

Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

Department	Housing
Date question raised	28-03-2022
Date of Area Panel	18-03-2022
Area in city	North
Star rating applied by residents	2
Deadline for officer response	22-04-2022, 12pm
Name of officer responding	Ododo Dafé
Department / team	Head of Housing Strategy & Supply

Title of question: Student Housing

Issue raised by residents:

Lack of homes available for local people on the council waiting list, whilst land is used to build student housing.

Background:

There has been a significant amount of student housing built in the area in recent years. To local residents it feels as if every piece of vacant land is being allocated for student flats. The council rationale for this is that it will free up more of the existing housing for local people and families, but this isn't the experience of those living in the area. There doesn't seem to be a reduction in the number of HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation), and it seems that new HMO licences are still being granted to private landlords.

Action requested by residents:

It was agreed to raise this at the Area Panel to request the following information:

- How many properties are there in the area with HMO licences?
- How does this compare to the number of HMO licences 3 years ago?

Officer Response:

•How many properties are there in the area with HMO licences?

A total of 1,100 house in multiple occupation (HMO) licences were issued within the Patcham, Hollingdean & Stanmer, and Moulsecoomb & Bevendean wards for the financial year 2021/22. We currently have a backlog of applications to be processed, so this figure will increase over the coming year.

•How does this compare to the number of HMO licences 3 years ago?

I am sorry but it is not possible to provide a comparative figure over the period requested as there are two licensing schemes currently in operation in the city that cover HMOs - and each run for a certain period.

The Mandatory Licensing Scheme is the national scheme for all properties with 5 or more tenants. This is an on-going scheme, with licences renewed every 5 years.

The Additional Licensing Scheme is the local scheme for smaller HMOs with 3 or more tenants, in properties with 2 or more storeys. This second scheme started in 2018, runs for 5 years and will end in March 2023. A total of 3,030 licences were issued across the city, but I regret that I do not have the figure broken down by wards.

While the perception is that every piece of development land is used for student housing, it might be useful to highlight that we have recently built 30 council homes at Hawkridge (the ex Selsfield Drive Housing Office), there are 226 affordable homes being developed on the Preston Barracks site (some for affordable shared ownership), 242 affordable homes being built on the Coldean Lane site as part of the council's joint venture with Hyde Housing Association, and of course there is the exciting proposal for over 200 council homes as part of the Moulsecoomb Hub development.

As well as the considerable housing development in this Area Panel area, and the purchase of properties back into council stock that were previously sold under the Right-to-Buy, I can also confirm that Council Tax records show a reduction in the number of homes across the city that have a student exemption. The figure was 5,699 in 2020/21, and 4,729 in 2021/22 - a reduction of 970 homes.

Officer contact details:

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Specific Action:

No Specific Action.

Timeline:

Start date: N/A

End date: N/A