure 4



Base: 219 Respondents

As figure 4 shows, the top four answers received a very similar number of responses. The least popular answer was to provide apartments with access to care and support to buy (97 respondents).

13 respondents said other and 17 wrote comments. These can be read in Appendix 7.

Q9: How can Local Authorities help young people from the age of 16 - 25 years meet their housing needs?

Table 6

	Number of Respondents	% of Total Respondents
Provide apartments with support for those who need help to develop the skills to live independently.	148	67.9
Work with private landlords to provide more opportunities for young people to access private rented accommodation	136	62.4
Provide affordable first time buyer accommodation either part ownership or full ownership	136	62.4
Provide more affordable housing for rent for single people and couples	170	78.0
Provide accommodation for young people with higher support needs	132	60.6
Other	24	11.0

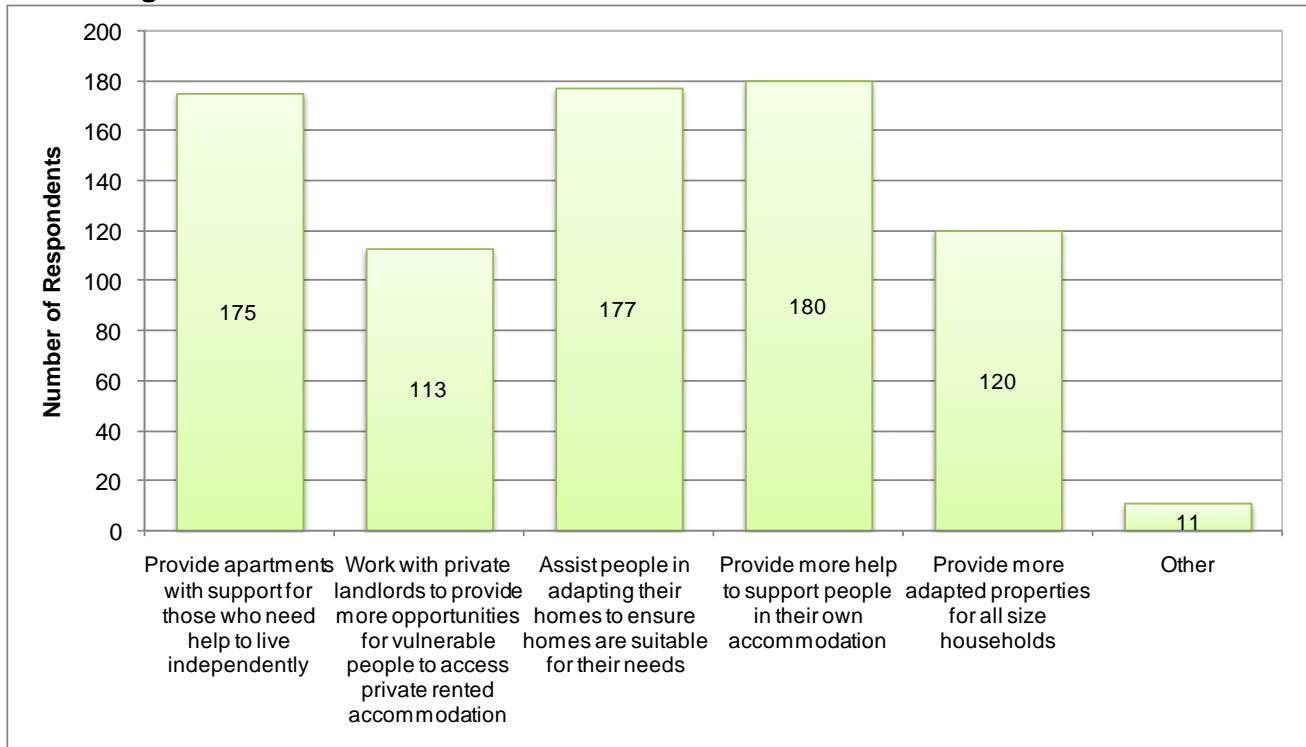
Base: 218 respondents

The most popular response was to provide more affordable housing for rent for single people and couples (78.0%). The other options had a similar number of responses.

24 respondents said other and 26 wrote comments. These can be read in Appendix 8.

Q10: How can Local Authorities help vulnerable people, such as those with physical or learning disabilities, meet their housing requirements/expectations?

Figure 5



Base: 217 respondents

As figure 5 shows, three of the five ways in which Local Authorities can help vulnerable people were equally popular and had a large number of responses. The most popular being to provide more help to support people in their own accommodation (180 respondents).

11 respondents said other and wrote comments. These can be read in Appendix 9.

Section Five: About You

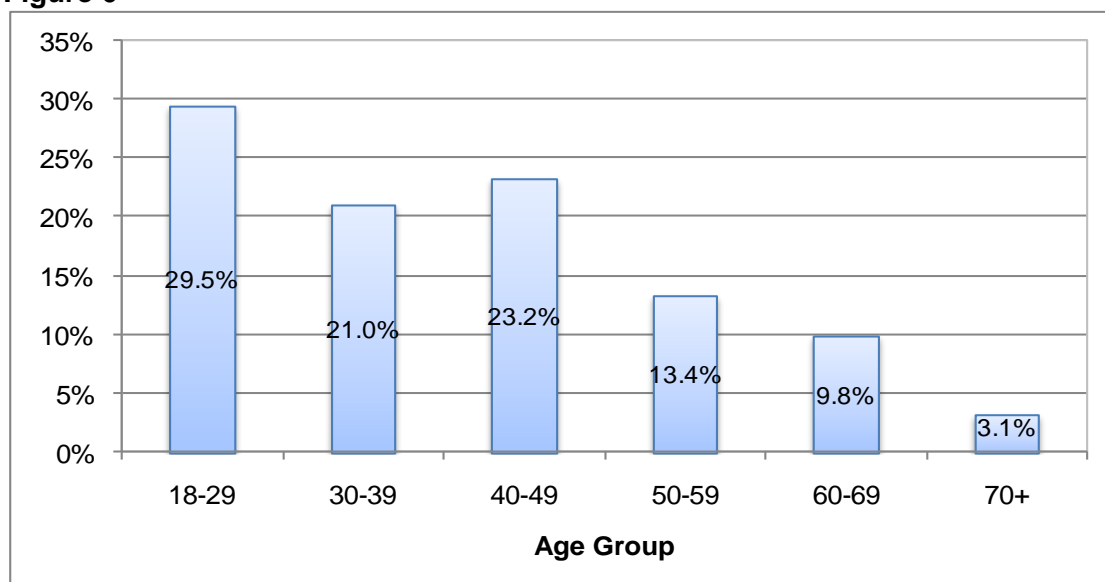
Q11: What age are you?

Table 7

Age group	Number of Respondents
18-29	66
30-39	47
40-49	52
50-59	30
60-69	22
70+	7

Base: 224 respondents

Figure 6



Base: 224 respondents

Q12: What is your current housing tenure?

Table 8

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Owner occupier (owned outright or with mortgage/loan)	104	46.6
Shared ownership	3	1.3
Rent from Local Authority	15	6.7
Rent from Housing Association/Trust	42	18.8
Rent from private landlord	37	16.6
Housing tied to job	1	0.4
Other	21	9.4

Base: 223 respondents

Q13: Do you have a long standing illness, disability or infirmity?

16.1% of respondents said they do have a long standing illness, disability or infirmity.

Q14: To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

Table 9

	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
White British	204	92.7
White Irish	2	0.9
White Other	7	3.2
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0	0.0
Black or Black British - African	0	0.0
Black or Black British - Other	0	0.0
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	0	0.0
Mixed - White and Black African	0	0.0
Mixed - White Asian	1	0.5
Mixed - Other	0	0.0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0.0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0.9
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0	0.0
Asian or Asian British - Other	0	0.0
Chinese	2	0.9
Other ethnic group	2	0.9

Base: 220 respondents

Appendices

Appendix 1

Q2: If more affordable housing was to be developed in your local area, what do you think should be provided?

33 respondents wrote the following comments after selecting 'other':

- There is a major shortage of suitable housing for young people (under 18yrs) which needs addressing. 16-18yr age group are falling through the net and are vulnerable.
- supported accommodation
- Supplying enough affordable housing IS the important housing issue in Worcestershire.
- Larger family homes for rent E.G. four bedroom houses for larger families
- Housing for families instead of always giving rented affordable housing to single parents and benefit scroungers as there is no incentive for many couples to live together officially as it pays to claim to be a single parent, get your rent etc paid but have your partner living with you unofficially.
- There should be a mixed provision to allow for mobility and changes in social/family circumstances.
- more family homes need to be built there is a shortage of 3 bed houses in my area . i'm in desperate need of a 3 bed but it doesn't look like i will get one anytime soon.
- Housing for 'Key workers' should be included. As this group is more often low paid, but are essential to communities, working and contributing.
- Not suitable for the area I live in
- Housing for the vulnerable: should be 'supported housing'
- I'm not in favour of local areas being 'developed'
- More needs to be done for the young people, housing costs are so high they cannot afford private rents
- larger flats
- Affordable housing for older people wishing to move to smaller properties
- There are far too few properties that are adequately used. I have seen many properties which would be much more suitable for older people being occupied by families. More and more people are wanting 2,3,4 bed houses for their growing families yet these seem to be used for elderly couples. According to RBC housing policy single people in larger properties should be found a property more suitable to their needs in order that the housing demand can be met - in the last 8 years I have seen none of this whatsoever!! Terrible
- a fair rent for all
- not to have demands on housing planning wise. like i got promised a house in harvington i was number 1 all week on the bidding to be told i couldnt have it due to not havin a connection with harvington im homeless with a baby due any day and need a home... its pointless
- Family accommodation for families of 4+ people, e.g. 4 bed or more
- couples in private accommodation who have been on the list for renting but will not go up the list because their children have left home therefore they will never get more points etc

- im vunuable and just lost my housing because of housing benifit cutting the payments in half . i really need a council flat . because im a single male im over looked all the time
- I don't think affordable housing is needed in our area and any available funds should be spent else where on more important issues - health and education for starters
- Ground floor properties for large families with a person with physical disabilities
- people living in refuges
- WHY IS THERE NEVER ANY HELP OR INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS OF ALMSHOUSES? WE ARE JUST, IF NOT MORE VULNERABLE THAN OTHER RESIDENTS. I WAS THREATENED WITH EVICTION BUT FOUND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO FIND HELP OR ADVICE.
- The problem with the right to buy scheme is the fact that there will always be a shortage of council properties for rent. People who are not on benefits always seem to draw the short straw as they cannot afford to buy and if unable to rent council property have to pay double to rent from private landlords. At least with part rent/part buy there is the incentive that it is not wasted money. The right to buy scheme should be abolished as this is unfair to those who have no choice but to rent privately without the opportunity to buy.
- Community-owned
- A more site specific approach to be adopted in addition to policies. In other words, identify actual opportunities and approach landowners about potential that they might not realise exists.
- Single person accommodation - houses
- Accommodation for couples with young children.
- I feel that there is plenty of housing available for older persons and persons with learning disabilities. Just look at all the empty properties eg sheltered accomodation age limit reduced to 50+. Empty shetlered units to buy in the property sector eg Homesmith house. Housing is despratley needed for families and young persons
- Gypsy and traveller accommodation
- nice big family houses with more than adequate gardens and not crammed in to estates with no room to park at 15 per acre.
- decent housing for over 50s wanting to downsize from 3bedroom house but not wanting to live in one bedroom flat with people of all ages

Appendix 2

Q3: In your opinion, which of the following actions do you think are most important for Local Authorities to contribute to when regenerating towns and their surrounding areas?

35 respondents wrote the following comments after selecting 'other':

- Utilise current buildings, develop into flats and stop encouraging young girls to have babies by giving them brand new apartments to live in
- Providing better town facilities with good parking at a reasonable cost to encourage people to visit the town
- By carefully and honestly considering the existing neighbours to any scheme before allowing the building of something that changes (reduces) their quality of life.
- Having safer and better looked after play area for children in areas where there are lots of flats with little or no communal green space. These areas should not just be provided they should be maintained to a high standard as well
- Consider the sustainability issues, many of which don't seem to be addressed in this questionnaire: use of lower carbon building materials, estate design to reduce car-use; water conservation; protection from flooding; value of greenspace for physical and mental health etc
- Specifying high standards of energy efficiency on ALL new and redeveloped properties, and encouraging small scale energy generation eg solar panels
- To make sure existing tenants of community housing are respecting their homes by keeping them clean and tidy inside and out and not abusing the property as there are a lot of other people without the opportunity of a social housing property that would respect the homes.
- The focus should not only be on the elderly and vulnerable people who live in houses of their own who work but can't afford the upkeep of the house unless in receipt of benefit this group has no help. The age group between 40-60 many people find themselves single living in rooms or sub standard accommodation because there is no alternative. private rental is far too high and people would have to give up work and claim benefits to pay the rent. also for people who have animals they are again discriminated against as the majority of private landlords don't allow pets.
- To be able to ensure people who rent or buy or own properties keep their property tidy and in good repair. The system we have to hold residents responsible, is not working very well. Living next to unsightly dirty messy properties is demoralising. An asset to no one and detrimental to the environment
- Trees are almost never planted in the town centres! Stourport in particular. If new development is planned then trees and shrub areas should be included to make the 'concrete' town environment more green and healthy for those living in the town where traffic is constant and a real health issue.
- Ensuring housing is generated/regenerated in villages proportionate with the size of the village and in conjunction with jobs
- **MORE SOCIAL HOUSING**
- every one currently in a council property re evaluated for example i know a lady living on her own in a 3 bed council house, a family of 8 soon to be nine living in a 3 bed council house and myself living in a private rented 1 bed flat with two adults and two newborn twins but can not get a council house as none are available

- Refusing to build on any Green Belt or 'greenfield' sites, even ADR, until every derelict or empty building has been used.
- To make sustainability a priority
- 'Suitable' housing for the elderly, in the area where they have lived for many years and in 'all' areas, villages, parish's etc. not just in the main towns. It has been identified that there is a tremendous need for housing for the elderly. Either to move from current rented large houses, or to sell their large 5 bed + houses and downsize into something more suitable. Freeing up these larger houses for families and also reducing the older persons outgoings allowing for a better standard of living for everyone involved. Whilst the Core Strategy has identified this need it has not highlighted where this accommodation will be provided. By this I mean which exact locations, not just 'within the Bromsgrove area'. That is just a wasted opportunity. Where are the older people with large houses from places like Alvechurch and Barnt Green going to downsize to. Certainly not some terraced small box on some estate next to a railway line. They will be looking for something a bit more 'comfortable' within decent grounds, with some privacy and security gates. Otherwise they will not downsize so the exercise is a total waste of time. I speak from personal experience as my wife and I want to downsize, but cannot find anything acceptable in our area, Barnt Green.
- Respect for the environment and green belt land
- tidy up the people with all the dogs and cats and make it law that spade and neutering is done before you buy the animal and all pets to be chipped.
- Prioritise for cyclists and pedestrians to move easily about the area.
- To ensure that all available brown-field sites are used first.
- Making housing available to All by all I mean people like myself who want to live with their families in a housing association house, but are told they cant as the rules say no. It would be cheaper all round to give us a 3 bed for our needs so we can live together rather than 2 seperate properties miles apart.
- Local Authorities need to stop insisting that housing benefit is not paid to landlords. This is causing huge problems for tenants. Millions of pounds are being squandered by tenants who just keep the money until they are thrown out. It is madness
- Promotion of good neighbourly conduct and perhaps a reconciliation service (both parties pay) for neighbourly disputes .
- Make people look after the properties they rent off the council.
- talking to local people on housing lists, to know what kind of property they would like.
- Ensure BEFORE any further development the WHOLE infrastructure is addressed and implemented prior to any development (for example and not exclusive roads, schools, NHS, jobs, local transport, local authority finances as the more "affordable" housing is the more lower income families are attracted to the area and so the more financial assistance so the more the higher income families will ultimately pay to subsidise these families. (The most prominent obviously being Council Tax)
- Reduce car parking charges/provide more car parking. Abandon the wasteful Park & Ride Schemes. Built Norton Parkway as a rail/bus transport hub with a very large, low charge car park.
- Initiatives to reduce the population.
- YET AGAIN WHO CHECKS OUT ALMSHOUSE PROPERTIES ? ? ? ?
- There need's to be more larger properties available for those with larger families. i am living in a 2bed house with 3 children in 1 room. a 3 bed will not be suitable due to a large gap between my children & the sex. = 1boy 9yrs 1girl 2yrs 1boy 6mths. i am not getting the help i need & my husband & i are

finding it a great strain on our family in a large variety of ways. including our marriage. i also think the system in general is not helping those in most need. a four bedroom house in stourport was given to a disabled person who had been registered for housing only three months...i have been waiting over a year...figure that out.

- The approach needs to be more viability and market related. Opportunities where market conditions might temporarily allow a solution get lost in policy formulation.
- By regenerating the town to be more attractive to younger families
- to also think about community facilities - not just improving existing facilities but ensuring that there is adequate provision for new build areas in terms of community centres, green spaces, shops and places of worship.
- Adapting vacant property, eg business and unlet office premises for residential use; and using industrial areas for regeneration, in preference to use of green belt or farmland
- big homes that are eco build with large gardens not 'crammed' together on estates. I am sick of hearing of affordable housing that is only effectively affordable to investors who then rent them out anyway.

Appendix 3

Q4 In your opinion, how much should Local Authorities contribute to regenerating villages and other rural areas?

20 respondents wrote the following comments after selecting 'other':

- By supporting the retention of important focal points such as Post Offices, shops and the like.
- LA's should be concentrating on the heart of the community E.G. The local school. Also the LA should ensure that local parish councillors have a detailed knowledge of social housing and how much is needed in their parish (according to the Needs Survey). I would suggest that Parish councillors may benefit from a visit to a Housing Association to see the type of properties that could be built in their parish, this may go some way to educate NIMBY's and fight off unhelpful local opposition
- by improving local transport strategies across buses, trains etc so improve employment mobility as well as sustaining communities.
- Homeowners and Landlords are aware of what advice and assistance is available nevertheless people are living in sub-standard housing still.this partly due to the cost of rented property also if you work and are on a single wage or basic income and are not in receipt of benefit you have no financial help.
- To enjoy the environment we need people to respect each other and abide by certain standards.
- The Greenbelts should be reassessed when clearly part of a village or settlement. All too often this type of category is over protected because of local resistance and ill thought out controls in the local development frameworks.
- By working with regional employment agencies to tie housing development to jobs and infrastructure. NEVER one without the others
- Identifying all property,old or new,currently vacant and refurbishing it.
- Concentrate on sustainability
- Respect for the environment and green belt land
- My big Issue is to be given a 3 bed house so i can live with my daughter, grandson and daughters partner and to be happy as this is what we have done for a number of yrs now and its good for all of us to live together
- Look to developing brown field land NOT green belt. For example Hampton Lovett and the new industrial area (Robert Wiseman) look to further developing to relocate business off Berry Hill (which is looking old and unkept) and then build housing on this site.
- Certainly not by wiping Lower Broadheath village off the map by building 3,500 houses here.
- Improve public transport
- Support for Post Offices, small schools, lift sharing, community transport
- The average person cannot relate to words and phrases like this. They need to be more appealing and relevant so people take notice. "Affordable Housing" means very little to most people.
- not just providing a range of housing options but at prices people can afford; this issues has stopped many young people staying in the place they grew up.
- Provision of low-cost affordable housing, using empty shop premises for conversion into convenient apartments within town centres: again preferable to out of town development in order to encourage people's sense of identity

with local towns such as Redditch, and to avoid loss of irreplaceable farmland which may be urgently needed for growing food in future times.

- When developing village housing please make it open to all not just persons that have a strong village connection. People from other areas should be given the choice to be able to live in the area that they choose. I was informed by council dept that the recently built development in Harvington was only for people with a connection to that village. When housing built off coopers lane, Evesham was allocated the same connection rule was not applied and people from all areas were able to apply.
- By providing design guidance for new homes

Appendix 4

Q5: With the cost of heating and lighting rising each year what do you think your local authority should do to help you keep your home warm?

31 respondents wrote the following comments after selecting 'other':

- Provide grants for homeowners installing renewable technology. E.G. You pay 25% of the cost to install an air source heat pump
- take care local planning authorities conditions do not conflict with people wanting to explore renewable technology
- Again all the help government payments etc go to people who are in receipt of benefit i live in a house with no central heating no double glazing electrics over 25yrs old and earn less than 14,000 but receive no help or even a percentage of help toward repairs and improvements and I know many people in this situation. the elderly in sheltered units receive between 200pounds and 400pounds per person each winter even though they only pay 5pound per week for gas.
- HELP GET ALL PROPERTIES ENERGY EFFICIENT
- to get rid of oil heating in rural areas as it is too expensive
- Many vulnerable people attend GPs surgeries a lot of information about peoples needs, could be gained if the GPs or their staff were more helpful
- Provide free loft insulation to householders with older properties and not just those on benefits.
- Ensuring developers build high quality new houses which meet the highest possible sustainable standards
- OFFER WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCES TO MORE FAMILIES ON LOW INCOMES NOT JUST THE ELDERLY
- advise on heating grants would be good as my 1 bed flat only has a night storage heater and with the cost of electricity i can not afford to keep it running all the time!
- Assist residents in older homes with the cost of e.g. cavity insulation, attention to roofs/chimneys
- Advise on best methods and SUSTAINABILITY
- To look at a property and suggest relevant improvements and also state the cost
- provide double glazing in all houses
- to update all homes with new heating systems that can be controlled better.
- give more than a token winter payment to the elderly & vulnerable
- call round to peoples homes giving help and sound advice on what to do in winter to help save money on electricity as electricity bills are like having a second mortgage or in my case a second house to pay rent for
- provide families who live in unstable private rent properties with a properties that have central heating and dont cause child illnesses. this is more important than looking to improve people whos homes warm up and live in stable properties!
- Taking a more relaxed approach to planning regs regarding up dating of older/listed buildings .
- Help with draft exclusion.
- Negotiate with local companies for residents to be able to take advantage of energy efficient measures and get good discounts. This is then a win win situation a company will be kept in business and homes can more cost

effectively implement energy efficient solutions and so you would be able to boast to and keep central government happy

- Provide grants for insulating so called 'hard to heat homes' with external insulation.
- **THINK YOU WILL FIND THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO ALMSHOUSES. YOU ARE DEPENDENT ON TRUSTEES.**
- all homes should be insulated both in the wall cavity & loft space.
- In regards to helping to clear loft space to allow loft insulation to be installed - i would only see this as a good use of LA resource if it was supporting those who could not do it themselves, i.e. elderly, individuals living alone with disabilities etc.
- Potentially all of these but local authorities must first find better ways of communicating with its ratepayers. The information needs to be more newsy and offer people real opportunities to take part on deals that are only available for short periods.

- facilitate community initiatives to help people help each other by providing energy loss profiles and incentives to reduce heat loss.
- Look at replacing windows and doors.
- raise awareness of grants and offer support to those who need it to fill out forms - it is often those most in need who do not have the skills to do this.
- Encouraging public awareness of vital need to conserve energy use: for example, by adapting lifestyles which are less wasteful of energy such as avoiding excessive use of central heating, computers and plasma screen televisions; and encouraging managers of shop premises to save energy by not leaving entrances open in cold weather as at present.
- grants to 'eco' proof old and un efficient homes.

Appendix 5

Q6: How can Local Authorities help improve the condition of existing housing?

22 respondents wrote the following comments:

- Using legal powers to compulsory purchase empty properties and a certain time (say 3 years)
- Ensure that the occupants of social housing treat it with respect and maintain it.
- Provide grants/incentives once an owner has shown they are prepared to pay for and to maintain improvement. Maybe take a 'whole street' approach and develop community cooperation as well.
- make sure homes are looked after by existing tenants of the housing system.
- with the comments I have already made how can you force people who live on approx£75-00 per week after outgoings to improve their property which has fallen into disrepair? I have put myself on the local housing list because i live in such a house with damp etc yet because i work and are single the choice of accommodation by anyone is limited.I know many people who live in awful bedsits especially if they are male and in the 40-60 age group but because they are not classed as vulnerable little choice is available for better housing.
- Legislation and follow up is far to complex Soul distroying when every issue takes so long to rectify.
- Forcing property owners to improve properties in poor condition is over zealous. Many do not have the financial resources to carry out the work required, particularly to very old properties. Low rented properties provide must need accommodation in the private sector, many rents only just cover mortgages, insurance and basic upkeep! Local Governments should be compelled to build new housing as the private sector can no longer provide this type of housing. Give Council Tax breaks to those improving property.
- As before, insist developers follow new rules with high standards
- bringing back empty properties back into use fantastic idea! if i was asked by my council to work with them to bring an empty property back into use so when complete i could live there i would! i think then you would get more genuine people who would be willing to work towards getting a new home rather than having it handed to them.
- Employ task forces of suitably-trained people to renovate properties at a low rate: maybe inmates nearing the end of a custodial sentence.
- More checks need to be made on properties & tenants MADE to clear them up or face fines/eviction
- make the existing tenants keep their houses in clean and reasonable condition too many are allowed to make slums of decent houses
- To do decent repairs. I know from experience that some contractors are not as careful, because its council. Ive had to sort out their mess and its not good.
- The local council should not invest time and effort without a positive financial return.
- Provide grants to insulate 'hard to heat homes' such as external insulation. Provide a list of approved building service providers such as plumbers, builders, etc. Regulate building service providers more efficiently to weed out the cowboys. Apply pressure to utility providers to reduce the cost to the

customer and bring in laws that force them to use a percentage their profits to invest for the future rather than forcing the customer to pay for them.

- CALLED IN STRATEGIC HOUSING BUT THEY DID NOT HAVE THE POWER TO ENFORCE THEIR FINDINGS . { SOMETHING TO DO WITH CHARITY LAW.}
- Perhaps there should be some kind of compulsory purchase order for properties which have stood empty for any length of time especially if there is likely to be any chance of vandalism to the said properties. A school locally was closed down and demolished. Surely a sound building could have been redesigned inside to provide valuable residential accommodation.
- Differing levels of council tax according to actual condition and energy efficiency, not "band value" related assessments.
- Give small grants to help people to improve their properties
- provide positive incentives instead of force as this will be wasteful of limited resources. In particular address poor use of accommodation by public agencies as well as private owners.
- encourage residents through community workers to start up residents projects to improve areas and give a sense of community and pride in where they live
- 1st Question, DELETE "that might be available"

Appendix 6

Q7 If you were ever threatened with homelessness, what options would you like to be available?

18 respondents wrote the following comments:

- If i was homeless, i would want to be housed as quickly as possible.
- Help to ensure pets can stay with their owners
- Probably none as I am not single and on benefits
- some personal support for the emotional issues which this would create.
- Temporary accomodation especially where children are concerned is unsuitable as this does not give security to the children of the family concerned. The private sector rents for someone working on a basic wage would not have enough left to eat yet alone live.
- There is a great need to inform school children of THEIR responsibilities at least have some money. saved if they intend to live on their own .Very important to inform all young people of their responsibilities.
- we should only provide temporary accomodation and help them get into work and private housing. we should not use tax payers money to help people who dont help themselves!
- GRANTS OR NON-INTEREST LOANS TO HELP THOSE FORCED OUT OF PRIVATELY RENTED HOMES INTO NEW ACCOMMODATION, REMOVE THE UNFAIRNESS OF FORCING FAMILIES REGISTERED AS HOMELESS INTO PRIVATE RENTALS DUE TO LACK OF SOCIAL HOUSING, BUT THEN PUTTING THEM AT A LOWER CHANCE OF GETTING SOCIAL HOUSING BECAUSE THEY HAVE A ROOF OVER THIER HEAD
- Permanent housing should not be an option,assistance only,to keep properti
- To be offered at least 1 property if you are homeless, regardless of whether you have children, or if you are employed - Homeless is homeless!
- A place to live for the time being, even just a very tiny room. It would be better to provide tiny living spaces for more people than larger living spaces for fewer people. But well supervised, to avoid drug dealers etc.
- If you read this please do something for us as we are being evicted we have entered into the 2 months that the law says we have to find somewhere else to live.we need a 3 bed house from the housing association that no one can take off us it would be nice to plant flower bulbs in Oct and see them grow in spring.It has to be a 3 bed for our needs as there are 3 adults and 1 child.I was hoping Santa would have 1 for us but there was no room in his sack. There should be housing for all who need it in this country and that includes us as we are being threatened with homelessness The option I would like open to us is a 3 bed house with a garden for the child to play in safely and to be able to know that we have a home that we can afford and are able to pay for and to live feeling secure and safe.I need to be able to bid for a property knowing that you will give us what we need These are the options that I would like to see open to every 1 in this country a housing association house suitable for peoples needs
- or a council flat . since i turned my life away from crime i dont get the help
- Not being treated like a a lowlife by the housing dept, and don't say they don't because I can tell you they talk to young single homeless people like they are criminals (true of Wyre Forest Community Housing).
- I would need help,support and advice on how to keep my property,how to sustain home ownership and if no options are available then i will seek advice on other options. However the advice should provide information and support

for access to suitable accommodation(either private from RSL or private rented)

- Provide a 'deposit guarantee' scheme for couples & families
- Surely this depends on the reason for becoming homeless! Some people need educating in money management and prioritising their spending. Perhaps the problem is because things have been made too easy for people and they dont need to help themselves!
- permission to build on owned land

Appendix 7

Q8: With the population in general getting older what do you think your local authority should do to help older people plan for their housing needs in the future?

- Don't penalise those who have worked and saved by charging them when others who chose not to save are given the same advantages for less or nothing.
- Single storey properties for older people are easier to manage.
- keep schemes open and wardens employed
- Incentives within the rented stock to move from family housing to a TWO BED flat/bungalow, as older people want the option of couples needing to sleep apart or for family to stay. Then pay for removals.
- Expect people to be reasonable about their requests.
- Helping older people with larger properties downsize, by either a home exchange or by providing more suitable properties for older people, freeing up larger houses for families. I am aware of this problem as where I live up to 5 properties in 2 roads have either a couple or single person occupying them. We are looking to move to a larger property as we now have 2 children living in a small 2 bedroom flat, we are on the exchange list and are bidding for properties that come up locally but to no avail.
- I don't think giving older people a house to buy is a great option because no nice way off putting it but the "cycle of life" is very harsh. Me saying this but at least if they are renting you can keep a constant supply of housing for people.
- Too much emphasis is given to the elderly when there are lots of options already for them. Older people in multiple bedroom rented properties should be encouraged to give them up and free them for families.
- better care services that are at a low cost.
- I'm an older person and there is no help in councils for me you must provide affordable rent accommodation for people when they get older like myself I am being evicted through circumstances unavoidable and through no fault of mine as none of us knows what is around the next corner and as there are 3 adults and 1 child we need a sympathetic housing officer to understand our needs and help us to be provided with a house.
- Housing stock is backed up with single older people in houses too big for their needs. Some kind of compulsory move on would be a good idea - entirely done with plenty of notice, but get them out of there and into older persons accommodation (of which there is way too much at the moment due to this problem - so why not use some of the empty older persons accommodation for the young single people?)
- Offer decent incentives to encourage older people to give up their rented houses, especially if they have 3 or more bedrooms. Offer them a decent and more suitable home, eg. bungalow with warden.
- By providing apartments for the elderly would free up family homes. The elderly would be living in a community that would also provide better company and reduce loneliness. Rather than any help in home adaptation such people should be actively encouraged to move to one of the appropriate apartments. To provide care to a number of people living in a block of apartments has surely overall got to be cheaper than having care go to their homes dispersed all over the town.
- Apply pressure on the government to reduce immigration and implement programs to reduce the population of the UK to a more realistic level i.e. 60 million.

- If single, older people are occupying big family properties, which are both hard to maintain and run, there should be some way of exchanging to a property which is smaller and more economical to run and maintain.
- Provide heating and light allowances for all elderly and vulnerable people.
- I thought all this was already in place

Appendix 8

Q9: How can Local Authorities help young people from the age of 16 - 25 years meet their housing needs?

26 respondents wrote the following comments:

- More accommodation such as Bath Road project ie independent flats with on site support.
- Make certain that the young people don't become dependent on free or very low cost accommodation by assisting the transit into full time employment quickly.
- support the local economy to help create/sustain jobs
- Increase Foyer Provision across the County
- At the younger end to see what can be done to keep the youngster within the family.
- all young people should be given the opportunity to live in affordable housing not just young people with children. the private landlords should also provide cheaper rents for people under 25yrs who for many the future looks poor with regards to work or housing prospects.
- listen to them and dnt jus think there young and take no notice as i feel thats whats happened to me plenty of times!
- Tie housing provision to job opportunities
- unfortunately we live in a world where kids seem to be able to have child, get a council house and live on benifits so why do we let them do this? why is it easy for irresponsible people to get they want but the genuine always fall short
- Educate young people to realise that they need to work and save up for housing.
- More accommadation/affordable rents,should be available for young people to help them live and work in the area,this enables them to provide for themsleves for the future,hopefully moving into the private sector.
- Young people should not EXPECT to have housing given to them, they must do as much as possible to provide for their own housing and their parents should expect to support them in this. It is not a right to spend all your money on enjoying yourself and then expect others to pay for your roof.
- Provide homes for young single people or couples who go out to work & have children. So they are not stuck in one bedroom at their parents houses for almost 2 years.
- You need to build more houses and flats for the young who are just starting there journey through life to give them a step up on the ladder then they may not end up like me after struggling all through their spring,summer,autumn of their lives and when they get to the winter of their life find that they cant go on and everything comes crashing down all around them.
- Not make housing benefit payable to them!! This is disastrous for most young people
- Release some of the older people properties for younger people. Young people are penalised from the start - they get much less housing benefit, and no help whatsoever once over 18 if they become homeless. They have to rely on Nightstop and Stonham for any delp.
- Provide more affordable housing in villages
- I don't think that this is an important issue for young people in this age bracket as if they cannot afford to rent/buy their own property then they should stay living with the parents/relatives until they are in a position to do so, it should not be down to the Local Authority to bear the costs.

- Offer a supported lodgings service. Some younger people just aren't cut out for living on their own, and can in turn prove a nuisance to their neighbours.
- Educating the young to stand on their own two feet without support. Reduce the free meal ticket mentality. The single parent culture. Instill the European morals of support from home or support yourself.
- In my day we had to learn to work, save and live within our means. If this policy were still in place today then this age group would not have the attitude of it's up to everybody else to help them. I at 16 could not have afforded to buy a home and so had to accept that I had to live at home until I had worked long enough and saved enough to be able to move to my own home.
- Apply pressure on the government to reduce immigration and to reduce the population explosion.
- What they should stop is the giving of council properties to pregnant mothers! This is a totally unfair system for those who genuinely want their own independence. Young people are unable to save for a mortgage because of the amount required for a deposit and if they have to rent from a private landlord they are penalised by the amount they have to find upfront for the deposit, rent in advance and management fees. Perhaps young people should be awarded points for being in work: having fought for their country in the forces! Too many are benefitting from the hard work of others and it's time it changed!
- Most young people from 16-25 would not have the slightest clue about any of the above or the aspiration to become involved in it. It needs to be in the education programme to stand any chance of them being interested in it at 16-25.
- Provide advice so that young people are informed and can make sensible decisions on housing.
- Encourage development of town centre accommodation, particularly when shop and office accommodation is empty and could be adapted for such use.

Appendix 9

Q10: How can Local Authorities help vulnerable people, such as those with physical or learning disabilities, meet their housing requirements/expectations?

11 respondents wrote the following comments:

- People need flats and houses and should be given choice to purchase too
- Avoid the allocation of people with difficulties into B&B type places. Help them to develop the life skills to support themselves as best they can. Help their integration into the wider community.
- public education so no NIMBYs
- Ensure all new build is adaptable where possible.
- Give them the practical help that they need make life a bit easier for them their lives are not so good at least help them so that they are not constantly struggling along the way
- and don't just house them in deprived, problem areas where their vulnerability is more likely to be exploited
- there are not many 2 bed bungalows catering for people like myself with a child under 3yrs supported housing
- This should be addressed by having appartments (much like the elderly) so that support can be given in a cost effective manner.
- IT IS ABOUT TIME SOMEONE SOMEWHERE TOOK A LOOK AT ALMSHOUSE RESIDENCES AND GAVE SOME SUPPORT TO THE RESIDENTS. NOT ALL CHARITABLE PEOPLE ARE IN FACT CHARITABLE. I HAVE BEEN THREATENED, BULLIED AND HARASSED BY TRUSTEES OF A CHARITY. DON'T THINK THIS WOULD BE ALLOWED IN ANY OTHER PROPERTY ! ?
- I have ticked them all as being aspirationally ideal but do not genuinely believe they would be successful with this category of person.
- Be more aware of individuals needs. We may all be physically disabled but we don't all have the same needs