

Appendix 1

Consultation outcomes and responses: Introduction of Flexible Tenancies

Consultation on the proposal to introduce Flexible Tenancies for certain designated council-owned homes was carried out using the 'Let's Talk Derby' consultation platform on the council website. Paper copies were also available on request. The consultation lasted for 12 weeks from 23 June to 14 September 2022. Housing Providers, tenants and Derby city residents were invited to take part, as well as organisations working with vulnerable households and those at risk of homelessness.

57 responses were received. When asked to provide information on what capacity they were completing the survey, 25% said they rented their home from the council; 8.8% from a housing association; 31.6% were homeowners; 12.3% were renting privately; 8.8% worked for a Registered Provider whilst 7% worked for an organisation that assists tenants or those in need of social or affordable housing. The remaining 7% did not specify their circumstances.

The following information gives a picture of the responses and comments received.

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposals for flexible tenancies for larger properties? Larger properties are defined as homes with four bedrooms or more.

The majority were in support with 86% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this proposal. 12.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed whereas 1.8% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Comments included:-

It's about time this is happening so many properties under occupied.

All tenancy should be flexible for everyone as anyone can have a change of circumstance.

My organisation started to use fixed term tenancies a few years ago and this really didn't result in an increase of high demand stock becoming available. At the end of the fixed term period if the household's situation had changed and they no longer needed a 4 bedroom home we then had the difficulty of finding them a suitable alternative property of a size appropriate to their needs at that time. We didn't have sufficient stock of the right size properties in the areas they were living and wished to stay in, so we continued renewing their tenancies every 5 years.

Social Housing is let on a different basis to the private rented sector, tenants are expected to furnish and decorate their homes. It does not seem fair to expect this from a tenant in a property for which they have a reduced security of tenure. The threat of home loss is likely to lead to or aggravate mental health conditions for those people who need the most support.

I cannot imagine having the insecurity of a fixed term tenancy hanging over me. I work in a homelessness service and can see the devastating impact the uncertainty

of insecure private tenancies has on tenant's mental health. Moving house is expensive and stressful. Knowing that when an adult child leaves home will result in the family having to uproot and possibly change schools for younger children would be an awful thing to have hanging over them.

I fully appreciate that we are in the middle of a housing crisis and affordable, good quality housing of all types and sizes is incredibly hard to come by in both the private and social sector. However I don't think that replicating the insecurity of the private sector is the answer to the problem.

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce flexible tenancies for properties with significant adaptations for a disabled occupant? Homes with significant adaptations are defined as 'homes which have undergone structural alterations or extension in order to accommodate the needs of a disabled person'.

Most respondents were in support with 80.3% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this proposal. 17.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed whereas 1.8% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Comments included:-

Flexible tenancies will add extra stress to the already difficult lives of people with disabilities. People with disabilities need secure housing more than any other group. Reviewing their housing every 5 years will cause extreme anxiety to many disabled people. It's just more punitive practices against those who are the most vulnerable.

I have worked closely with people with disabilities and, sadly the person with the disability might have a shorter than average life expectancy. Again, expecting a family to move when a loved one has passed would add an intolerable burden to a family already going through an extremely difficult time. I also think that frequent turnover of residents is detrimental to the community as people do not invest in their local area if they are unsure if they will be staying there very long.

As a disabled Derby Homes resident I feel you should build more adapted properties. I live in a house and have some minimal adaptations such as grab rails but I have put a lot of my own time and money into this house to make it nice.

I am worried about disabled people - what criteria will be used to assess the need of the individual who is living in the house? Will the tenant have the right of appeal? Although Derby Homes will be doing it - how will their work be overseen and by whom?

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to introduce flexible tenancies that are reviewed every five years?

The majority felt that this review was fair though some suggested a shorter length of time. 66.6% either agreed or strongly agreed with a 5 year review whilst 26.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. 7% Neither agree nor disagreed.

Comments included:-

Should be 3 years between reviews. 5 years too long

Too long suggest 3 years the need to get these houses into hands of those who most need them asap must take priority

Definitely not shorter than 5 years

Q7. Do you have any suggestions for other properties (other than homes with four or more bedrooms or significantly adapted properties) that could be rented on a flexible tenancy?

Of those that replied to this question, 9 thought Flexible Tenancies should also include houses with 3 or more bedrooms; 2 said bungalows and one person suggested ground floor flats. 2 respondents said these tenancies should apply to all tenancies, with one person citing ASB and rent arrears as the reason.

Q9. Would you like to make any other comments on flexible tenancies in larger properties and substantial adaptations?

Comments included:-

Good strategy.

Great innovative thinking, please get on with it!

Housing security is very important to people so a 5 year tenancy would be good as long as there is a guarantee to help and support people if the house no longer suits their needs.

If possible I would like to know more about the proposed plans for residents to move out of these properties, will they be supported to live nearby, how much time will they be given at the end of the flexible tenancy, what if said residents reject the new property.