

Appendix **A** Renewal Policy consultation summary

Following presentation of the draft Renewal Policy to Overview and Scrutiny in October 2011, the draft policy was consulted upon for a 14 week period to February 2012.

The following stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft policy;

- All Central Bedfordshire Council Members – through information/invitation in Members newsletter.
- All Parish Councils in Central Bedfordshire. An initial invitation was followed by a reminder in early February 2012.
- Warm Homes Healthy People scheme partners (including Disability resource Centre, Age UK, Older Persons Reference Group, and NHS colleagues.
- Presentation to Landlords' Forum.
- Inclusion on Central Bedfordshire Council website consultation pages.
- Presentation to Healthy Communities and older People Partnership Board.
- Internally to Central Bedfordshire Council Officers through Be Inspired, Connect and report consultation process.

The responses from consultation were small in number but were generally supportive of the draft policy. The responses are summarised below;

1. Popularity of recycling assistance through loans

Question 1: Is it right to recycle the assistance through loans?

Response	Number of responses
Strongly agree	1
Agree	3
Neither agree or disagree	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

The Town and Parish Council respondent agreed that it is right to recycle the assistance to loans. The other four responses were from owner occupiers.

Question 2: If you disagree or strongly disagree with this approach please explain why?

No responses.

2. Priorities

Question 3 - As resources are finite we have identified seven priorities in case we have to make difficult decisions on how the funding is allocated. The priorities are listed below and are in order of priority with A being the highest:

A - The safety and security of older persons and other vulnerable groups, living in their home,

B - Reducing cases of fuel poverty,

C - Reduction of category 1 hazards, (with associated health related benefits) & major adaptations for people with disabilities,

D - Reducing the number of non decent homes, primarily with loan assistance that can be recycled

E - Reduction of empty homes,

F - The improvement in the thermal efficiency of the housing stock,

G - The maximising of opportunities for external funding of all types for the benefit of meeting the above priorities.

Do you think we have prioritised the above in the right order?

Yes – 3

Age UK commented “I agree with the priority setting with vulnerable people etc at the top. The list seems quite logical and sensible.”

No - 3

Question 4: If you answered no, please explain why.

- a) I would reverse B and C because the health and safety of people is more important than their financial circumstances.
- b) Cranfield Parish Council considers that E and F are most important after A.
- c) Not sure that every empty home owner can get a grant, it may encourage people to leave homes empty

In response to a) above – Fuel Poverty does have a detrimental affect on Health and Safety, which is why it is second highest priority.

In response to b) above, addressing fuel poverty will also improve thermal efficiency.

In response to c) above, the Empty Homes Loan assistance does include conditions for eligibility.

3. Effectiveness of policy

Question 5: Do you think the policy deals with the poor housing conditions that affect the most vulnerable households in Central Bedfordshire?

Yes - 6

No – 0

Question 6: If you answered no, please explain why?

No responses.

Question 7: In the policy we have listed the different types of assistance that could support people to live in decent and suitable properties for their needs (see page 16 and 20 of the policy for the definitions). In your opinion, how would you rate the effectiveness of the following forms of assistance in supporting vulnerable people to live in decent and suitable properties for their needs?

	Very effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very ineffective
Safety, Security and Emergency Repair Grant	2	3		
Home Improvement Loan Assistance		5		
Affordable Warmth Assistance		5		
Empty Homes Loan Assistance		4	1	
Home Loan Support Assistance		3	2	
Relocation Assistance		4		
Disabled Facilities Grant (mandatory)		5		
Disabled Facilities Grant (discretionary top up loan assistance)		5		

Question 8: If you answered ineffective or very ineffective above please explain why.
 not sure this would work [home loan support assistance]
 no good spending money on an empty home if still empty afterwards.

4. Other comments

Question 9: Are there other forms of assistance that should be considered? If so please explain what type and why.

Not aware
 None identified
 main problems appear to be covered

Question 10: Do you have any other comments to add on the draft policy?

No
 No

In respect of the initiative (Relation assistance), to publicise the fact that if people downsized it would free up larger homes for families - a general point on this is that we must always remain focused on the individuals. Certainly by trying to move an older person to a small flat from their family home which they may have been living in for some forty or so years, could have a serious impact on their life. It is not just about moving and making room but a whole lifetime spent in a certain place and the uprooting and stress this can cause could potentially be very detrimental to a person's health. There always needs to be a balance in this respect.

5. About the respondents

Question 11: Type of respondent

	Number of respondents
Landlord of private sector housing	0
Community/ Voluntary group	1
Town or Parish Council	1
Central Bedfordshire Council officer	0
Officer from other public sector organisation	0
Tenant of private sector housing (i.e. not social housing)	0
Owner occupier	4

Question 12: What is your postcode? (Transferred in to towns below)

Leighton Buzzard
 Heath and Reach
 Cranfield
 Stanbridge
 Dunstable
 Bedford based Community Group

Question 13: Gender

Two respondents were male, two female.

Question 14: Age

	Number of respondents
19 and under	
20-29 yrs	
30-44 yrs	1
45-59 yrs	
60-64 yrs	1
65-74 yrs	1
75+	1

Question 15: Do you consider yourself to be disabled? Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is considered to have a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a sustained and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Yes - 1

No – 3

Question 16: Ethnicity

	Number of respondents
White	4
Asian or Asian British	0
Black or Black British	0
Chinese	0
Mixed	0
Other Ethnic group	0