

London's Housing Stock

POLICY 3.14 EXISTING HOUSING

Strategic

- A The Mayor will, and boroughs and other stakeholders should, support the maintenance and enhancement of the condition and quality of London's existing homes.

Planning decisions and LDF preparation

- B Loss of housing, including affordable housing, should be resisted unless the housing is replaced at existing or higher densities with at least equivalent floorspace.
- C This policy includes the loss of hostels, staff accommodation and shared accommodation that meet an identified housing need, unless the existing floorspace is satisfactorily re-provided to an equivalent or better standard. The loss of housing to short-term provision (lettings less than 90 days) should also be resisted.
- D Boroughs should promote efficient use of the existing stock by reducing the number of vacant, unfit and unsatisfactory dwellings, including through setting and monitoring targets for bringing properties back into use. In particular, boroughs should prioritise long-term empty homes, derelict empty homes and listed buildings to be brought back into residential use.

- 3.79 Maintaining and improving the quality and condition of London's stock of 3.1 million homes is a continuing concern to individual Londoners and especially so for some groups. In 2003, 36 per cent of homes across all tenures failed to meet Government's broad Decent Homes Standard, slightly more

than in the country as a whole, and in 2006 180,000 dwellings or six per cent of the stock did not meet the more stringent fitness standard providing 'acceptable places to live'⁴⁰. The planning system must support the largely managerial and investment based initiatives to target this issue set out in the London Housing Strategy.

- 3.80 Retrofitting of the existing stock to address climate change adaptation and mitigation will be particularly important in this (Policy 5.4). Account should also be taken of Policy 3.8 to provide good quality new accommodation to meet the needs of vulnerable groups for supported housing. In some circumstances this will in turn help support broader measures set out in the London Housing Strategy to reduce under-occupation and make larger homes available for families.
- 3.81 To address London's housing needs and sustain its neighbourhoods, existing housing should be retained where possible and appropriate, except where there are acceptable plans for its replacement. Short term lettings especially for holiday lets, can result in a serious loss of housing, and should be resisted. Such lettings require specific planning consent under the Greater London Council (General Powers) Acts 1973 and 1983.
- 3.82 Estate renewal should take into account the regeneration benefits to the local community, the proportion of affordable housing in the surrounding area (see Policy 3.19), and the amount of affordable housing intended to be provided elsewhere in the borough. Where redevelopment of affordable housing is proposed, it should not be permitted unless it is replaced by better quality accommodation, providing at least an equivalent floorspace of affordable housing.