

Full Council – 18 January 2023

Written question from Cllr Nick Stuart to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Digital Transformation, Housing, Homelessness and Poverty

Will the Council provide details of the number and type of properties for rent delivered by the Council in 2022 directly, and in association with outside organisations, and the current plans for 2023.

Noting the Council proposed prefabs as an immediate solution to the housing crisis how many of those have been built?

Response

It should be noted that for a council to be in a position to deliver new homes it takes substantial planning and pre-development work which takes time to put in place. This has been the emerging focus for delivering housing since the Alliance came into administration.

Taking this into consideration, the number and type of properties for rent delivered by the Council in 2022 directly is as follows;

- The Council purchased 4 x 1 bed flats in 2022 and 1 x 1 bed flat in 2023 nearing completion. The 5 flats will remain in Council ownership for single homeless individuals or couples to rent. Grant from DLUHC via the Rough Sleepers Accommodation Grant and our Section 106 monies for “affordable homes” via the planning system was the funding source.

And in association with outside organisations (including plans for 2023);

- The Council has grant funded Ryde Aspire grant funded the development of 5 x 1 bed flats in Ryde High Street above an existing building and completed the legal transactions through the Community-Led Housing Grant. These flats are currently in development and will complete next financial year 2023-2024.

The Council has also been working with Vectis Housing Association for several years to deliver a mixed-use site at Branstone Farm by providing the land, securing grants, and supporting the planning process and developing the combined infrastructure to the site.

The housing provided is 42 new homes of which 17 are 2-bed, 23 are 3-bed and 2 are 4-bed for both affordable rent and shared ownership/part rent. 16 new homes have been completed to date with the remaining 26 to be completed in the next financial year 2023-24.

Prefabs

Plans for direct delivery of modular (prefab) homes has been put on hold due to the financial position of the council as they require significant cash backed subsidy which is no longer available.

A loan facility of £40m was agreed in early 2022 to provide new homes and this would require the identification of sites and projects that are viable and do not worsen the Council's financial position. To date no specific sites have been confirmed.

There are a number of grant funded projects which will deliver more "affordable" housing in future years such as Levelling Up Fund, Brownfield Land Release Fund, and One Public Estate. We are also working closely with Island Housing Associations in order to support delivery of new homes.