

John Clark – Housing Services Manager, Places for People

(Not able to attend meeting in person, answers provided below).

- 1) What percentage of the stock do Places For People tenants under occupy in this district?

We do not have specific data for Sevenoaks available on under occupancy at this time as we have been working on our strategy nationally rather than getting into district areas at this stage. However, in our South East area (including Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex, Berkshire, Hampshire and Isle of Wight) our under occupancy rate for 2 beds is 66%. This figure seems high but is skewed as it includes our Seaside and Country Homes Properties across the region which is a scheme to free up family homes in London.

- 2) In your opinion, what are the main solutions to reducing under occupation?

There is no easy answer to tackling under occupation however tools that we use or consider using are; promoting HomeSwapper; undertaking affordability checks for new customers or existing if tenancies change, highlighting the upcoming proposals in the welfare reform that may affect tenancies where there is currently under occupation.

- 3) Do you have any incentives in place to reduce under occupation?

No, we do not currently have incentives in place to tackle under occupation.

Additional comments:

- Some rooms that are under occupied may be used by tenants to work from home and we try not to penalise these groups.
- Filling all rooms in properties in areas may cause communities to become overcrowded and unbalanced (e.g. services such as dentists, doctors).