



Building a Better Bournemouth

Homes for Boscombe Strategy



2017-20

Foreword

Bournemouth Borough Council are fully committed to the regeneration of Boscombe and recognise that housing is critical to effecting lasting change. This new Homes for Boscombe Strategy outlines the work that we believe needs to take place, working in partnership with the local community and our partner organisations.

Boscombe has huge potential for positive change. We want to take the area's best elements and use its potential to attract investment to create a new housing offer, whilst tackling the issues within the current housing stock, so that Boscombe becomes a better place for people to live, work and visit. There has been a lot of positive work that has taken place already over the last 5 years and we intend to build on that. We know we have much more work to do but, with local support we are committed to improving housing in Boscombe for the benefit of the whole community.

Councillor Robert Lawton, Cabinet Member for Housing

Living in Boscombe, I know it to be a vibrant, exciting place with stunning architecture, award winning parks and beaches and a strong, creative community. Whilst there is much to be proud of and significant progress has been made in addressing issues within the area, we know that there is still more to be done before we achieve our objective of a sustainable community in Boscombe.

The Homes for Boscombe Strategy outlines the ongoing work that needs to take place to make Boscombe an even better place to live, work and visit as part of the wider regeneration programme. As both a resident of Boscombe and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Public Health I am delighted to be able to publish the refreshed Homes for Boscombe Strategy which further cements the Council's commitment to Boscombe.

Councillor Jane Kelly, Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Public Health

Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
3. Vision
4. Overview of the development of the Homes for Boscombe Strategies
5. The work undertaken to date
6. Boscombe and Pokesdown Neighbourhood Plan
7. Demography
 - 7.1 Population
 - 7.2 Ethnicity
 - 7.3 Qualifications
 - 7.4 Claimant count
 - 7.5 Employment
 - 7.6 Deprivation
 - 7.7 Health inequalities
 - 7.8 Housing and Households
 - 7.9 Migration
 - 7.10 Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)
 - 7.11 Housing Complaints
 - 7.12 Child Poverty
 - 7.13 Crime and Anti-social behaviour
 - 7.14 Transport
 - 7.15 Summary
8. The Homes for Boscombe Strategy
 - 8.1 Strategic Objective
 - 8.2 The Homes for Boscombe aims
 - 8.3 How are proposing to achieve this?
 - 8.4 Aim: Improve the quality of accommodation
 - 8.5 Aim: Improve housing management and tackle ASB
 - 8.6 Aim: Reduce the number of empty properties
 - 8.7 Aim: Ensure households with complex support needs are provided with appropriate support in the most appropriate location
 - 8.8 Support the Neighbourhood Plan in the development of housing policies which will help to deliver a more sustainable profile of accommodation
 - 8.9 Provide new family homes
9. Contact details
10. Related strategies and documents

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Housing in Boscombe is one of the six key themes for the Boscombe Regeneration Partnership. The original 'Homes for Boscombe' strategic vision ran from 2012 to 2015 and outlined the approach that the Council and its partners would take to improve housing within Boscombe. This refreshed Homes for Boscombe Strategy brings the document up to date, continues the Council's commitment to addressing housing in Boscombe and brings the Homes for Boscombe Strategy in line with the timescales for the Boscombe Commitment & Action Plan.

1.2 The refreshed Homes for Boscombe Strategy provides an overview of data relating to the current housing related issues within the Boscombe West and Boscombe East wards. This data has been used to inform the strategic objective and aims for this strategy and to ensure that we are focusing on the right issues.

1.3 The over-arching objective for the refreshed Homes for Boscombe Strategy is to create a **more sustainable profile of accommodation**. This means that Boscombe would have a better mix of accommodation which suits the needs of its current and future residents. This would be achieved through a balanced range of affordable housing, from single units through to family accommodation.

1.4 The current housing provision caters predominantly for single occupants without providing the range or number of affordable accommodation units required for couples and families to establish themselves and settle in the area.

1.5 In order to achieve our objective of a more sustainable profile of accommodation, the refreshed Homes for Boscombe strategy has five aims which provide a framework for the work that we are proposing to undertake. These are:

- Improve the quality of accommodation
- Improve housing management and tackle ASB
- Reduce the number of empty homes
- Ensure households with complex needs are provided with appropriate support in the most appropriate location
- Support the Neighbourhood Plan in the development of housing policies which will help to deliver a more sustainable profile of accommodation
- Provide new family homes

1.6 The refreshed Homes for Boscombe Strategy outlines the activity we are intending to deliver under each of these aims in order to achieve a more sustainable profile of accommodation.

2. Introduction

2.1 The purpose of this document is to set out our strategic vision for the regeneration of housing in Boscombe. It sets the strategic objective and aims for future work and informs the workplan which will be developed to ensure the effective delivery of these aims.

3. Vision

3.1 Our vision for housing in Boscombe is that:

‘Boscombe will be a place which has a vibrant, mixed and sustainable community who live in good quality housing which is affordable, in an area with appropriate infrastructure and exciting opportunities.’

4. Overview of the development of the Homes for Boscombe Strategies

4.1 Boscombe Regeneration Partnership has been working since 2012 to try and address the root causes behind Boscombe’s deprivation. The Strategic Area Assessment for Boscombe, which was produced in 2011, tells the story of how Boscombe evolved from its status of a premiere British seaside resort in the 1900’s, into an area suffering from the high levels of deprivation and complex issues that we see today. The Strategic Area Assessment highlighted the role that Housing played in the area’s decline and helped to identifying Housing as one of the six key priorities for the Boscombe Regeneration Partnership to focus on.

4.2 The Boscombe Regeneration Partnership subsequently produced the Boscombe Commitment & Action Plan 2012-15 which outlined the work of the partnership. To compliment the Boscombe Commitment & Action Plan, the Homes for Boscombe Vision document was produced. This highlighted in more detail the work that would be undertaken to address the housing issues in the area. It outlined the activity that would take place between 2012 and 2015 and was adopted by Bournemouth Council in 2012.

4.3 A refresh of the Strategic Area Assessment was undertaken in 2015 to help inform the future focus of the Boscombe Regeneration Partnership’s work. The refreshed Boscombe Commitment & Action Plan 2015-20 was subsequently produced to demonstrate the ongoing commitment to the regeneration of Boscombe.

4.4 This refreshed Homes for Boscombe strategy ensures that the activity that takes place to address housing related issues in Boscombe is up to date and aligned with the timescale for the Boscombe Regeneration Partnership’s over-arching strategy.

5. The work undertaken to date

5.1 In the Homes for Boscombe Vision 2012-15 we committed to:

- Improving the quality of accommodation
- Increasing home ownership
- Reducing the number of bedsits/HMOs
- Reducing the number of households with complex needs
- Encouraging more working households to live in the area- and stay

5.2 Since the launch of the Homes for Boscombe Vision in 2012 we have achieved the following:

- Over 2,000 units of accommodation were inspected through the Boscombe Target Area Inspection programme - the notices issued for improvement work resulting in an estimated £460,000 investment by landlords to improve the quality of private rented sector accommodation
- Supported the owners of the Royal Arcade on their planning applications which aimed to provide accommodation above the Arcade shops
- Purchased and refurbished 5 previously empty 3 bedroom Police houses at Gladstone Road
- Reduced supported housing accommodation within the Operation Galaxy Phase 1 target area by 9%
- Supported Bournemouth 2026 develop Gladstone Mews, 11 eco-friendly family homes for local families through a Community Land Trust
- Developed an Area Lettings Plan which gives preference for social housing to working households and excludes those who have a history of engaging in drugs, anti-social behaviour and criminality
- Purchased three houses in multiple occupation and converted them back in to self-contained homes, reducing the density of HMO's in Churchill Gardens and providing new homes allocated through the Area Lettings Plan
- Developed 11 shared ownership family homes at the Cherries Court development at the former Palmerston Road car park
- Undertook a major evidence analysis and subsequent public consultation to consider the potential for Selective Licensing in the area
- Instigated discussions regarding the Old Coal Yard site which led to the outline submission for the erection of 60 dwellings, community facility with associated parking and access
- Supported the Neighbourhood Plan in the development of housing policies

5.3 Operation Galaxy began in 2013 when multi-agency partners came together to consider how to collectively deal with the most problematic properties in Boscombe and the surrounding areas. The catalyst for the

project was a high-profile murder in Roumelia Lane which sparked a wave of concern and frustration from the community around what they perceived to be the high number of rehabilitation centres which they believed were fueling drugs and crime in the area. A multi-agency project, Operation Galaxy, was established, jointly led by the Boscombe Regeneration Partnership leads for Housing and Crime.

5.4 The overall objective for Operation Galaxy was to “reduce the negative impact of identified premises in the community of Boscombe”. Operation Galaxy is currently in its second phase. Phase 1 identified accommodation with support (properties which the community thought were offering rehabilitation services of some sort but were also causing concern in relation to their operation). Phase 2 started in January 2016 and focusses on identified problematic houses of multiple Occupancy (HMOs) in a targeted Boscombe area.

5.5 Both phase 1 and phase 2 of Operation Galaxy have played a significant role in addressing problematic properties, improving housing standards and supporting vulnerable families and individuals.

5.6 We believe that all this work has played an important role in improving the housing and housing related issues affecting the Boscombe area. However, we recognise that there is still a significant amount to do.

6. Boscombe & Pokesdown Neighbourhood Plan

6.1 Since the development of the original Homes for Boscombe Strategy, Bournemouth Borough Council has approved an application by the community to designate the Boscombe and Pokesdown Neighbourhood Plan Forum and Neighbourhood Area, covering Boscombe East and Boscombe West wards.

6.2 This decision enables the local community to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for their area in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. It is the first such designation in Bournemouth. A Neighbourhood Plan is a framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is different from other planning documents because it is prepared by the local community. Once it has been completed through a statutory process and adopted by the Council, the policies in the plan will be used, alongside the Council’s planning policy documents, to make decisions on planning applications in the area.

6.3 The Boscombe Regeneration Partnership fully supports the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Boscombe West and Boscombe East wards and we propose that the refreshed Homes for Boscombe Strategy widens its focus to align with the Neighbourhood Plan area.

6.4 We also propose that the Neighbourhood Plan and the Homes for Boscombe strategy are complimentary; with the former focusing on the area’s development and growth whilst the Homes for Boscombe Strategy focusses

on addressing the area's housing related issues as part of the wider regeneration programme.

7. Demography

7.1 Population

Both the Boscombe West and Boscombe East wards saw a significant increase in their populations between the 2001 and 2011 Census. In Boscombe West, the population increased by 30% between the ten-year period compared to 15.8% for Boscombe East and 12% for Bournemouth. The latest estimate for the Boscombe West ward's population, based on the 2015 mid-year estimate, is 10,900 and 11,600 for Boscombe East.

Boscombe West is a very densely populated ward and taking into account the 2015 mid-year estimates the density of people per hectare has now increased from 99 in 2011 to 110. Boscombe East ward now has an average of 63 people per hectare, an increase from 60 in 2011. For Bournemouth, the population density has increased from 40 people per hectare to 42.

The 2011 Census identified that in the Boscombe West ward 8,000 residents were of working age, representing 75% of the population, for Boscombe East this was 68% of the population. The average age of residents in Boscombe West was 38.2 years compared to 38.1 years for Boscombe East and 39.3 years for England and Wales.

7.2 Ethnicity

Boscombe West is an ethnically diverse ward with a smaller proportion of White-British (68.7%) than England and Wales (79.8%) and Boscombe East (80.9%). These figures are taken from the 2011 Census and the populations are likely to be more ethnically diverse now as represented through the wide range of children attending school in Boscombe with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

7.3 Qualifications

The Boscombe West ward has a larger proportion of residents with 'other qualifications' (12.2%) compared with the Borough and England and Wales. Other qualifications include vocational/work related qualifications and foreign qualifications where the level is unknown or not stated. The Boscombe East ward has a smaller proportion of residents aged 16-74 without a qualification (17.2%) than nationally (22.5%) but around the same proportion of residents with a degree or equivalent qualification.

7.4 Claimant count

As at May 2017, the proportion claiming out of work benefits in Boscombe West stood at 3.6%. The equivalent figure for Boscombe East was 2%, 1.7% for Bournemouth and 1.9% for England.

7.5 Employment

A significant proportion of Boscombe West residents (16.5%) are employed in the hotel and catering industry compared to the borough (11.3%). The ward also has a slightly larger proportion of residents employed in manufacturing than Bournemouth. Both types of occupations tend to be lower paid, often seasonal or demand driven and on short term or zero hour contracts. In Boscombe East, around 41% of 16-74 year olds in employment work in managerial, professional or associate professional or technical occupations. These occupations types tend to provide a higher income and more stable employment and are likely to reflect some of the differences between the two wards in terms of income and property tenure.

7.6 Deprivation

Since the 2012 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, areas within Boscombe West have seen an improvement in their overall Indices of Multiple Deprivation ranking, resulting in Central Boscombe no longer being the most deprived area in the South West. Deprivation levels however remain high and under the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015, deprivation levels are higher within the Boscombe West ward than the Boscombe East ward.

Three of the five most deprived Lower Super Output Area's (LSOAs) in the Bournemouth area are within the Boscombe West ward, all within the 10% most deprived in England. The most deprived LSOA is Boscombe Central which ranks 226th in England, out of 32,844 nationally, so in the top 1% of LSOAs and is the 7th most deprived LSOA in the South West. The least deprived LSOA in the Boscombe West ward is Honeycombe Chine and is ranked 15,398th illustrating the growing differences between the North and South of the ward.

In Boscombe East, the six LSOAs within this ward rank between 5,995th and 22,492th, out of 32,844 nationally and between 15th and 82nd, out of 110 within Bournemouth. The area to the north and east of Christchurch Road is the most deprived part of the ward.

7.7 Health Inequalities

Figure 1 shows life expectancy at birth for males and females born between 2008-2012.

Figure 1: Life Expectancy at Birth¹

	Boscombe West	Boscombe East	Bournemouth	England and Wales
Life expectancy for males	71.4 years	79 years	78.6 years	78.9 years
Life expectancy for females	79.7 years	82.6 years	82.9 years	82.8 years

¹ Public Health England, www.localhealth.org.uk

Life expectancy for males and females in Boscombe West is lower than for Bournemouth and England & Wales. Boscombe East shows little variation in life expectancy when compared to Bournemouth and the UK.

Figure 2 shows that Boscombe West has a significantly high proportion of residents whose day to day activities are 'limited a lot' by a long-term health problem or disability. Boscombe East however, has a higher proportion of residents who are in very good health and only 7.2% say their day to day activities are limited a lot by their health.

Figure 2: Long Term Health Problem or Disability²

	Boscombe West	Boscombe East	Bournemouth	England and Wales
Day to day activities limited a lot	11.9%	7.2%	8.6%	8.5%
Very good health	39.8%	47.4%	46.3%	47.1%
Bad health	6.7%	4.2%	4.4%	4.3%
Very bad health	2.3%	0.9%	1.3%	1.3%
All in bad health	8.9%	5.1%	5.7%	5.6%

7.8 Housing and Households

Figure 3 shows that households in Boscombe West are smaller than the England and Wales with an average of 1.7 people; however, 34.5% of households are living in overcrowded conditions based on the number of rooms compared to 14% for Bournemouth and 8.5% for England & Wales. Boscombe East is very similar in profile to the rest of Bournemouth for average household size and households living in overcrowded conditions. Figure 3 also highlights that the Boscombe West ward has almost 10% of the Borough's known Empty Homes.

Figure 3: Housing and Households³

	Boscombe West	Boscombe East	Bournemouth	England and Wales
Average household size	1.7	2.2	2.2	2.4
Overcrowded households	34.5%	14.1%	14%	8.5%
Number of empty homes	72 (9.3% of all empty properties in Bournemouth)	52 (6.7% of all empty properties in Bournemouth)	777	n/a

² Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census data 2011

³ Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census data 2011

Families with dependent children	58.4%	75.4%	67.9%	76.6%
Living in a single person household	55.3%	37.5%	37%	30%

Figure 3 shows there are fewer households with dependent children in the Boscombe West ward compared to Bournemouth and England and Wales. Boscombe East has more families with dependent children than Bournemouth but is broadly in line with the figure for England & Wales. The lower percentage of families with dependent children is particularly relevant when looking at the type and size of the dwelling (as highlighted in Figure 5, later in this document).

Of particular significance is the high percentage of people living in a single person household within Boscombe West ward- 55.3% compared to 37% for Bournemouth and 30% for England & Wales. Again, we believe this is due to the style and size of accommodation which is detailed in Figure 5.

Figure 4 shows Boscombe West as having lower owner-occupation rates (27.5%) and a higher proportion of households renting privately (61.5%). This is particularly noticeable when compared with England & Wales which has an owner occupier rate of 63.6% and a private rented rate of 16.7%.

Figure 4: Tenure⁴

Tenure	Bosc West		Bosc East		Bournemouth		England & Wales	
	No'	%	No'	%	No'	%	No'	%
All h'holds	5,441	100	4,888	100	82,374	100	23,366,044	100
Owned	1,494	27.5	2,756	56.4	47,057	57.1	14,853,678	63.6
Shared ownership (part owned & part rented)	69	1.3	38	0.8	569	0.7	178,236	0.8
Social rented	489	9.0	343	7.0	9,206	11.2	4,118,461	17.6
Private rented	3,344	61.5	1,708	34.9	24,685	30.0	3,900,178	16.7
Living rent free	45	0.8	43	0.9	857	1.0	315,491	1.4

The number of dwellings in Boscombe West increased by 29% between 2001 and 2011 compared to 16% for Boscombe East and 12% for Bournemouth. Figure 5 shows the number of bedrooms in a household's accommodation. We can see that just under 50% of households in the Boscombe West ward have one bedroom. This is significantly higher than the figure for Bournemouth

⁴ Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census data 2011

(20.7%) and England and Wales (11.5%). When all accommodation with 'no bedrooms, 1 or 2 bedrooms' are collated this accounts for 88.5% of the household accommodation in the Boscombe West ward- over double the figure for England and Wales.

The accommodation in Boscombe East ward is broadly in line with the rest of Bournemouth except for households with '5 or more bedrooms' which is higher than both the figures for Bournemouth and England & Wales. We believe that the type of accommodation in the Boscombe West ward- smaller units of accommodation- is the reason why we have fewer households with dependent children and more people living in a single person household.

Figure 5: Number of Bedrooms⁵

	Boscombe West	Boscombe East	Bournemouth	England and Wales
Number of bedrooms	5,441	4,888	82,374	23,366,044
No bedrooms	1.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%
1 bedroom	49.4%	22.1%	20.7%	11.5%
2 bedrooms	37.8%	34.2%	35.8%	27.6%
ALL 0, 1 or 2 bedrooms	88.5%	56.7%	56.9%	39.4%
3 bedrooms	6.7%	24.7%	27%	41.6%
4 bedrooms	2%	11.6%	11.4%	14.4%
5 or more bedrooms	2.8%	7.1%	4.7%	4.6%

7.9 Migration

Using 2011 Census data, figure 6 provides estimates that classify the usual residents living in an area, and those having moved from the area to elsewhere within the UK in the year preceding the census. The estimates are as at Census day, 27 March 2011.

Figure 6: Migration⁶

Migration	Boscombe West		Boscombe East		Bournemouth	
All usual residents	9,843		10,876		183,491	
Lived at same address one year ago	6,903	70.1%	8,875	81.6%	147,653	80.5%
Migrants: Total	2,940	29.9%	2,001	18.4%	35,838	19.5%
Migrants: Moved within the area	390	4.0%	312	2.9%	17,823	9.7%

⁵ Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census data 2011

⁶ Office for National Statistics (ONS), Census data 2011

Migrants: Moved into the area from within the UK	2,296	23.3%	1,458	13.4%	15,123	8.2%
Migrants: Moved into the area from outside the UK	254	2.6%	231	2.1%	2,892	1.6%
Moved out of the area	1,620	16.5%	1,473	13.5%	11,003	6.0%

Figure 6 shows that the Boscombe West ward had a higher population turnover than Boscombe East and Bournemouth with only 70.1% living at the same address a year prior to the Census. The proportion of residents moving into Boscombe West from elsewhere in the UK (23.3%) is significantly higher than it is in Bournemouth (8.2%). Correlating with this figure, the ward also shows a higher proportion of residents moving out of the area (16.5%) compared to Bournemouth (6%).

Whilst it could be speculated that the high percentage moving into and out of the area are due to full time students attending the universities, the Census information around economic activity shows that the ward has a smaller population of students (7%) compared to Boscombe East (9.5%) and Bournemouth (10%).

7.10 Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)

A mandatory HMO is a property which meets all the following criteria:

- it's at least 3 storeys high
- at least 5 tenants live there, forming more than 1 household
- shares a toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities with other tenants

Mandatory HMOs are registered by the Council. Boscombe West has a higher number of mandatory HMOs compared to Boscombe East. In general terms, the areas where we see a higher density of HMOs are where the Indices of Deprivation identify areas of higher deprivation.

Figure 7 shows the number of registered mandatory HMOs in each ward across Bournemouth. The Boscombe West ward has the highest percentage of HMOs across the Borough at 23.2% while Boscombe East only has 4.5%.

Figure 7: Registered Mandatory HMOs in Bournemouth⁷

Ward	HMO Mandatory Licence	% of Borough Stock
Boscombe East	23	4.50%
Boscombe West	119	23.20%
Central	55	10.70%
East Cliff and Springbourne	88	17.20%
East Southbourne and Tuckton	7	1.40%
Kinson North	0	0.00%
Kinson South	0	0.00%
Littledown and Iford	0	0.00%
Moordown	4	0.80%
Queen's Park	41	8%
Redhill and Northbourne	1	0.20%
Strouden Park	0	0.00%
Talbot and Branksome Woods	43	8.40%
Throop and Muscliff	0	0.00%
Wallisdown and Winton West	14	2.70%
West Southbourne	19	3.70%
Westbourne and West Cliff	74	14.50%
Winton East	24	4.70%
Total	512	100%

7.11 Housing Complaints

Figure 8 shows the number of housing complaints per ward received by the Council during 2016-17. Boscombe West has the second highest number of complaints per ward and Boscombe East has the seventh highest number.

Figure 8: Category A Hazards per Ward⁸

Date range	16-17	16-17	16-17 Total
Ward	HMO Action	Single Occ. Action	
Boscombe East	26	22	48
Boscombe West	37	58	95
Central	25	53	78
East Cliff and Springbourne	44	53	97
East Southbourne and Tuckton	4	11	15
Kinson North	1	9	10
Kinson South	1	6	7
Littledown and Iford	0	5	5
Moordown	15	13	28

⁷ Bournemouth Borough Council, Mandatory HMO register

⁸ Bournemouth Borough Council, Housing and Community Enforcement department

Queen's Park	41	26	67
Redhill and Northbourne	3	12	15
Strouden Park	3	1	4
Talbot and Branksome Woods	25	13	38
Throop and Muscliff	2	5	7
Wallisdown and Winton West	23	4	27
West Southbourne	8	9	17
Westbourne and West Cliff	26	27	53
Winton East	29	21	50
Blank	3	1	4
Grand Total	316	349	665

7.12 Child poverty

Analysis undertaken in 2016 by 'End Child Poverty' used tax credit data, updated with national trends on worklessness, that was compatible with national estimates of children living in households below the 60% median income level. This enabled them to provide an estimate of the percentage of children living in poverty for every ward in the Country.

Figure 9: Children Living in Poverty⁹

	Living in poverty before housing costs	Living in poverty after housing costs
Boscombe West	20.9%	33.14%
Boscombe East	19.47%	30.55%
Bournemouth	16.52%	26.31%

Figure 9 shows that there are a higher percentage of children living in poverty in the Boscombe West and Boscombe East ward both before and after housing costs are applied compared to Bournemouth. These are significantly higher for the Boscombe West ward.

7.13 Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Figure 10 shows the recorded levels of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) per ward in Bournemouth in 2016. Boscombe West has the second highest recorded levels of ASB in Bournemouth.

⁹ www.endchildpoverty.org.uk

Figure 10. Recorded levels of ASB per ward during 2016¹⁰

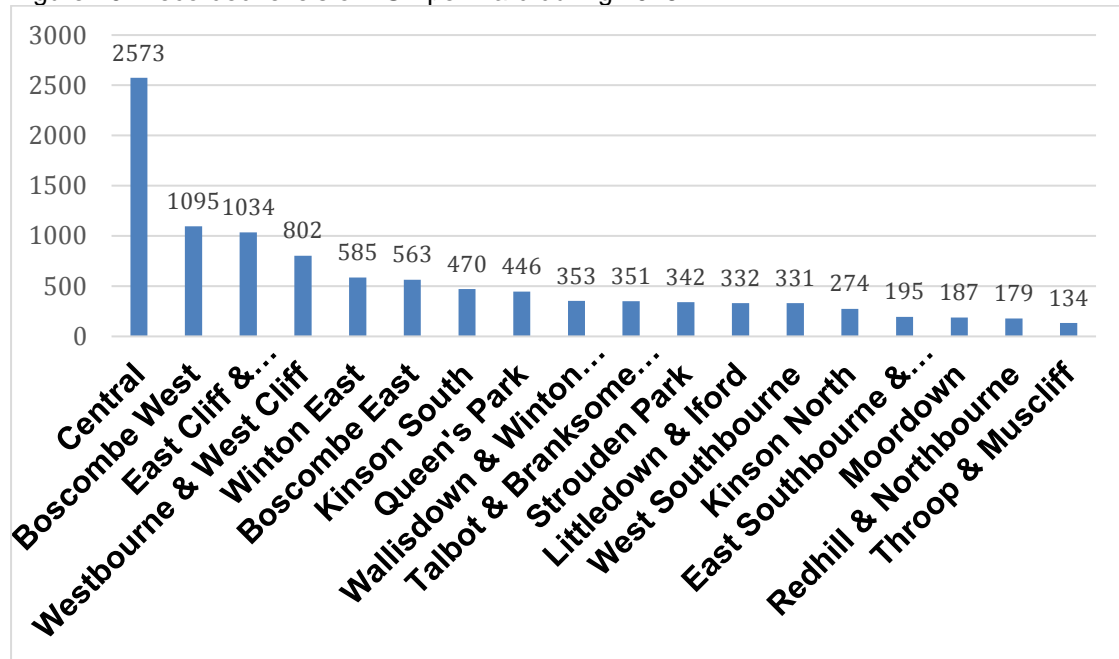
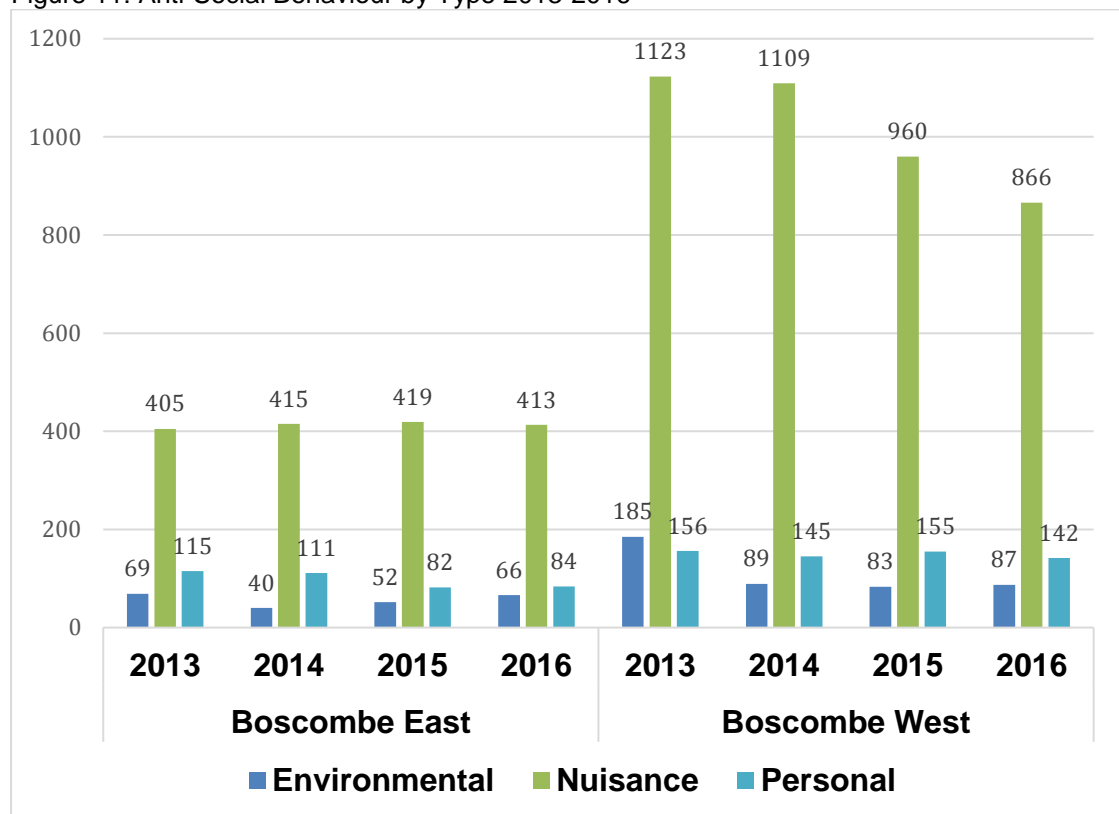


Figure 11 shows three types of recorded ASB between 2013 and 2016 in the Boscombe West and Boscombe East wards. Boscombe West has very high reports of ASB related to 'Nuisance' ASB; this tends to be ASB linked to a residential property.

Figure 11: Anti-Social Behaviour by Type 2013-2016¹¹



¹⁰ Dorset Police

¹¹ Dorset Police

7.14 Transport

In Boscombe West a significant proportion (44.4%) of households are without access to a car. The area does, however, have good access to services such as doctors and dentists and most facilities are available within a short, flat walking distance such as schools, open spaces and shopping facilities. In Boscombe East, just over 28% of households in this ward are without a car; however, a further 26% of households have two or more cars.

7.15 Summary

The Boscombe West and Boscombe East wards can be summarised as the following:

- Both wards have undergone a significant population growth between the 2001 and 2011 Census compared to Bournemouth
- Both wards are more densely populated per hectare compared to Bournemouth
- Both wards are more ethnically diverse than Bournemouth
- Both wards have a higher proportion of the working age population claiming out-of-work benefits
- Both wards experience levels of deprivation with significantly high levels in Boscombe West
- Life expectancy at birth is lower for both males and females within Boscombe West
- Boscombe West has a higher proportion of residents whose day to day activities are limited by a health problem
- Boscombe West has significantly higher levels of overcrowding in accommodation
- Boscombe West has a high percentage of single person households
- Boscombe West ward has a high percentage of accommodation with 0,1 or 2 bedrooms
- Both wards underwent significant increases in the number of dwellings between 2001 and 2011 compared to Bournemouth
- Both wards experience higher levels of privately rented accommodation, significantly higher in Boscombe West
- Owner occupation rates are significantly lower in Boscombe West
- Both wards have a higher proportion of children living in poverty but Boscombe West has significantly fewer households with dependent children
- Both wards have low car ownership but good transport links
- Boscombe West has the highest number of HMOs per ward accounting for 23% of the stock in the Borough
- Boscombe West has just under 10% of the Borough's known empty properties
- Boscombe West had the second highest number of Category A hazard housing complaints in 2016/7
- Boscombe West has significant and persistently high 'nuisance' ASB rates

Bournemouth Council believes that many of the issues highlighted above are due in part to the type and quality of some of the housing within the area- the high concentration of small single unit accommodation, most of which offer the lowest rents in Bournemouth.

Their size, availability, general lower quality and cost mean they tend to have a high turnover of residents, many of whom will be at the bottom of the housing ladder for several reasons (lower income, chaotic lifestyles, underlying health problems, new to the area/just left home). Whilst accommodation of this type provides a valuable role in the housing options across the Borough, it is the Council's view that having too much of this type of accommodation in one area is detrimental to the area's regeneration and prevents Boscombe from having a sustainable community.

Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

For Boscombe to become a sustainable community it needs to have a better mix of accommodation which suits the needs of its current and future residents. This means having a balanced range of affordable accommodation, from single units through to family accommodation (two, three or four bed units for example).

The current housing provision caters predominantly for single occupants without providing the range or number of affordable accommodation units suitable for couples and families to establish themselves and settle in the area. The Homes for Boscombe Strategy aims to address this through the Homes for Boscombe Vision and the following strategic aim.

8. The Homes for Boscombe Strategy

8.1 Strategic objective

The Homes for Boscombe Strategy has one over-arching objective, with several specific aims to deliver the objective. It is the Council's view that in order to create a sustainable community within Boscombe we need to address the current housing stock and, where appropriate, its management. The overall objective we are proposing in the Homes for Boscombe strategy is to 'Secure a more sustainable profile of accommodation'.

In order to achieve our objective, we need to improve the quality of some of the accommodation so that it meets the standards we would expect people to be living in.

Within the private rented sector, we need to improve how some properties are managed and tackle ASB that is linked to these properties.

We need to ensure that we make the best use of the resources that already exist, so we need to bring empty residential properties which could provide valuable housing back into use.

We need to work with partner organisations to ensure that people are accessing any support that they need. We also need to be mindful of the issues that Boscombe is currently experiencing and make sure that people with support needs are housed in the most appropriate location.

Whilst all this activity is taking place we also need to make sure that we are planning for Boscombe's future and so we need to work with the Neighbourhood Plan forum to help them develop their policies for the area.

8.2 The Homes for Boscombe aims

Objective: Secure a more sustainable profile of accommodation

- Aim: Improve the quality of accommodation
- Aim: Improve housing management and tackle ASB
- Aim: Reduce the number of empty properties
- Aim: Ensure households with complex support needs are provided with appropriate support in the most appropriate location
- Aim: Support the Neighbourhood Plan in the development of housing policies which will help to deliver a more sustainable profile of accommodation
- Aim: Provide new family homes

8.3 How are we proposing to achieve this?

The following section outlines the activity we are proposing to undertake to achieve each of our aims.

8.4 Aim: Improve the quality of accommodation

Operation Galaxy is a partnership project between Dorset Police and Bournemouth Council. It identifies problematic Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) with an aim to inspect each property, identify any housing standards and housing management concerns and provide additional support and referrals for the residents that live within. Operation Galaxy focusses on a specific area of Boscombe around Churchill Gardens and the surrounding roads. The programme is currently funded until March 2018.

The Government has consulted on plans to extend the current mandatory licensing of HMOs and announcements about implementation of new regulations are anticipated during 2017. The proposals made by the government, broadly speaking, extend current mandatory licensing by removing the current two or more storey's criteria applied by the current regulations. For Bournemouth, this could mean an increase in mandatory licensable HMO's from 500 currently to 2500. Given the density of HMO accommodation in the Boscombe area, there will be a significant increase in HMO licensing and associated enforcement activity once the new regulations are enacted.

Bournemouth Council is currently reviewing its Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy. The policy aims to protect and improve lives by ensuring that privately rented homes are safe and warm. It aims to raise standards in private sector housing throughout Bournemouth by working in partnership with owners, landlords, letting agents and tenants. Where partnership working is unsuccessful in achieving this the policy outlines the enforcement actions and approach that will be taken to address the problems.

8.5 Aim: Improve housing management and tackle ASB

Bournemouth Council recently undertook a detailed analysis of evidence considering the issues of deprivation, ASB, crime and housing standards in the area. The review focused on the links between these issues and the significant private rented sector. Following this analysis, consultation on whether to introduce a Selective Licensing scheme to areas within Boscombe and Springbourne was undertaken. At the time of writing this strategy a decision is yet to be made on whether to proceed with Selective Licensing. However, whatever position the Council takes in this regard, we will seek to tackle the issues identified by implementing a targeted enforcement approach.

Properties which result in anti-social behaviour, either through the behaviour of the tenants or their visual and audio impact on the community will be dealt with through the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour team and Community Enforcement team.

We will seek to develop our services to support landlords to better manage their accommodation.

We will expand the evidence based approach to targeted ASB action and interventions, working in partnership with key agencies and the community.

We will develop a borough wide Neighbourhood Strategy which will seek to address community issues and the Boscombe area will be a priority for this strategy.

8.6 Aim: Reduce the number of empty homes

Bournemouth's Empty Homes Strategy 2016-2021 outlines the approach that Bournemouth undertakes to try and reduce the number of empty homes. Boscombe West has the third highest number of empty homes within Bournemouth, equating to ten percent of all known empty homes in the Borough. Empty homes within the Boscombe West and Boscombe East wards will be targeted with the approaches outlined in the Empty Homes Strategy.

8.7 Aim: Ensure households with complex support needs are provided with appropriate support in the most appropriate location

We will review the existing Area Lettings Plan for Boscombe which aims to ensure that individuals with a recent history of causing ASB or engaging in criminal activity are not housed within the Boscombe area.

'Cuckooing' is a crime where a drug dealer befriends a weak, old or otherwise vulnerable person and then takes over their home, using it as a base for dealing and/or using drugs. By the time the activity comes to the attention of the authorities, the offender/s have moved on, leaving the vulnerable person to deal with the aftermath and possible eviction. Boscombe is an area where cuckooing is known to have taken place. Bournemouth Council will develop a Bournemouth-wide Cuckooing Strategy to ensure that vulnerable individuals are protected from harm and exploitation.

'County Line' activity involves a gang (usually made up of young males) from a large urban area travelling to smaller locations (such as a coastal town) to sell Class A drugs, specifically crack cocaine and heroin. Gangs tend to communicate via a mobile number- referred to as the 'line'.

The line is usually kept away from the area where drugs are being sold and a relay system is used to contact those acting as dealers in the county location. Gang members regularly travel between the urban and county locations to deliver drugs and collect cash. They tend to use a local property, generally belonging to a vulnerable person who is being cuckooed.

The Council will also work in partnership with the Police to ensure that County Line drugs gangs are disrupted and their harm on our communities is minimised or eradicated.

The nature of Boscombe's housing stock makes it an easy area to place individuals in need of accommodation. However, the issues that Boscombe is currently experiencing mean that Boscombe might not always be the best location to house someone who is vulnerable or have complex support needs; it may make them more vulnerable by being placed in the area. We will work with partner organisations to ensure that vulnerable households with complex support needs are housed in an area which is appropriate to their needs.

Building on the successes of Operation Galaxy we will explore further the development of virtual teams which bring together a wide range of partners such as the Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Immigration Service, Probation, Drug & Alcohol Action Team and others to enable cohesive working on shared priorities.

8.8 Aim: Support the Neighbourhood Plan in the development of housing policies which will help to deliver a more sustainable profile of accommodation
Boscombe and Pokesdown Neighbourhood Plan Forum is developing its policies for the neighbourhood plan area. They have five over-arching themes, three of which is: "Providing the homes that we need".

There are currently two Neighbourhood Plan aims which are relevant to the Homes for Boscombe Strategy. They aim to promote family housing, encourage development that provides a mix of house types consistent with the needs of the community and; encourage new developments of an appropriate density. In general terms, at the time of writing, the Neighbourhood Plan Forum is seeking to develop policies which encourage;

- Family units with two or more bedrooms
- Retention and conversion of historic building

and strongly resist:

- New HMOs
- Developments of one person-sized units unless designed for older or disabled people

We will support the Neighbourhood Plan Forum in the development and implementation of their policies. Activity will include reviewing Council owned land to consider opportunities for development as well as exploring schemes for Centenary Way, Royal Arcade and other sites within the defined area. We will explore opportunities for utilising Housing Revenue Account funds and the Community Housing Fund within Boscombe. We will assist in the exploration of key sites for housing aligned to the Neighbourhood Plan's identified sites and explore opportunities for cohesive funding applications with a wide range of partners. We will also support the Neighbourhood Plan Forum's ambition to promote greener homes, renewable energy and sustainable construction.

8.9 Provide new family homes

The Council is committed to providing new, affordable family homes wherever possible. In line with the new Housing Strategy 2017-2020, we will seek to develop and facilitate development opportunities to deliver new homes in Boscombe.

We will continue to develop plans for the regeneration of the Centenary Way area, with the priority of providing new family homes.

In addition to all the activity we are proposing we will continue to build on our existing partnerships between the Council, Police, Immigration Service, Fire & Rescue Service, Landlords & letting Agencies to deliver these outcomes.

9. Contact details

If you have any comments or queries on this policy, please contact:

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10. Related strategies and documents

- Bournemouth Borough Council Housing Strategy
- Bournemouth Borough Council Homelessness Strategy
- Bournemouth Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy
- Bournemouth Empty Homes Strategy

All the above are available at:

http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Residents/housing/strategies_and_plans.asp

- Boscombe Commitment & Action Plan 2012-15
- Boscombe Commitment & Action Plan 2015-20
- Boscombe Strategic Assessment 2011
- Boscombe Strategic Assessment Refresh 2015
- Homes for Boscombe Strategic Vision 2012-15

Available at www.bournemouth.gov.uk/boscomberegeneration

