

Public Document Pack

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To: Cllr Ron Hampson (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox,
Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Glenys Diskin,
Rosetta Dolphin, Jim Falshaw, Alison Halford,
George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Brian Lloyd,
Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

17 September 2013

Sharon Thomas 01352 702324
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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **MONDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2013** at **10.00 AM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES**

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2013 (copy enclosed).

4 **DEVELOPING THE FLINTSHIRE HOUSING OFFER THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF A HOUSING COMPANY** (Pages 7 - 12)

Report of Head of Housing enclosed.

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

- 5 **DEVELOPING THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR TO HELP MEET THE NEED FOR MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING** (Pages 13 - 54)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 6 **FLINT TOWN CENTRE (HOUSING REGENERATION)** (Pages 55 - 92)
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 7 **PERFORMANCE REPORTING** (Pages 93 - 100)
Report of Chief Executive enclosed.
- 8 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 101 - 108)
Report of Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.

Agenda Item 3

HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 JULY 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Llys Eleanor, Shotton Lane, Shotton, Deeside CH5 1QU on Wednesday, 10 July 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox, Peter Curtis, Glenys Diskin, Jim Falshaw, Alison Halford, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Brian Lloyd, Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: Ron Davies and Rosetta Dolphin

CONTRIBUTORS:

Cabinet Member for Housing, Director of Community Services, Head of Housing, Housing Strategy Manager, Housing Asset Manager, Operations Manager and Housing Strategy Officer

IN ATTENDANCE:

Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

7. ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman welcomed those in attendance to the meeting at Llys Eleanor and praised the wonderful facility which he felt Flintshire County Council should be proud of. He thanked the staff and residents for their hospitality.

The Chairman then explained to Members that Gill Conway, the Operations Manager, would be retiring from the Council shortly. He presented her with a bouquet of flowers and thanked her for the work that she had undertaken during her employment at the Council.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2013 had been circulated with the agenda.

Matters Arising

Councillor Alison Halford referred to the penultimate paragraph on page 5 and asked whether the Income Team dealing with rent arrears were to be invited to a future meeting of the Committee. The Head of Housing responded that a report on rent arrears would be considered as part of the Quarter 1 performance report at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 11 September 2013 and suggested that the Income Team attend that meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman indicated that there would be a slight change in the order of business to bring forward the item on the Community Services Directorate Plan.

11. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE PLAN

The Director of Community Services introduced a report on the Community Services Directorate Plan to present the final draft to Members and to seek any final views and comments before approval by Cabinet.

He provided a detailed presentation on the Improvement Plan and highlighted the four priorities and the sub priorities for Housing which included Extra Care Housing, achieving the Wales Housing Quality Standard and modern, efficient and adapted homes. The Director then provided a detailed presentation on the Directorate Plan. It was reported that a user friendly style to the format had been adopted by Community Services in 2012 and this had been retained for the update. Section 3 of the Directorate Plan detailed the vision and values of the Directorate of Community Services and the performance highlights were reported in section 4. The extra care facility at Llys Jasmine was on schedule to open in September 2013 and would be similar to the development at Llys Eleanor in Shotton.

Councillor George Hardcastle thanked the Director for his presentation and report. He asked whether there had been any significant impacts since the introduction of Welfare Reform. The Head of Housing responded that as at the end June 2013 rent arrears had increased by £30,000 on the same period last year and even though this was a concern, about 80% of income due was still being collected. She added that 21 tenants who were being charged for under occupancy charges had been moved to smaller properties. Discretionary Housing Payments had been made to some tenants following claims and a key issue was ensuring that tenants were aware of the Welfare Benefits Service who could assist in identifying whether they were receiving the benefits that they were entitled to. On the issue of homelessness, there had been an increase in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation but this was currently being contained within the budget and the impact was being managed. Following a further question from Councillor Hardcastle on what would happen if tenants had a three bedroom property and there were insufficient one or two bedroom properties available for them to move into, the Head of Housing said that each case was looked at on its merits. She detailed the approach taken for those who were in arrears before the introduction of the Welfare Reform and those who had not been in arrears prior to April 2013. She advised that the Council were not yet at the position of taking tenants to court over the rent arrears which had accrued as a result of Welfare Reform but there would be a need to look at how this would be managed for the future.

Councillor Peter Curtis said that there would be situations in the whole of the country where tenants wanted to move to smaller properties to avoid the

extra charge, but the properties were not available for them to move to. He spoke of the 30 empty properties which were being brought back into use for residential living and also commented on the increased use of foodbanks. Councillor Curtis referred to the large number of empty properties in the Holywell and Greenfield areas and queried whether this was due to high rents being charged. The Head of Housing said that ways were being considered of how to work with private landlords and suggested that this could be the subject of a report to a future meeting. Councillor Curtis welcomed the reduction in the number of void properties.

Councillor Alison Halford thanked the Director, the Head of Housing and officers for the report and the information provided. She asked for further information on why the authority was in the bottom quartile for the average time taken to complete Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and undertaking visits to looked after children within statutory timescales. On the issue of DFGs, the Director said that improvements had been made in the last quarter but that Flintshire County Council was still below average for Councils in Wales. Work had been undertaken to work more effectively and the position was improving but was still a challenge. On the issue of visits within statutory timescales, he said that these were for individual cases and could result in a missed performance indicator if the visit was undertaken a day later than scheduled, however the situation was improving. In response to a query from Councillor Halford about whether DFGs could be included as an item on the Forward Work Programme for discussion at a future meeting, the Director concurred and suggested that it be included as an item for discussion at a joint meeting with the Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Halford referred to the Deeside Housing Renewal Area and asked whether there had been any slippage. The Director confirmed that it was reported in the Directorate Plan that this issue remained a key priority. The Head of Housing said that there were no significant issues and added that the renewal area budget was ringfenced but the funding at £300,000 had been significantly lower than the £1m expected. Last year all of the commitments were achieved.

On the issue of vacant properties which were beyond repair, Councillor Mike Reece queried whether demolition could be forced to free up land to build new properties. The Director suggested that this be included as an item on the Forward Work Programme for a future meeting. Councillor David Cox raised concern about properties which had stood empty for over five years and the problems associated with identifying and contacting the owners. The Director commented on the challenges but said that a target of bringing 30 empty homes back into use had been set. The Head of Housing said that the empty homes activity had improved and she commented on work which was being undertaken on options available to Councils such as charging higher rates of Council Tax for empty properties. She suggested that a report on empty properties be considered at a future meeting of the Committee and that the Housing Renewal Manager be invited to attend to answer questions from Members.

The Chairman queried whether there was any funding available which could be used to build council houses on land owned by the authority. The Head of Housing explained that Welsh Government (WG) had been able to secure

agreement with Central Government to exit the HRA subsidy system but the implications of this for Flintshire were not yet known.

In response to a question from Council Halford about whether the Council would buy back properties in good condition which had previously been council houses, the Head of Housing said that this had not happened yet but there was an option for the authority to do so. Councillor Gareth Roberts did not feel that the Council were legally able to do this.

Councillor Jim Falshaw referred to the issue of Section 106 agreements for affordable housing and said that he felt that developers would not agree to comply with this requirement.

The Head of Housing advised that just under 3000 people were on the housing register and, following a comment from Councillor Falshaw, confirmed that modern and different methods of construction were being explored to develop new homes.

In response to a question from Councillor Halford, the Head of Housing explained that the land review was underway but had not yet been completed. The Director advised that he would provide further information on land owned by Flintshire County Council at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the final draft of the Community Services Directorate Plan be endorsed.

12. HOUSING SERVICE PLAN

The Head of Housing introduced a report to seek Member endorsement of the 2013-2014 Housing Service Plan.

The Head of Housing detailed the background to the report and explained that the service plan set out the housing service's priorities and key actions to secure continuous improvement in 2013-2014. A summary of the challenges faced by the service and the opportunities for change and improvement were detailed in the report and included improving performance in void management; working towards delivery of a regional allocations policy and housing register; delivering projects and initiatives to mitigate the effect of Welfare Reform and delivering the Flint Regeneration Housing Scheme.

Councillor Alison Halford asked for further information on staff appraisals and sickness absence and also on gypsies and travellers. The Head of Housing said that the target for appraisals was 100% for all staff. She added that sickness absence figures were improving and she was confident that sickness absence would continue to reduce. On the issue of gypsies and travellers the Housing Strategy Manager said that consideration was being given to the expansion of the Riverside Site and for a transit site in Greenfield. Councillor Peter Curtis asked whether there was an update on the Dollar Park site as he felt that there was an unlawful expansion of the site. The Head of Housing suggested that the Housing Strategy Manager look at the issue following this meeting and advise Councillor Curtis of his findings. Councillor Gareth Roberts said that the site had been

granted permission on appeal until 2015 for 12 pitches but these had not all been used. He added that if all of the pitches were now being used, it could appear that the site had expanded.

Councillor Roberts also queried whether there was adequate provision in the other North Wales authority areas. In response, the Housing Strategy Manager said that in North Wales, Flintshire County Council provided 58% of the sites and Wrexham County Borough Council provided 33%. There were a small number of sites in Anglesey but Conwy, Denbighshire and Gwynedd County Councils did not have any formal provision for gypsies and travellers. He referred to a housing white paper which proposed a statutory duty for all authorities to make provision for sites.

In response to a query from Councillor Mike Reece on the boarding up of some of the maisonettes in Flint, the Head of Housing said that this was necessary due to risks to remaining residents.

RESOLVED:

That the Housing Service Plan 2013-2014 be endorsed.

13. DELIVERING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN FLINTSHIRE WITHOUT THE REQUIREMENT FOR PUBLIC GRANT SUBSIDY

The Head of Housing introduced a report to outline to Members the variety of financial models available to the Council to facilitate housing development in Flintshire without the requirement for public grant subsidy.

She detailed the background to the report and explained that the Council needed to rethink its approach to housing development. It was reported that the Council needed to ensure that the right types of housing offered in the right locations were delivered to meet the needs of existing households. To attract economically active households into Flintshire, the Council must therefore consider new delivery models, seek out alternative forms of funding and consider different tenures and housing products. The report raised the issue of what to do with land that was owned by Flintshire County Council and detailed how it could deliver housing in the future. The Head of Housing spoke of some of the financial models which included disposing of the land at no value or joint venture arrangements.

Councillor Peter Curtis asked whether options which were used in other countries had been considered and disagreed with the idea of giving land away as he felt that the highest price should be achieved.

In response to questions from Councillor Alison Halford, the Head of Housing provided further information on a co-operative delivery model. The Cabinet Member for Housing said that discussions were ongoing and a visit was to be undertaken to view properties built by other local authorities. Councillor Ray Hughes asked whether building log cabins had been considered.

Councillor Gareth Roberts felt that the Council would like to be able to build its own Council housing but in highlighting paragraph 3.14, he raised

concern that the models suggested in the report were about building properties for others. He also felt that it was inappropriate to consider undertaking prudential borrowing.

In response to the comments made, the Head of Housing said that it was not the role of the Council to just look at social needs as there was a need to provide adequate housing provision for all. She spoke of the differences between affordable/social rent and market rents and said that there was a need to look at how to meet all the different needs.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

14. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator reminded Members of the Forward Work Programme planning session which was due to take place on Monday, 15th July. She circulated a pack of papers for their consideration at the planning session.

Councillor George Hardcastle asked whether the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 11 September 2013 could be held at the Holywell Flintshire Connects office.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be noted.

15. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press and no members of the public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.30 pm and ended at 3.55 pm)

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Chairman

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF HOUSING**

SUBJECT: **DEVELOPING THE FLINTSHIRE HOUSING OFFER THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF A HOUSING COMPANY**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To explain potential long term strategic aspirations for housing provision in Flintshire and to seek support in principle to the establishment of a housing company that could be instrumental in delivering this vision.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The council now has a range of housing services for which there has been positive improvement. There is growing confidence both externally and internally that services will continue to improve and will achieve excellence.

2.02 However this progress is being made at a time when residents of the County are facing increasing difficulty in accessing affordable housing due to economic pressures, welfare reform and the challenges experienced in accessing mortgage finance; and in addition to this the number of new homes being developed to meet emerging needs has been stagnant for the last few years (despite planning approvals being provided and land being available for development).

2.03 To try to find ways to address these challenges, the council has been innovating and developing new ways to achieve its affordable housing provision. This report identifies some of the barriers to implementation that the council is facing immediately and longer term if its aspiration to be both a strategic enabler and provider of a range of affordable housing products is to be realised.

2.04 This paper identifies a proposed way forward that would provide much needed additional flexibilities for the council to meet its Local Housing strategy targets for new and additional homes across a range of tenures.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The current statutory limitations which govern the Councils ability to grant tenancy agreements are very restrictive and mean that, in all but exceptional circumstances, the council is obliged to grant a full secure tenancy to its tenants. In addition, where properties are held in the HRA rents must comply with the WG Rents benchmarking regime effectively causing problems where the council wishes to charge an affordable or market rent.

3.02 Officers, with the support of Senior members are working on a number of new initiatives to meet local needs and grow the Councils service delivery offer and are finding that a number of new opportunities cannot be taken forward satisfactorily due the constraints placed on the Council through its current arrangements for service delivery.

3.03 POTENTIAL SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS PRIVATE SECTOR LEASING

The Local Authority is working with a number of private landlords in Flintshire to explore options for leasing properties. The Local Authority is keen to lease a range of property types that can be used to meet a range of needs. This is also being seen as an opportunity to encourage the growth of the private rented sector which is increasingly becoming a tenure of choice for those unable to access mortgage finance. There are a number of investors happy to invest in property but not keen to take on management responsibilities. The council is viewed as a trusted provider in this regard.

The council has experience and expertise in property management and repair and maintenance. The pending homeless legislation will allow councils to discharge their homeless duty into the private rented sector. To encourage landlords to do this, the council needs a "management offer" which can provide reassurance to private landlords that should they house tenants at LHA rent levels rather than market rents, that the council can ease any perceived management burden by directly managing the property itself and guaranteeing the landlord a fixed income and making sure that where tenants need support to manage the tenancy that this support is in place.

It would also seem to make sense that where the council is working with property owners who are receiving loan funding from the council to improve their property that it has a management offer available too.

3.04 ELDERLY HOME OWNERS

Many home owners wish to access more suitable accommodation (for health reasons), in the county's council stock but are currently, in some cases, prevented from doing so as they receive insufficient priority on the Councils waiting list. (They receive deduction points based on the value of their property). In many cases this capital value

however makes purchasing more suitable property very challenging.

3.05 Flintshire Council has a good supply of property suitable for older people- nearly 50% of its stock, and needs additional 2/3 bedroom family homes for temporary and longer term use at affordable rents. Were the council able to lease the property from the home owner for 5-10 years and let it, the council could meet identified needs; the home owner would receive an income (net of a management fee) to enable them to pay rent and could be re-housed by the council into more appropriate property which they would find easier to manage and which could help to address social isolation.

3.06 **REGENERATION SCHEMES**

As part of delivering the Town Centre master plans, proposals are being developed for mixed tenure new housing developments. The Council is currently limited in the range of solutions it can provide as a direct provider of new homes. Social rented homes can be provided for in the HRA but affordable rent, market rent and low cost home ownership would be challenging to deliver without a new legal structure in place. See 3.09 below relating to the opportunities which would come from housing company being established.

3.07 **EMPTY HOMES**

Members are aware that the council has been successful at bringing a number of empty homes back in to use over recent times via its own Housing Capital programme and Welsh Government "Houses to Homes" funding. The Houses to Homes scheme places no requirement on the property owner to rehouse local people in partnership with the local authority and therefore they can choose to let property at market rents which may not always be the council priority for a particular location. There has been a recent example of this where an owner was happy in principle to lease his properties to the council (which had been improved with loan funding from Welsh Government), but the council was advised that the property would either need to be let as secure tenancies, or, if they were used for homeless people on temporary license arrangements. The plan was to use them for temporary decants or for affordable rent, so neither option was ideal.

3.08 **GIFTED UNITS**

Over the last two years the Council has reached agreement with a small number of private developers for them to gift properties to the council as part of meeting their s106 obligations. During the next 18 months 24 properties will be built and gifted to the council's ownership. The benefit of this arrangement is that the Council has properties it can let to meet local needs for social and affordable housing, providing a new revenue stream, and in addition, the council has unencumbered assets on which it could borrow to fund other priorities for capital funding. The first four of these homes are expected to be completed ready for transfer to the Council in

September 2013.

To meet need in the locations where these homes are being developed, a range of tenure options need to be available to the Council. In some locations new units of social housing are what is needed while in others it is the intermediate rental market. Were a broader range of tenancy options available, this would introduce an additional level of flexibility for the Council in meeting need.

3.09 HOUSING COMPANY

One possible way to deliver several of these aspirations would be to establish a housing company. Any property owned by the company, or for which it had leases in place, would not be subject to the benchmarking regime and therefore could set rents at LHA rates or market rates as needed. But more importantly as the company would not be an entity which satisfies the landlord condition for the granting of secure tenancies, the company would have a much higher degree of flexibility in terms of the type of tenancy it can grant and would be able to grant assured short hold tenancies in line with the private sector. A further additional benefit is that any property held in it and let as a non secure tenancy would not be subject to the Right to Buy (or Right to acquire).

3.10 The company could be used to establish a lettings agency, offering housing management and repair and maintenance services etc as described earlier in this report to support the encouragement of growth in the private rented sector. A fee would be charged for this service but this would be on a not for profit basis.

3.11 The Council has various powers to establish companies. The different powers are subject to their own limitations and so the precise power will need to be carefully identified in order to ensure the company is able to achieve all that the Council intends.

3.12 For example the “well being power” enables the council to do anything that it considers is likely to promote or improve the well being of their area and/or persons in it. The power is expressly intended to cover social factors such as the promotion of good quality and affordable housing.

3.13 It is not possible for a company set up under the well being power to trade. So if the company is to trade commercially at some point in the future then it will need to be set up under a different piece of legislation.

3.14 Should the proposal be supported in principle then further work will be undertaken to identify the power that best fits with future intentions and to develop governance/finance and management arrangements etc.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That scrutiny committee support the aspirations for developing the housing service and support the development of proposals to establish a housing company for consideration at a future cabinet meeting.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There will be a small cost in establishing a housing company and n gaining the appropriate legal advice. This can be from existing budgets.

5.02 Establishing a company will provide the potential to develop new revenue streams and to make best use of gifted capital assets in some locations. The company would purchase management services from the council initially, which would be met from existing resources. The company could have an agreement with the council to return any surpluses each year, based on company performance.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 The homes and services provided would be targeted towards those needing affordable housing.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 These proposals could see additional long term empty properties brought back into use.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None directly.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Existing staff with the appropriate skills will provide charged management services via a management agreement to the new company.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Independent legal advice has been sought, which this report uses.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **DEVELOPING THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR TO HELP MEET THE NEED FOR MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.01 To inform Members of the work undertaken to date as part of the WLGA supported Private Rented Sector Improvement Plan.
- 1.02 To seek Members views on how the Council should work with the sector to achieve the key outcomes of growth, quality and accessibility.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The National and Local Context

Over the last 10 years the size of the private rented sector in Wales has almost doubled, to match the size of the social housing sector. It is anticipated that within the next year or so, 1 in 5 households in Wales will be renting from a private landlord. In Flintshire the levels of private rented housing is similar to the national average at 11.5%. However, there is a lower than average social rented sector at 15% compared to 17% nationally.

- 2.02 As part of its strategic housing role the Council must keep under review housing supply, demand and quality across all tenures within its area. This is therefore a Housing priority within the Flintshire Improvement Plan 2013-14. As Members will be aware the Plan states that in 2013-14 we will 'develop a strategy to grow and sustain the private rented sector.'

- 2.03 In order to support this improvement, the Council can rely on a number of pieces of evidence. This includes the Private Sector House Stock Condition Survey, the Local Housing Market Needs Assessment (LMHA) and the recently commissioned Private Rented Market Report. The latter document provides detailed information in respect of the size and growth of the sector across Flintshire over the last 3 years, along with details of property types and rental yields down to ward level. The Council also collects national and local performance indicators which support the latest intelligence of the

performance of the sector.

2.04 The evidence to date suggests that whilst the sector has grown in Flintshire, it remains slightly smaller than the Welsh national average and demand outstrips supply, exacerbated by the lower levels of socially rented properties.

2.05 The Flintshire Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017 was prepared with the above context in mind. The three key themes as you will be aware are 'more housing more choice', 'improving homes and communities' and 'better services to improve people's lives.' The work activity within this report therefore falls within the objective of 'more housing more choice.'

2.06 Flintshire has developed, with WLGA support, a private rented sector improvement plan. The Plan provides a framework for improvement structured around the following 5 objectives: -

- raising the profile and awareness of the private rented sector within Flintshire
- developing a stronger corporate approach to working with the private rented sector
- growing the sector and improving the corporate 'offer' to private rented sector landlords and owners
- strengthening the relationship and improving communication with the private rented sector
- improving access to private rented accommodation particularly through an enhanced social lettings approach.

2.07 In order to form the Plan, views were sought from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Head of Housing Services and nominated Officers from across the Council who have an involvement with the sector. The Officer's included staff from Housing Options, Housing Renewal & Strategy, Housing Enforcement and Housing Benefit. This report seeks further views from Members of Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and support for the approach taken to date.

2.08 **The rationale for further intervention in the Private Rented Sector**

The lower number of both privately rented and socially rented properties in Flintshire will become increasingly problematic, as a highly competitive rental market will restrict access generally and particularly to those from vulnerable groups requiring support.

2.09 This restricted private rented sector offer is at a time when access to social housing is becoming more difficult, with significant reductions to the Welsh government Social Housing Grant (SHG) programme impacting on new build development for social rent. Partly in

recognition of this, a change to the homelessness legislation is coming forward to allow the discharge of homeless duty in to the private rented sector, expected to be rolled out in 2015, with some Welsh Council's piloting the new legislation in 2014.

2.10 Reductions in the availability of mortgage finance and the need for a large deposit have also resulted in more people seeking to rent rather than buy. The result of this is that private landlords have the ability to 'cherry pick' their tenants and may therefore overlook vulnerable groups, who may be deemed to be of greater risk. This further restricts people's housing options, particularly those with support needs and to a lesser extent those in receipt of local housing allowance.

2.11 Evidence is also emerging from the Housing Options team which bears out the above statement. It is becoming more difficult for the team to prevent homelessness and in Quarter 1 of 2013/14, 42 people were accepted as homeless with a full duty owed. This compares with Quarter 1 of 2012/13, when only 21 people were accepted as homeless. The Council has always been highly successful at preventing homelessness and this therefore supports the need to intervene to ensure more accommodation is made available.

2.12 The sector is also beginning to see the impact of welfare benefit changes. Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) can be made available for a short fixed term period to those tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit and in difficulty paying their rent. During April/May 2013 there were 186 claims for DHP, which is an increase of 42% on the same period last year. This further supports the need to work much more closely with landlords if they are not to leave the LHA market, or the rental sector altogether.

2.13 **Changes which may deter the growth of the sector**

There will also be new duties and responsibilities placed on private landlords which may deter them from entering and/or remaining in the private rented market in the future. These include mandatory licensing, which is likely to come in to force during 2015. Licensing should allow Council's to better regulate the sector, with the ability to withdraw licenses from landlords, preventing them from operating in this capacity in Wales. However, licenses will attract a fee, require the owner to demonstrate that they are a 'fit and proper person' and ensure that they have undertaken the required training through Landlord Accreditation Wales. These may all act as disincentives.

2.14 A further impact on landlords is that during 2016 it will become illegal to rent out properties with an energy rating of F & G, requiring many to make further improvements to their properties. This is particularly an issue for older properties and those of solid walled construction. This is the property type most common in the private rented market in

Flintshire. This will require many landlords to improve heating systems and insulation for their tenants. Whilst this is welcome in terms of reducing fuel poverty, once again it is those at the lower end of the rental market that could be affected. Landlords could seek to increase rental yields in order to pay, or recoup the required investment, thereby exiting the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) market. In a highly competitive rental sector this would be possible in most areas of Flintshire and could lead to a further reduction in the availability of properties at LHA rents.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Activities already underway

Growing the sector and improving the corporate 'offer' to private rented sector landlords and owners

3.02 Whilst all areas within the Plan are a priority, the need to attract more potential landlords to the sector and in to working in partnership with the Council is most urgent. To achieve this the Council's revised Private Sector Housing Renewal and Improvement Policy contains provision for supporting owners of actual and potential rented accommodation.

3.03 It is recognised that one of the key enablers to growing the private rented sector is the use of long term vacant properties. Flintshire currently has approximately 500 properties which have been vacant over 6 months. This figure is relatively small in the context of the estimated 22000 vacant long term vacant properties across Wales. Targeting of these properties should increase the pool of available homes. As Members will be aware, this is currently a high priority for Welsh government and additional capital resources have been provided to operate a loan scheme. This is in addition to the Flintshire grant and loan schemes which have been in operation since the approval of the Private Sector Renewal & Improvement Policy in 2012. The Schemes have supported owners to bring a number of properties back in to use, many of which are to rent at LHA rates and some have been linked in with the 'Keyring' Scheme, which offers low level support to tenants. In 2012/13 a total of 32 properties were returned to occupation through direct action by the Housing Service. The Council's Improvement Plan for 2013/14 has a target of a further 30 properties to be returned to occupation during the current year.

3.04 The Renewal Policy has also allowed for targeted energy efficiency investment in housing across all tenures. The Council has been proactive in its approach to the private rented sector, working with a larger portfolio landlord in a scheme area. An example of this approach is in Connah's Quay, where the Council has worked with a landlord who supports our private sector leasing scheme, thereby

ensuring some of our vulnerable tenants are protected and supporting the future use of those properties as private rented accommodation, when the legislation change around energy ratings come forward in 2016.

- 3.05 In addition a temporary Officer has been appointed to work in Housing Options to enhance the Flintshire Bond Scheme and manage and improve existing private sector arrangements. The funding for this Officer is being provided through the homeless prevention budget. The Officer will be tasked with consulting with landlords and potential landlords to see what incentives could be put in place to encourage property owners to work with the Council. It is recognised that incentives in the form of financial assistance will be severely limited in the current climate. However, incentives might include; chargeable property management services, through direct letting or a full leasing scheme; access to accommodation support through Supporting People; a competitive repairs service for private landlords through the Council's DLO and discounts on materials through the managed stores at Travis Perkins. The purpose of this report is to stimulate Member debate and further suggestions or revisions to the above list would be welcomed.
- 3.06 The Council has entered in to a small number of leases, through delegated authority, to secure temporary accommodation. This strategy began in 2005 and allowed the Council to reduce its historic reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation. The Council has also recently taken a lease on 6 two bedroom terraced properties in Flint, to support the town centre regeneration project. Private sector leasing offers the Council the opportunity to make sure that the types of properties required are available for rent, principally 2 bedroom houses and larger shared accommodation for single people. The latter type is especially valuable, as it is extremely difficult to achieve through the HRA and the current arrangement for providing secure tenancies.
- 3.07 The joining together of the Supporting People Team and the Housing Options team has been successful in ensuring that appropriate accommodation support is linked in for vulnerable groups.
- 3.08 **Accommodation Support Activity**

Month	Referral Numbers	Allocated Internally	Signposted to other agencies	Refused Support or NFA
January	15	6	9	0
February	10	6	4	0
March	8	8	0	0
April	28	17	8	3
May	34	30	3	1
June	39	27	10	2

July	69	28	39	2
August	80	13	67	0

3.09 As evidenced above, the numbers of people referred for support is rising as a consequence of improved targeting and links with both the income team and bond scheme. This has placed more demand on that element of the service, but is helping to ensure the sustainability of tenancies. This is vital in a private sector rental market where tenants not requiring support can easily be sourced by landlords in favour of those whose tenancies that may be at risk of failure. An Accommodation Support Officer has been appointed to work exclusively with the bond scheme for a temporary period up to 31st March to ensure that tenancy breakdown remains low. This additional resource is being funded through the Supporting People Grant. However, the Council will need to consider working much more closely with property owners to support tenancies in future.

3.10 **Strengthening the relationship and improving communication with the private rented sector**

As part of the Welfare Reform response the Council received specific grant funding to establish a Housing Options & Housing Benefit Liaison Officer. The main duties and responsibilities of this Officer include engaging with landlords to resolve funding problems as they arise and providing support to ensure continued letting for existing private tenants on Housing Benefit along with new tenants. This link has proved vital at a time of change to welfare benefits and the increased call for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).

3.11 The Housing Service is planning to meet with private sector landlords and consult on what they believe the Council's offer should be. The intention is to consult as widely as possible, utilising data from Housing Benefit, the housing bond team and landlords registered with the All Wales Landlord Accreditation Scheme. An open consultation will also take place through the Council's new corporate website. There is recognition that financial incentives to landlords will be limited in the current financial climate. However, there is an opportunity to work much more closely with the sector to mutual benefit, if the appetite from private landlords exists, or can be developed.

4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 The Members support the Flintshire Private Rented Sector Improvement Plan.

4.02 That Members provide their views on how the private rented sector can be developed to help meet the key outcomes of growth, quality and accessibility.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 There are none arising out of this report

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 The profile of the private rented sector is broadening out, with tenants across the financial spectrum. However, the impact is that some of the most vulnerable, particularly financially vulnerable are finding it increasing difficult to access the sector.

6.02 The aim of this report is to support access to private renting for all groups, thereby supporting an anti poverty impact.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are non arising out of this report

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Implementation of the private rented sector improvement plan should support better access to the private rented sector for all, including vulnerable groups

8.02 Policies developed as a result of the private rented sector improvement plan will undergo an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no immediate personnel implications arising out of this report. However, a review of duties and responsibilities, particularly those within the current bond scheme may need to be revised to support greater intervention within the private rented sector.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None required as a result of this report

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None required as a result of this report

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 The Private Rented Market in Flintshire – An Evidence Base (June 2013)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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The Private Rented Market in Flintshire

An evidence base

June 2013

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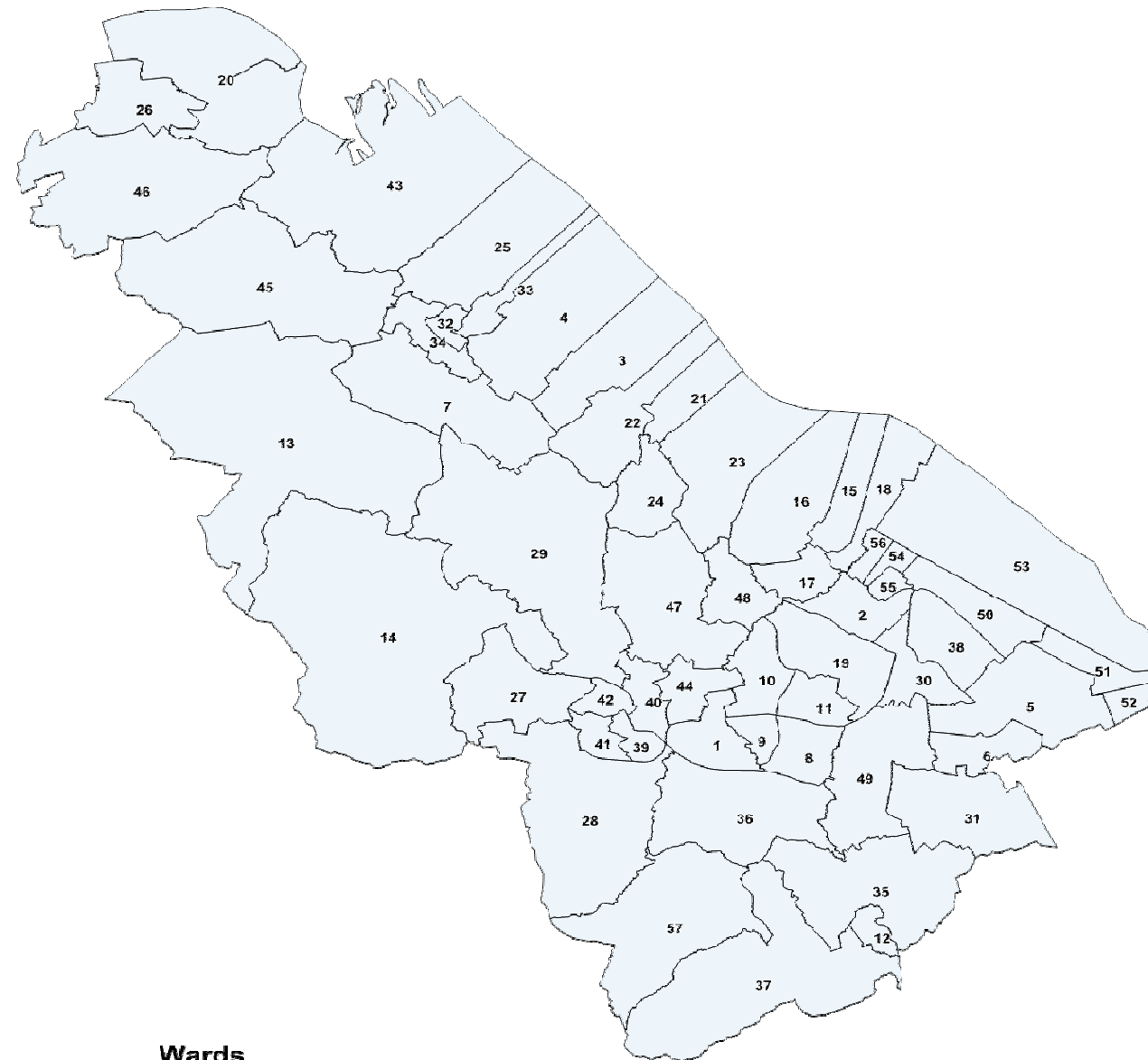
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Please note that in this report some of the tables include rounded figures. This can result in some column or row totals not adding up to 100 or to the anticipated row or column ‘total’ due to the use of rounded decimal figures. We include this description here as it covers all tables and associated textual commentary included. If tables or figures are to be used in-house then we recommend the addition of a similarly worded statement being included as a note to each table used.

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Key to the Flintshire Map



Wards

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 - Argoed | 23 - Flint Oakenholt | 45 - Whitford |
| 2 - Aston | 24 - Flint Tre awny | 46 - Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor |
| 3 - Bag Ilt East | 25 - Greenfield | 47 - Northcp |
| 4 - Bag Ilt West | 26 - Gronant | 48 - Northcp Hall |
| 5 - Broughton North East | 27 - Gwemaffield | 49 - Penyffordd |
| 6 - Broughton South | 28 - Gwemymynydd | 50 - Queensferry |
| 7 - Brynford | 29 - Halkyn | 51 - Saltney Mold Junction |
| 8 - Buckley Bistre East | 30 - Hawarden | 52 - Saltney Stonebridge |
| 9 - Buckley Bistre West | 31 - Higher Kinnerton | 53 - Sealand |
| 10 - Buckley Mountain | 32 - Holywell Central | 54 - Shotton East |
| 11 - Buckley Pentrobin | 33 - Holywell East | 55 - Shotton Higher |
| 12 - Caergwrle | 34 - Holywell West | 56 - Shotton West |
| 13 - Caerwys | 35 - Hope | 57 - Trauddyn |
| 14 - Cilca n | 36 - Leeswood | |
| 15 - Connah's Quay Central | 37 - Llanfynydc | |
| 16 - Connah's Quay Golftyn | 38 - Marcot | |
| 17 - Connah's Quay South | 39 - Mold Broncoec | |
| 18 - Connah's Quay Wepre | 40 - Mold East | |
| 19 - Ewloe | 41 - Mold South | |
| 20 - Ffynnongroyw | 42 - Mold West | |
| 21 - Flint Castle | 43 - Mostyn | |
| 22 - Flint Coleshill | 44 - New Brighton | |

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing White Paper: A White paper for Better Lives and Communities, which published on 21st May 2012, contains a commitment to modernise the private rented sector by introducing measures to improve standards of management and property condition. The changes build on measures that have already been introduced and support the aim of having a vibrant, sustainable private rented sector in Wales. The private rented sector was recognised as playing a significant role in increasing the supply of new homes. *'This will require broader thinking about options for people seeking a home, supported by better, more flexible tenancy arrangements and action to improve conditions and practices. This will also help to reduce the stigma attached to renting as opposed to home ownership'*.
- 1.2 The private rented sector is growing; the recently published Census figures for 2011, confirmed that the sector now totals 18.1% in (England and Wales), an increase of 31.2% from 13.8% in 2001. Increasing house prices pre 2007 and the struggling sales market when the down turn came are both factors that have underpinned the growth of the rental market for both 'active choice' renters and 'frustrated would be' homeowners. Tenure reform and less accessible social rented housing is also likely to be an increasing factor to the growth in the private rented sector. and the sector clearly now plays a vital role in meeting housing needs as well as providing an alternative to homeownership.
- 1.3 Local authorities have an important role in ensuring that the Private Rented Sector meets both these requirements. Balancing good quality supply with demand will help to stabilise rents and encouraging good quality management will improve the reputation of the sector and encourage longer term lets and lower turnover. However, this is a challenging task where existing partners need to be encouraged to participate and new partners and investors need to be identified.
- 1.4 This report provides an evidence base around the scale, growth and performance of the Private Rented Sector in Flintshire since 2009. It utilises data from a number of secondary sources which are identified in the report. Vizzihomes data is used extensively in this report and only includes private rented property that has been advertised and/or managed through a letting agent.

2. The Evidence Base

The size of the sector

- 2.1 The Census 2011 confirms (Table 1) that there are 629 (11.5%) households living in the private rented sector in Flintshire; this is lower than the national figure for England and Wales of 18.1% but comparable to the 12% of households that are living in the private rented sector in Wales. The highest percentage is in Queensferry (24.7%) and the lowest Mold South (4.5%). Other areas with high proportions of properties in the private rented sector include Shotton East, Shotton West, Saltney Mold Junction, Mold Broncoed, Holywell Central and Ffynnongroyw. The location of the private rented sector, by percentage of the market, is illustrated in Map 1.
- 2.2 There are a significant number of Wards (26) where the private rented sector is larger than the social rented sector, and these are Broughton South, Buckley Mountain, Buckley Pentrobin, Caerwys, Connah's Quay South, Connah's Quay Wepre, Ewloe, Ffynnongroyw, Flint Trelawny, Gwernaffield, Gwernymynydd, Halkyn, Hawarden, Higher Kinnerton, Leeswood, Llanfynydd, Mold South, New Brighton, Northop, Northop Hall, Penyffordd, Queensferry, Shotton East and West, Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor and Whitford.
- 2.3 The wards with the highest proportion of stock in the private rented sector are highlighted in bold throughout the document to allow readers to track their trends more easily.

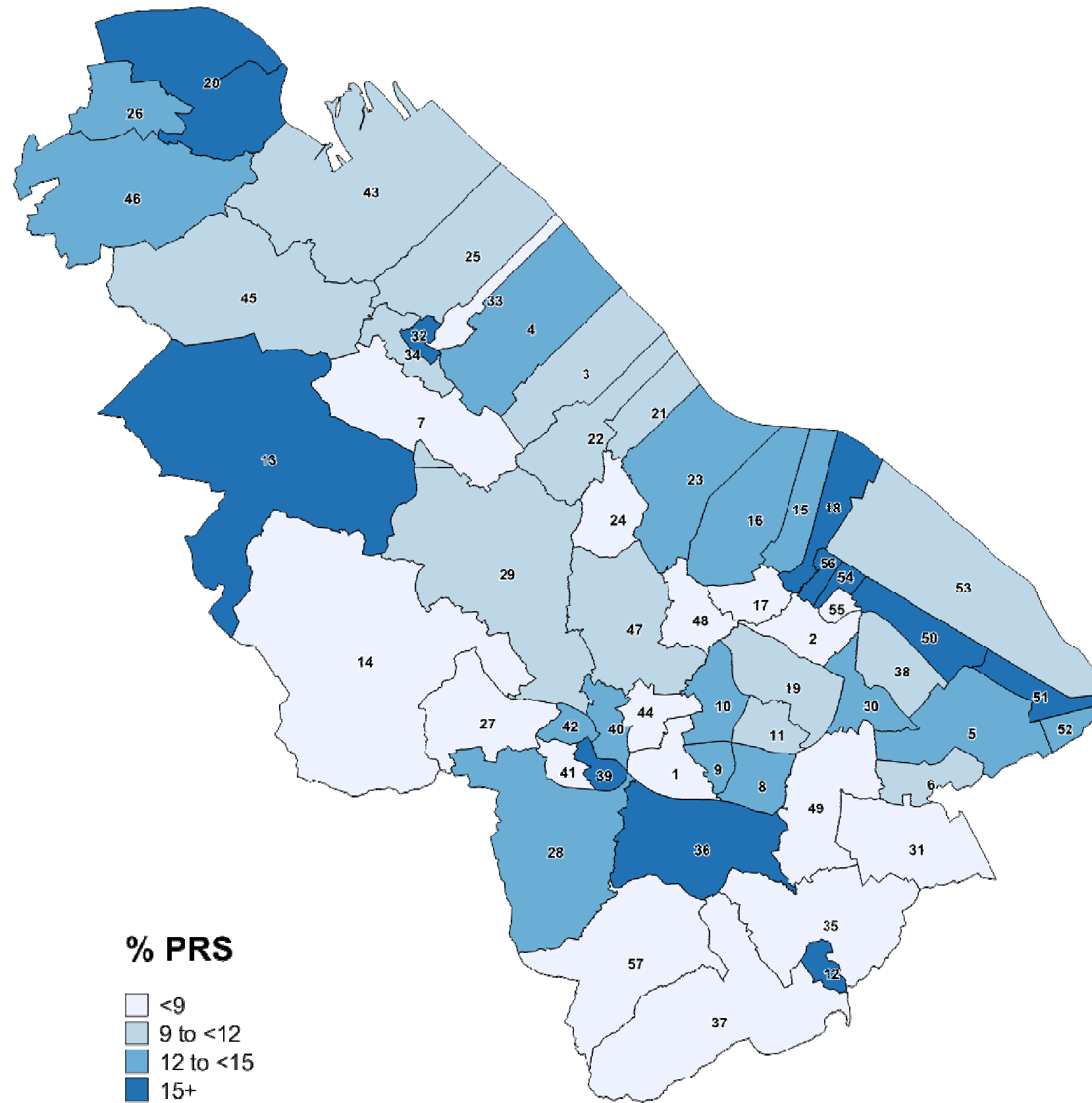
Table 1: Private Rented Sector by Ward

Ward	Owners No.	Affordable Housing No.	PRS No.	Total	Owners %	Affordable Housing %	PRS %
Argoed	1051	20	86	1157	90.8	1.7	7.4
Aston	1043	178	99	1320	79.0	13.5	7.5
Bagillt East	597	97	90	784	76.1	12.4	11.5
Bagillt West	558	227	135	920	60.7	24.7	14.7
Broughton North East	681	139	135	955	71.3	14.6	14.1
Broughton South	1229	160	171	1560	78.8	10.3	11.0
Brynford	773	85	60	918	84.2	9.3	6.5
Buckley Bistre East	1135	196	183	1514	75.0	12.9	12.1
Buckley Bistre West	1217	481	237	1935	62.9	24.9	12.2
Buckley Mountain	959	128	164	1251	76.7	10.2	13.1
Buckley Pentrobin	1608	133	233	1974	81.5	6.7	11.8
Caergwre	487	130	118	735	66.3	17.7	16.1
Caerwys	817	106	167	1090	75.0	9.7	15.3
Cilcain	643	62	62	767	83.8	8.1	8.1
Connah's Quay Central	799	471	212	1482	53.9	31.8	14.3
Connah's Quay Golftyn	1493	384	276	2153	69.3	17.8	12.8
Connah's Quay South	1879	132	146	2157	87.1	6.1	6.8
Connah's Quay Wepre	751	40	140	931	80.7	4.3	15.0
Ewloe	1890	28	240	2158	87.6	1.3	11.1
Ffynnongroyw	589	106	133	828	71.1	12.8	16.1
Flint Castle	397	527	103	1027	38.7	51.3	10.0
Flint Coleshill	1093	434	172	1699	64.3	25.5	10.1
Flint Oakenholt	792	258	152	1202	65.9	21.5	12.6
Flint Trelawny	1189	52	93	1334	89.1	3.9	7.0
Greenfield	715	305	118	1138	62.8	26.8	10.4
Gronant	472	117	86	675	69.9	17.3	12.7
Gwernaffield	734	52	56	842	87.2	6.2	6.7
Gwernymynydd	600	46	97	743	80.8	6.2	13.1
Halkyn	588	65	78	731	80.4	8.9	10.7

Ward	Owners No.	Affordable Housing No.	PRS No.	Total	Owners %	Affordable Housing %	PRS %
Hawarden	677	35	118	830	81.6	4.2	14.2
Higher Kinnerton	574	27	59	660	87.0	4.1	8.9
Holywell Central	384	362	150	896	42.9	40.4	16.7
Holywell East	562	133	58	753	74.6	17.7	7.7
Holywell West	697	177	98	972	71.7	18.2	10.1
Hope	849	95	90	1034	82.1	9.2	8.7
Leeswood	636	132	138	906	70.2	14.6	15.2
Llanfynydd	639	62	66	767	83.3	8.1	8.6
Mancot	1017	338	168	1523	66.8	22.2	11.0
Mold Broncoed	765	244	203	1212	63.1	20.1	16.7
Mold East	652	136	110	898	72.6	15.1	12.2
Mold South	958	11	55	1024	93.6	1.1	5.4
Mold West	621	417	141	1179	52.7	35.4	12.0
Mostyn	466	207	89	762	61.2	27.2	11.7
New Brighton	1099	74	75	1248	88.1	5.9	6.0
Northop	1060	80	133	1273	83.3	6.3	10.4
Northop Hall	546	48	50	644	84.8	7.5	7.8
Penyffordd	1319	107	138	1564	84.3	6.8	8.8
Queensferry	564	136	230	930	60.6	14.6	24.7
Saltney Mold Junction	334	160	111	605	55.2	26.4	18.3
Saltney Stonebridge	969	394	185	1548	62.6	25.5	12.0
Sealand	674	443	142	1259	53.5	35.2	11.3
Shotton East	584	108	179	871	67.0	12.4	20.6
Shotton Higher	431	566	69	1066	40.4	53.1	6.5
Shotton West	655	106	193	954	68.7	11.1	20.2
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	568	105	115	788	72.1	13.3	14.6
Treuddyn	525	110	43	678	77.4	16.2	6.3
Whitford	847	19	91	957	88.5	2.0	9.5
Flintshire	46,451	9,991	7,339	63,781	72.8	15.7	11.5

Source: Census 2011

Map1: The location of the private rented sector



The growth in the sector

2.4 Table 2, illustrates the growth in the private rented sector between 2001 and 2011. Overall, the private rented sector has increased by 4.1 percentage points to 11.5%; an overall increase of 55.4% and as a result both the owner occupied sectors and affordable housing sectors have reduced (Chart 1).

Table 2: Growth in PRS 2001-11 by ward

Ward	Owners %	Affordable Housing %	PRS%	Ward	Owners %	Affordable Housing %	PRS %
2001				2011			
Argoed	93.4	1.9	4.7	90.8	1.7	7.4	
Aston	78.9	17.0	4.1	79.0	13.5	7.5	
Bagillt East	77.7	14.5	7.8	76.1	12.4	11.5	
Bagillt West	65.3	24.5	10.2	60.7	24.7	14.7	
Broughton North East	68.8	19.2	11.9	71.3	14.6	14.1	
Broughton South	82.6	12.4	5.0	78.8	10.3	11.0	
Brynford	80.6	13.0	6.4	84.2	9.3	6.5	
Buckley Bistre East	80.8	13.6	5.7	75.0	12.9	12.1	
Buckley Bistre West	66.2	28.2	5.6	62.9	24.9	12.2	
Buckley Mountain	80.5	11.8	7.7	76.7	10.2	13.1	
Buckley Pentrobin	84.6	8.8	6.6	81.5	6.7	11.8	
Caergwrle	68.0	21.2	10.8	66.3	17.7	16.1	
Caerwys	79.3	8.4	12.2	75.0	9.7	15.3	
Cilcain	82.0	10.9	7.1	83.8	8.1	8.1	
Connah's Quay Central	56.4	35.0	8.6	53.9	31.8	14.3	
Connah's Quay Golftyn	73.3	20.2	6.5	69.3	17.8	12.8	
Connah's Quay South	90.3	6.7	3.0	87.1	6.1	6.8	
Connah's Quay Wepre	86.8	6.6	6.6	80.7	4.3	15.0	
Ewloe	94.6	1.1	4.3	87.6	1.3	11.1	
Ffynnongroyw	68.7	14.7	16.6	71.1	12.8	16.1	
Flint Castle	44.7	49.5	5.8	38.7	51.3	10.0	
Flint Coleshill	65.4	26.5	8.2	64.3	25.5	10.1	
Flint Oakenholt	71.4	22.4	6.2	65.9	21.5	12.6	
Flint Trelawny	91.3	4.0	4.7	89.1	3.9	7.0	
Greenfield	63.9	28.2	7.9	62.8	26.8	10.4	
Gronant	68.1	21.1	10.7	69.9	17.3	12.7	
Gwernaffield	87.0	7.3	5.8	87.2	6.2	6.7	
Gwernymynydd	82.6	8.7	8.7	80.8	6.2	13.1	
Halkyn	77.4	12.4	10.2	80.4	8.9	10.7	

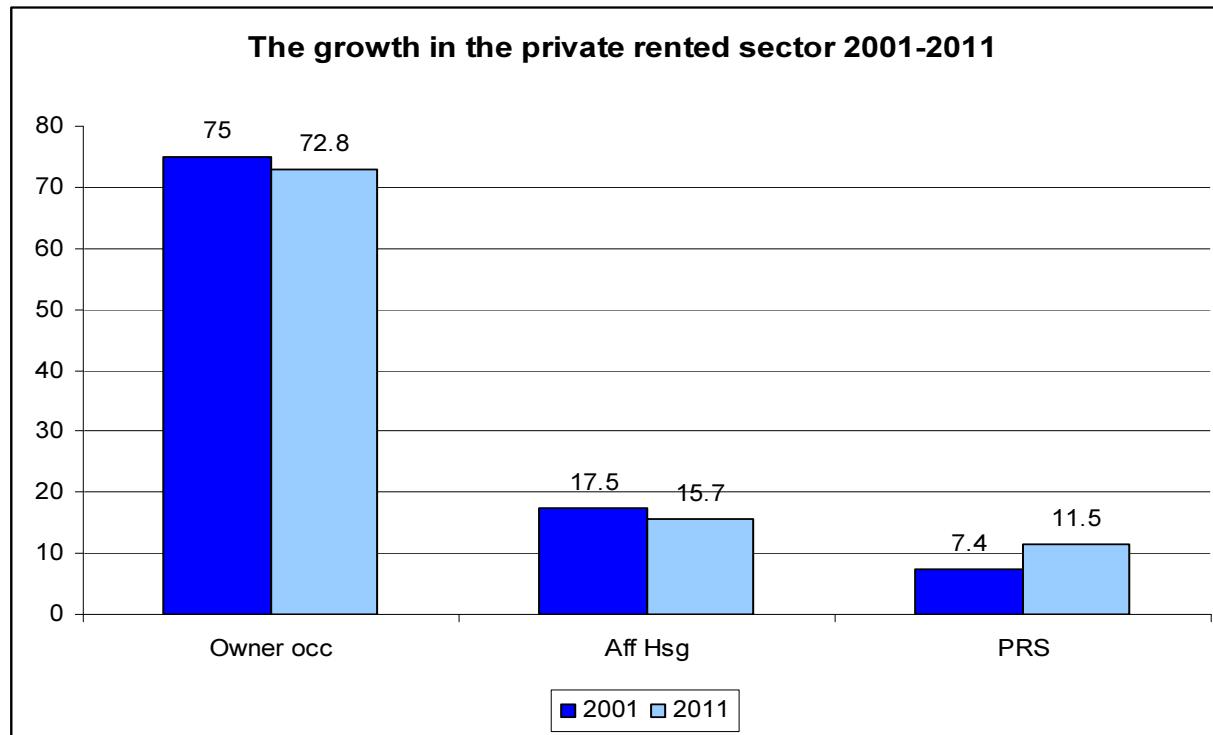
Ward	Owners %	Affordable Housing %	PRS %	Ward	Owners %	Affordable Housing %	PRS %
2001				2011			
Hawarden	83.5	4.5	12.0	81.6	4.2	14.2	
Higher Kinnerton	89.3	4.0	6.6	87.0	4.1	8.9	
Holywell Central	45.3	43.7	11.0	42.9	40.4	16.7	
Holywell East	75.1	19.2	5.7	74.6	17.7	7.7	
Holywell West	73.6	17.4	8.9	71.7	18.2	10.1	
Hope	82.3	9.6	8.1	82.1	9.2	8.7	
Leeswood	73.4	15.4	11.1	70.2	14.6	15.2	
Llanfynydd	85.2	8.1	6.7	83.3	8.1	8.6	
Mancot	67.2	23.5	9.3	66.8	22.2	11.0	
Mold Broncoed	66.5	23.2	10.4	63.1	20.1	16.7	
Mold East	73.7	18.0	8.3	72.6	15.1	12.2	
Mold South	95.8	1.7	2.4	93.6	1.1	5.4	
Mold West	52.9	41.8	5.3	52.7	35.4	12.0	
Mostyn	58.5	30.4	11.2	61.2	27.2	11.7	
New Brighton	88.2	7.9	4.0	88.1	5.9	6.0	
Northop	87.3	6.7	6.0	83.3	6.3	10.4	
Northop Hall	82.9	12.5	4.6	84.8	7.5	7.8	
Penyffordd	85.7	8.3	6.0	84.3	6.8	8.8	
Queensferry	67.1	16.5	16.4	60.6	14.6	24.7	
Saltney Mold Junction	55.6	31.8	12.6	55.2	26.4	18.3	
Saltney Stonebridge	64.5	30.5	5.0	62.6	25.5	12.0	
Sealand	50.7	39.8	9.6	53.5	35.2	11.3	
Shotton East	76.6	13.7	9.7	67.0	12.4	20.6	
Shotton Higher	42.5	52.5	5.1	40.4	53.1	6.5	
Shotton West	79.1	11.9	9.0	68.7	11.1	20.2	
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	74.4	14.4	11.2	72.1	13.3	14.6	
Treuddyn	77.2	19.2	3.6	77.4	16.2	6.3	
Whitford	86.8	2.5	10.7	88.5	2.0	9.5	
Flintshire	75	17.5	7.4	72.8	15.7	11.5	

Source: Census 2001 and 2011

2.5 The overall changes mask geographical differences. The top 10 Wards with the highest percentage growth in the private rented sector are illustrated in Chart 2

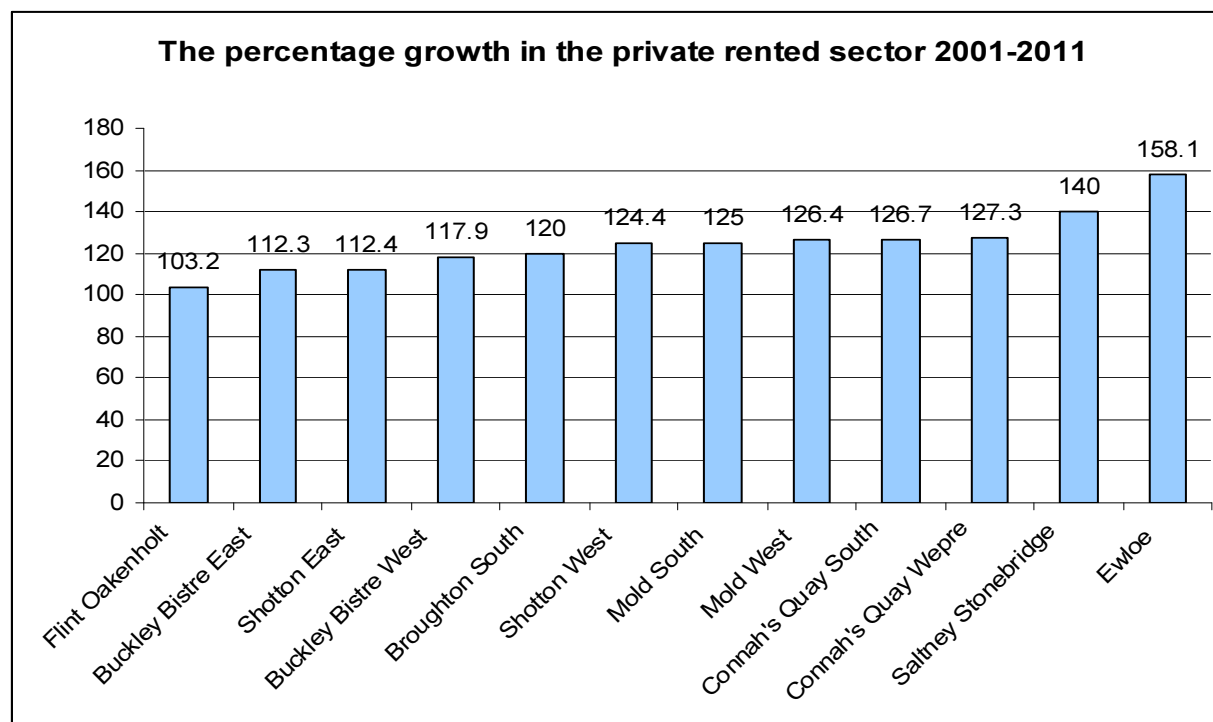
2.6 Map 2 illustrates the growth in the PRS in Flintshire

Chart 1: The percentage growth in the private rented sector 2001-2011

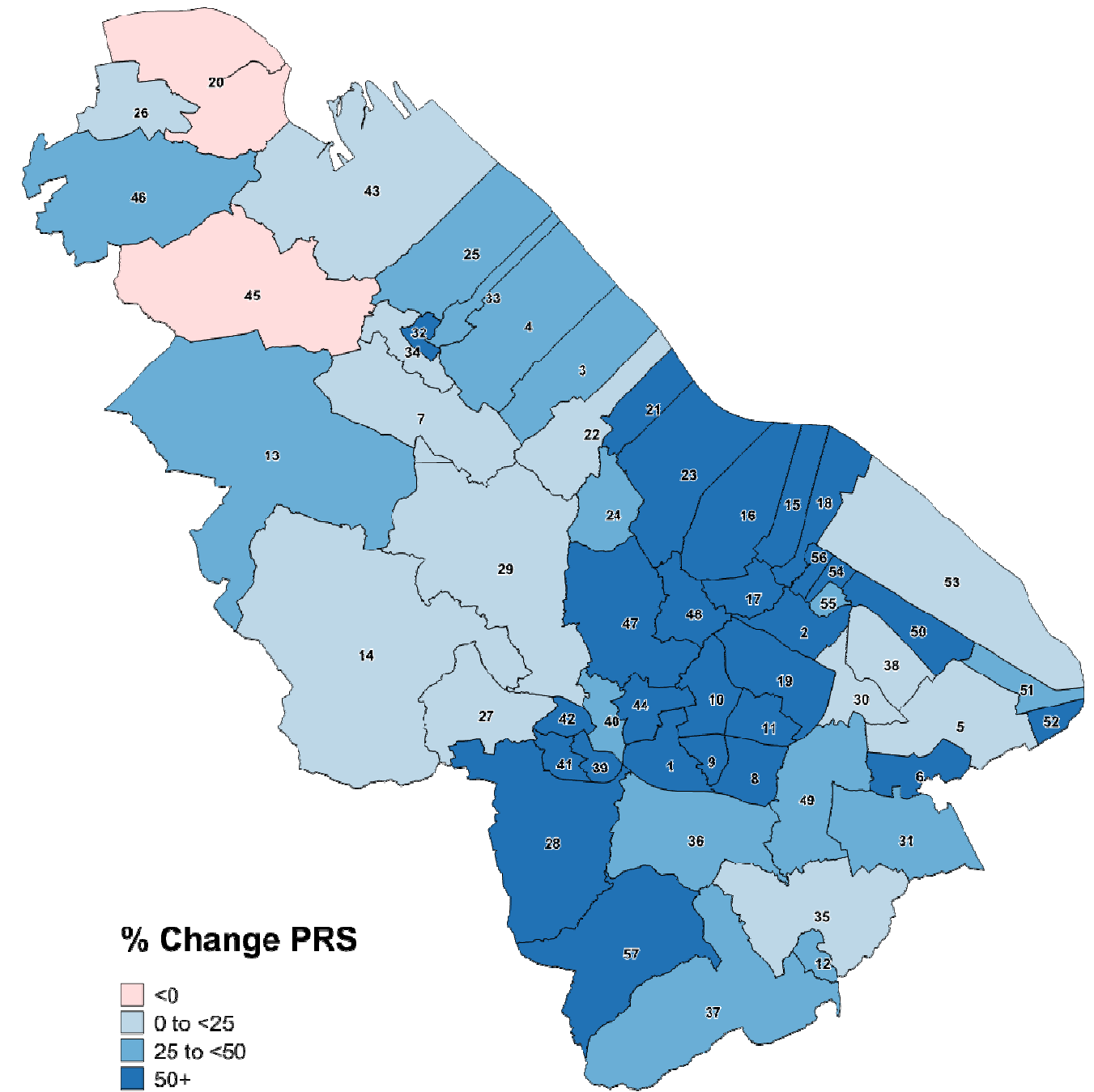


Source: Census 2001 and 2011

Chart 2 The percentage growth in the private rented sector 2001-2011



Map 2: Growth in the PRS in Flintshire



2.7 In table 3, we have compared average property prices in 2012 in each Ward with the size of the private rented sector. The table confirms that the sector is concentrated in the lower value housing market areas where the property values are lower and would suggest that the sector is a lower value offer, providing an extension to the social rented sector.

2.8 There are, however, a number of Wards where the size of the private rented sector is above the Flintshire average and the property values are also above the average price for Flintshire, such as Broughton North East, Caerwys and Gwernymynydd. This suggests that there will be higher value properties available in the private rented sector and as these wards have experienced a reasonable increase in scale of the private rented sector over the past 10 years, suggests that the growth in the sector is not only confined to the lower value markets but also for higher income economically active markets.

Table 3: Average Property Price by Ward

Ward	Average sales Value 2012	Total %age of the PRS Census 2011
Argoed	£137,147	7.4
Aston	£170,853	7.5
Bagillt East	£119,273	11.5
Bagillt West	£84,147	14.7
Broughton North East	£179,908	14.1
Broughton South	£155,708	11.0
Brynford	£186,679	6.5
Buckley Bistre East	£109,440	12.1
Buckley Bistre West	£126,922	12.2
Buckley Mountain	£155,788	13.1
Buckley Pentrobin	£173,074	11.8
Caergwrle	£119,591	16.1
Caerwys	£217,400	15.3
Cilcain	£282,516	8.1
Connah's Quay Central	£96,686	14.3
Connah's Quay Golftyn	£117,856	12.8
Connah's Quay South	£160,527	6.8
Connah's Quay Wepre	£132,438	15.0
Ewloe	£183,789	11.1
Ffynongroyw	£100,125	16.1
Flint Castle	£79,688	10.0
Flint Coleshill	£140,183	10.1
Flint Oakenholt	£90,469	12.6
Flint Trelawny	£149,125	7.0
Greenfield	£108,680	10.4
Gronant	£120,496	12.7
Gwernaffield	£224,327	6.7
Gwernymynydd	£188,800	13.1
Halkyn	£243,591	10.7
Hawarden	£214,875	14.2
Higher Kinnerton	£320,143	8.9
Holywell Central	£86,167	16.7
Holywell East	£106,746	7.7
Holywell West	£143,558	10.1

Ward	Average sales Value 2012	Total %age of the PRS Census 2011
Hope	£146,880	8.7
Leeswood	£149,000	15.2
Llanfynydd	£274,817	8.6
Mancot	£149,311	11.0
Mold Broncoed	£146,185	16.7
Mold East	£137,380	12.2
Mold South	£209,327	5.4
Mold West	£167,135	12.0
Mostyn	£153,136	11.7
New Brighton	£152,690	6.0
Northop	£258,835	10.4
Northop Hall	£169,643	7.8
Penyffordd	£171,058	8.8
Queensferry	£96,909	24.7
Saltney Mold Junction	£115,607	18.3
Saltney Stonebridge	£138,757	12.0
Sealand	£164,935	11.3
Shotton East	£106,926	20.6
Shotton Higher	£106,313	6.5
Shotton West	£104,868	20.2
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	£204,339	14.6
Treuddyn	£185,800	6.3
Whitford	£218,765	9.5
Flintshire	£162,125	11.5

New properties coming onto the market

2.9 Table 4 shows the actual number of properties coming onto the private rented market each year from 2009 to 2012 in each ward¹. Overall, the total number of properties coming onto the market has increased from 1,264 in 2009 to 1,680 in 2012; an increase of 32.9%. The total number coming onto the market has increased year on year with 2012 seeing the largest number of properties coming onto the market during the past four years of 1,680 or 29.9% of all properties during the past four years.

Table 4: Number of Properties coming to Market 2009-12

Ward	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	%age change from 2009 to 2012	Total %age of the PRS Census 2011
Argoed	16	13	13	24	66	50.0	7.4
Aston	20	16	22	21	79	5.0	7.5
Bagillt East	10	12	15	25	62	150.0	11.5
Bagillt West	20	13	17	50	100	150.0	14.7
Broughton North East	27	12	28	27	94	0.0	14.1
Broughton South	32	39	36	44	151	37.5	11.0
Brynford	20	9	18	14	61	-30.0	6.5
Buckley Bistre East	20	20	24	41	105	105.0	12.1
Buckley Bistre West	26	29	39	68	162	161.5	12.2
Buckley Mountain	28	28	42	44	142	57.1	13.1
Buckley Pentrobin	30	43	48	50	171	66.7	11.8
Caergwrle	12	14	27	17	70	41.7	16.1
Caerwys	24	17	32	34	107	41.7	15.3
Cilcain	6	10	7	13	36	116.7	8.1
Connah's Quay Central	29	45	41	51	166	75.9	14.3
Connah's Quay Golftyn	60	45	61	60	226	0.0	12.8
Connah's Quay South	36	22	45	44	147	22.2	6.8
Connah's Quay Wepre	30	24	22	23	99	-23.3	15.0
Ewloe	51	54	81	79	265	54.9	11.1
Ffynnongroyw	13	9	14	23	59	76.9	16.1
Flint Castle	10	9	16	19	54	90.0	10.0
Flint Coleshill	22	28	30	41	121	86.4	10.1
Flint Oakenholt	33	22	25	34	114	3.0	12.6
Flint Trelawny	20	16	15	19	70	-5.0	7.0
Greenfield	33	31	27	26	117	-21.2	10.4
Gronant	11	18	30	27	86	145.5	12.7
Gwernaffield	3	5	17	7	32	133.3	6.7
Gwernymynydd	19	18	14	22	73	15.8	13.1
Halkyn	2	15	16	17	50	750.0	10.7

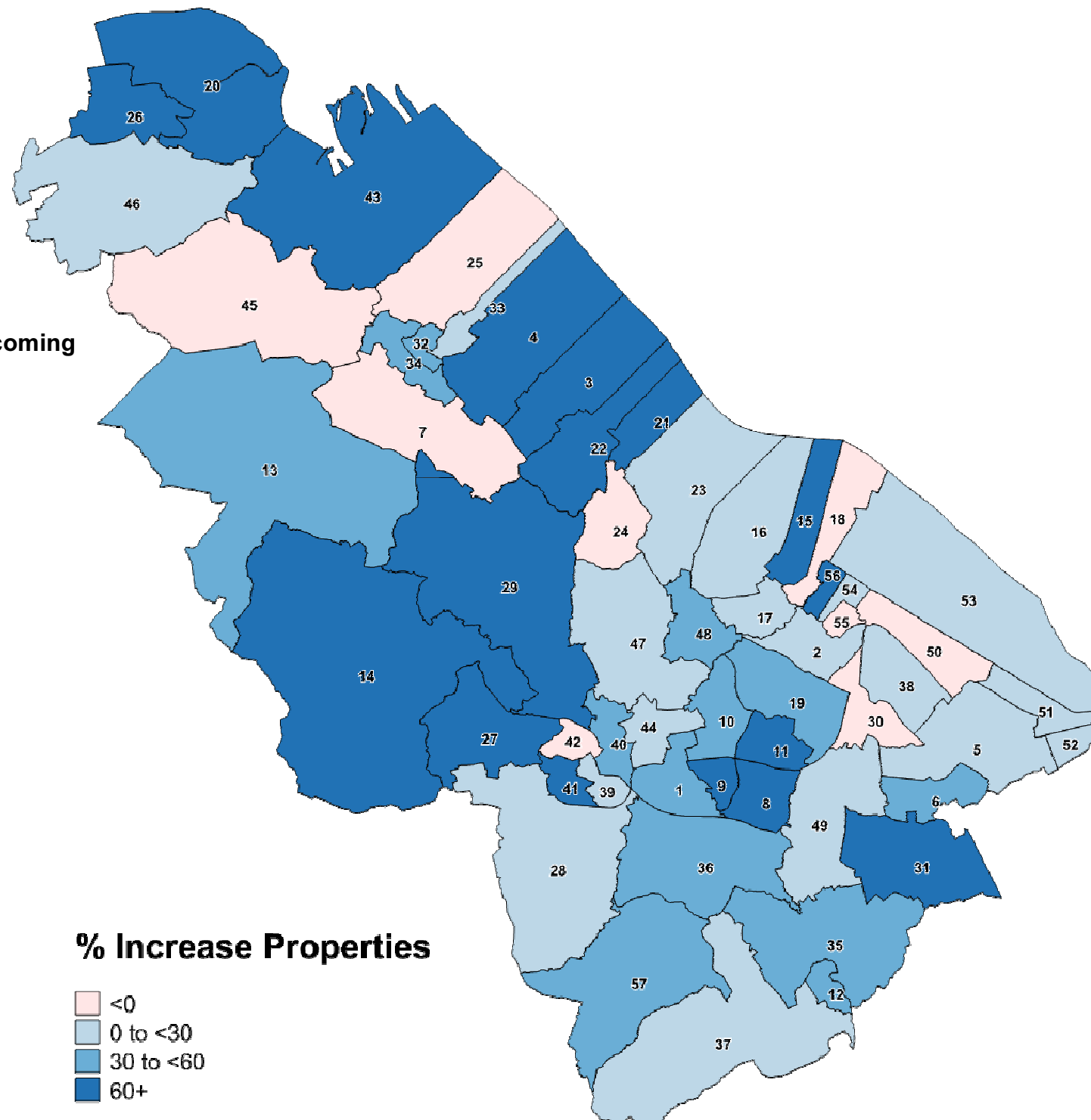
Ward	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	%age change from 2009 to 2012	Total %age of the PRS Census 2011
Hawarden	19	15	26	13	73	-31.6	14.2
Higher Kinnerton	14	18	17	24	73	71.4	8.9
Holywell Central	30	26	31	40	127	33.3	16.7
Holywell East	9	7	16	10	42	11.1	7.7
Holywell West	17	15	14	25	71	47.1	10.1
Hope	17	14	21	25	77	47.1	8.7
Leeswood	15	24	22	21	82	40.0	15.2
Llanfynydd	14	13	23	15	65	7.1	8.6
Mancot	29	21	24	32	106	10.3	11.0
Mold Broncoed	45	25	43	47	160	4.4	16.7
Mold East	22	20	23	32	97	45.5	12.2
Mold South	6	10	15	15	46	150.0	5.4
Mold West	31	19	36	27	113	-12.9	12.0
Mostyn	7	9	23	23	62	228.6	11.7
New Brighton	18	17	25	18	78	0.0	6.0
Northop	27	27	35	33	122	22.2	10.4
Northop Hall	10	13	14	15	52	50.0	7.8
Penyffordd	20	21	34	24	99	20.0	8.8
Queensferry	25	17	18	16	76	-36.0	24.7
Saltney Mold Junction	28	25	12	30	95	7.1	18.3
Saltney Stonebridge	47	54	51	61	213	29.8	12.0
Sealand	32	29	38	32	131	0.0	11.3
Shotton East	25	13	24	26	88	4.0	20.6
Shotton Higher	9	4	9	7	29	-22.2	6.5
Shotton West	26	30	23	45	124	73.1	20.2
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	21	18	17	26	82	23.8	14.6
Treuddyn	6	8	18	9	41	50.0	6.3
Whitford	32	18	29	25	104	-21.9	9.5
Flintshire	1264	1166	1503	1680	5613	32.9	11.5
%age	22.5	20.7	26.7	29.9	100		

Source: Vizzihomes and Census 2011

¹ These properties were advertised through a private letting agent.

- 2.10 The wards that have experienced the largest percentage increase in new properties coming onto the market are: Halkyn (750%), Mostyn (228.6%), Buckley Bistre West (161.5%), Mold South (150%), Bagillt West (150%), Gronant (145.5%), Gwernaffield (133.3%), Cilcain (116.7%) and Buckley Bistre East (105%). Halkyn, Mold South, Cilcain and Gwernaffield are high value markets and therefore confirm that there is a growing higher value income market in Flintshire.
- 2.11 In terms of the total number of properties coming onto the market in the past four years, the largest numbers have been in Connah's Quay Golftyn (226) and the lowest number in Shotton (29).
- 2.12 There are 9 wards where the number of properties coming onto the market has contracted since 2009.
- 2.13 The increase in the number of properties coming onto the market from 2009 in each ward is mapped in Map 3 below

Map 3: The increase in the number of properties coming onto the market 2009-2012



2.14 Table 5 shows the actual number of properties coming onto the market during 2010, 2011 and 2012 as a percentage of all properties in the Private Rented Sector. This provides a useful guide on activity in the market. Overall, the number of properties coming onto the market as a percentage of the total stock (as taken from the Census 2011) has increased over the past 3 years and in 2012 represented 22.9% of the total private rented stock.

2.15 The wards with the largest number of units coming onto the market as a percentage of the total private rented sector stock in 2012 were Higher Kinnerton (40.7%), Bagillt West (37%), Saltney Stonebridge (33%), Ewloe (32.9%), Gronant (31.4%), Connahs Quay South (30.1%) and Northop Hall (30%). These are not the wards with the largest private rented sector, suggesting that there are likely to be newly emerging markets in Flintshire.

Table 5: Number of properties coming to market as percentage of PRS

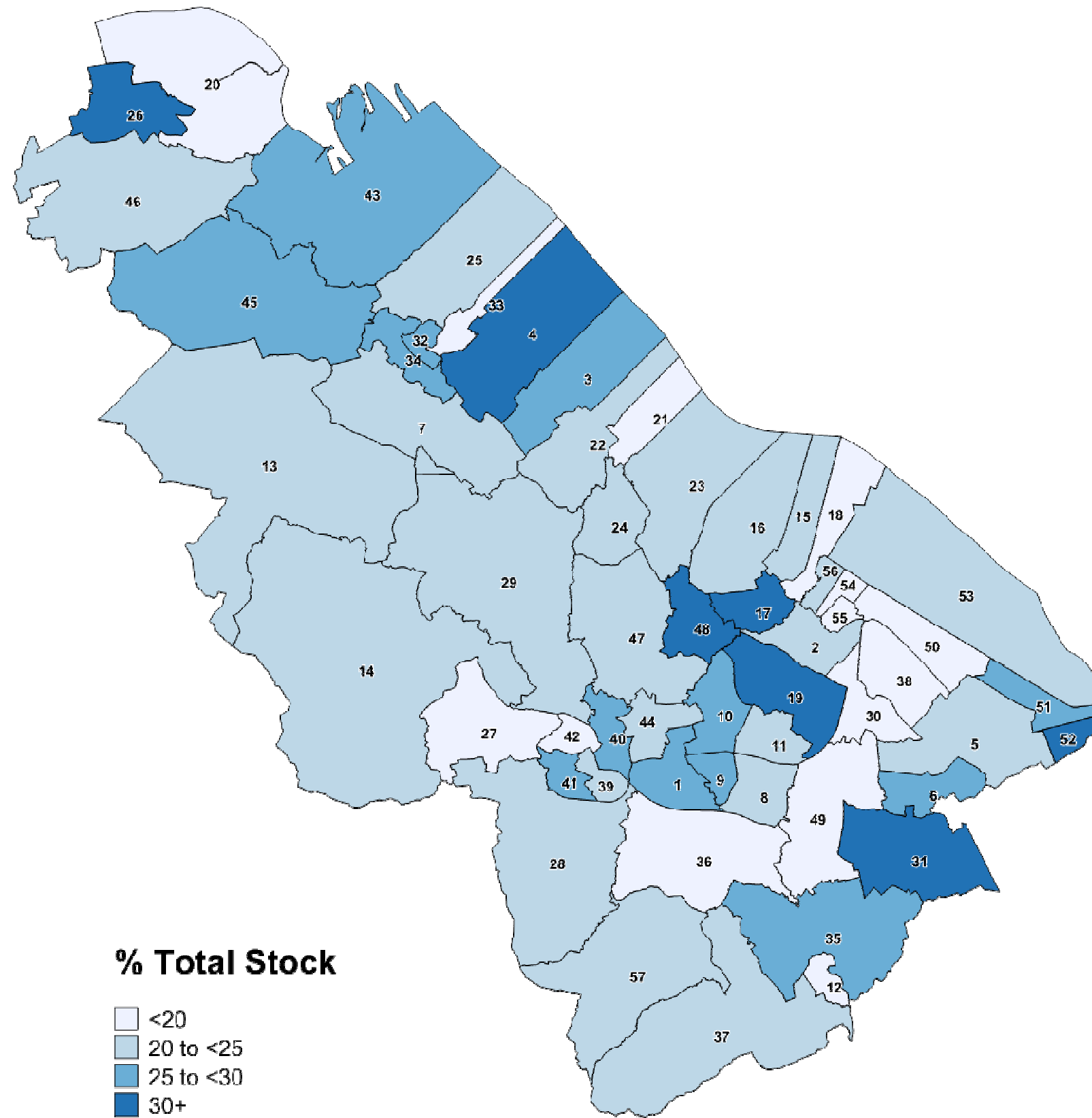
Ward	No new properties coming to market 2010	No new properties coming to market 2011	No new properties coming to market 2012	Total No properties in PRS Census 2011	No as %age of total stock 2010	No as %age of total stock 2011	No as %age of total stock 2012
Argoed	13	13	24	86	15.1	15.1	27.9
Aston	16	22	21	99	16.2	22.2	21.2
Bagillt East	12	15	25	90	13.3	16.7	27.8
Bagillt West	13	17	50	135	9.6	12.6	37.0
Broughton North East	12	28	27	135	8.9	20.7	20.0
Broughton South	39	36	44	171	22.8	21.1	25.7
Brynford	9	18	14	60	15.0	30.0	23.3
Buckley Bistre East	20	24	41	183	10.9	13.1	22.4
Buckley Bistre West	29	39	68	237	12.2	16.5	28.7
Buckley Mountain	28	42	44	164	17.1	25.6	26.8
Buckley Pentrobin	43	48	50	233	18.5	20.6	21.5
Caergwrle	14	27	17	118	11.9	22.9	14.4
Caerwys	17	32	34	167	10.2	19.2	20.4
Cilcain	10	7	13	62	16.1	11.3	21.0
Connah's Quay Central	45	41	51	212	21.2	19.3	24.1
Connah's Quay Golftyn	45	61	60	276	16.3	22.1	21.7
Connah's Quay South	22	45	44	146	15.1	30.8	30.1
Connah's Quay Wepre	24	22	23	140	17.1	15.7	16.4
Ewloe	54	81	79	240	22.5	33.8	32.9
Ffynnongroyw	9	14	23	133	6.8	10.5	17.3
Flint Castle	9	16	19	103	8.7	15.5	18.4
Flint Coleshill	28	30	41	172	16.3	17.4	23.8
Flint Oakenholt	22	25	34	152	14.5	16.4	22.4
Flint Trelawny	16	15	19	93	17.2	16.1	20.4
Greenfield	31	27	26	118	26.3	22.9	22.0
Gronant	18	30	27	86	20.9	34.9	31.4
Gwernaffield	5	17	7	56	8.9	30.4	12.5
Gwernymynydd	18	14	22	97	18.6	14.4	22.7
Halkyn	15	16	17	78	19.2	20.5	21.8
Hawarden	15	26	13	118	12.7	22.0	11.0
Higher Kinnerton	18	17	24	59	30.5	28.8	40.7

Ward	No new properties coming to market 2010	No new properties coming to market 2011	No new properties coming to market 2012	Total No properties in PRS Census 2011	No as %age of total stock 2010	No as %age of total stock 2011	No as %age of total stock 2012
Holywell Central	26	31	40	150	17.3	20.7	26.7
Holywell East	7	16	10	58	12.1	27.6	17.2
Holywell West	15	14	25	98	15.3	14.3	25.5
Hope	14	21	25	90	15.6	23.3	27.8
Leeswood	24	22	21	138	17.4	15.9	15.2
Llanfynydd	13	23	15	66	19.7	34.8	22.7
Mancot	21	24	32	168	12.5	14.3	19.0
Mold Broncoed	25	43	47	203	12.3	21.2	23.2
Mold East	20	23	32	110	18.2	20.9	29.1
Mold South	10	15	15	55	18.2	27.3	27.3
Mold West	19	36	27	141	13.5	25.5	19.1
Mostyn	9	23	23	89	10.1	25.8	25.8
New Brighton	17	25	18	75	22.7	33.3	24.0
Northop	27	35	33	133	20.3	26.3	24.8
Northop Hall	13	14	15	50	26.0	28.0	30.0
Penyffordd	21	34	24	138	15.2	24.6	17.4
Queensferry	17	18	16	230	7.4	7.8	7.0
Saltney Mold Junction	25	12	30	111	22.5	10.8	27.0
Saltney Stonebridge	54	51	61	185	29.2	27.6	33.0
Sealand	29	38	32	142	20.4	26.8	22.5
Shotton East	13	24	26	179	7.3	13.4	14.5
Shotton Higher	4	9	7	69	5.8	13.0	10.1
Shotton West	30	23	45	193	15.5	11.9	23.3
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	18	17	26	115	15.7	14.8	22.6
Treuddyn	8	18	9	43	18.6	41.9	20.9
Whitford	18	29	25	91	19.8	31.9	27.5
Flintshire	1166	1503	1680	7,339	15.9	20.5	22.9

Source: Vizzihomes and Census 2011

2.16 The number of the private rented homes coming onto the market as a percentage of the total private rented stock in 2012 is illustrated in Map 4

Map 4: The number of the private rented homes coming onto the market as a percentage of the total private rented stock in 2012



Property type and bed size

2.17 The number of flats that have come onto the market has increased from 2009 to 2012 but the proportion of flats still only represents 18.8% of all properties in 2012. The majority of properties coming onto the market are houses and represent 82.6% over the past four years.(Table 6)

Table 6: Size of property on market 2009-12

Property type	2009 No	2010 No	2011 No	2012 No	Total	Property type	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %	Total
Flats	189	217	255	316	977	Flats	15	18.6	16.9	18.8	17.4
House	1075	949	1248	1364	4636	House	85	81.4	83.1	81.2	82.6
Flintshire	1264	1166	1503	1680	5613	Flintshire	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Vizzihomes

2.18 Table 7, illustrates the total number of properties coming onto the market by property size in each of the four years from 2009-2012 and also expresses these figures as a percentage for each year.

2.19 There is a relatively good supply of properties for families (the largest growing market in the private rented sector). 36.3% of properties have been 2 bed properties and 39.6% 3 bed properties. The figure for three bed properties is higher than arc⁴ usually see, as 2 bed properties normally dominate markets.

2.20 However, there are fewer larger properties. Only 2.2% of properties brought onto the market in the past four years have been 4 bed plus. By comparison, there are very few smaller properties and only 2.3% of all properties brought onto the market in the past four years have been bed-sits. Interestingly the number of smaller units, bed-sits and one bed properties that have come onto the market has increased in the past few years, potentially as a response to the LHA benefit caps.

2.21 This property offer is likely to create shortages of property for households affected by the shared room rate or looking for smaller accommodation.

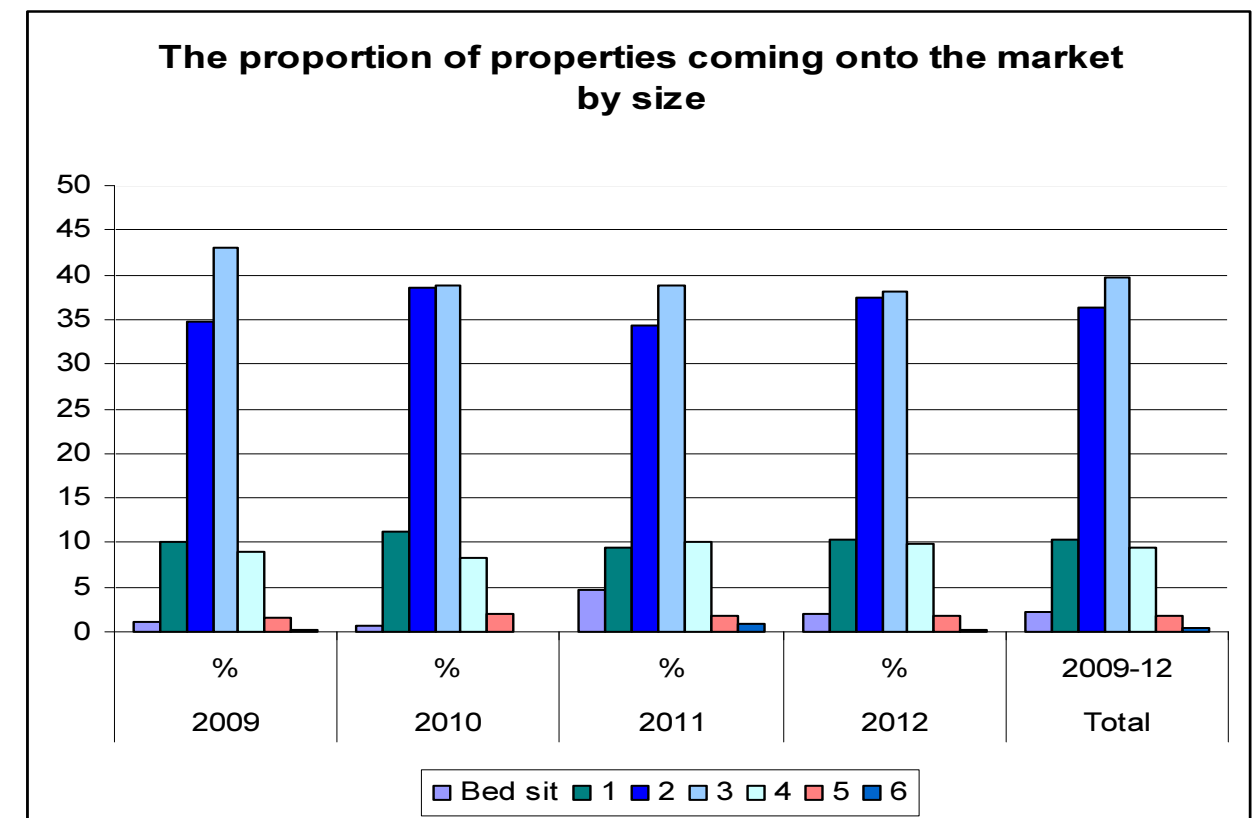
Table 7: Number of properties coming to market 2009-12 by property size

No of beds	2009 No	2010 No	2011 No	2012 No	Total No	No of beds	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %	Total %
Bed sit	15	8	71	36	130	Bed sit	1.2	0.7	4.7	2.1	2.3
1	127	132	142	175	576	1	10.0	11.3	9.4	10.4	10.3
2	440	449	517	630	2036	2	34.8	38.5	34.4	37.5	36.3
3	543	454	583	640	2220	3	43.0	38.9	38.8	38.1	39.6
4	113	96	151	166	526	4	8.9	8.2	10.0	9.9	9.4
5	19	23	25	29	96	5	1.5	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.7
6	4	1	12	3	20	6	0.3	0.1	0.8	0.2	0.4
7	3	3	0	1	7		0.2	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.1
8	0	0	2	0	2		0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Flintshire	1264	1166	1503	1680	5613	Flintshire	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Vizzihomes

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Chart 3: The proportion of properties coming onto the market by bed size 2009-2012



Source: Vizzihomes

2.22 Table 8², shows the number and percentage of different property types and sizes coming onto the market from 2009-2012.

2.23 There has been a consistent proportion of 2 bed houses but a reduction in the proportion of 3 bed properties coming onto the market from 42.6% in 2009 to 39.1% in 2012.

Table 8: The percentage of properties coming onto the market by bed size 2009-2012

Property type	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	2009 %	2010 %	2011 %	2012 %	Total
Flat	711	706	958	989	3364	30.8	31.9	32.9	29.7	29.8
Bedsit	3	5	11	9	28	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.5
1	87	89	101	129	406	6.9	7.6	6.7	7.7	7.2
2	93	118	133	166	510	7.4	10.1	8.8	9.9	9.1
3	5	4	7	11	27	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.5
4	NA	NA	1	1	2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
5	NA	1	NA	NA	1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
6	1	NA	2	NA	3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
House	1075	949	1248	1364	4636	85	81.4	83	81.2	82.6
Bedsit	12	3	60	27	102	0.9	0.3	4.0	1.6	1.8
1	40	43	41	46	170	3.2	3.7	2.7	2.7	3.0
2	347	331	384	464	1526	27.5	28.4	25.5	27.6	27.2
3	538	450	576	629	2193	42.6	38.6	38.3	37.4	39.1
4	113	96	150	165	524	8.9	8.2	10.0	9.8	9.3
5	19	22	25	29	95	1.5	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7
6	3	1	10	3	17	0.2	0.1	0.7	0.2	0.3
7	3	3	NA	1	7	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.1
8	NA	NA	2	NA	2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Flintshire	1264	1166	1503	1680	5613	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Vizzihomes

² This data is available at ward level but too large to include within this report

Rent levels

- 2.24 Table 9, shows the average rent levels for properties coming onto the market in each ward for the four years 2009-2012. It then shows the percentage increases in rents year on year and the overall percentage increase from 2009-2012.
- 2.25 The average rent for a property in Flintshire from 2009-2012 was £663 pcm. Since 2009, average rents in Flintshire have reduced by 3% although there was a healthy increase during 2009-10. The wide fluctuations suggest a relatively un-established market that has not developed consistent trends to reflect the growing role the private rented sector has to play in meeting housing need and demand.
- 2.26 Overall rent reductions at a local authority level are unusual and not often seen in other local authorities. However, the overall rent reduction is being driven by some very large reductions in a small number of wards. In 29 of the 57 wards, rent increases where above 4%. There are currently several sources of data on rental levels in the private rented sector, all of which are indicative but none definitive. The sources include:-
- Office of National Statistics (ONS) 'private rental' component of Consumer Price Inflation (CPI)
 - Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data
 - Surveys by private companies such as LSL Property Services
- 2.27 These data produce a range of values for rent increases between 0.9%and 3.3% per year and would confirm that parts of the Flintshire market are increasing at relatively high levels.

Table 9: Average rent levels

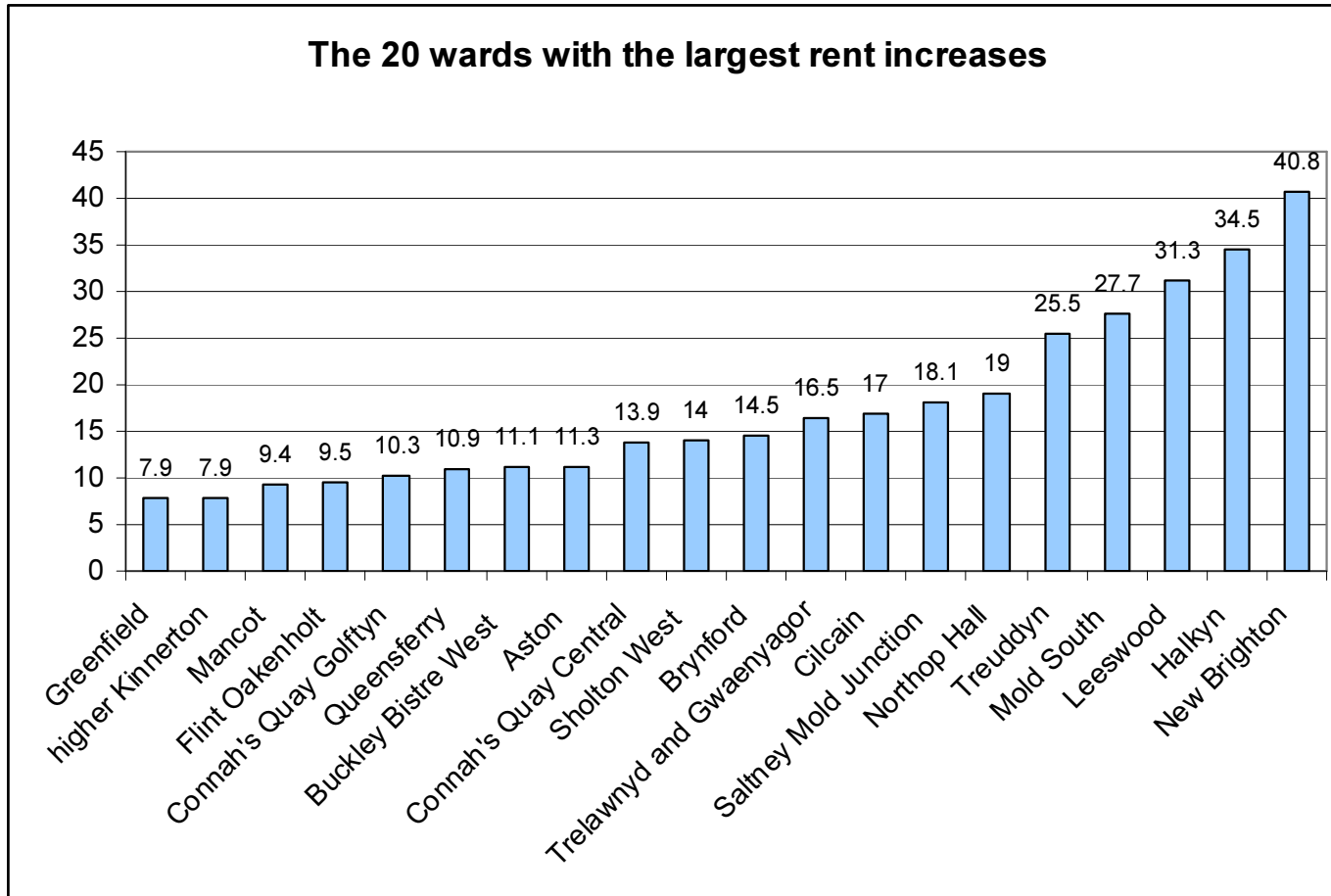
Ward	2009 £pcm	2010 £pcm	2011 £pcm	2012 £pcm	Total £pcm	% change 2009- 2010	% change 2010- 2011	% change 2011- 2012	% change 2009- 2012
Argoed	£622	£622	£643	£649	£636	-0.1	3.4	1.0	4.4
Aston	£590	£668	£665	£657	£645	13.1	-0.5	-1.3	11.3
Bagillt East	£590	£566	£634	£568	£587	-4.0	11.5	-11.2	-3.7
Bagillt West	£537	£550	£523	£535	£535	2.4	-4.9	2.2	-0.3
Broughton North East	£720	£967	£806	£715	£776	34.4	-22.5	-12.5	-0.6
Broughton South	£637	£632	£628	£635	£633	-0.9	-0.5	1.0	-0.3
Brynford	£589	£657	£610	£674	£625	11.6	-8.1	11.0	14.5
Buckley Bistre East	£576	£592	£568	£571	£575	2.7	-4.2	0.6	-0.9
Buckley Bistre West	£531	£542	£585	£589	£571	2.2	8.2	0.8	11.1
Buckley Mountain	£593	£571	£575	£588	£582	-3.7	0.6	2.1	-1.0
Buckley Pentrobin	£607	£574	£626	£558	£590	-5.4	8.5	-11.2	-8.2
Caergwrlle	£527	£484	£524	£505	£512	-8.0	7.5	-3.5	-4.1
Caerwys	£599	£586	£585	£552	£578	-2.2	-0.2	-5.5	-7.9
Cilcain	£608	£734	£868	£717	£733	20.6	22.1	-24.7	17.9
Connah's Quay Central	£452	£474	£490	£515	£487	4.8	3.6	5.5	13.9
Connah's Quay Golftyn	£535	£3,146	£2,552	£590	£1,614	487.7	-110.9	-366.5	10.3
Connah's Quay South	£649	£740	£628	£668	£662	14.0	-17.2	6.2	3.0
Connah's Quay Wepre	£751	£543	£565	£630	£631	-27.8	3.0	8.7	-16.1
Ewloe	£749	£719	£706	£685	£711	-3.9	-1.7	-2.9	-8.5
Ffynnonogroyw	£488	£502	£515	£524	£510	2.9	2.7	2.0	7.5
Flint Castle	£553	£552	£531	£512	£532	-0.1	-3.8	-3.4	-7.4
Flint Coleshill	£520	£530	£528	£544	£532	1.8	-0.3	3.0	4.6
Flint Oakenholt	£533	£518	£558	£584	£551	-2.8	7.4	4.9	9.5
Flint Trelawny	£710	£621	£856	£631	£700	-12.5	33.1	-31.7	-11.2
Greenfield	£483	£543	£523	£522	£517	12.4	-4.2	-0.3	7.9
Gronant	£653	£573	£996	£663	£759	-12.2	64.7	-51.0	1.4
Gwernaffield	£798	£670	£749	£636	£716	-16.1	9.9	-14.2	-20.4
Gwernymynydd	£1,660	£702	£697	£582	£914	-57.7	-0.3	-6.9	-64.9
Halkyn	£585	£774	£834	£787	£790	32.3	10.3	-8.1	34.5
Hawarden	£789	£797	£752	£788	£777	0.9	-5.6	4.5	-0.1
Higher Kinnerton	£677	£709	£820	£730	£736	4.6	16.5	-13.2	7.9
Holywell Central	£500	£504	£490	£520	£505	0.8	-2.9	6.2	4.1
Holywell East	£549	£554	£545	£575	£555	0.9	-1.7	5.5	4.7
Holywell West	£526	£556	£623	£565	£565	5.8	12.6	-10.9	7.4

Ward	2009 £pcm	2010 £pcm	2011 £pcm	2012 £pcm	Total £pcm	% change 2009- 2010	% change 2010- 2011	% change 2011- 2012	% change 2009- 2012
Hope	£830	£610	£692	£674	£702	-26.5	9.9	-2.1	-18.7
Leeswood	£503	£535	£604	£660	£580	6.5	13.6	11.1	31.3
Llanfynydd	£899	£665	£687	£619	£712	-26.0	2.4	-7.6	-31.2
Mancot	£587	£559	£630	£642	£608	-4.8	12.1	2.1	9.4
Mold Broncoed	£567	£604	£608	£592	£591	6.5	0.7	-2.9	4.3
Mold East	£557	£540	£513	£509	£527	-3.0	-4.8	-0.8	-8.6
Mold South	£622	£739	£739	£794	£742	18.8	-0.1	8.9	27.7
Mold West	£519	£565	£573	£550	£551	9.0	1.6	-4.5	6.0
Mostyn	£856	£788	£668	£647	£699	-8.0	-14.0	-2.5	-24.5
New Brighton	£666	£619	£680	£938	£723	-7.0	9.2	38.6	40.8
Northop	£769	£717	£659	£712	£711	-6.8	-7.4	6.9	-7.4
Northop Hall	£604	£633	£746	£718	£683	4.9	18.6	-4.5	19.0
Penyffordd	£748	£803	£740	£687	£742	7.5	-8.5	-7.1	-8.1
Queensferry	£464	£544	£842	£515	£582	17.2	64.3	-70.5	10.9
Saltney Mold Junction	£486	£498	£533	£575	£523	2.4	7.1	8.6	18.1
Saltney Stonebridge	£550	£553	£586	£587	£570	0.4	6.0	0.1	6.6
Sealand	£994	£804	£762	£695	£812	-19.1	-4.2	-6.7	-30.1
Shotton East	£495	£451	£505	£499	£493	-9.0	11.0	-1.3	0.8
Shotton Higher	£1,337	£540	£460	£508	£755	-59.6	-6.0	3.6	-62.0
Shotton West	£449	£456	£493	£512	£482	1.7	8.1	4.2	14.0
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	£637	£699	£661	£742	£689	9.7	-6.0	12.8	16.5
Treuddyn	£536	£621	£625	£673	£622	15.8	0.7	9.0	25.5
Whitford	£698	£732	£694	£734	£711	4.8	-5.3	5.6	5.1
Flintshire	£631	£707	£715	£612	£663	12.0	1.4	-16.4	-3.0

Source: Vizzihomes

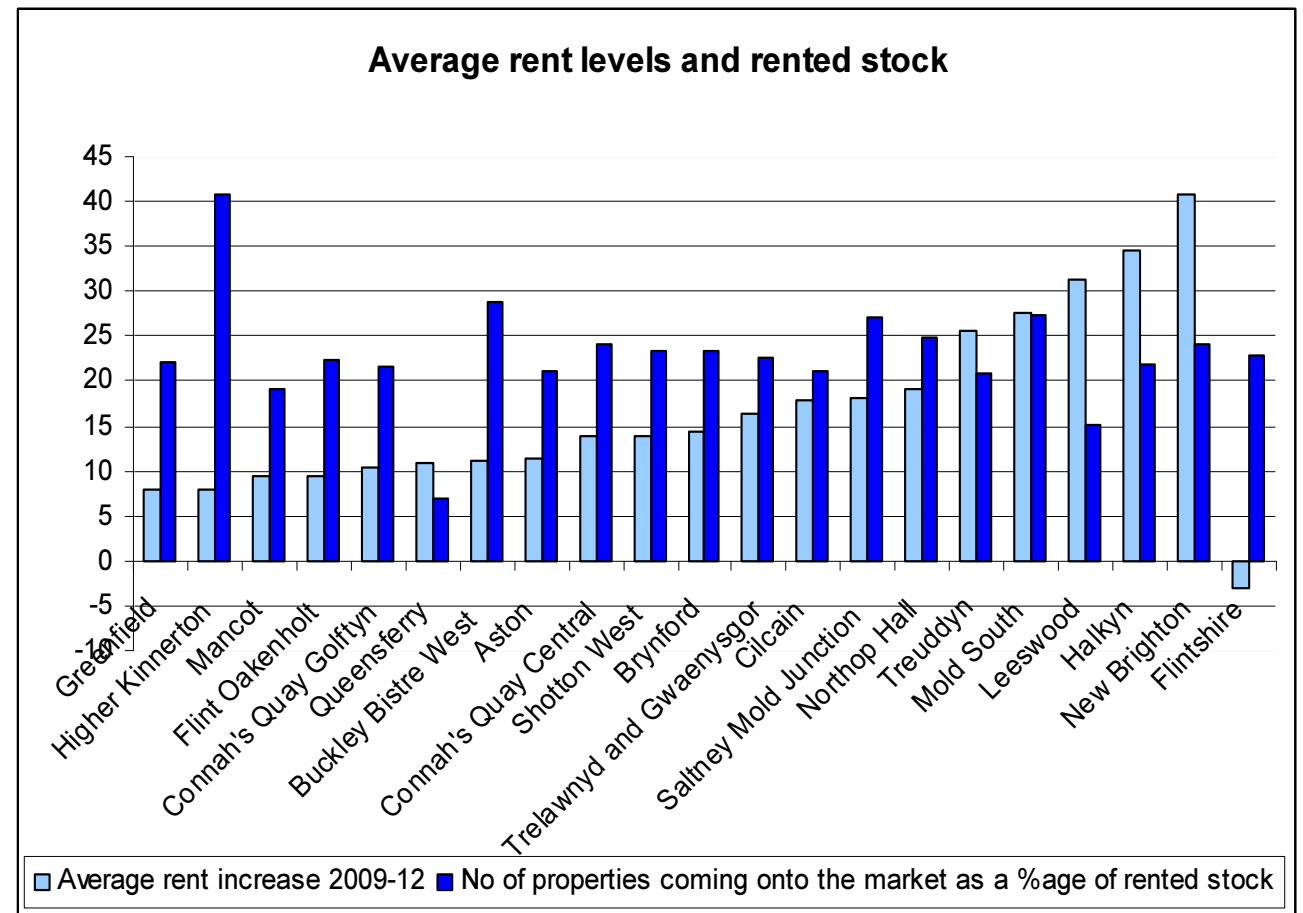
- 2.28 The overall figures mask geographical differences. The 15 wards with the largest rent increases are illustrated in chart 4. There are some very large rent increases in these wards and these areas provide significant opportunity for future investment, if they could be continued.
- 2.29 Chart 5 brings together two parts of the evidence base. It compares the total number of new properties coming onto the market in 2012 as a percentage of all rented stock in the 20 wards with the highest average rent increases from 2009-2012. The Flintshire averages are also illustrated. The chart shows that although there is not a consistent link between the activity in the market and rent increases, there is a general correlation between wards with the highest rental increases and number of new properties coming onto the market in 2012.

Chart 4: The 20 Wards with the largest rent increases



Source: Vizzhomes

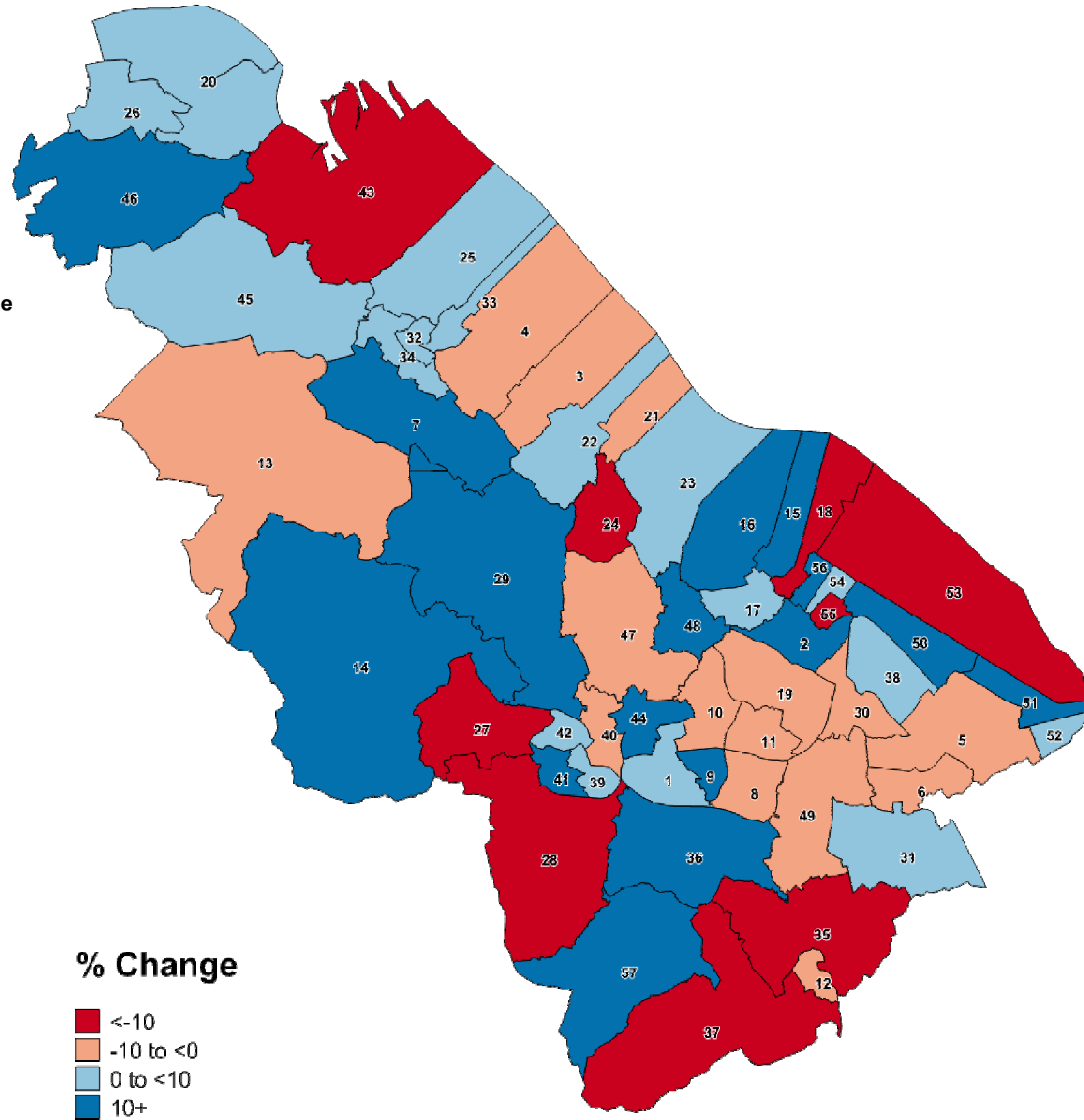
Chart 5: Average rent levels and rented stock



Source: Vizzhomes

2.30 The average rent change 2009 to 2012 is shown geographically in Map 5.

**Map 5: The average rent change
2009 to 2012**



2.31 Table 10 shows average rents by property type and bed size³. Since 2009, average rents for flats have increased by 2.8%, whilst for houses there has been a reduction of -2.7%. The biggest rent increases have been for 1 bed flats, and smaller houses. The larger houses are based on relatively small sample sizes.

2.32 The higher rental increases for smaller homes may be linked to the caps on LHA and many households may have chosen the private rented sector as a 'stepping stone' into homeownership and are renting smaller (cheaper) properties whilst they save for deposits for mortgages.

Table 10: Rent levels by property type in wards

Property size	2009 £pcm	2010 £pcm	2011 £pcm	2012 £pcm	Average £pcm	%age change 2009-2012
Flat	£476	£499	£496	£490	£491	2.8%
Bed sit	£416	£401	£461	£388	£422	-6.8%
1	£412	£436	£429	£434	£429	5.3%
2	£533	£547	£546	£533	£540	0.0%
3	£549	£499	£514	£554	£534	0.8%
4	NA	NA	£1,160	£650	£905	NA
5	NA	£950	NA	NA	£950	NA
6	£550	NA	£358	NA	£422	NA
House	£658	£754	£760	£640	£700	-2.7%
0	£4,074**	£492	£687	£575	£1,050	-85.9%
1	£397	£410	£455	£481	£437	21.1%
2	£534	£878	£548	£543	£615	1.7%
3	£610	£629	£842	£629	£680	3.1%
4	£869	£924	£904	£906	£901	4.3%
5	£1,133	£1,183	£1,198	£1,014	£1,125	-10.5%
6	£858**	£1,950	£2,510	£1,582	£2,022	84.3%
7	£2,165**	£2,083	NA	£4,000	£2,392	84.8%
8	NA	NA	£1,400	NA	£1,400	NA
Flintshire	£631	£707	£715	£612	£663	-3.0%

Source: Vizzihomes

³ This data is available at ward level but too large to include within this report.

Affordability

- 2.33 We have considered two types of affordability in Flintshire. The affordability for households dependent on Local Housing Allowance and the affordability for economically active households.
- 2.34 We have reviewed all of the properties that came onto the market in each year from 2009 to 2012 (5,613) and compared the rent levels with the Local Housing Allowance caps for Flintshire. We have then recorded the number of properties that were available within the LHA caps by bed size and expressed this as a percentage of all of that property type available. The results are shown in Table 11.⁴
- 2.35 Since 2009, 22.3% of all properties coming to the market have been within the Local Housing Allowance caps. This increases to 26.3% for 1 bed properties. The overall average is lower than usual figures that arc⁴ identifies in other local authorities, where the average is usually around 30-40%
- 2.36 During the four year period, only 8 bed-sits/shared rooms were available within Local Housing Allowance levels. It is very likely that this type of property is available but not advertised through letting agents but given that, it is also likely that it is of a lower quality and management standard than properties let through managing agents.

Table 11: Affordability by property type

No of beds	2009		2010		2011		2012		Total No	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Bed sit	2	13.3	0	0.0	4	5.6	2	5.6	8	6.1
1	45	35.4	41	31.1	32	22.5	34	19.4	152	26.3
2	92	20.9	95	21.2	75	14.5	79	12.5	341	16.7
3	194	35.7	144	31.7	144	24.7	141	22.0	623	28
4	36	31.9	21	21.9	27	17.9	33	19.9	117	22.2
5	1	5.3	1	4.3	0	0.0	5	17.2	7	7.2
6	2	50.0	0	0.0	2	16.7	0	0.0	4	20
Flintshire	372	29.4	302	25.9	284	18.8	294	17.5	1252	22.3

Source: Vizzihomes

- 2.37 Chart 6 illustrates the changing affordable levels for properties. Since 2009, there has been a reduction in the number of properties coming onto the market within the LHA caps and therefore choice has reduced for households dependent on LHA; this is most noticeable for smaller and larger property.

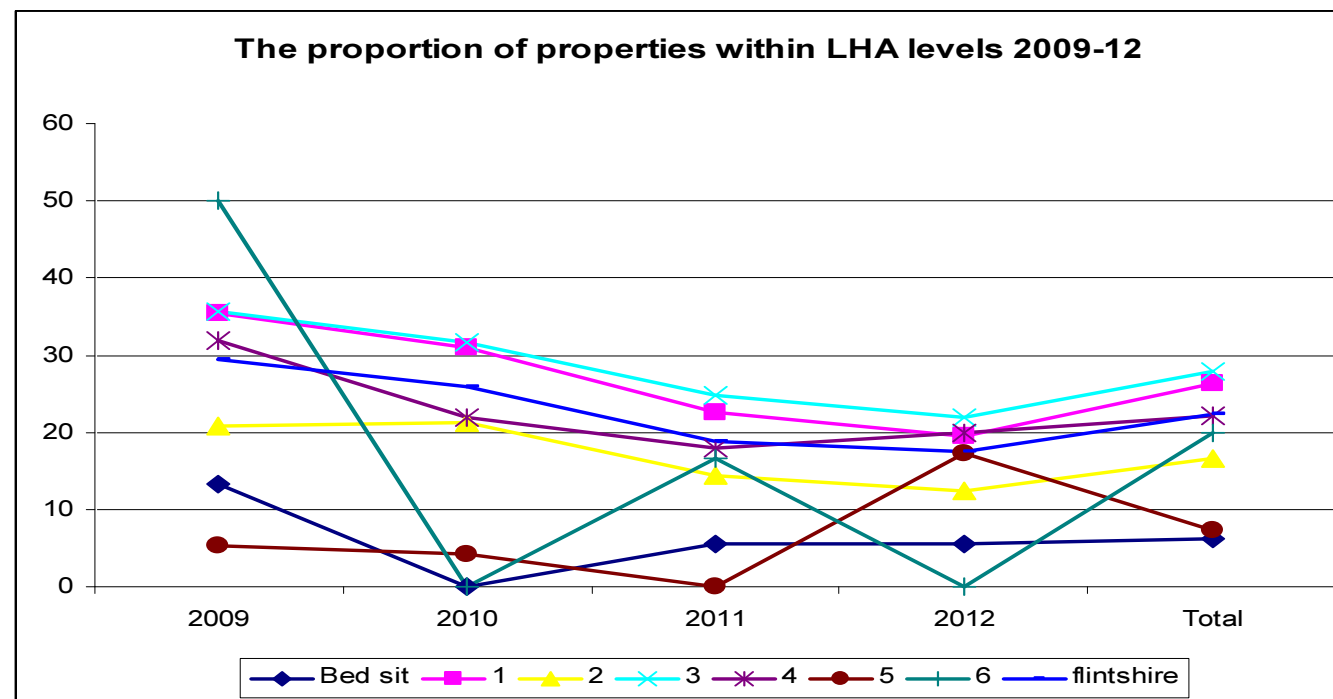


Chart 6: The percentage of properties within LHA caps 2009-2012

Source: Vizzihomes

⁴ LHA Caps were only introduced in 20011 but for the purposes of this report we have assumed they have always been in place.

- 2.38 The LHA caps are forecast to increase by 1% in 2014 and 2015. Given the previous rent increases in many of the wards in Flintshire, the proportion of properties affordable within LHA caps is likely to reduce over the next two years. Because the rent increases are different in different locations it is likely that the Flintshire market will become more polarised between properties managed within LHA and those for economically active households.
- 2.39 Table 13, illustrates the monthly and annual net income levels that would be required to rent a property in each ward, if the rent accounted for 30% of household income. The rent levels are based on 2012 figures when lower quartile annual gross income was £17,981 and the average annual gross income was £26,161⁵.
- 2.40 There were no areas where households on lower quartile net incomes could afford average rent levels unless that used over 30% of their household income.
- 2.41 Households earning average household earnings could afford average rent levels in most areas with the exception of Broughton North East, Cilcain, Halkyn, Hawarden, Higher Kinnerton, Mold South, New Brighton, Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor and Whitford
- 2.42 The least affordable ward was New Brighton and the most affordable Shotton East based on average rents.

Table 12: Affordability by ward

Ward	2012 average rent levels £pcm	Monthly Income required for rent to be within 30% of household net income	Annual net income	Ward	2012 average rent levels £pcm	Monthly Income required for rent to be within 30% of household net income	Annual net income
Argoed	£649	£2,164	£25,967	Hawarden	£788	£2,627	£31,523
Aston	£657	£2,190	£26,286	Higher Kinnerton	£730	£2,435	£29,217
Bagillt East	£568	£1,894	£22,728	Holywell Central	£520	£1,735	£20,818
Bagillt West	£535	£1,784	£21,404	Holywell East	£575	£1,917	£23,000
Broughton North East	£715	£2,385	£28,615	Holywell West	£565	£1,883	£22,600
Broughton South	£635	£2,117	£25,400	Hope	£674	£2,248	£26,976
Brynford	£674	£2,248	£26,971	Leeswood	£660	£2,199	£26,390
Buckley Bistre East	£571	£1,903	£22,842	Llanfynydd	£619	£2,062	£24,747
Buckley Bistre West	£589	£1,965	£23,575	Mancot	£642	£2,141	£25,688
Buckley Mountain	£588	£1,958	£23,500	Mold Broncoed	£592	£1,972	£23,669
Buckley Pentrobin	£558	£1,859	£22,310	Mold East	£509	£1,696	£20,350
Caergwrle	£505	£1,684	£20,212	Mold South	£794	£2,648	£31,773
Caerwys	£552	£1,841	£22,088	Mold West	£550	£1,832	£21,985
Cilcain	£717	£2,391	£28,692	Mostyn	£647	£2,157	£25,878
Connah's Quay Central	£515	£1,717	£20,600	New Brighton	£938	£3,126	£37,511
Connah's Quay Golftyn	£590	£1,967	£23,606	Northop	£712	£2,374	£28,491
Connah's Quay South	£668	£2,227	£26,718	Northop Hall	£718	£2,395	£28,739
Connah's Quay Wepre	£630	£2,100	£25,197	Penyffordd	£687	£2,290	£27,478
Ewloe	£685	£2,283	£27,397	Queensferry	£515	£1,716	£20,590
Ffynnongroyw	£524	£1,748	£20,970	Saltney Mold Junction	£575	£1,915	£22,980
Flint Castle	£512	£1,707	£20,482	Saltney Stonebridge	£587	£1,956	£23,468
Flint Coleshill	£544	£1,813	£21,754	Sealand	£695	£2,317	£27,800
Flint Oakenholt	£584	£1,947	£23,365	Shotton East	£499	£1,663	£19,962
Flint Trelawny	£631	£2,103	£25,236	Shotton Higher	£508	£1,693	£20,314
Greenfield	£522	£1,739	£20,869	Shotton West	£512	£1,705	£20,462
Gronant	£663	£2,209	£26,504	Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	£742	£2,474	£29,692
Gwernaffield	£636	£2,119	£25,429	Treuddyn	£673	£2,244	£26,933
Gwernymynydd	£582	£1,941	£23,291	Whitford	£734	£2,445	£29,344
Halkyn	£787	£2,624	£31,482	Flintshire	£612	£2,039	£24,471

Source: Vizzihomes

⁵ ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 22 May 2013]

2.43 Table 13 shows the monthly and annual gross income levels that would be required to rent different property sizes. The rent levels are based on 2012 figures when lower quartile annual gross income was £17,981 and the average annual gross income was £26,161⁶.

2.44 Households on lower quartile earning could only afford 1 bed flats based on a definition of spending up to 30% of household income on rent. For average earnings, larger properties - four bed plus - can become unaffordable based on average rent levels.⁷

Table 13: Affordability by property type and size

Property size	2012 average rent levels pcm	Monthly Income required for rent to be within 30% of household net income	Annual net income
Flat	£490	£1,633	£19,594
0	£388	£1,293	£15,516
1	£434	£1,448	£17,375
2	£533	£1,778	£21,332
3	£554	£1,845	£22,145
4	£650	£2,167	£26,000
House	£640	£2,133	£25,601
0	£575	£1,918	£23,016
1	£481	£1,603	£19,234
2	£543	£1,809	£21,706
3	£629	£2,098	£25,171
4	£906	£3,022	£36,258
5	£1,014	£3,380	£40,566
6	£1,582	£5,272	£63,267
Flintshire	£612	£2,039	£24,471

Source: Vizzihomes

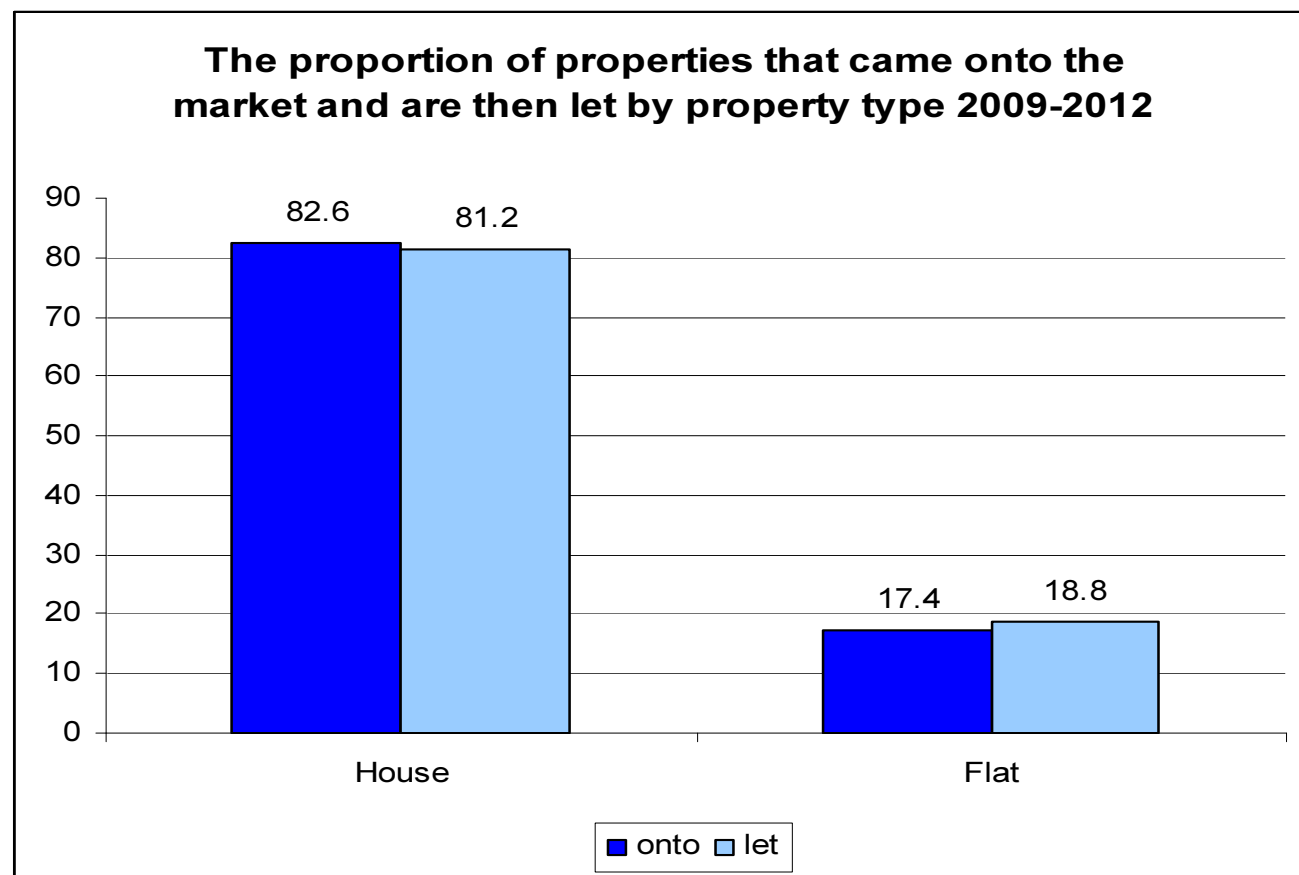
⁶ ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 22 May 2013]

⁷ Averages will mask local geographical differences

Properties let

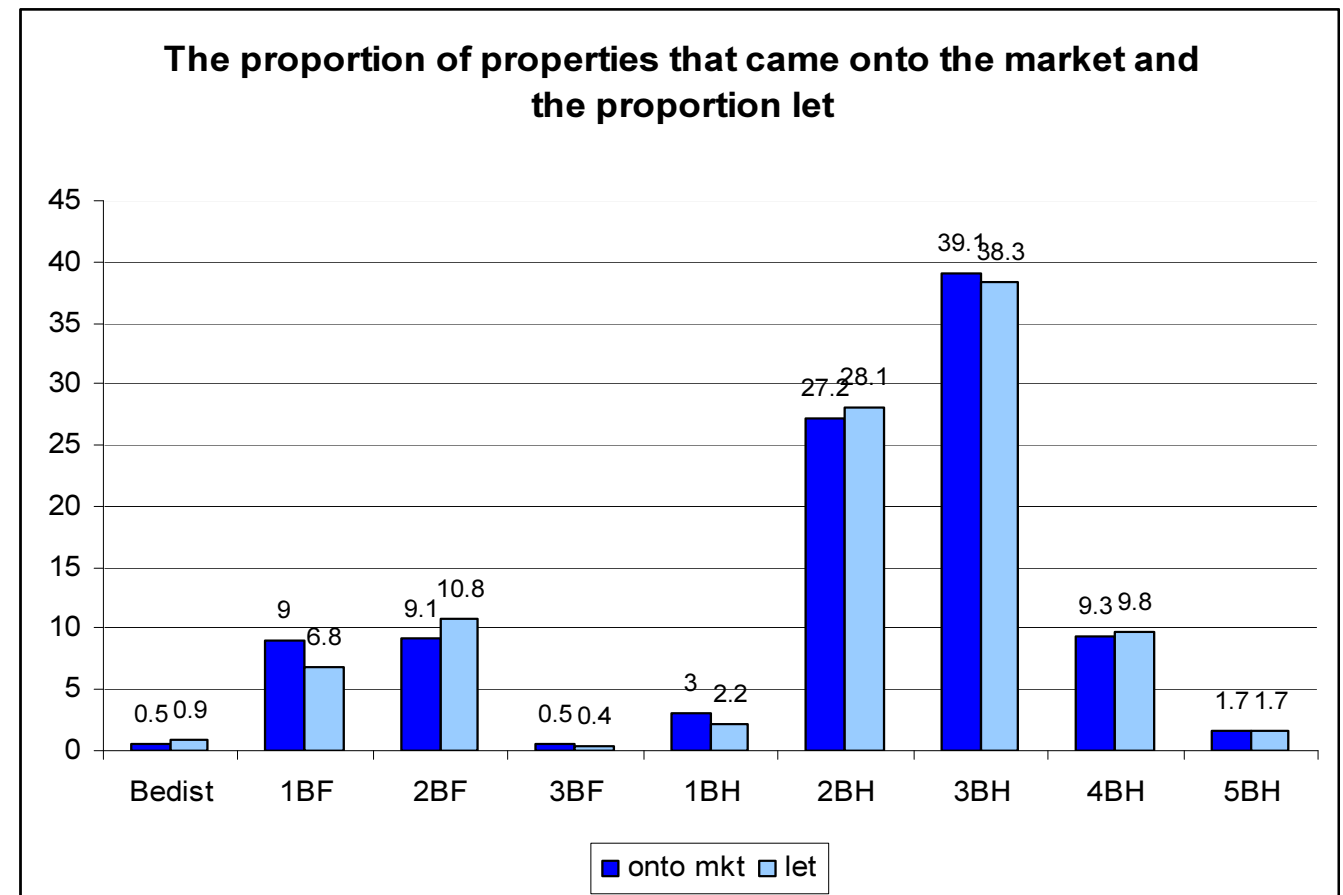
- 2.45 The information shown in this report has used data taken from a 'new instructions' report. This tracks all properties that come onto a market and is based on an electronic trawl of data. It is estimated to cover 99% of the market. What is more difficult to report is how many of those properties are then let. This data is taken from a 'weekly let' report and relies on individual agents updating their records. Whilst we have a very good sample of properties let to identify their characteristics and the time property takes to let, it is not possible to provide the actual number of properties let. We do however; know that in Flintshire, of the 5,613 properties that came onto the market between 2009 and 2012, at least 48.4% (2,720) of them were let, although likely to be much higher.
- 2.46 This provides us with a robust summary of the characteristics of properties that do get let and we have compared these below with those that came onto the market. Chart 7 illustrates the percentage of flats and houses that came onto the market compared to the percentage that were let. There is a general balance of the market, although overall, a greater percentage flats come onto the market than are let. This would suggest a small over supply of this property type but it could also indicate that the property is in a poor condition or in poor locations and therefore not popular. The reverse is true for houses.
- 2.47 Chart 8 illustrates the percentage of properties coming onto the market and the percentage then let by property type and size. Again, we generally see a balance in the market. However, there are small discrepancies between 1 bed flats coming onto the market and being let, suggesting a small over supply, and there also appears to be a small under supply of 2 bed flats coming onto the market. The market for private rented housing tends to be in overall balance.

Chart 7: the proportion of properties that come onto the market and are then let by property type 2009-2012



Source: Vizzihomes

Chart 8: the proportion of properties that came onto the market and the proportion let

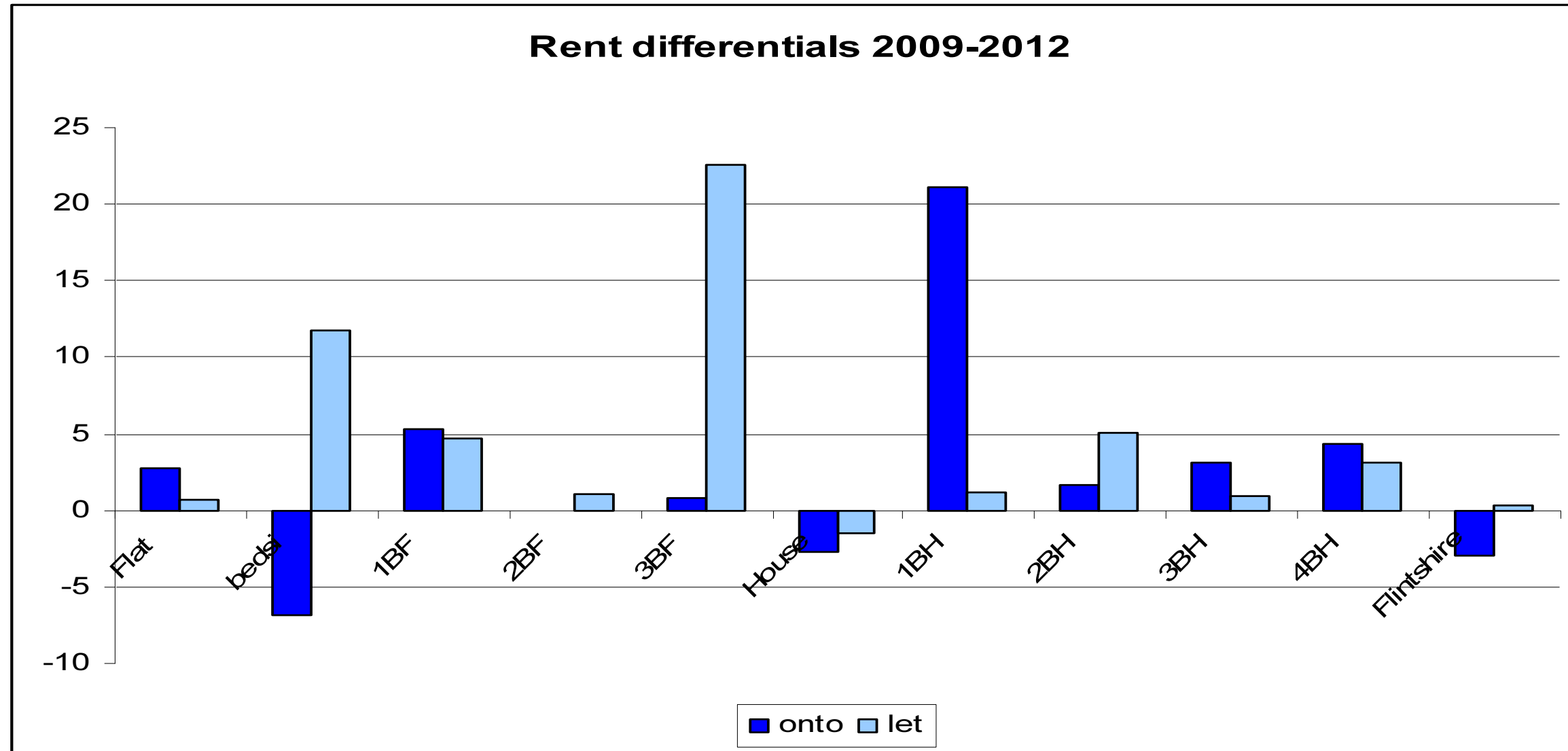


Source: Vizzihomes

Rent differentials

- 2.48 The rent that property is advertised at and the rent it is let at can often be different and may demonstrate a market pressure if rents are being negotiated up or an oversupply if rents are successfully negotiated down.
- 2.49 Chart 9 below illustrates the percentage differences in rent negotiations from 2009-2012⁸. For properties coming onto the market, the data confirms that rent levels being advertised reduced by 3% from 2009-2012. However, when properties were let they increased by 0.3%. This suggests that rents are being negotiated upwards but it may be that lower quality (and therefore cheaper) were being let. However, as the market seems to be generally in balance, we would conclude that some rents are being negotiated upwards.

Chart 9: Rent differentials



Source: Vizzihome

⁸ 2 bed flats coming onto the market did not change between 2009-2012 and show as 0

Time to let property

2.50 The time to let a property can indicate how popular a particular property type is, how popular an area is or whether a property is in good condition. It can also indicate an undersupply/oversupply of a particular property type. The time to let a property is a very useful measure of the health of the rental market and this section considers how long it took for property to be let after coming onto the market.

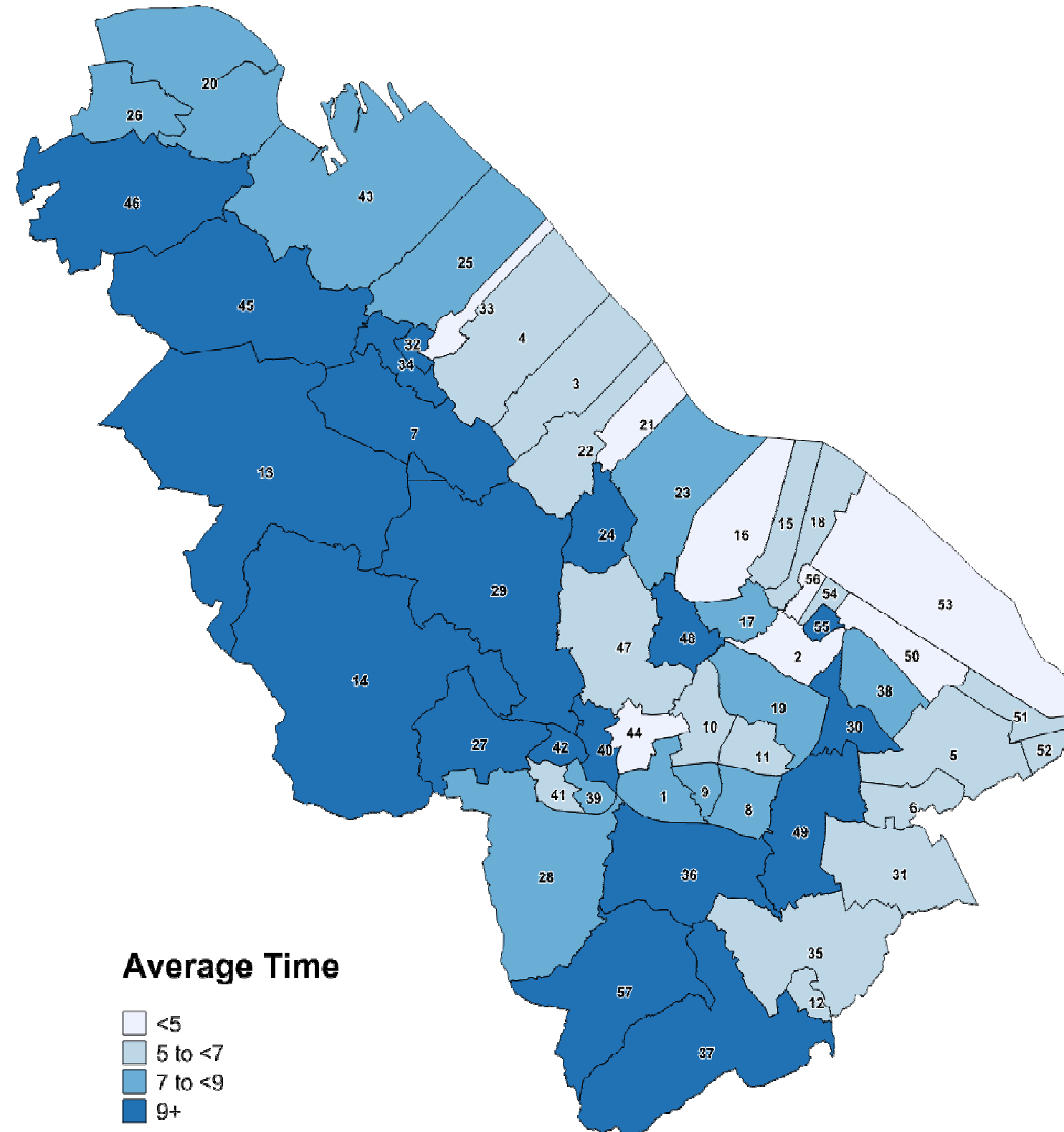
2.51 Table 14, shows the average time to let a property in weeks in each of the years 2009-2012 by ward and shows the percentage change in the number of weeks, year on year and overall from 2009 to 2012. Over 2009 to 2012, the average time it took to let property in Flintshire was 12.4 weeks. However, during 2011 and 2012 this time reduced significantly and during 2012, the average time to let property was 7.6 weeks. Since 2010, the time to let a property has been reducing and quite significantly. This would suggest that there has been an increased demand for properties in the private rented sector over the past two years.

Table 14: Time to let by ward 2009-2012

Ward	Time to let in weeks					% age change 2009-10	% age change 2010-11	% age change 2011-12	% age change 2009-12	Ward	Time to let in weeks					% age change 2009-10	% age change 2010-11	% age change 2011-12	% age change 2009-12
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average						2009	2010	2011	2012	Average				
Argoed	9.0	8.3	17.6	7.5	10.2	-7.4	111.2	-57.2	-16.3%	Hawarden	7.3	23.6	15.8	10.7	14.5	222.2	-33.1	-32.2	46.1%
Aston	13.3	31.3	6.3	4.8	11.4	134.6	-79.8	-24.4	-64.2%	Higher Kinnerton	17.1	5.2	17.3	6.0	12.2	-69.9	234.8	-65.3	-65.0%
Bagillt East	11.0	14.2	7.4	6.7	8.9	29.1	-47.9	-9.9	-39.4%	Holywell Central	14.9	21.4	21.8	9.1	16.9	43.8	1.6	-58.2	-38.9%
Bagillt West	9.6	30.8	4.9	6.0	9.2	221.8	-84.2	24.3	-36.9%	Holywell East	6.8	13.0	7.7	4.2	8.1	92.6	-41.0	-45.2	-37.8%
Broughton North East	10.7	28.0	8.5	6.6	11.4	161.3	-69.7	-22.7	-38.9%	Holywell West	7.0	18.8	23.2	9.8	16.1	167.9	23.9	-57.7	40.3%
Broughton South	5.3	15.3	4.8	6.3	7.4	189.5	-68.5	30.9	19.2%	Hope	8.3	19.8	21.4	5.8	11.4	139.4	8.2	-72.7	-29.3%
Brynford	9.3	33.6	22.8	9.2	20.0	263.5	-32.1	-59.6	-0.3%	Leeswood	8.6	18.2	31.8	9.4	19.3	111.2	74.8	-70.3	9.8%
Buckley Bistre East	4.8	11.7	19.3	7.5	10.8	145.6	65.5	-61.4	56.9%	Llanfynydd	8.0	28.6	5.9	11.2	14.6	257.1	-79.5	91.6	40.3%
Buckley Bistre West	8.6	12.4	17.5	7.9	10.8	43.9	40.8	-54.7	-8.1%	Mancot	10.3	17.9	13.9	7.5	12.2	72.9	-22.0	-46.3	-27.7%
Buckley Mountain	10.2	19.8	8.6	6.3	10.8	94.5	-56.4	-26.5	-37.6%	Mold Broncoed	8.2	22.8	10.1	8.8	12.5	177.6	-55.5	-13.1	7.4%
Buckley Pentrobin	10.8	21.5	10.1	5.4	12.1	99.8	-53.1	-46.8	-50.1%	Mold East	13.0	13.0	28.1	9.3	15.9	0.0	116.2	-66.8	-28.2%
Caergwrle	12.3	71.7	3.3	5.2	11.4	481.1	-95.3	56.0	-57.8%	Mold South	16.0	28.2	12.7	5.7	14.4	76.3	-55.0	-55.0	-64.3%
Caerwys	11.3	19.4	49.5	10.5	23.0	71.2	155.4	-78.9	-7.6%	Mold West	8.3	21.8	15.9	9.1	15.0	161.9	-27.3	-42.9	8.7%
Cilcain	19.6	15.2	40.6	14.0	21.5	-22.5	167.7	-65.5	-28.5%	Mostyn	5.0	16.4	6.8	8.1	8.5	228.0	-58.5	18.7	61.4%
Connah's Quay Central	7.0	12.4	4.3	5.4	7.3	77.8	-65.2	24.6	-22.9%	New Brighton	10.5	15.6	5.8	4.7	9.0	48.7	-63.1	-19.0	-55.6%
Connah's Quay Golftyn	5.4	17.5	9.2	4.3	9.8	221.7	-47.4	-53.2	-20.9%	Northop	13.0	23.8	18.8	6.8	14.2	83.1	-20.8	-64.0	-47.8%
Connah's Quay South	7.0	15.0	6.1	7.2	8.5	114.3	-59.6	18.4	2.5%	Northop Hall	7.5	15.6	5.4	9.3	9.4	107.6	-65.0	70.6	23.8%
Connah's Quay Wepre	11.0	5.4	4.9	5.9	5.7	-50.9	-10.1	21.8	-46.2%	Penyffordd	7.5	19.2	28.2	9.4	17.9	155.6	47.0	-66.6	25.3%
Ewloe	10.7	16.1	16.7	7.7	12.8	50.5	3.5	-53.6	-27.8%	Queensferry	10.0	37.9	14.1	4.1	16.2	278.8	-62.7	-70.9	-58.9%
Ffynnongroyw	7.0	23.5	8.8	8.9	10.5	235.7	-62.6	1.3	27.1%	Saltney Mold Junction	7.6	14.3	16.6	6.1	10.6	88.2	16.5	-63.4	-19.7%
Flint Castle	13.5	19.7	6.3	4.2	8.9	45.7	-68.0	-33.2	-68.9%	Saltney Stonebridge	7.0	5.5	9.1	6.6	7.1	-21.8	66.5	-27.4	-5.5%
Flint Coleshill	7.8	13.7	20.0	5.9	11.3	76.0	45.7	-70.6	-24.5%	Sealand	5.3	12.3	14.8	4.4	9.9	132.4	20.8	-70.7	-17.6%
Flint Oakenholt	9.2	16.7	33.3	7.3	17.7	81.6	99.5	-78.3	-21.2%	Shotton East	5.0	20.8	16.9	6.9	14.2	315.6	-18.7	-59.1	38.0%
Flint Trelawny	12.0	10.2	7.8	12.4	11.0	-15.3	-23.8	60.6	3.7%	Shotton Higher	2.5	4.3	13.8	10.6	9.0	73.3	217.3	-22.9	324.0%
Greenfield	7.8	22.5	12.1	7.9	14.9	189.7	-46.3	-34.9	1.4%	Shotton West	11.0	3.6	17.7	3.9	7.7	-67.1	388.7	-77.8	-64.4%
Gronant	14.7	25.8	11.0	8.5	13.0	75.2	-57.3	-22.5	-42.1%	Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	2.5	40.1	14.1	9.9	18.0	1505.7	-65.0	-29.8	295.0%
Gwernaffield	5.7	38.0	4.5	16.2	13.4	570.6	-88.2	260.0	185.9%	Treuddyn	4.0	33.5	7.5	16.8	16.7	737.5	-77.6	124.0	320.0%
Gwernymynydd	8.6	12.7	19.5	7.8	12.7	47.8	53.4	-60.0	-9.3%	Whitford	15.6	22.4	17.6	12.3	17.0	43.7	-21.5	-30.1	-21.1%
Halkyn	2.0	1.5	9.6	10.0	8.1	-25.0	541.7	3.9	400.0%	Flintshire	9.8	18.3	14.3	7.6	12.4	86.4	-22.2	-46.8	-22.9%

Source: Vizzihomes

Map 6: The average time to let a property 2012



- 2.52 Table 15, shows the average time to let property by property type and size and the percentage change year on year and overall from 2009 to 2012. The time to let both flats and houses has increased although there have been very large reductions during 2011-12 suggesting that the market has only recently increased in demand and activity.
- 2.53 However, there are quite significant differences between property sizes. Focusing on the timeframe during 2011-2012, there have been significant reductions in the time to let all properties but the largest reductions are for smaller properties, particularly flats. This suggests the demand for these properties has increased recently and that is potentially the case now that Local Housing allowance caps have been introduced. This may have an effect of 'forcing' households into smaller properties because of the amount of benefit that is available to fund rent.

Table 15: Time to let by property type and size 1009-12

Property size	Time to let in weeks					% age change 2009-10	% age change 2010-11	% age change 2011-12	% age change 2009-2012
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Overall average				
Flat	10.9	17.9	16.9	8.1	13.2	64.4%	-5.7%	-51.9%	-25.4%
0		19.2	10.0	3.6	11.8	NA	-47.8%	-64.0%	NA
1	8.1	14.5	23.0	7.4	14.3	79.0%	58.3%	-67.9%	-9.1%
2	12.9	19.2	12.3	8.6	12.6	48.6%	-35.8%	-30.2%	-33.5%
3	5.0	28.7	9.5	8.7	12.7	473.3%	-66.9%	-8.8%	73.3%
4				27.0	27.0	NA	NA	NA	NA
6		1.0	1.0		1.0	NA	0.0%	NA	NA
House	9.7	18.4	13.7	7.4	12.2	90.9%	-25.8%	-45.7%	-23.0%
0	2.0		8.7	2.0	6.6	-100.0%	NA	-76.9%	0.0%
1	11.2	13.2	17.3	8.8	12.6	18.4%	30.9%	-49.4%	-21.5%
2	9.9	17.1	16.4	7.2	12.7	71.7%	-3.8%	-56.1%	-27.5%
3	9.2	18.1	11.8	7.1	11.4	95.7%	-34.6%	-40.2%	-23.5%
4	10.2	24.8	12.5	8.5	13.0	143.1%	-49.7%	-32.0%	-16.9%
5	10.2	28.3	16.1	11.8	15.3	177.8%	-43.1%	-26.5%	16.1%
6		50.0	5.0	4.3	13.6	NA	-90.0%	-13.3%	NA
7		27.0	27.0		27.0	NA	0.0%	NA	NA
8			2.0		2.0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Flintshire	9.8	18.3	14.3	7.6	12.4	86.4%	-22.2%	-46.8%	-22.9%

Source: Vizzihomes

- 2.54 Chart 10 illustrates the time take in weeks to let property in each rent band and shows a reduction from 2010 until 2012 in all rent levels.

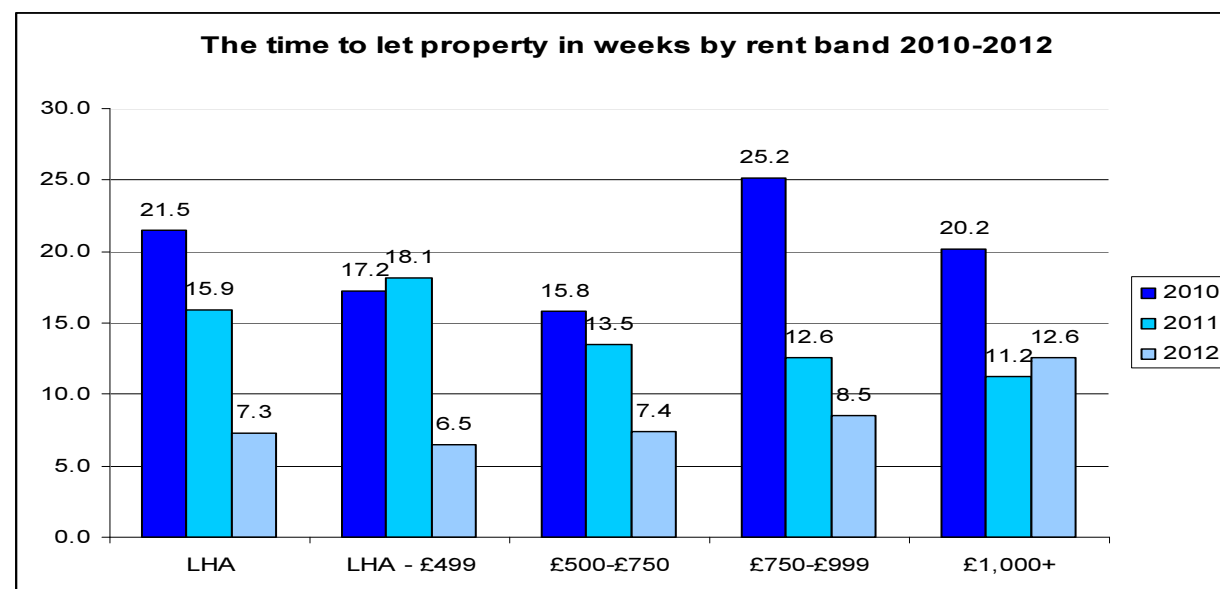


Chart 10: Time to let in weeks by rent band 2010-12

Rental yields

2.55 Table 16 provides a guide to rental yields achievable in different wards. It assumes average rent levels and average sales values⁹ and allows for 12% management and maintenance costs including voids and bad debts. Rental yields based on average rents and values are relatively low. The average is 4%. The highest rental yield is in Flint Oakenholt (6.8%), the lowest yield is in Llanfynydd and Higher Kinnerton (2.4%). These yields are relatively low compared to many markets arc4 has worked in and although do not reach the 7+% level where investors could be interested, are only taking averages of the market and therefore there will be areas where yields are much higher. This could provide an opportunity for investors.

Table 16: Rental yields by ward

Ward	Average sales Value 2012	Average Rent PCM 2012	Annual average rental income	Net income 12% costs	Rental yields
Argoed	£137,147	£649	£7,788	£6,853	5.0
Aston	£170,853	£657	£7,884	£6,938	4.1
Bagillt East	£119,273	£568	£6,816	£5,998	5.0
Bagillt West	£84,147	£535	£6,420	£5,650	6.7
Broughton North East	£179,908	£715	£8,580	£7,550	4.2
Broughton South	£155,708	£635	£7,620	£6,706	4.3
Brynford	£186,679	£674	£8,088	£7,117	3.8
Buckley Bistre East	£109,440	£571	£6,852	£6,030	5.5
Buckley Bistre West	£126,922	£589	£7,068	£6,220	4.9
Buckley Mountain	£155,788	£588	£7,056	£6,209	4.0
Buckley Pentrobin	£173,074	£558	£6,696	£5,892	3.4
Caergwrle	£119,591	£505	£6,060	£5,333	4.5
Caerwys	£217,400	£552	£6,624	£5,829	2.7
Cilcain	£282,516	£717	£8,604	£7,572	2.7
Connah's Quay Central	£96,686	£515	£6,180	£5,438	5.6
Connah's Quay Golftyn	£117,856	£590	£7,080	£6,230	5.3
Connah's Quay South	£160,527	£668	£8,016	£7,054	4.4
Connah's Quay Wepre	£132,438	£630	£7,560	£6,653	5.0
Ewloe	£183,789	£685	£8,220	£7,234	3.9
Ffynnongroyw	£100,125	£524	£6,288	£5,533	5.5
Flint Castle	£79,688	£512	£6,144	£5,407	6.8
Flint Coleshill	£140,183	£544	£6,528	£5,745	4.1
Flint Oakenholt	£90,469	£584	£7,008	£6,167	6.8
Flint Trelawny	£149,125	£631	£7,572	£6,663	4.5
Greenfield	£108,680	£522	£6,264	£5,512	5.1
Gronant	£120,496	£663	£7,956	£7,001	5.8
Gwernaffield	£224,327	£636	£7,632	£6,716	3.0
Gwernymynydd	£188,800	£582	£6,984	£6,146	3.3
Halkyn	£243,591	£787	£9,444	£8,311	3.4
Hawarden	£214,875	£788	£9,456	£8,321	3.9

Ward	Average sales Value 2012	Average Rent PCM 2012	Annual average rental income	Net income 12% costs	Rental yields
Higher Kinnerton	£320,143	£730	£8,760	£7,709	2.4
Holywell Central	£86,167	£520	£6,240	£5,491	6.4
Holywell East	£106,746	£575	£6,900	£6,072	5.7
Holywell West	£143,558	£565	£6,780	£5,966	4.2
Hope	£146,880	£674	£8,088	£7,117	4.8
Leeswood	£149,000	£660	£7,920	£6,970	4.7
Llanfynydd	£274,817	£619	£7,428	£6,537	2.4
Mancot	£149,311	£642	£7,704	£6,780	4.5
Mold Broncoed	£146,185	£592	£7,104	£6,252	4.3
Mold East	£137,380	£509	£6,108	£5,375	3.9
Mold South	£209,327	£794	£9,528	£8,385	4.0
Mold West	£167,135	£550	£6,600	£5,808	3.5
Mostyn	£153,136	£647	£7,764	£6,832	4.5
New Brighton	£152,690	£938	£11,256	£9,905	6.5
Northop	£258,835	£712	£8,544	£7,519	2.9
Northop Hall	£169,643	£718	£8,616	£7,582	4.5
Penyffordd	£171,058	£687	£8,244	£7,255	4.2
Queensferry	£96,909	£515	£6,180	£5,438	5.6
Saltney Mold Junction	£115,607	£575	£6,900	£6,072	5.3
Saltney Stonebridge	£138,757	£587	£7,044	£6,199	4.5
Sealand	£164,935	£695	£8,340	£7,339	4.4
Shotton East	£106,926	£499	£5,988	£5,269	4.9
Shotton Higher	£106,313	£508	£6,096	£5,364	5.0
Shotton West	£104,868	£512	£6,144	£5,407	5.2
Trelawnyd and Gwaenysgor	£204,339	£742	£8,904	£7,836	3.8
Treuddyn	£185,800	£673	£8,076	£7,107	3.8
Whitford	£218,765	£734	£8,808	£7,751	3.5
Flintshire	£162,125	£612	£7,344	£6,463	4.0

Source: Vizzihome Average rent levels, Sales values CLG House Price Statistics; Land Registry Price Paid Dataset

⁹ There will be significant difference between property types and specific locations

3. In summary and conclusion

3.1 This report has provided detailed information about the private rented market in Flintshire since 2009.

Total stock

- 3.2 The Census 2011 confirms that there are 629 (11.5%) households living in the private rented sector in Flintshire; this is lower than the national figure for England and Wales of 18.1% but comparable to the 12% of households that are living in the private rented sector in Wales. The highest percentage is in Queensferry (24.7%) and the lowest Mold South (4.5%). Other areas with high proportions of properties in the private rented sector include Shotton East, Shotton West, Saltney Mold Junction, Mold Broncoed, Holywell Central and Ffynnongroyw.
- 3.3 Overall, the private rented sector has increased by 4.1 percentage points to 11.5%; an overall increase of 55.4% and as a result both the owner occupied sectors and affordable housing sectors have reduced, as confirmed by the Census 2001 and 2011
- 3.4 The sector is generally concentrated in the lower value housing market areas where the property values are lower and would suggest that the sector is a lower value offer, proving an extension to the social rented sector. There are however, a number of wards where the size of the private rented sector is above the Flintshire and the property values are also above the average price for Flintshire such as Broughton North East, Caerwys and Gwernymynydd. This suggests that there will be higher value properties available in the private rented sector and as these wards have experienced a reasonable increase in scale of the private rented sector over the past 10 years, suggests that the growth in the sector is not only confined to the lower value markets but also for higher income economically active markets.

Properties on the market

- 3.5 From 2009 to 2012, 5,613 properties have come onto the market. This number has increased from 1,264 in 2009 to 1,680 in 2012; an increase of 32.9%. The total number coming onto the market has increased year on year with 2012 seeing the largest number of properties coming onto the market during the past four years of 1,680 or 29.9%.
- 3.6 The number of flats that have come onto the market has increased from 2009 to 2012 but the proportion of flats still only represents 18.8% of all properties in 2012. The majority of properties coming onto the market are houses and represent 82.6% over the past four years.
- 3.7 There is a relatively good supply of properties for families (the largest growing market in the private rented sector). 36.3% of properties have been 2 bed properties and 39.6% 3 bed properties. The figure for three bed properties is higher than arc⁴ usually see, as 2 bed properties normally dominate markets.
- 3.8 However, there are fewer larger properties. Only 2.2% of properties brought onto the market in the past four years have been 4 bed plus. By comparison, there are very few smaller properties and only 2.3% of all properties brought onto the market in the past four years have been bed-sits. Interestingly the number of smaller units, bed-sits and one bed properties that have come onto the market has increased in the past few years, potentially as a response to the LHA benefit caps.
- 3.9 This property offer is likely to create shortages of property for household affected by the shared room rate or looking for smaller accommodation.

Rent levels

- 3.10 The average rent for a property in Flintshire from 2009-2012 was £663 pcm. Since 2009, average rents in Flintshire have reduced by 3% although there was a healthy increase during 2009-10. The wide fluctuations suggest a relatively un-established market that has not developed consistent trends to reflect the growing role the private rented sector has to play in meeting housing need and demand.
- 3.11 Overall rent reductions at a local authority level are unusual and not often seen in other local authorities. However, the overall rent reduction is being driven by some very large reductions in a small number of wards. In 29 of the 57 wards, rent increases where above 4%.
- 3.12 There are some very large rent increases in a number of areas which provides a significant opportunity for future investment, if they could be continued.

- 3.13 For properties coming onto the market, the data confirms that rent levels being advertised reduced by 3% from 2009-2012. However, when properties were let they increased by 0.3%. This suggests that rents are being negotiated upwards but it may be that lower quality (and therefore cheaper) were being let. However, as the market seems to be generally in balance, we would conclude that some rents are being negotiated upwards.

Affordability

- 3.14 Since 2009, 22.3% of all properties coming to the market have been within the Local Housing Allowance caps. This increases to 26.3% for 1 bed properties. The overall average is lower than usual figures that arc⁴ identifies in other local authorities, where the average is usually around 30-40%.
- 3.15 During the four year period, only 8 bed-sits/shared rooms were available within Local Housing Allowance levels. It is very likely that this type of property is available but not advertised through letting agents but given that, it is also likely that it is of a lower quality and management standard than properties let through managing agents.
- 3.16 This will create limited choices and geographies for households dependent on local housing allowance. It is likely to worsen as local housing allowance is limited further through new government policy. Overall, the sector is lower value and therefore likely to be lower income and so the impact of welfare reforms will be significant. This may mean that:
- Landlords leave the sector by choice or be forced if their properties are repossessed
 - Tenants may face illegal evictions
 - Homelessness presentations may increase
 - Landlords may be unable to afford to maintain their properties
 - There may be increased exported costs as a result of poor health and injury in the private rented sector as homes are not maintained and/or tenants cannot afford to heat them etc. This will impact on regional and local support services
 - The potential polarisation of the private rented sector into very poor quality and good quality, lower and higher rent levels.

Properties let

- 3.17 There is a general balance of the market; the proportions of property types that come onto the market are similar to the proportion of property types that get let; however, overall, a greater percentage flats come onto the market than are let. This would suggest a small over supply of this property type but it could also indicate that the property is in a poor condition or in poor locations and therefore not popular. The reverse is true for houses.
- 3.18 However, there are small discrepancies between 1 bed flats coming onto the market and being let, suggesting a small over supply and conversely there is also evidence of a small under supply of 2 bed flats coming onto the market. The market for private rented housing tends to be in overall balance.

Time to let a property

- 3.19 Over 2009 to 2012, the average time it took to let property in Flintshire was 12.4 weeks. However, during 2011 and 2012 this time reduced significantly and during 2012, the average time to let property was 7.6 weeks. Since 2010, the time to let a property has been reducing and quite significantly. This would suggest that there has been an increased demand for properties in the private rented sector over the past two years; although there will be different demands for different property types.
- 3.20 Focusing on the timeframe during 2011-2012, there have been significant reductions in the time to let all properties but the largest reductions are for smaller properties, particularly flats. This suggests the demand for these properties has increased recently which would correlate with the Local Housing Allowance caps and reflect the fact that Flintshire is a relatively low value market.

Rental yields

3.21 Rental yields based on average rents and values are relatively low. The average is 4%. The highest rental yield is in Flint Oakenholt (6.8%), the lowest yield is in Llanfynydd and Higher Kinnerton (2.4%). These yields are relatively low compared to many markets arc4 has worked in and although do not reach the 7+% level where investors could be interested, are only taking averages of the market and therefore there will be areas where yields are much higher. This could provide an opportunity for investors.

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **FLINT TOWN CENTRE (HOUSING REGENERATION)**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The purpose of this report is to consider the next steps in progressing delivery of the Housing element of the Flint town Centre master plan, including seeking Member support.

- For the use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers if necessary.
- To develop firm proposals to resolve Clwyd Alyn's interest in 7 maisonettes
- For firm proposals to be developed for approval to progress the new housing development

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 There has long been a local ambition to regenerate the town centre of Flint. During 2011/12 DTZ were appointed by the council to undertake a master planning exercise which was adopted by council following extensive stakeholder and community consultation in June 2012.

2.02 The master planning exercise identified options and proposals to improve the environment, retail, civic, housing and commercial offer in the town centre. The master plan identified the sites for housing regeneration which this report seeks to address.

2.03 On 13th December 2011 the Executive approved a phased programme to empty the Flint maisonettes in preparation for a regeneration scheme which would see new high homes provided as part of a package of measures to regenerate Flint Town Centre.

2.04 To date, 157 maisonettes are empty, and one leaseholder has sold their property to the council. Of those who have been re-housed, 57% have been re-housed to council property in the North Area, 4% to both the Easy and South respectively. 4% have moved into the private rented sector, 8% to Housing Associations and the remainder have either moved in with family, deceased or been evicted etc.

2.05 Six further tenants have accepted offers and are waiting to move. Three further leaseholders have now accepted offers. Across the remaining 3 Leas blocks there are only 2 home owners and one

tenant whose situations are not fully resolved.

- 2.06 As the area has become increasingly empty there have been security issues and an increase in the level of ASB. Security sheeting has had to be fitted on ground floor and accessible vacant units, and an overnight security service is in place. Cleaning and keeping the area tidy is a high priority and the police have been working in partnership with the council to manage the situation.
- 2.07 The first fully vacant block was Coleshill Lea, and this and the garages adjacent to it were demolished in the Summer of 2012.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The plan for Flint is based around the following six strategic objectives:-
1. Transform Flint's physical image*
 2. Reconnection of Flint's assets
 3. Promote the town and it's opportunities
 4. To better serve the local people*
 5. Create economic growth through job creation*
 6. To embed Flint into a sub regional tourism network
- 3.02 Following approval of the Masterplan and building on its work, a housing development brief was commissioned for Flint. The significant footprint of the existing maisonette blocks provides an opportunity to re-build nearly a quarter of the original medieval planned town – with the new houses and streets aligning more sensitively to the original grid pattern. It is intended that the new build provision within the redevelopment will provide between 173 and 180 units dependent upon the final agreed layout. These will be made up of a mix of, apartments and 2 and 3 bedroom houses.
- 3.03 The development brief has now been completed and in April 2013 the Flint Steering Group approved the final draft version, for recommendation to cabinet for approval. Once approved this will form supplementary planning guidance for any schemes which come forward. The plan guides the developer on the density and layout of properties, design features to follow etc. This will allow the council to make sure that the new homes compliment the town and its history. The design brief is attached to this report as Appendix A and B.
- 3.04 **Compulsory Purchase Order**
It is recommended that work commences to gain a Compulsory Purchase Order for the whole of the housing redevelopment site. The advantage of this is that it ensures that the council has clear title for any future redevelopment and it could help with the repurchase of the 5 leaseholder maisonettes should negotiation not be successful.

- 3.05 Approval to use CPO powers does not mean that the Council will issue a CPO, however, it does allow for the flexibility to do so, should it become necessary. In the event that a CPO is sought affected residents would have the opportunity to object. Any objections would be dealt with by way of a Planning Enquiry overseen by a Welsh government Planning Inspector. Given that this process is driven by the Planning System it would be advantageous for the Council to have an approved Planning Permission for the Maisonettes site, which gives the Inspector the opportunity to balance the community benefit from the proposal against the rights of the individual. The Council would be in a strong position to request a CPO under these circumstances, as a clear plan is in place, the values offered are reasonable and there will have been ongoing dialogue with the owners around other forms of support.
- 3.06 Currently the Council is seeking to acquire by agreement land required for the scheme which is owned by third parties. It may be that such efforts are unsuccessful, in which case it would be necessary for the Council to pursue the acquisition of the land by compulsory purchase (by way of a CPO) as that will be the only mechanism by which the Council can be certain that it will be able to take possession of the land when required. As the CPO process can be lengthy, Members' support is sought at this stage to the making of a CPO.
- 3.07 Section 226 91) (a) of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 enables the making of a CPO if the Council thinks that the acquisition of land will facilitate the carrying out of development, re-development or improvement on or in relation to land in the area, improving the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area. That is considered to be the case in relation to the Flint Town Centre Masterplan.
- 3.08 In particular the acquisition of the Order is essential to facilitate:-
- (a) the comprehensive redevelopment and improvement of Flint Town Centre
 - (b) the delivery of a range of new house types, providing a mixed tenure scheme for the Town Centre
 - (c) bringing forward a more diversified housing provision and the re-invigoration of the local housing market supporting the wider regeneration and sustainability of Flint Town Centre
- 3.09 If approval is given to the making of a CPO, it is intended to instigate the process as soon as possible. However, this does not mean that the Council will have to rely on the CPO, but it does allow for the flexibility to do so, should it become necessary.
- 3.10 Whilst the CPO would be made primarily to deal with parcels of land owned by third parties who are unwilling to sell (for whatever reason) it would cover all the land to be the subject of the scheme, including

land owned by the Council. By doing so, any issues or restrictions relating to the title(s) of the land can be overcome.

3.11 Leaseholder negotiations

The Council continues to negotiate with the 5 remaining leaseholders within the Maisonette blocks. Following valuations from the District Valuer (DV) and further valuation by an independent local estate agent, each leaseholder has received an offer. The offers reflect prices for equivalent sized accommodation within the Flint area, and show the Council has been reasonable, taking into account a balance of factors including the value of the homes, costs of security and council tax while blocks remain standing.

3.12 Currently 3 offers have been accepted and this will influence the phasing plan. The remaining 2 leaseholders have rejected the offers made. Officers do not believe there is scope to increase the offer; however, they continue to engage with the owners to offer other non financial support with re-housing in an attempt to reach agreement.

3.13 Clwyd Alyn properties

Clwyd Alyn Housing Association own 7 Maisonettes originally purchased in 2005. (They were keen to partner with the Council in any regeneration scheme). Clwyd Alyn are still very interested in being a partner with the council for the delivery of this current regeneration scheme and have been doing some work with tenants of the maisonettes to develop interest in forming a housing co-operative as part of the new development.

3.14 The council has a number of options to deal with the Clwyd Alyn interest on the site. These include:

1. Purchasing the properties Clwyd Alyn own.

This would provide clear title but would be challenging for the council alongside other competing priorities for the housing capital programme.

2. Asking a developer to purchase the units from Clwyd Alyn.

This could cause delays in getting blocks demolished and could provide title issues for the new development as there would be mixed land ownership

3. Agree a “deal in the round”

The aim of this approach is that there would be no financial outlay for the council in cash terms. This arrangement would involve the council providing land for future developments to an agreed value.

3.15 Option 3 is the recommended options and member support is sought to develop firm proposals for formal approval.

3.16 **The New Development**

The current tenure mix in Flint Town Centre is shown below.

	Social rented	Owner occupied	Private rented
Flint Town Centre	49%	45%	5%
Wider Flint	20%	75%	5%
County as a whole	12%	77%	11%

3.17 The regeneration proposals have, as part of delivering a more vibrant sustainable town, had ambition to enhance the housing offer, providing a number of homes for social rent (between 20-40), and with the remaining (c120- 140) homes for let at affordable and (a small number) market rents with a small number potentially also for sale.

The broad tenure mix being planned is for 40 homes for social rent developed by a RSL and/or the council, 15 homes for Rent to Buy, 105 homes at affordable (LHA) rents and 20 homes at market rents.

3.18 The mix of units has been designed to meet emerging needs for small houses and apartments to help address the impacts of Welfare Reform. Housing for sale will work on the site in later years, (but probably not in the early stages), as the housing development progresses and confidence in the housing market increases, therefore rent to buy is being considered as a tenure that can support owner occupation long term. Also a large for sale development is taking pace at Croes Atti and this will meet a significant amount of the need for home ownership in the local area.

3.19 Affordable rents, although higher than social rents, can allow properties to be developed without public subsidy in the form of Social Housing Grant, and the rents are still fully eligible for housing benefit for those who have limited incomes.

3.20 The development site covers the footprint of the existing maisonette site and could take in other sites in the town centre should these become available.

3.21 **Clwyd Alyn interest**

Officers are considering options for land to be transferred to Clwyd Alyn for c20 homes to be built for social rent on the site. These would be managed on a co-operative model subject to resident support

3.22 **Financial model for delivery**

Council officers have been exploring a range of options for meeting the housing requirements in the Local housing strategy and investigating a range of options for delivering homes for affordable rent. A paper was presented to Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in July 13 describing the work to date and the various models. Independent legal advice has been sought which confirms that each

of the models can be delivered from a legal perspective and each will need to be evaluated scheme by scheme to decide which would be the preferred model. Once a decision on preferred funding model has been made, then tendering to appoint a developer/funder will almost certainly be necessary.

- 3.23 This paper sets out the options for Flint and asks for a steer from Scrutiny Committee on the principles to be applied in arriving at the chosen funding option.
- 3.24 It is important to note that **all options are self financing** as in all cases the council will receive new rental income to service any costs in delivering and managing any homes built.
- 3.25 Appendix C provides a summary of each of the options for ease of consideration. This will be applied to arrive at final proposals once key principles have been agreed.
- 3.26 **Key questions to determine final decision making** (agreeing our principles for this scheme)
- 3.27 **Ownership**
- How important is it that the Council owns all (or part) of the development at the end of the scheme?
- 3.28 **Affordability**
- Does the council want the lowest cost scheme for the Council over the life of the scheme? (That may mean taking on more risk regarding the annual affordability of a scheme?)
 - Does the council want the lowest possible rents for tenants?
- 3.29 **Space standards and design features**
- Do we want to set high end or mid range design standards?
- 3.30 **Risks**
- In any long term financial modelling assumptions must be made. How much tolerance to change in these assumptions, which affect costs, do we want to build into the model?
 - Is the council happy to take the development risk?
- 3.31 **Length of arrangement with partner**
- Schemes range from 5 years upwards to 45 years
 - Is the council happy to enter into 45 year arrangements?
- 3.32 **Simplicity**
- Some models are more complex than others, which will lead to higher costs in administering the scheme.
- Does the council want to focus on the simplest most straight forward models?

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01
- Support the development brief so it can be adopted as supplementary planning guidance
 - Support the use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers if necessary.
 - Seek member support to resolve Clwyd Alyn's interest in 7 maisonettes
 - Seek support for the tenure mix and "key principles" for the scheme which will then form a firm recommendation as to the delivery model for new homes

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 A substantial piece of work to evaluate the financial affordability of each model from a revenue budget perspective has been undertaken, with emphasis being placed on all models needing to prove that they are self financing. This work will now be revisited and refined to take account of discussions Members will have on factors that are key in the process of selecting a financial model (as described in section 4 of this report).
- 5.02 Independent advice is being commissioned to assist Officers in building sensitivity analysis into the financial affordability calculations and to provide guidance on specialist areas including tax, financial reporting and governance which affect each model. This cost will be met from existing budgets.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 Each of the models will provide additional affordable housing and would therefore have a positive anti poverty impact.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 All new affordable housing arising out of these financial models will be built to high standards which would provide a positive environmental impact.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 There are no equality implications arising out of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 There are no personnel implications arising out of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Further consultation will be required with local residents, key stakeholders and local members as the scheme progresses.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Senior Members and Member stakeholders have received a presentation on each of the financial models with an opportunity to evaluate the risks and benefits of each.

11.02 Regular tenant and resident meeting have been held over the last 3 years and these have included meetings to inform the regeneration plan.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix A – Design Brief
Appendix B – Flint Plans
Appendix C – Evaluation of Funding Options

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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FLINT TOWN CENTRE

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF - NEW HOMES - DRAFT APRIL 2013

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Flint Town Centre Spatial Framework
3. Development Brief Area 1. Earl Street
4. Development Brief Area 2. Duke Street
5. Built form and materials
6. Next steps.



Present day aerial view of Flint

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 2011, Flintshire County Council commissioned a DTZ led consortium to develop a regeneration led master plan for the development of Flint Town Centre. The Final Draft Flint Strategy and Master Plan 2021 (Flintshire County Council, February 2012) proposed a range of detailed Action Plans that:

- Strengthen the identity and image of the Town
- Link together the town's key assets into an overall meaningful framework
- Improve gateways and sense of arrival

Page.65

- Build on the town's great history and use that to help shape a new future
- Ensure that key public realm projects link together to bring greater impact
- Improve connectivity, legibility and access to and through the town, particularly for business and visitors.
- Bring a better housing offer into the heart of the town, and in doing so repair the damage caused from earlier planning and development work
- Link closely to the current initiatives such as the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI).

Central to the master plan for change is the demolition of the town's 200 plus maisonettes which since their construction in the early part of the 1970's, have dominated the town. Now failing and no longer fit for purpose the demolition is a once in a generation opportunity to re-imagine, plan and deliver a new town centre for the 21st century.

That chance for change is the subject of this Development Brief, which focuses directly on the residential led regeneration of the town.

Flint started life as a 'planned town', originally built to serve the castle built by Edward I in 1277 as part of his 'Ring of Iron'. The town was set out to the south of the castle in a grid, based around a central cruciform of streets linking to the castle gates and the coastal routes from Chester (a days march away) along the north Wales coast. The town did not have a wall, but a protective earthen and wooden palisade ditch. The outline of this remains visible in the pattern of streets, Duke, Chapel, Earl and Castle Dyke Street which can be traced directly back to the pattern seen in John Speed's 17th century map of the town. Later maps show a growing, changing town, still shaped by the original grid until the development of the railway in the 1840s severed the town from the castle. Then in the 1970's the development of the maisonette blocks and towers with their self-referential orientation, removed most of the original historic fabric.

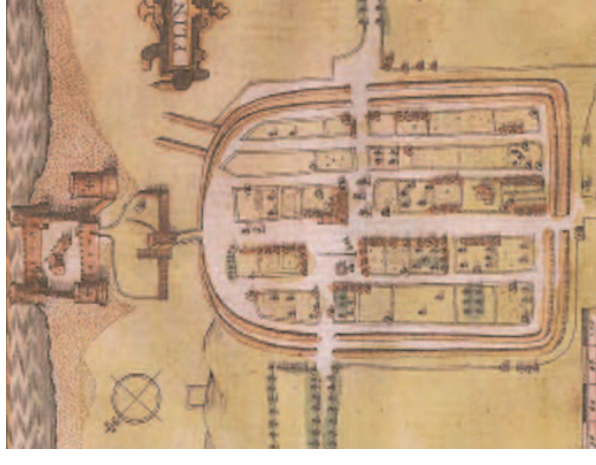
In contrast to the earlier rebuilding of Flint, this opportunity will be based on ideas that are tried and tested. This new plan for change will be less one of experimentation, but rather one in favour of ideas that promote a real sense of place, history and community. Back into Flint will go proper streets, homes and spaces that make sense and have a clear feeling of purpose and intention. This will be a place that will feel and encourage a sense of belonging and neighbourhood. Both the original town centre master plan and the detailed layouts illustrated in this Brief have been subject to detailed and positive local consultation. The master plan process from initial analysis to on the ground proposals are the result of an ambitious and ground breaking council led process, in collaboration with the residents and businesses of the town.

The Purpose of the Development Briefs.

This brief sets out the design requirements and objectives for the new Flint. The aspirations are clear. To design and deliver new residential neighbourhoods in the heart of the town which meet the highest urban design quality.

There are three development areas, which together represent almost a quarter of the original fortified town. Each site has been master planned and 'coded' so that it is clear what the key design parameters are, defined through a series of simple clear diagrams to assist future designers and their clients.

There is also guidance on form, materials and detail, which point towards the right design approach in details for Flint. There are also illustrations, which provide a 'Look and Feel' of what is needed. This development brief sets out what needs to be done. Solutions which fail to meet the design quality objectives will not be acceptable. Emphasis is on what can be done rather than what can't be done. Solutions that exceed expectations and delight in Flint's urban story are required.



John Speed's original town map

2.0 MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES

The core objectives of the Spatial Framework and Indicative Master Plan are set out in the Final Draft Flint Strategy and Master Plan 2021 (Flintshire County Council). It describes many of the key urban design and place making tactics that underpin this brief.

The Spatial Framework identifies the physical and spatial priorities for change across Flint. It highlights the sites with the potential to attract investment, set within a framework of improved connections and linkages. The central opportunity sites are the residential sites described in this brief and these, more than any other sites, have the greatest potential to transform the town.

Underpinning the Spatial Framework are a series of town building and place making tactics inspired and influenced by Flint's original historic structure prior to the development of maisonnettes. These are:

- 1. The original urban grid.**
Flint town centre is set out on a grid using a method little changed since the Romans. The Castle standing guard over the water is the marker from which the town was planned around two central streets set out as a cruciform. The central street is now Castle/Church Street aligned with the castle. The cross route (dividing the town into quarters),



is Chester Road, which marked the original road from Chester in the east. The quarters were then subdivided into smaller linear plots running in parallel with Church and Castle Street. This can still be seen traced out in Feather and Sydney Street.

- 2. Gateways in the town.**
The cruciform centred grid layout defined 3 main entrances into the town, with the fourth one linking directly to the outer gates of the castle.

- 3. The original line of fortification.**
John Speed's map clearly shows the line of defence around the town comprising two lines of earthworks and ditching. Whilst the exact location of these fortifications can no longer be seen, their original line can be traced through the location of Castle Dyke, Duke, Earl and Chapel Streets.

The development Areas.

These development briefs focus on three key areas of the town centre. The first two currently contain maisonette blocks which are being decanted and demolished. The first blocks on Earl Street have already been demolished, and so this will be the first phase of redevelopment.

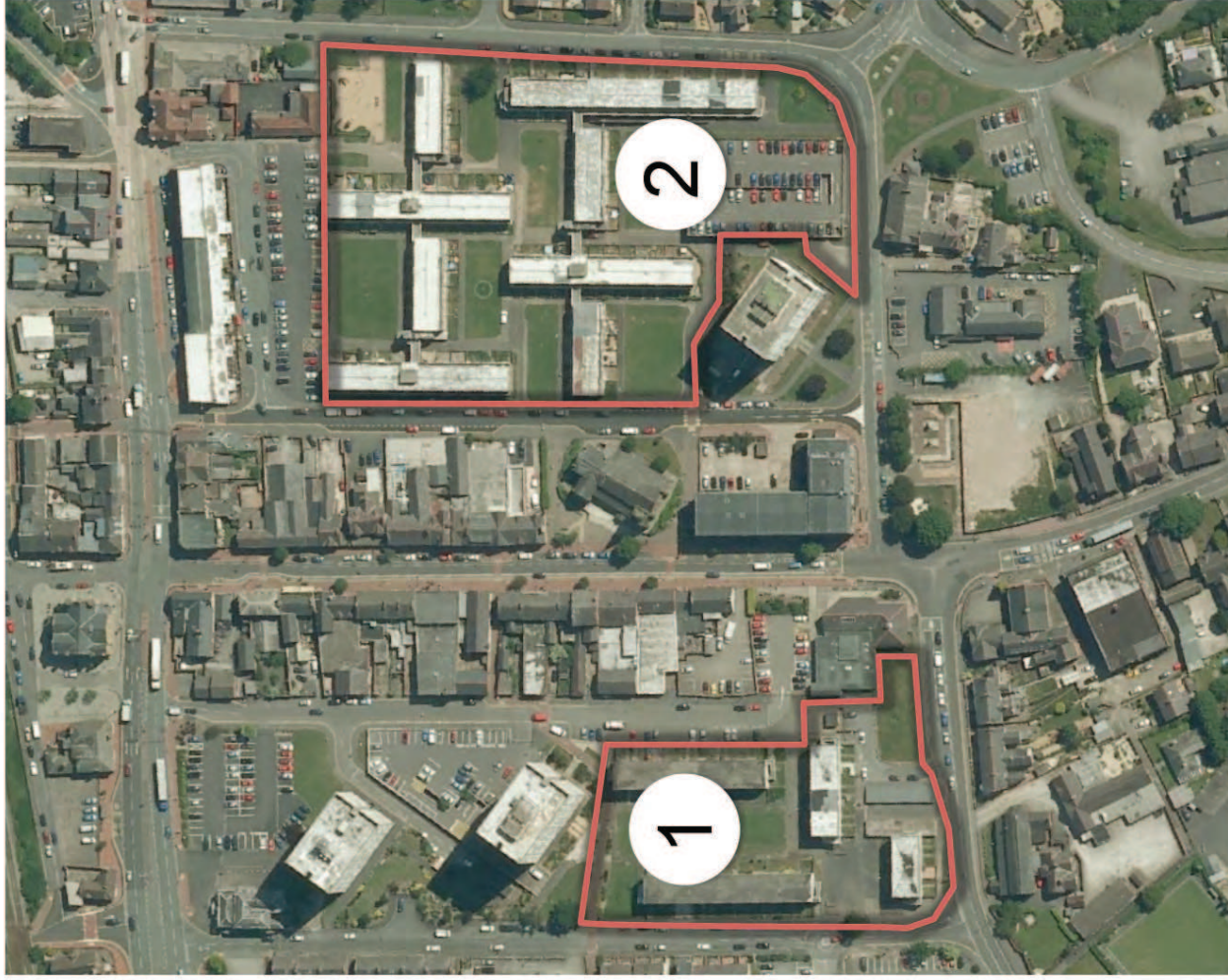
1. Earl Street (phase 1)
2. Duke Street



Area 1 (decanting now well underway)



Area 2



Town centre development areas

3.0 EARL STREET

Overall Intention.

The Earl Street development area is defined by Colehills Street to the west, Earl Street to the north, Church Street to the south and Feather Street to the east.

Masterplan Key:

1. Town Library
2. Improved pedestrian walk
3. Possible development site
4. Allocated parking for residents only.
5. Existing green space retained
6. Improved pavement access on Coleshill Street
7. Residents only internal parking court
8. Proposed Apartment block
9. New roadway from Earl Street
10. Feather Street closed to through traffic
11. Proposed homes
12. Existing pedestrian link extended and improved
13. New green boundary edge

Demolition of the existing maisonettes is already underway, meaning Earl Street will be the first phase of the town centre redevelopment. There are a number of neighbouring opportunities that will need to be taken into account during detailed design. These are:

Town Library.

The master plan incorporates the fenced off green space located between the library and Colehills Street and the small car parking area to the rear of the library.

Parking

There are two car parking areas fronting onto Church Street. Both have been incorporated into the wider master plan but are not subject to these Development Briefs. However, the Brief proposes maintaining and enhancing the key pedestrian route linking Church Street with Earl Street, the Pavilion and Retail Park beyond. Importantly, Feather Street is extended to link with Earl Street for pedestrians and cyclists but no through traffic. This proposal reconnects the original historic town centre grid in a manner similar to Sydney Street.

Residential Uses.

The Earl Street master plan proposes 28 houses and 14 flats providing 42 homes.

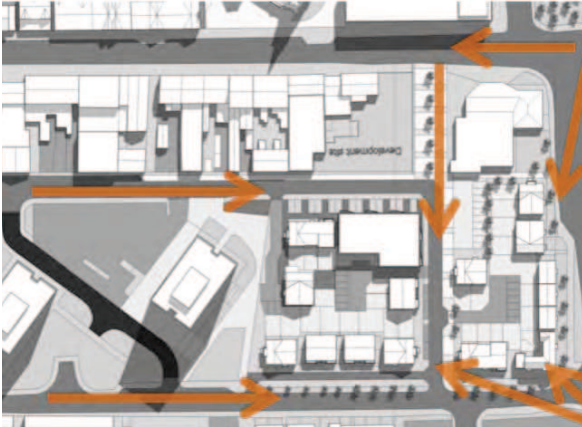
All houses will be linked, semidetached, or limited to short terrace runs of three, to ensure efficient layouts. Each house requires a separate access route from back garden to street. Housing facing onto Chapel Street is double fronted to take advantage of the narrow plot width needed to maintain the pedestrian route to the Pavilion and Retail Park.

Non-residential uses

There are no non-residential uses proposed as part of the new build. However, attention needs to be paid to the setting and function of the library and the opportunity sites provided by the Church Street car parking and garden.



Earl Street Proposed Layout



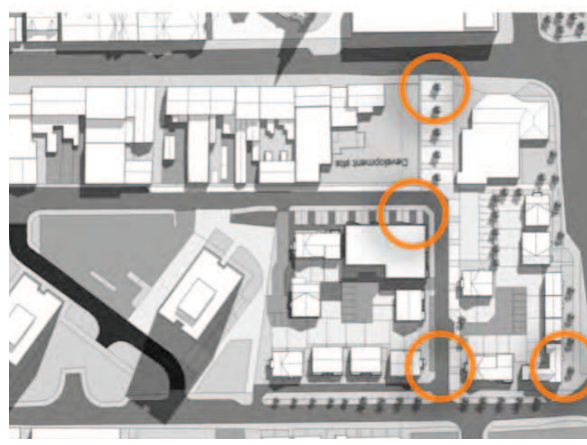
Important Views



Frontage and enclosure



Grid and structure



Key events

Grid and structure

The master plan envisages two distinct development parcels shaped by the re-connection of Feather Street and the pedestrian route. The intention is to bring to Flint proper houses, which overlook the street with careful planned boundaries, defensible space and a clear definition between public and public worlds. This grid, is deliberately urban and civic in character.

Movements and connections.

All roads will need to be designed to local adoptable standards, with a possibility of a 20mph speed limit. Street trees are required to close off views, and provide shelter and green amenity.

parking courts, on-plot drives and street parking. At present town centre parking is free and unrestricted. Consideration needs to be given to the wider town parking strategy (SK Transport) and whether parking in the new streets needs to be controlled and restricted to residents and visitors.

Green amenity.

As with Earl Street the outward facing development is situated behind a green linear area designed to reference the line of original town fortifications. An access lane is located behind the green edge on Earl Street. The current fenced off green area on Chapel Street is partially incorporated into the master plan leaving a smaller area adjacent to the library.

Important views.

There are a number of key views, which the master plan must respond to.

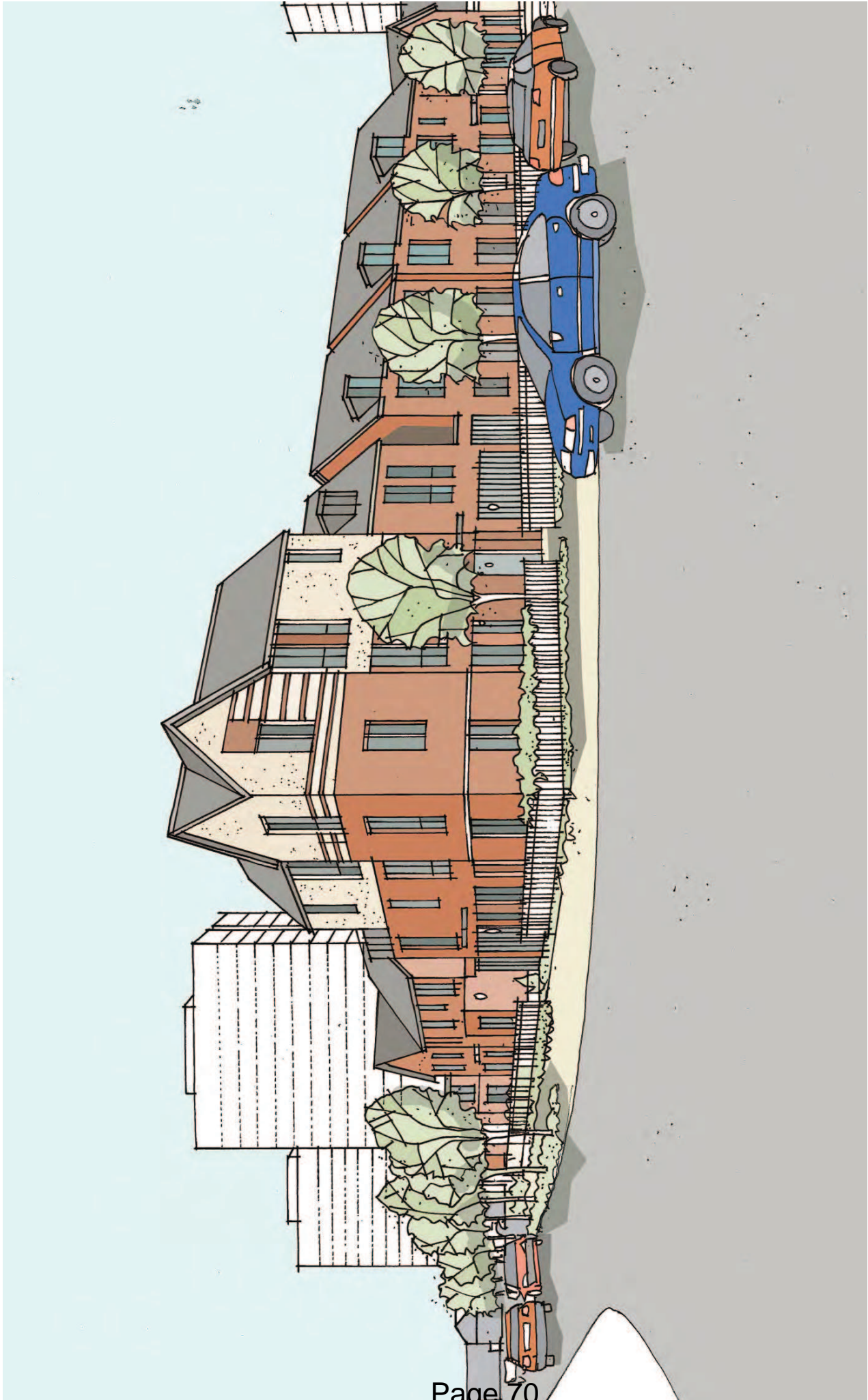
1. From Aber Street on arriving into Flint looking towards the junction of Colehills and Earl Streets.
2. Arriving into Flint from Northrop Road looking south along Colehills Street.
3. Looking west along Earl Street where new frontage needs to define the original fortified boundary of the town.
4. View from Church Street towards the Pavilion and Retail Park.

Parking.

Parking is allocated on a plot-by-plot basis. With no net increase in parking. All parking is at grade, divided between small internal

Waste collection.

A detailed strategy will be required to ensure refuse vehicles are accommodated across the new master plan. Every new home will require a secure access route between the rear garden and the street to enable bins and other equipment to be moved without passing through the interior of the home.





Indicative view of new homes on Earl Street showing new access lane and green (town wall) edge

4.0 DUKE STREET

Overall Intention.

The Duke Street development area is defined by Sydney Street to the north, Chapel Street to the west, and Duke Street to the south and the existing town car park to the west located behind the existing shops on Chester Street.

The intention is to clear the entire site including the decked car park at the Chapel and Duke Street junction. Castle Heights is retained, and subject to possible refurbishment.

The wider Flint Town Centre Master Plan envisages dividing the development area into 4 large plots. A new central street is planned, 'New Swan Lane' named after the original street that once ran across this area, while a new cross street is envisaged connecting Duke Street to the new Market Square, Sydney and Church Street. This 'cruciform' street pattern is important as it brings to Flint something new and fit for purpose but also a link to its original historic street pattern.

Masterplan Key:

1. Church Gate. New lane with pedestrian and cycle link to Sydney Street
2. New Swan Street. New lane linking from Chapel Street
3. New green frontage
4. Castle Heights
5. Proposed new homes.
6. Proposed new apartment block
7. No vehicle access. Pedestrian and cycle access only.
8. Raised highway table at the crossing.
9. New secure play space approximately 500 sqm.
10. Residents only internal parking court
11. Existing town centre parking retained.
12. Shared parking for Castle Heights



Duke Street Proposed Layout

Residential uses.

For the Duke Street area the current master plan proposes 84 houses and 15 apartments providing 99 homes. All houses will be linked semidetached, or limited to short terrace runs of three, to ensure efficient layouts. Each house requires a separate access route from back garden to street.

Non-residential uses.

It is envisaged that a community meeting space and café is provided at the junction of Sydney Street and New Church Gate. This needs to overlook the new market square and be visible from Church Street. Other related projects include the refurbishment and adaptation of Castle Heights into an Extra Care Facility. This is likely to include external transformation of the tower and the introduction of community facilities at ground level with a new entrance on Chapel Street.

Grid and structure

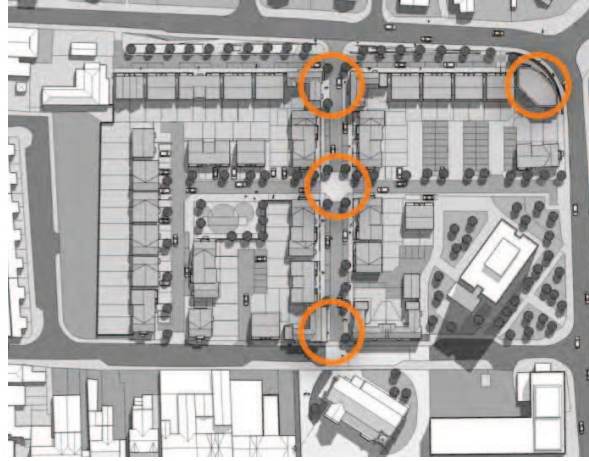
The master plan envisages 4 distinct development plots resulting in a legible, simple street layout lined with homes. The intention is to bring to Flint proper houses, which overlook the street with careful planned boundaries, defensible space and a clear definition between public and public worlds.

Movements and connections.

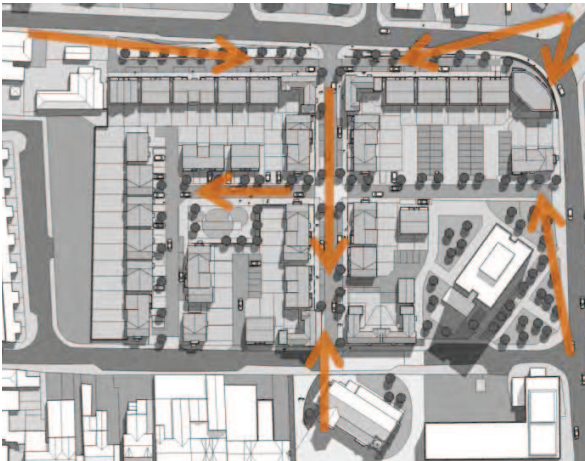
There are two primary streets planned with limited vehicle access, New Swan Street and Church Gate, which form a 'cross' in the heart of the new community. There is



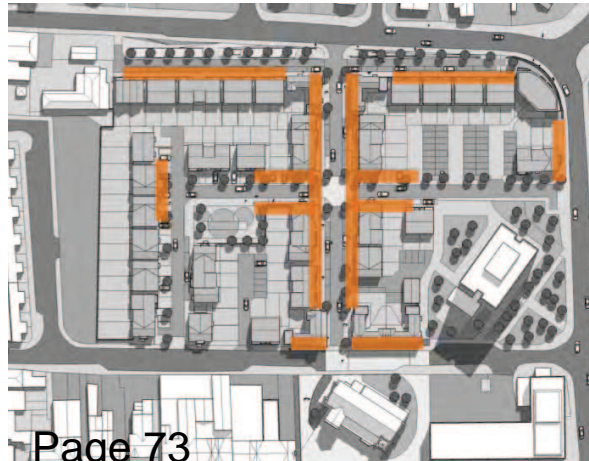
Grid and structure



Key events



Important Views



Frontage and enclosure

a secondary lane planned to serve a new terrace at the eastern end of the layout. The intention is to develop a series of people oriented residential streets, limited to 20mph. A 'raised speed table' is to be provided at the cross. The junctions will also need to be designed to deter through routes and speed. The existing route to the east of Castle Heights is to be retained but subject to redesign to down grade its use to link in with the proposed Castle Heights remodeling. All roads will need to be designed to local adoptable standards. Street trees are required to close off views, and provide shelter and green amenity.

Important views.

There are a number of key views, which the master plan must respond to.

1. Church Gate, which is planned to provide an important cross route but also a view from Duke Street to the east façade of St Mary Flint.
2. The view along Duke Street where new development is designed to mark the edge of the historic town and provide a gateway into the town centre.
3. The junction of Chapel and Duke Streets where a new three storey residential apartment building is proposed to help mark the edge of the original fortified town.
4. From Church Street across the

square towards Sydney Street where new three storey residential blocks help define and enclose the southern side of a refurbished market square.

Parking.

Parking is allocated on a plot-by-plot basis. With no net increase on parking. All parking is at grade, divided between small internal parking courts, on-plot drives and street parking. At present town centre parking is free and unrestricted. Consideration needs to be given to the wider town parking strategy (SK Transport) and whether parking in the new street needs to be controlled and restricted to residents and visitors.

Green amenity.

A new linear green landscape element is planned along Duke Street behind which a new access lane is proposed to serve homes fronting onto the existing street. This green landscape element is designed to reference the original line of the town's fortification. It is envisaged that both New Church Gate and New Swan Street will be tree lined where possible. Every house will have a private secure garden.

Waste collection.

A detailed strategy will be required to ensure refuse vehicles are accommodated across the new master plan. Every new home will require a secure access route between the rear garden and the street to enable bins and other equipment to be moved without passing through the interior of the home.

A purpose designed play area is envisaged at the North – western end of New Swan Street. This space, approximately 500sqm needs to be provided in line with the town's wider play space needs and policies, and as part of a wider strategy, which includes improvements to Swinchaired Walk green space. The new play area will be a 'LEAP' (a local equipped area for play). A secure wall of appropriate height and construction will be required where gardens abutt the play space.

'Natural policing' via overlooking will be required from New Swan Street, and surrounding homes. The play space design and content is to be developed in collaboration with Flintshire Leisure Services



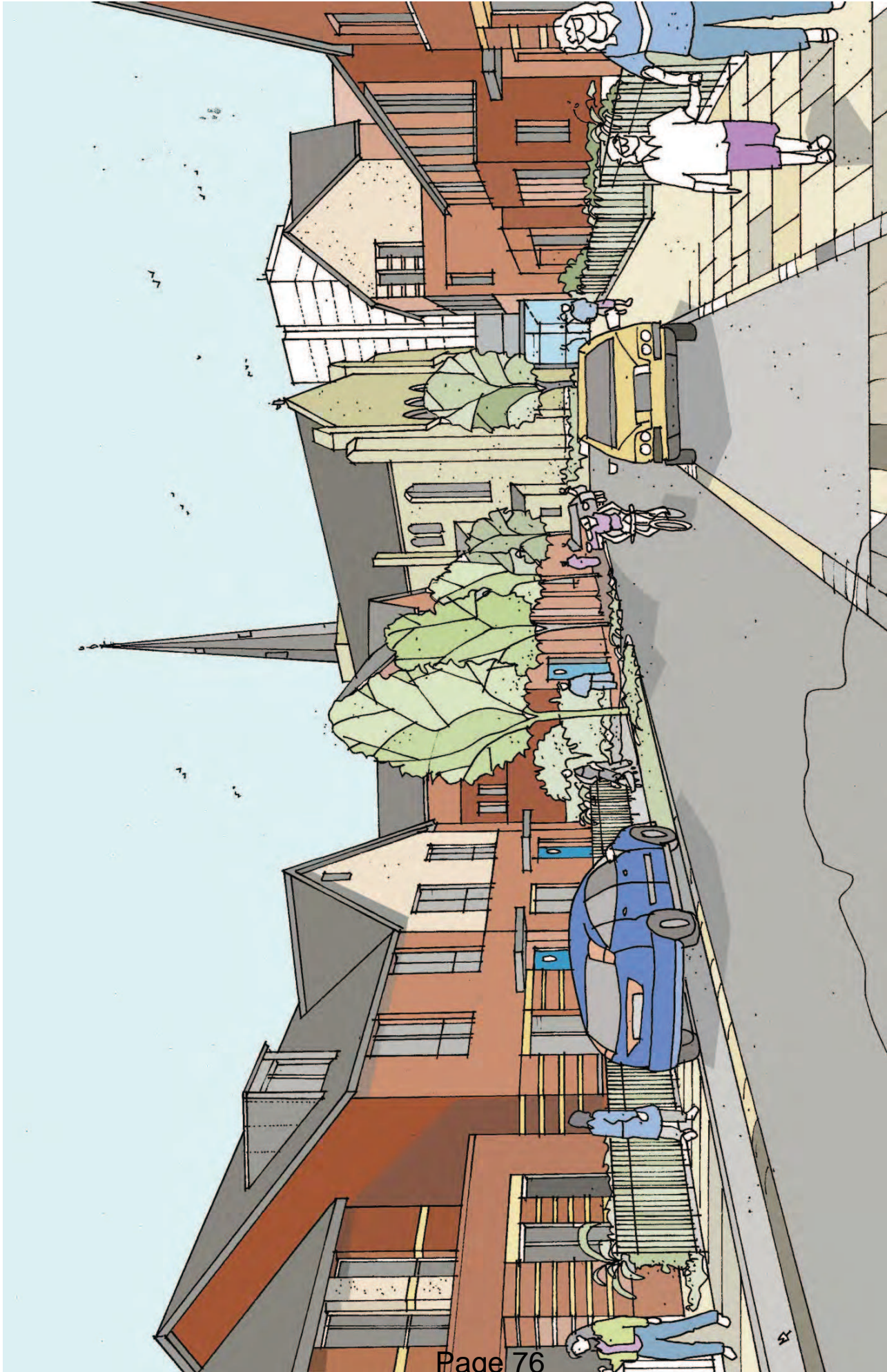
Indicative view of new housing on Duke Street showing entrance to the new Church Gate Street, linking to Market Square



Inspiration images for the new town wall green edge



Indicative view of new apartment building on the corner of Chapel and Duke Street





Indicative view of market square, showing new cafe and entrance into Church Gate



Indicative view of new play space (secure railings removed)

5.0 BUILT FORM AND MATERIALS

Flint House Typologies.

Having established the spatial and physical requirements this section looks at house design in terms of form and materials. It is important that all new homes look, feel and acknowledge Flint and its history. As with the master plan layout, emphasis here is on simplicity, clarity, material quality and attention to detail.

The proposed master plan envisages a number of distinct house forms required to meet key urban design and place making criteria. It is important that the these typologies are followed.

Old Town Boundary

These homes need to be designed to establish the line of the original old town boundary. This is an important part of the new Flint, which through new development establishes its original identity as an ancient fortified town. These homes are semi-detached (seen as villas) which visually connect together through an arched side alley route, giving secure access to the rear gardens and bin stores.

The ground floor has a projecting bay (which could become an external terrace) and together these form a repetitive pattern and

strong frontage to the old town boundary. Ridge Lines are continuous. Houses can project forward or back from each other but not to an excessive extent and as long as the side gateways still connect.

2. Gate House.

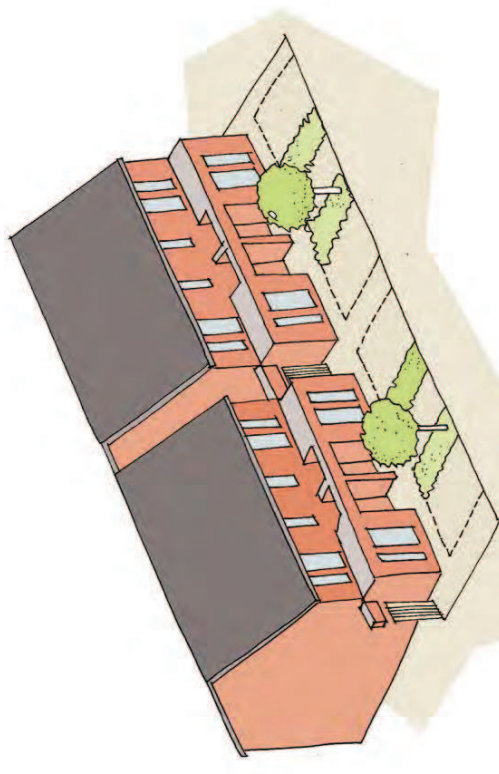
These larger three storey homes are located only at key entrances and gateways to help establish a sense of threshold into the new quarter. Ideally each corner should comprise two houses linked, again to form a semi-detached unit. These homes contain garages so that they can be positioned closer to the pavements and not set behind a private driveway.

3. Cross Roads.

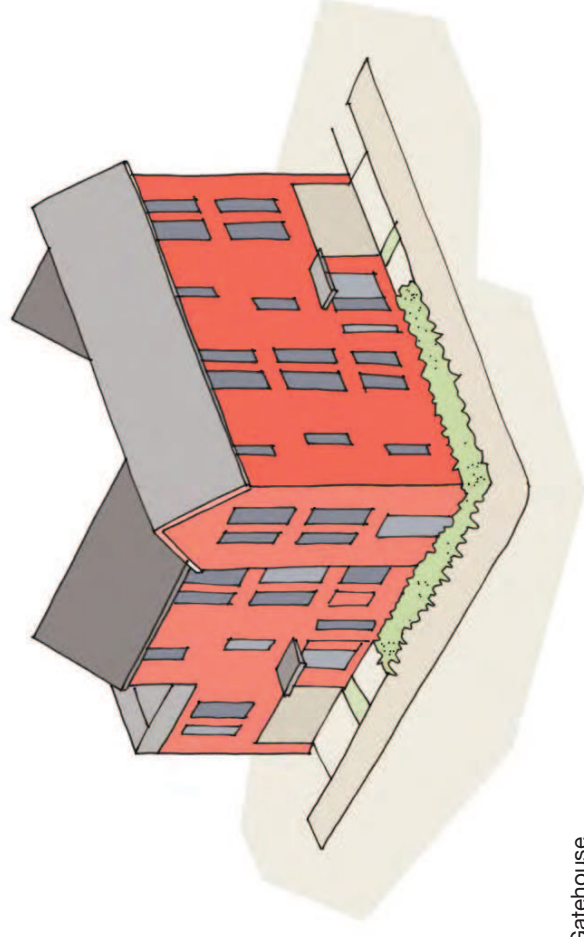
These house are designed to reinforce the character where key streets cross. Importantly the entrances to these houses are located on the return side so that they face onto the crossroads. Blank facades that face onto public streets will not be acceptable.

4. Terrace ends.

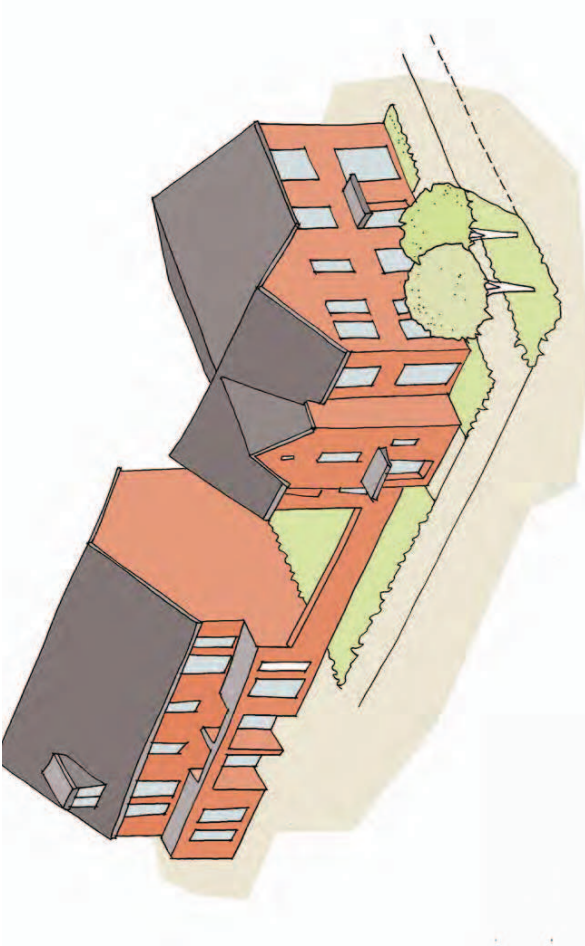
These houses place a strong gable front towards the street. They are specifically required to add emphasis to secondary entrances, some linear views and in particular to end a run of continuous terrace.



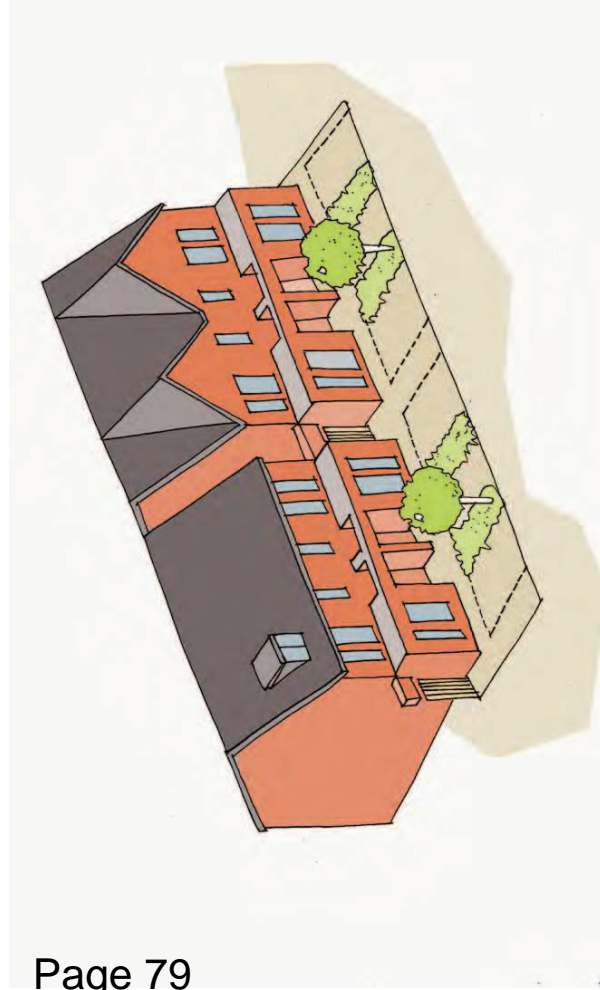
Boundary houses



Gatehouse



Cross Roads



Terrace ends

Form and materials.

From the Mid 19th Century Welsh vernacular housing design was heavily influenced by English house styles, as the railway extended into North Wales. These houses featured simple forms with contrasting brick banding some featuring polychromatic brickwork. The overall brick colour of these houses is a deep orange/ red with yellow brick features. Other materials include render panels and exposed lintels. It is 19th century Flintshire that provides the basis of the design palette for the new domestic architecture.





In summary new homes should reference the following:

1. Houses are rectangular in form with simple gabled roofs with ridges running parallel to the road
2. Return gables to the frontage have a purpose, either to emphasise the important rooms, end a terrace or bring a sense of importance to a junction or street corner.
3. Vertical emphasis is created by rectangular window shape and vertical alignment of windows.
4. Single storey bays are used to address the street and bring repetition and rhythm to key frontages.

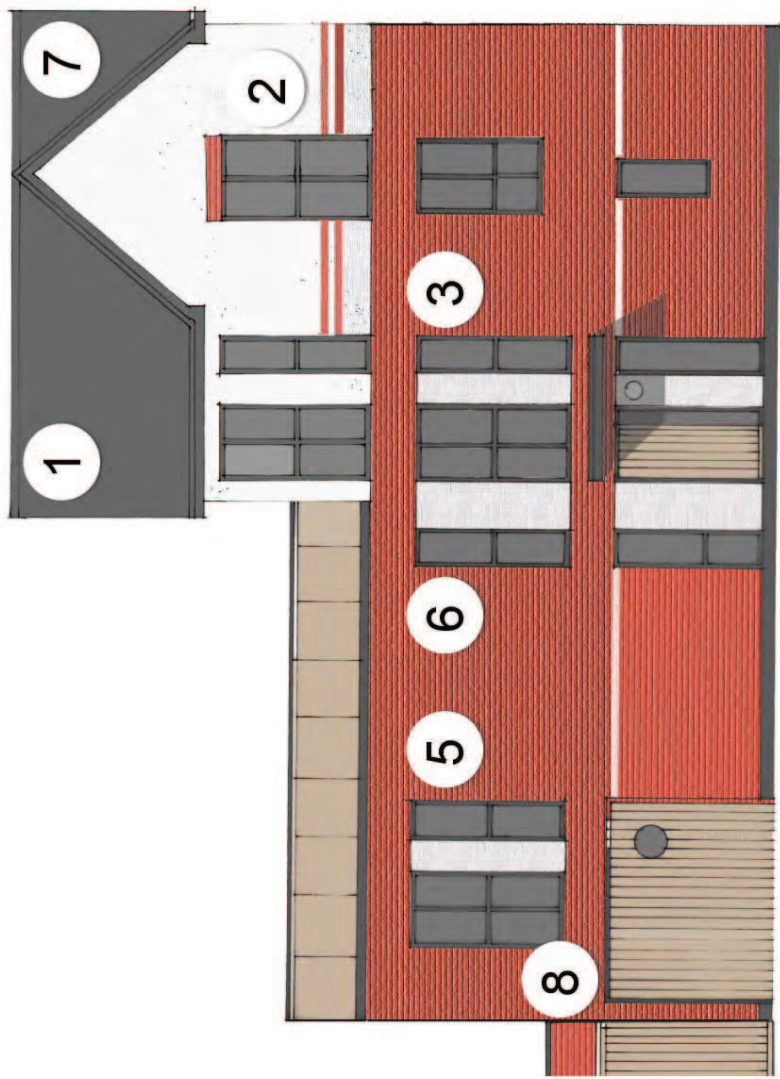
5. The primary material is brick, and is generally an orange red terracotta colour with contrasting buff-yellow detail. (see palette opposite)
6. Fender is used for contrasting infill panels and sometimes for the upper floor elevations.
7. Roofs are steeply pitched and generally clad in slate or darker tile.
8. Houses are set into semi-detached villas allowing private side access.
9. Window heads/lintels are expressed with contrasting material
10. Where the opportunity exists, extra space in the roof is to be encouraged with simple dormer projections









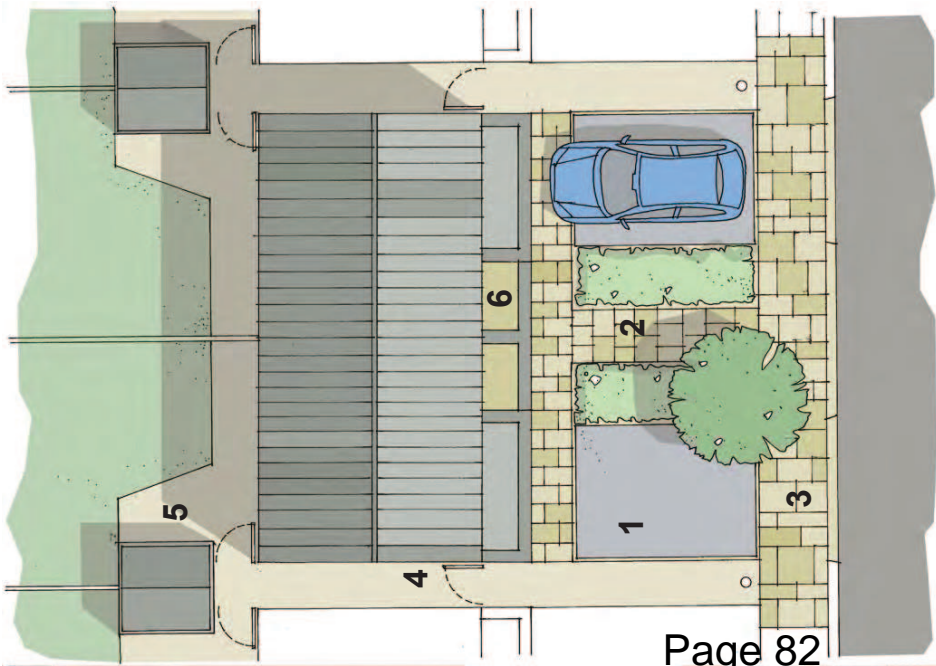


Brickwork will be the principal material, supplemented with render panels contrasting brick banding, and where appropriate polychromatic brickwork particularly on gables. Flintshire is historically the home of Buckley bricks which range from deep purples and reds to warm yellow facings, very similar to London stock.

To create variety across the town, the basic material palette featured here can be swapped and recomposed. So for example, render and brick panels can alternate on the same house type, and with the right polychromatic details and banding, new character can be created based on the same strong overall theme..



-  Buckley Flintshire Castle Red
-  Buckley Jacobean Purple mix
-  Offwhite render framed in panels
-  Buckley Flintshire White
-  Dark grey aluminium PVF coated windows
-  Dark slate roof or similar



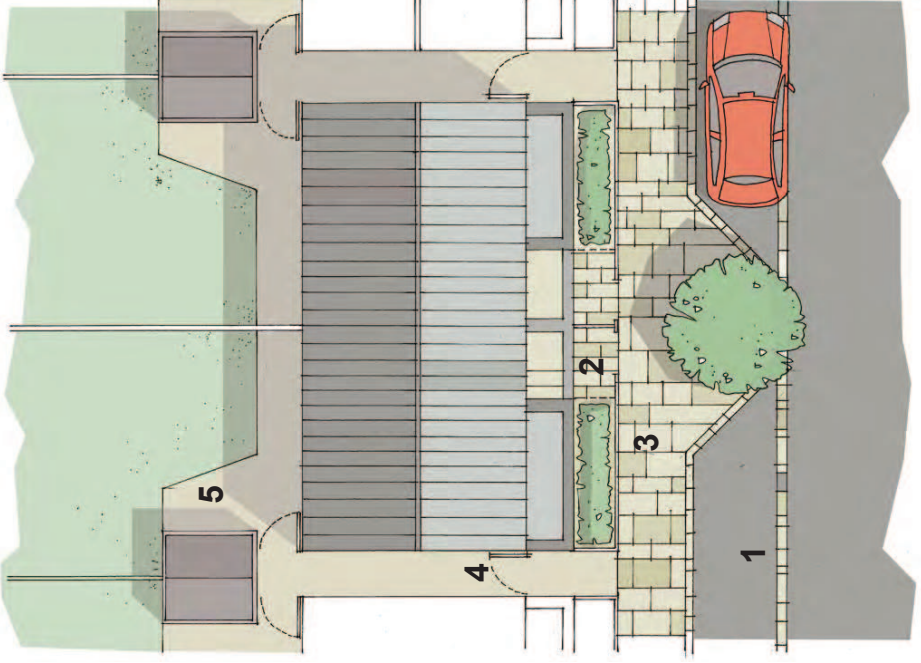
Street Frontages

Different types of house frontages are envisaged. The intention is to provide secure parking either on dedicated drives, small parking courts or on street. Discussion is underway regarding residents parking permits for the streets inside each development area.

Homes facing directly onto the street will have a 1m buffer zone defined by a 1.2m railings.

Street Frontage 1

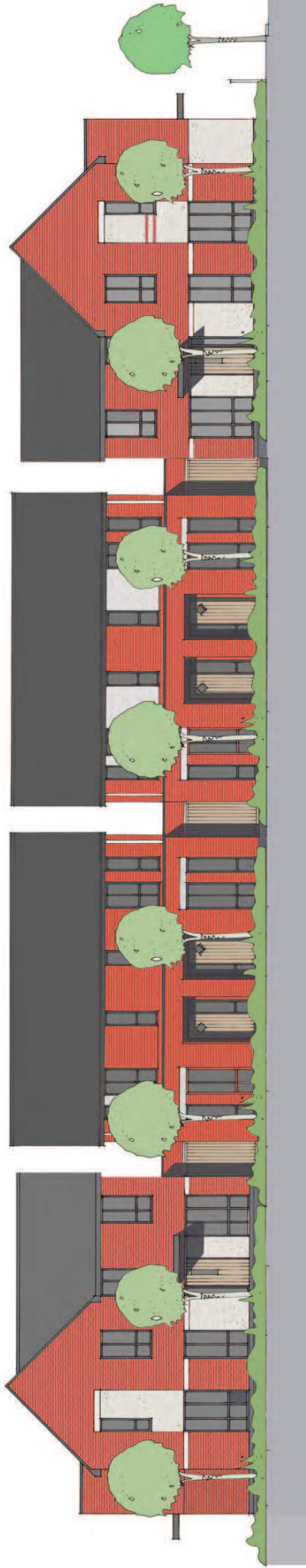
1. Dedicated parking drive
2. Pedestrian entrance and planting
3. Pedestrian pavement
4. Shared private alleyway to gardens
5. Bin store and private gardens



Street Frontage 2.

1. On-street parking area
2. Entrance to houses and 1m secure buffer
3. Pedestrian pavement
4. Shared private alleyway to gardens
5. Bin store and private gardens

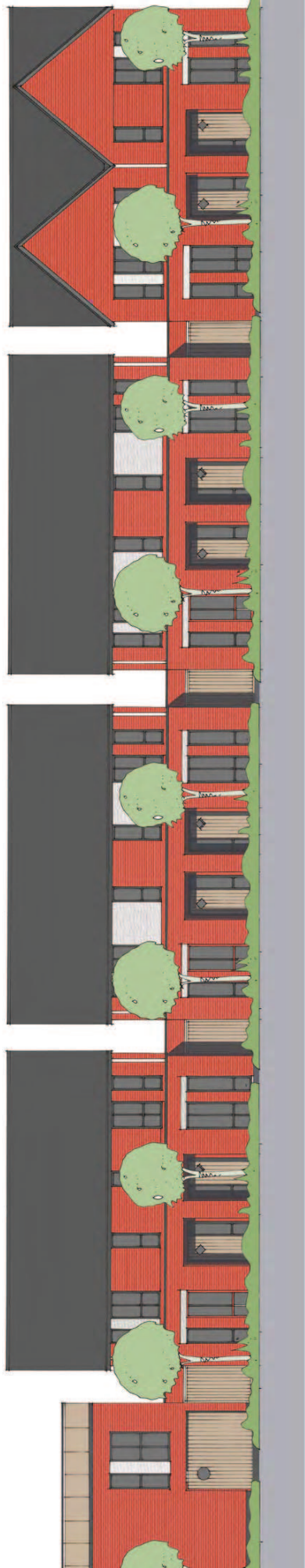


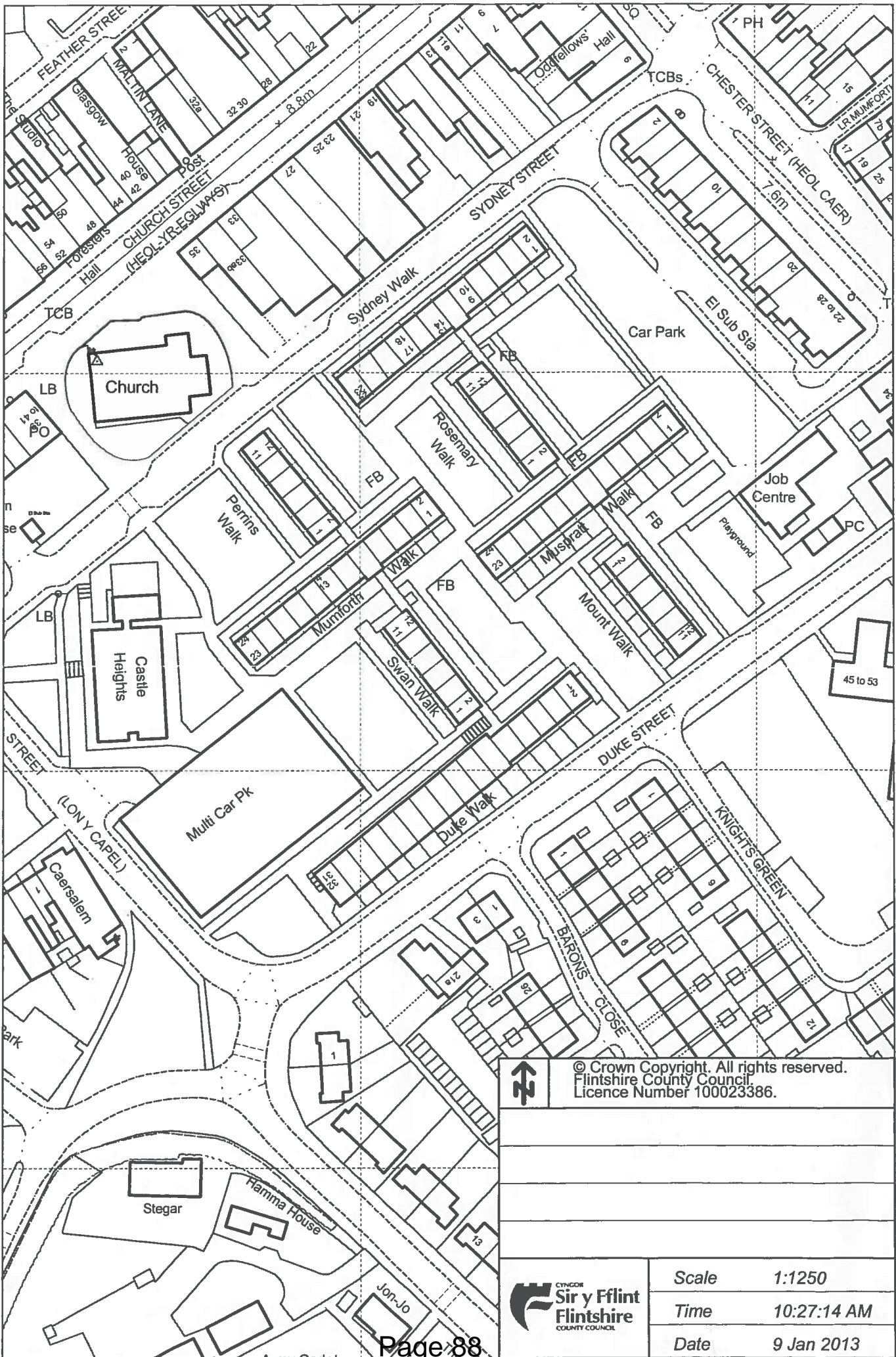


Indicative Street Frontage - Duke Street



Indicative Street Frontage - Earl Street





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Date	9 Jan 2013

Model	Affordability	Risks	Simplicity/limits of model	Certainty of ownership	Contributes to master plan outcomes
HRA borrows and builds	HRA is seeking borrowing ability from WG. This will be capped	Council manages the development and financing of it. Development delays could lead to cost increases. Do we have the skills to manage this?	HRA borrowing capacity is limited Can only develop social rented units so this would limit the ability to change the tenure mix in the town, but it could form a part of the development say 20 units	Council owns at outset	HRA can only be used to build social housing and there is a goal to provide a broader tenure mix in the town centre
Council fund borrows and builds	Council fund has no limits on its ability to borrow s long as it is prudent, sustainable and affordable.	Council manages the development and financing of it. Development delays could lead to cost increases. Council would need to buy in development expertise to deliver the scheme and manage the key risks of development	Scheme is self financing	Council owns at outset	Housing of a range of tenures can be developed in the council fund
Long term lease	Scheme costs more overall as it is being paid for for 45 years	Development risk is not the councils Scheme costs are all agreed up front.	None	Council owns at end of lease	Affordable and market trent can be provided which can support some tenure diversification but

Model	Affordability	Risks	Simplicity/limits of model	Certainty of ownership	Contributes to master plan outcomes
	However rental income more than covers management costs and lease costs	The margin of affordability could come under pressure from changes in RPI/CPI rates that could not have been foreseen due to the length of the scheme			cannot provide social rent or affordable home ownership
Deferred purchase	Council needs to be in a position to buy the property developed in tranches from years 3 to 5	If the council cannot fund at that time the funder reserves the right to sell on to another purchaser but Flintshire continues to manage for up to 20 years.	Price for purchase is fixed at development stage. Overall costs are lower than leasing	It is not certain but possible	Provides affordable home ownership but not and affordable rent units
Joint venture model	Council needs to be able to purchase the property at any time from year 3 onwards	Council is only a small shareholder in the joint venture and the main partner has sufficient share to decide to sell their interest at a time which might not be appropriate for the council to purchase. There is no control over price of properties agreed at the outset.	The model is very complex and involves entering at least 4 different leases. This will add cost and time for the council in managing this relationship.	The council is not guaranteed ownership	

Model	Affordability	Risks	Simplicity/limits of model	Certainty of ownership	Contributes to master plan outcomes
Council sells site to private developer	Capital receipt received by the council for all or part of the site No future investment funds achieved through new rental income (as after borrowing costs paid rents outweigh management costs)	Value of land low due to brown field nature Developer takes full risk on site success No developer interest at current time Development delayed considerably until housing market recovers Development finance could be difficult to access leading to delays Section 106 provision does not meet tenure mix requirements Could lead to loss of community confidence if development delayed	Helps achieve tenure re-balance	The council would have no ownership apart from possibly some gifted units as part of S106 arrangements	Section 106 would be used to deliver affordable housing at up to 30% units. The tenure mix needed requires higher levels of affordable housing for rent and purchase

Some key facts/assumptions

- The scheme would be self funding
- Total development costs for 130 homes circa £12m
- Rents could increase by RPI plus or CPI plus. This can have an impact on affordability for the tenant.
- Quality standards and space standards can vary and would need to be set buy the council at the outset.
- In all models the council would have as a minimum a long term management role

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide an update on the streamlined and corporate approach to performance reporting.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council adopted the Improvement Plan for 2013/14 on 25 June 2013. The Improvement Priorities of the previous Council have been thoroughly reviewed and challenged to streamline and reset them and to be clearer over the impacts and how performance will be measured.

2.02 The Improvement Plan focuses on the priorities which are going to have the most impact during 2013/14. This helps the organisation to concentrate on the things where sustained corporate attention is needed during 2013/14, with the remaining priorities being managed as more routine performance management.

2.03 The introduction of the new style Improvement Plan has presented the opportunity to review and streamline our current reporting arrangements so that they in turn focus and concentrate on the achievement of our priorities and the impacts which they seek to deliver.

2.04 The alignment of the new three year Outcome Agreement (starting in 2013/14) with the Improvement Plan allows for further streamlined reporting as part of the Improvement Plan monitoring.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Future reporting arrangements will include:

1. Monitoring of Improvement Plan activity and progress reported each quarter: This will include progress against the achievement measures, risks and the Outcome Agreement. This will start in October with a single report to Cabinet, followed by quarterly updates. The Improvement Priorities are to be monitored by appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees according to the priority area of interest.

Most of these are straight forward e.g. the Housing priorities will be reported to Housing Overview and Scrutiny; others are more complex e.g. Social Enterprise is led by the Director of Community Services, but will be reported to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the content is mainly regeneration and business related. Appendix 1 is a mapping document showing accountability and reporting lines.

2. Twice annually (at quarters 2 and 4) performance highlight reports will be presented from the Heads of Service: These will be similar to those previously produced for quarterly reporting with a focus on performance exceptions, both good and poor. This ensures that the 'business as usual' is still being monitored and reported against.
- 3.02 The contents of these half yearly Head of Service reports will include:
- Improvement Priorities that do not have an in-year priority
 - Service Plan progress
 - Corporate measures e.g. absence management
 - Reporting against findings from external regulatory bodies e.g. Wales Audit Office, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales or Estyn
 - Improvement Targets
 - National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) – as part of the new Outcome Agreement.
- 3.03 This approach is more streamlined and will remove some of the duplication experienced with the previous approach, e.g. separate Improvement Plan and risk register reporting.
- 3.04 The first full Improvement Plan progress report will be presented to Cabinet's October meeting.
- 3.05 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive this report and will be briefed on the changing arrangements.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 Members support and help develop the new approach to performance reporting.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 There are no specific financial implications for this report, however the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan is aligned to resource the priorities of the Improvement Plan.

5.02 In addition, the alignment of the Outcome Agreement to the Improvement Plan may have financial implications. These will be detailed in a future report once the Outcome Agreement is more fully developed.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 There are no specific anti poverty implications for this report, however poverty is a priority within the Improvement Plan 2013/14.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 There are no specific environmental implications for this report, however the environment is a priority within the Improvement Plan 2013/14.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 There are no equalities implications for this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 There are no personnel implications for this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will receive this report as part of their September forward work programme which explains the new approach to performance reporting.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Corporate Management Team and the Performance Leads from across the Authority have contributed to help shape the new approach to reporting. Cabinet members have been consulted. Wales Audit Office has been advised.

11.02 Informal Cabinet received a copy of this report 3 September 2013.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Improvement Priorities Mapping Document

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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Council Priorities - Accountability Mapping

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Housing	Director of Community Services	Cabinet Member for Housing	Extra Care Housing	Helping more people to live independently and well at home	Head of Housing	Housing
			Modern, Efficient and Adapted Homes	Improving the choice and quality of local housing		
			Achieve the Wales Housing Quality Standard	Improving quality of life for our tenants through improved housing		

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Living Well	Director of Community Services	Cabinet Member for Social Services	Independent Living	Improving people's quality of life	Head of Adult Social Services / Head of Children's Social Services	Social & Health
			Integrated Community Social and Health Services	Helping more people to live independently and well at home	Head of Adult Services	

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Economy and Enterprise	Director of Environment	Council Leader	Business Sector Growth in Deeside	Creating jobs and growing the local economy	Head of Regeneration	Environment
			Town and Rural Regeneration	Making local communities viable		
	Director of Community Services		Social Enterprise	Supporting and creating new forms of local business	Head of Regeneration	Environment

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Skills and Learning	Director of Lifelong Learning	Cabinet Member for Education	Modernised and High Performing Education	Improving standards in schools to get the best learner outcomes	Primary, Secondary and Inclusion Lead Officers	Lifelong Learning
			Places of Modernised Learning	Improving places of learning to get the best learner outcomes	Head of Development & Resources (LLL)	Lifelong Learning
		Council Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance	Apprenticeships and Training	Meeting the skills and employment needs of local employers	Director of Lifelong Learning / Head of Regeneration	Lifelong Learning / Environment

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Safe Communities	Chief Executive / Director of Environment	Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Waste & Recycling	Community Safety	Keeping people and communities safe	Head of Public Protection	Community Profile and Partnerships
		Cabinet Member for Environment	Traffic and Road Management	Improving road safety	Head of Assets and Transportation	Environment

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Poverty	Director of Community Services	Cabinet Members for Social Services / Housing / Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance	Welfare Reform	Protecting people from poverty	Head of Finance / Head of Housing	Housing / Corporate Resources
			Fuel Poverty		Head of Housing	Housing

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Environment	Director of Environment	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Environment / Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Waste & Recycling	Transport Infrastructure and Services	People being able to access employment, local services and facilities	Head of Assets and Transportation	Environment
			Carbon Control and Reduction	Reducing our carbon impact on the natural environment		

Council Priority	Lead Accountability	Portfolio Holder	Sub-Priority	Impact	Lead Accountability	O&S Scrutiny Committee
Modern and Efficient Council	Chief Executive	Cabinet Member for Corporate	Organisational Change	Managing services well to achieve our priorities	Chief Executive / Head of ICT & Customer Services / Head of Housing	Corporate Resources
		Cabinet Member of Finance	Matching Resources to Priorities	Protecting local front-line public services through the best use of our resources	Chief Executive / Head of Finance	
			Achieving Efficiency Targets			
		Cabinet Member for Corporate	Procurement Strategy	Making our money go further through smart procurement	Head of ICT & Customer Services	
			Asset Strategy	Having the right buildings in the right places for the right uses	Head of Assets and Transportation	
			Access to Council Services	Improving Customer Services	Head of ICT & Customer Services	
			Single Status	Achieving a fair and affordable pay and grading structure	Head of HR and OD	

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER, 2013**

REPORT BY: **HOUSING AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR**

SUBJECT: **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Directors. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 N/A

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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CURRENT FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Scrutiny Focus	Responsible / Contact Officer	Submission Deadline
16 October 2013 Meeting to be held at Flintshire Connects, Holywell	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Quarter 1 performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	8 October 2013
	Welfare Reform	To consider the impact that Welfare Reform is having on the Council, Council tenants and other residents in Flintshire and work the Council is undertaking to mitigate the impact as far as possible.	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	
	HRA Subsidy	To consider the impact of the planned changes to the HRA Subsidy System.	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	
	Improvement Plan	To consider the Housing Improvement Plan.	Service Improvement	Head of Housing	
20 November 2013	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q2 performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	12 November 2013

	SARTH	To consider final proposals to develop a regional Housing register and allocations policy.	Service Improvement	Head of Housing	
	Draft Asset Management Strategy	To consider stock investment and proposals to provide high quality sustainable housing stock to meet WHQS.	Service Improvement	Head of Housing	
	Tenant satisfaction survey results and action plan	To consider the tenant satisfaction survey results and benchmark them with the last independent survey and agree an action plan to address any issues identified.	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	
8 January 2014	Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management	To consider progress in delivering the revised Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	30 December 2013
	Sheltered Housing Improvement Project	To consider progress following the review of sheltered accommodation	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	

<p>5 February 2014</p>	<p>Collaborative Working within Housing Services</p>	<p>To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives</p>	<p>Service Delivery</p>	<p>Head of Housing</p>	<p>28 January 2014</p>
<p>5 March 2014</p>	<p>Quarterly Performance Reporting</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Renewal</p> <p>Universal Credit Implementation Update</p>	<p>To consider Q3 performance outturns for improvement targets</p> <p>To consider progress on the delivery of Flintshire's first Renewal Area, general service developments and county wide projects</p> <p>To receive a report on the implementation of Universal Credit</p>	<p>Performance Monitoring</p> <p>Performance Monitoring</p> <p>Service Delivery</p>	<p>Director of Community Services</p> <p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>	<p>26 February 2014</p>
<p>16 April 2014</p>	<p>Update on the Repairs and Maintenance Service</p> <p>Welfare Reform</p>	<p>To monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include void management.</p> <p>To consider the impact that Welfare Reform is having on the Council, Council tenants and other residents in Flintshire and work the Council is undertaking to manage and mitigate the impact as far as possible.</p>	<p>Performance Monitoring</p> <p>Service Delivery</p>	<p>Head of Housing</p> <p>Head of Housing</p>	<p>8 April 2014</p>

21 May 2014					13 May 2014
10 June 2014	Quarterly Performance Reporting	To consider Q4/Year End performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	3 June, 2014

Joint meeting with the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – date to be confirmed

- Empty Homes
- Adopted/Un-adopted land and review of garage sites

Joint meeting with the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee – December, 2013 (possible site visit to Lllys Jasmine)

- Disabled Facilities Grants – and the use of removable 1 bedroom/bathroom pods
- Supporting People
- Telecare
- Extra Care

REGULAR ITEMS

Month	Item	Purpose of Report	Responsible / Contact Officer
Quarterly / Annual	Performance Reporting	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Director of Community
Six monthly	Update on Repairs and Improvements	To enable Members to monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include void management.	Head of Housing
Quarterly	Sheltered Housing Improvement Project	To receive progress with the review on sheltered accommodation.	Head of Housing
Six monthly	Private Sector Housing Renewal	To consider progress on the delivery of Flintshire's first Renewal Area, general service development and county wide projects.	Head of Housing
Quarterly	Collaborative Working within Housing Services	To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives.	Head of Housing

STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF RISKS AND CHALLENGES
TOPICS ALLOCATED TO OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 - COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Category	Risk Reference	Title	Committee
Strategic Partnerships	CL04	Affordable Housing	Housing

SECTION 2 - COUNCIL DELIVERY

Category	Risk Reference	Title	Committee
Environment	CD08	Shotton and Deeside Renewal Area	Housing
Housing	CD12a	Housing Strategy	C&H
	CD12b	Housing Management	C&H
	CD12c	Housing Repairs & Maintenance	C&H
	CD12d	Homelessness	C&H
	CD12e	Sheltered Housing	Housing
	CD14	Housing Ballot	C&H
	CD19	Gypsies and Travellers	C&H
Social Care	CD26	Disabled Facilities Grants	S&H and Housing (joint meetings)