

Woughton Community Council

Regeneration policy 2021

Introduction / Overarching aims

Estate improvement is vital to the Woughton area. The phrase 'improvement' is preferred to 'regeneration', which can conjure up negative images and is often seen as being forced on unwilling communities.

Estate improvement must be led by and championed by local communities both at estate level and often at a much more local level (e.g. street). Of course professional support and advocacy can greatly assist in this approach.

Policy

This approach does not mean that everyone's individual wishes can be catered for. There will be occasions when majority views will hold sway. Whenever there is a difference of opinion when a majority view needs to be obtained this will be via a referendum with every elector or those who would be eligible if the voting age were 16 shall be entitled to a single vote.

Woughton Community Council will support resident associations and local communities throughout the process. We demand a strong say in discussions to both.

We will be active in ensuring that any improvement plans adhere to the policies in the approved Neighbourhood Plan adopted by Woughton Community residents. Amongst other matters this restricts building heights to 3 storeys (and generally two storeys) except in the close vicinity of local centres where 4 storeys can be considered. It also acknowledged that there is open space that may be suitable for development but equally protects the most valuable open spaces on each estate.

As a general rule we do not believe that demolition and rebuilding of existing properties is necessary or desirable and does not appear to be supported locally either. There may be the odd exception which is acceptable if this is the tested wish of local people living in the affected street(s).

However improvement to existing social and council housing is vital. Many of our houses are approaching 50 years old and often showing signs of age, and require modernisation, improvements in energy efficiency and similar. The same is true of many privately owned properties especially those now being privately let.

The resources for improvements to Council houses should come from the Councils Housing Revenue Account and other sources such as those arising from new developments. Those for private housing cannot come from the Housing Revenue Account

We would expect any new housing to adhere to the former Parker-Morris spatial standards. Additionally, we would want to ensure that all housing, whether new or existing, is maintained to high standards, with a responsive and high quality repairs service and sufficient investment to prevent any reoccurrence of housing not meeting 'decent homes' standards.

There is a strong need locally for affordable rental housing. Council owned properties offer the best opportunity for this and we would thus seek to ensure that at least 50% of all new houses be Council rented properties

We would expect to see a significant enhancement in the quality of public open space

We would expect to see significant investment in training, skills and educational opportunities as well as a real attempt to tackle issues such as mental health, disability and social isolation.

Whilst 4 of our estates have been identified as priority regeneration estates we also believe that appropriate opportunities should be taken to improve the other 3 residential estates in our area as well.

Linked policies (i.e. to be read in conjunction with).

Last review date:	May 2021
Next review date:	May 2022
Lead:	Council Manager
Overseeing Committee:	Operations Committee
Approved:	
Review cycle:	Annually