

# Older People's Housing Questionnaire Report

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Housing

*2 October 2017*

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## Older People's Housing Questionnaire Report

### Introduction

1. London Borough of Richmond upon Thames is committed to fully understanding the views of older residents and their preferences for their current and future housing needs.
2. This small research project is part of a wider project of work addressing the accommodation needs of older residents and should be considered as part of a broader comprehensive evidence base alongside the Council's Extra Care Evidence Base<sup>1</sup> and Retirement Housing Review<sup>2</sup>. Additional insight into housing need in the Borough is also available in the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment<sup>3</sup> and the Council's Local Plan<sup>4</sup> which sets out the planning policy position.
3. To collate the views of residents, the Council hosted a stall at the Full of Life Fair for residents of the Borough aged 55 and over, which was held in Twickenham on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Information on housing options for older people was provided to all respondents at the Full of Life Fair detailing a range of housing options that could be available to older people including; equity share housing for older people, the Council's downsizing scheme for social housing tenants and other retirement housing options in the Borough (explanations of these products were given where these were unfamiliar to the respondent). The Council also held an online consultation during October and November 2016. In total, there were 42 responses to the questionnaire at the Full of Life Fair and 24 to the online consultation. The questionnaire covered areas such as; older people's plans to move in the near future, attractiveness of retirement housing and information about the respondent such as age, ethnicity, gender, disability and current tenure type.
4. This paper provides a useful snapshot of the views of some older residents, despite not being a representative sample of the estimated 51,300 people aged 55 and over in the Borough<sup>5</sup>. As such, drawing definitive conclusions from the findings of the paper is not possible. This paper analyses all responses together as the profiles of the groups were largely similar, apart from their age groups. The proportion of respondents aged 55-64 was notably higher for the online consultation where 46% of respondents were in this age group compared to 14% at the Full of Life Fair.

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<sup>1</sup>LBRuT (2015) *Extra Care Housing Evidence Base*. Retrieved from: [http://www.richmond.gov.uk/extra\\_care\\_housing\\_evidence\\_base.pdf](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/extra_care_housing_evidence_base.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> LBRuT (2016) *Retirement Housing Review*. Retrieved from: [http://www.richmond.gov.uk/retirement\\_housing\\_review.pdf](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/retirement_housing_review.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> LBRuT (2016) *Strategic Housing Market Assessment*. Retrieved from: [http://www.richmond.gov.uk/housing\\_market\\_assessment\\_final\\_report\\_december\\_2016.pdf](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/housing_market_assessment_final_report_december_2016.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> LBRuT (2018) *Local Plan*. Retrieved from: [https://www.richmond.gov.uk/local\\_plan](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/local_plan)

<sup>5</sup> GLA (2015) *GLA Population Projections - Custom Age Tables*. Retrieved from: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/gla-population-projections-custom-age-tables>

## Demographics

5. The questionnaire was focused on understanding the views of residents of the Borough who are aged 55 and over, so all of the respondents were in this age group with the highest proportion aged 65-74 (38%).

Age	Full of Life Respondents	Online Respondents	All Respondents	% of All Respondents
55-64	6	11	17	26%
65-74	15	10	25	38%
75-84	17	3	20	30%
85+	4	0	4	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1: The number and proportion of respondents by age group**

6. Over two-thirds of the total respondents (45) who were surveyed were female (68%), with 21 male respondents taking part in the questionnaire (32%). The proportion of females taking part in the survey was similar at the Full of Life Fair (69%) and during the online consultation (67%).
7. The ethnicity of the respondents was similar to that of the Borough as a whole when compared with data from the Census in 2011. The largest ethnic group from the questionnaire and from the Census in 2011 was White (both 86%), with those identifying as Asian, Black and Other also largely aligned with Census data.

Ethnicity	% of All Respondents	Census 2011
Asian/Asian British	6%	7%
Black African/Caribbean/British	3%	2%
Refused	3%	0%
Other	2%	5%
White	86%	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2: The ethnicity of respondents and of Richmond upon Thames residents (Census 2011)**

8. When respondents were asked whether they considered themselves to have a disability, 20% (13 respondents) said that they did and 80% said they did not. Given the small sample size it is not possible to draw any conclusions from this.

## Findings

9. Respondents were surveyed on whether they were planning to move currently or in the future and whether they would ever consider moving to retirement housing. Only 18% said that they were currently considering moving home, with 35% indicating that they were planning to move at some point in the future. This means that 44% had no plans to move from their current accommodation and 3% were unsure.

10. As Table 3 below shows, only 15% said that they would not consider moving to retirement housing at some point and nearly two-thirds saying that they would consider a move to sheltered, extra care or age-exclusive housing (61%). This indicates that of those surveyed, people would consider moving to retirement housing in certain circumstances even if they are not currently planning to do so. In addition, there was a noticeable difference between the responses received at the Full of Life Fair and those from the online survey. Nearly 71% of those at the Full of Life Fair said they would consider moving to housing for older people, whereas only 42% on the online consultation said the same. There were no observable trends between the age groups of those who answered this question but one reason for the difference could be that people attended the event to find out more about services for older people including housing services, as this was a focus of the fair.

<b>Would you consider moving to retirement housing?</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
<b>Yes</b>	40	61%
<b>No</b>	10	15%
<b>Not Sure/Refused</b>	16	24%
<b>Total</b>	66	100%

**Table 3: Would you consider moving to extra care/sheltered/age-exclusive housing?**

11. All respondents were asked what they found most and least appealing about housing for older people and could select multiple responses. The majority of respondents (53%) said that the location of the scheme would be of paramount importance and would favour retirement housing near to the local community, amenities and transport. The other factors that people said were most appealing were the social facilities (38%) and the lower cost of living (38%).

<b>Reason</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>% of All Respondents</b>
<b>Retirement housing near to local community, amenities and transport</b>	35	53%
<b>The social and leisure facilities at the scheme</b>	25	38%
<b>The lower cost of living e.g. energy bills</b>	25	38%
<b>I would like support or care on site</b>	24	36%
<b>I would like communal facilities e.g. dining area, residents' lounge, shared garden</b>	22	33%

**Table 4: What do find most appealing about retirement housing? (Top 5 responses)**

12. When respondents were asked what they found least appealing about retirement housing, they said it was the ties they had to their current neighbourhood and location of their home (58%), which again highlights the importance of location to those surveyed. This was followed by their attachment to their current home (48%) and then over a third of respondents said that they would not like the upheaval of moving (35%).

Reason	No. of Respondents	% of All Respondents
I like my current neighbourhood and location of home	38	58%
I like my current home	32	48%
The upheaval of moving	23	35%
I do not think there would be enough storage for my belongings	19	29%
I do not want to move from freehold to leasehold	18	27%

**Table 5: What do find least appealing about retirement housing? (Top 5 responses)**

13. The importance of remaining nearby their current home was also evident when respondents were asked how far they would move from where they currently live. Nearly two-thirds (62%) said that they would not consider moving from their current neighbourhood, with 26% saying they would move between two and five miles away and only 12% saying they would consider moving more than five miles from their current home. Although, with such a small sample, this cannot demonstrate how far people are willing to move, it provides an indication of the proportion of people who wish to remain near to where they currently live.
14. Respondents were asked what the minimum number of bedrooms they would consider and over half said two bedrooms (56%), with 30% saying one. This question also highlighted that 61% of respondents would consider a downsizing move, which rises to 73% when including those currently living in one bedroom properties and would move to another one bed. Respondents at the Full of Life Fair were provided with information on shared equity opportunities and the downsizing scheme for social housing tenants by Council officers.

No. of Bedrooms	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
1	20	30%
2	37	56%
3	6	9%
4+	1	2%
Not Answered	2	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6: What is the minimum number of bedrooms you would consider?**

15. When the responses to this question are broken down by tenure, there are some clear trends with 73% of the 49 owner occupiers confirming they would consider moving to a home with two bedrooms. This is a finding that is also aligned with national trends as the majority of older owner occupiers are often found preferring two bedroom units<sup>6 7</sup>.

## Conclusion

16. This research has identified that 53% of those surveyed said they were considering moving home at some point (18% currently considering moving and 35% planning to move in the

<sup>6</sup> Demos (2012) *Top of the Ladder*.

<sup>7</sup> JRF (2012) *Older people's housing: choice, quality of life, and under-occupation*.

future). Interestingly, a higher proportion said that although they were not planning to move, they would consider moving to housing for older people in certain circumstances (61%). This represents quite a large proportion of the respondents, although the difference between the responses received at the Full of Life Fair and online could indicate that people who were already interested in retirement housing attended the fair to find out more about housing for older people.

17. The location of schemes was also something that respondents highlighted. The least appealing factor about retirement housing was that respondents liked their current home and surrounding neighbourhood, with the majority of respondents also saying that they would be reluctant to move from their current neighbourhood. Continuing to review where retirement housing schemes are located and developed across the Borough will support meeting choice in terms of location.
  
18. Regarding the number of bedrooms older people would consider, the vast majority of respondents (86%) said that they would live in either a one or two bedroom home. This is aligned with the Council's policy to pursue a mixture of one and two bedroom units on retirement housing schemes in the Borough. This is also aligned with previous research completed by the Council<sup>8</sup> that identified that the majority of owner occupiers would prefer a two bedroom home. The Retirement Housing Review previously published by the Council also highlighted that based on Housing Register data, the majority of those waiting for retirement housing in the social rented sector would require one bedroom units.

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<sup>8</sup> LBRuT (2016) *Retirement Housing Review*. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.richmond.gov.uk/retirement\\_housing\\_review.pdf](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/retirement_housing_review.pdf)

## Appendix One

### Retirement Housing Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to provide Richmond Council with more insight into the housing needs and aspirations of its older residents in order to support housing development which is attractive to local older people.

**Your answers will be confidential: we will not record your name or details in a way that you can be identified.**

**Please see page 4 for a glossary of terms.**

1. Are you planning to move from your current home?
  - I am currently considering moving
  - I plan to move in the next 5 / 10 / 15 / 20+ years (Please circle applicable figure)
  - I do not plan to move from my current home
  
2. Would you consider moving to extra care/sheltered/age-exclusive housing?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
  
3. What would you find most appealing about the idea of moving to retirement housing? (You may choose multiple answers)
  - Currently struggling to cope with daily tasks
  - You would like support or care on site
  - Difficulty getting around your home
  - You would like more accessible accommodation e.g. walk-in shower
  - Current home is in disrepair
  - Struggling to maintain home
  - Current home is too large
  - Current cost of living e.g. energy bills
  - Currently feel isolated or lonely
  - You would like communal facilities e.g. dining area, residents' lounge, shared garden
  - Type of tenure available e.g. market sale, shared equity, social rented
  - Social and leisure facilities at the scheme
  - Lack of amenities and services near your current home
  - Retirement housing near to local community, amenities and transport
  - Other (please specify)

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4. What would you find least appealing about the prospect of moving to retirement housing?  
(You may choose multiple answers)

- I like my current home
  - I like my current neighbourhood and location of home
  - The upheaval of moving
  - The expense of moving
  - The image of retirement housing
  - I do not wish to downsize to a smaller home
  - I do not think that the accommodation would meet my expectations
  - I have no issues managing my home
  - I would not like the activities
  - I do not think there would be enough storage for my belongings
  - I would not like the shared facilities
  - I do not want to move from freehold to leasehold
  - I am reluctant to starting paying service charges
  - Other (please specify)
- .....

5. What is the minimum number of bedrooms you would consider?

- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedrooms
- 3 bedrooms
- 4 or more bedrooms

6. In which of the following tenure types would you choose to live? (You may choose multiple answers)

- Freehold
- Leasehold
- Social rented
- Rent from a private landlord

7. Are you a resident of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames?

- Yes
- No

8. If yes, in which village area do you live?

- Barnes
- East Sheen
- Kew
- Hampton
- Hampton Hill
- Hampton Wick
- Mortlake
- Richmond
- St Margarets & East Twickenham
- Teddington
- Whitton & Heathfield

9. How far would you consider moving from where you currently live?

- Only to my current neighbourhood
- 2-5 miles from my current home
- 5-10 miles from my current home
- 10+ miles from my current home

10. In which type of property do you currently live?

- House
- Flat
- Other



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11. Which of the following describes your current tenure type?

- Owned outright
- Owned with a mortgage
- Social rented
- Rented from a private landlord

12. How many bedrooms are there in your current property?

- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedrooms
- 3 bedrooms
- 4 or more bedrooms

13. Are you:

- Male
- Female

14. How would you describe your ethnic group?

- White
- Black African/Caribbean/British
- Other ethnic group (please specify)
- Asian/Asian British
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

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15. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No

16. What was your age at your last birthday?

- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85 and over

## Glossary

- Age-exclusive housing:** Schemes / properties which are available exclusively to older people. Usually incorporate design features helpful to older people and may have communal facilities such as a residents' lounge, guest suite and shared garden but do not provide any regular on-site support to residents.
- Extra care housing:** Schemes / properties are included where care (registered personal care) is available on site 24/7.
- Leasehold:** Properties where the purchaser has permission to live in a property as their home but only until the lease expires and do not own the ground it is built on. Leaseholders are generally liable for certain ongoing costs, such as ground rent and/or service charges. The majority of housing for older people for sale will be sold leasehold.
- Market sale:** This is when the purchaser buys a property as at level in line with market rates without any form of discount.
- Shared equity:** This is when the purchaser buys a fixed proportion of a property but can never buy the remainder which will always remain with the freeholder.
- Sheltered housing:** Schemes / properties are included where some form of scheme manager (warden) service is provided on site on a regular basis but where no registered personal care is provided. A regularly visiting scheme manager service may qualify as long as they are available to all residents when on site. In most cases schemes will also include traditional shared facilities, such as a residents' lounge and possibly laundry and garden.
- Affordable rented:** Properties rented from a not-for-profit Registered Provider of social housing at a rate set at no more than 80% of market levels. Eligibility criteria include amount of savings and level of income. Another type of submarket rented home is London Affordable Rent, which was introduced by the Mayor of London and is set at a benchmark level below 80% of market rate, at a level that the Greater London Authority (GLA) consider to be 'genuinely affordable'.