

Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review

Statement in support of University provision of subsidised staff housing

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Introduction

The University has had several discussions with Cherwell District Council ('the Council') at both Officer and Elected Member level, regarding its aspiration to develop affordable housing as subsidised staff housing. The Council has indicated its willingness to consider the University's aspiration to provide accommodation for its staff on its own land at Begbroke and North Oxford. The University wrote to the Leader of Cherwell District Council at the beginning of December 2018 to confirm its strategic objective to develop its landholding at Begbroke (PR8 in the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review or 'the Plan') to provide a substantial amount of residential accommodation for University and College staff at a subsidised rent for key workers (including academic staff, early career research staff and technical and support staff). In order for that objective to be realised, provision for key worker housing or employer-linked affordable housing would need to be recognised as meeting affordable housing requirements by the Council. The Leader of the Council replied on 16 January confirming that the issues raised should be explored through the examination process. This paper is aimed at assisting that discussion.

The University's strategy to providing subsidised staff housing has been developed in part in response to its dialogue with Oxford City Council over that last three years as the City Council has embarked on the preparation of its draft Oxford Local Plan 2036. To help the City Council meet Oxford's housing needs, the University has been willing to consider providing employer-linked affordable housing on its own land for its own staff. The Tripartite have also included this in all the representations submitted to the Council during the plan preparation process.

During discussions with Officers in December 2018 the Council indicated that it has a number of questions and would wish to receive more detailed information in response to these queries to further the dialogue on the matter leading up to the Examination hearing sessions into the Plan starting on 5th February 2019.

1. Need and importance to the University of the affordable housing

Staff Numbers

- 1.1. The Collegiate University represents the largest landowners, businesses and employers in Oxford. They are one of the largest employers in the city with over 21,000 staff. The University of Oxford (excluding Oxford University Press or 'OUP') itself has 13,600 staff

(headcount) (as at July 2017), of which 7,000 are academic staff (including research staff), whilst over 6,500 staff work as either technical or support staff. In addition, a further 5,250 staff are employed by the Colleges and OUP employs 2,200 staff at its premises in Walton Street, Oxford.

Staff profiles

1.2. Each year the University has a significant turnover of staff, due in particular to the high number of research staff on fixed-term contracts (c 5,000). During the year 1 August 2016-31 July 2017 there were an estimated 2,400 new starters¹ of which around 1,200 were research staff. Over 3,000 jobs per year are advertised on the University’s Jobs website (some are re-advertisements and/or staff moving jobs within the University). See Figure 1 below.

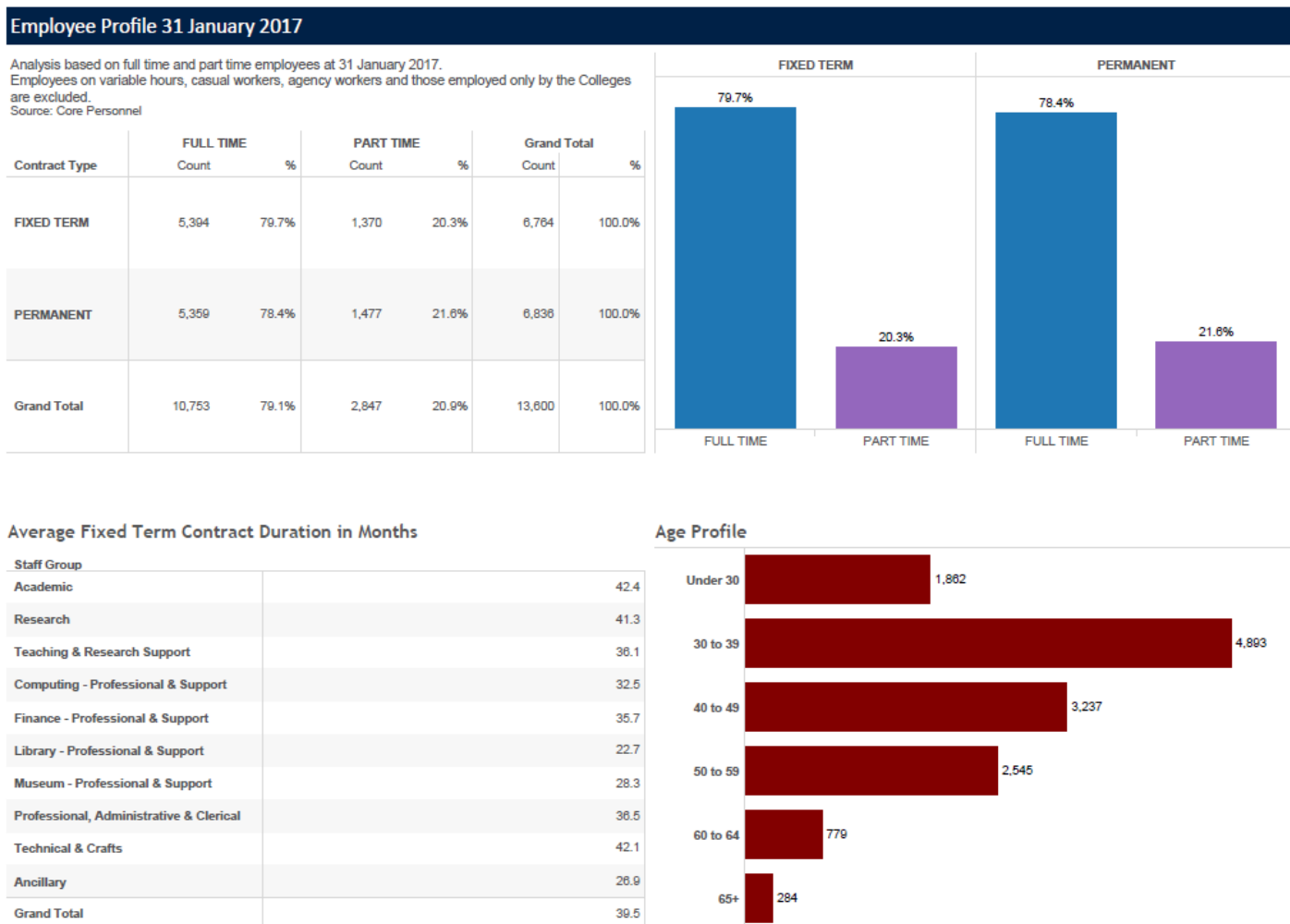


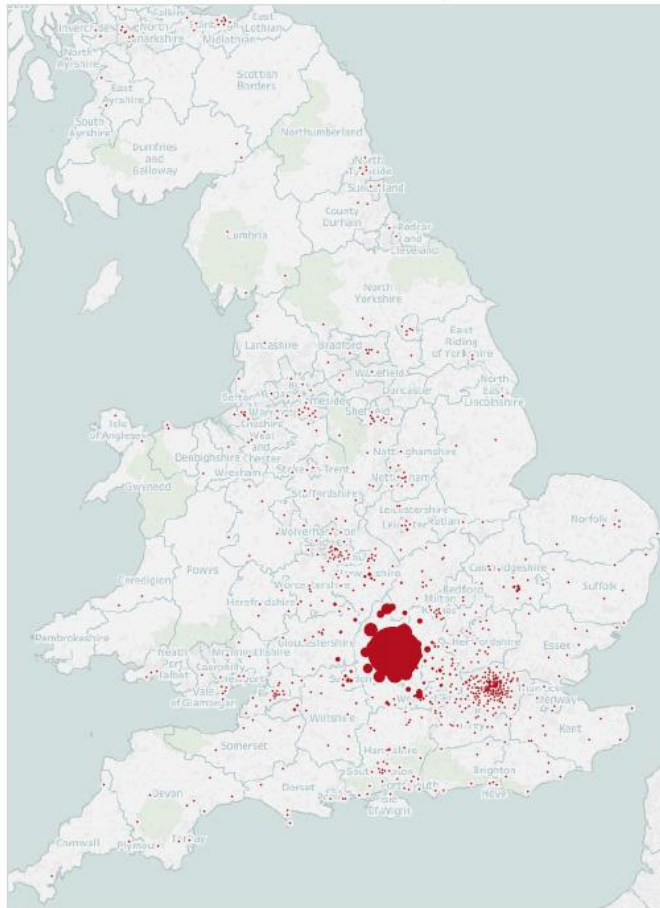
Figure 1 – Employee Profile

¹ Figure derived from staffing data showing that during the year 1 August 2016-31 July 2017 there was relatively static headcount with growth of only 157 in the total headcount but in the same period there were **2,362 leavers**. Of which 738 (31%) leavers were due to end of fixed term contract.

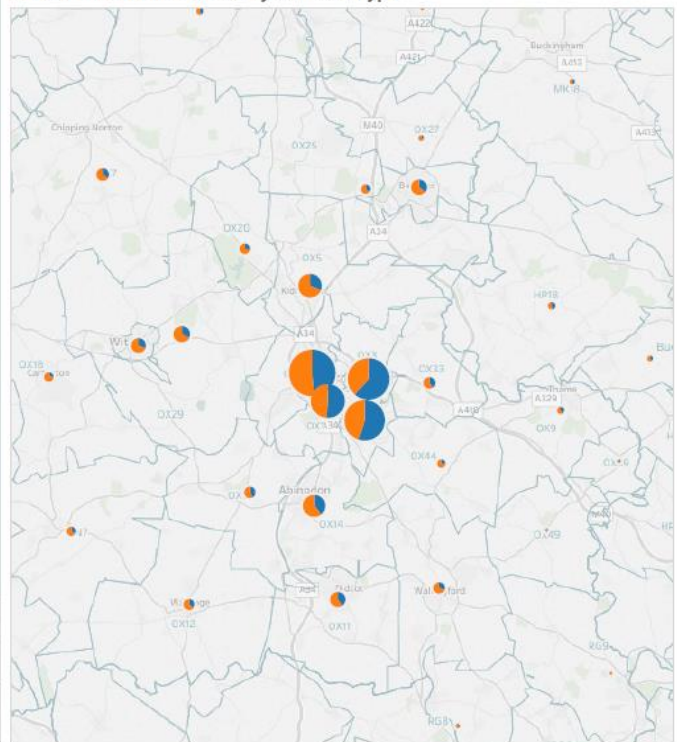
Where staff live

1.3. From its staffing data the University is aware that almost half of staff live within Oxford although there are notable concentrations too at the County’s market towns especially Abingdon, Kidlington and Bicester. See Figures 2 and 3 below.

Overview of Employee Home Address at 31 January



Oxford Area Home Address by Contract Type



STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF UNIVERSITY SUBSIDISED STAFF HOUSING

Estimated Earnings by Postcode 'Outcode' - OX Postcodes for Staff in Post at 31 January 2017

OutCode	£0 - 9,999		£10,000 - 19,999		£20,000 - 29,999		£30,000 - 39,999		£40,000 - 49,999		£50,000 - 59,999		£60,000 - 69,999		£70,000 - 79,999		£80,000 - 89,999		£90,000 - 99,999		£100,000 +	
	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT	FIXED TERM	PERMANENT
OX1	20	27	60	47	72	131	388	79	56	78	18	116	12	36	2	16	2	22	1	16	5	46
OX2	55	47	99	119	176	241	558	163	152	134	47	172	19	93	11	41	15	39	6	31	18	148
OX3	30	36	86	81	224	156	585	138	176	109	41	81	11	44	6	15	4	17	3	6	8	40
OX4	27	53	92	113	193	228	526	163	117	108	25	73	6	39	3	10	5	5	2	8	5	18
OX5	9	18	24	59	38	129	89	89	24	51	6	30	20	2	2	5	1	2	2	2	2	14
OX7	2	3	7	14	13	30	21	25	10	17	2	6	3	8	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	5
OX9	2	3	4	4	7	8	3	6	5	5	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OX10	2	2	13	9	8	27	10	29	4	12	1	11	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
OX11	3	3	22	11	17	49	37	39	13	22	3	14	2	4	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
OX12	1	2	4	14	11	27	17	20	12	9	1	6	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
OX13	3	4	7	14	11	27	16	10	18	10	2	5	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
OX14	6	19	47	40	39	108	87	78	23	38	8	19	2	11	2	2	5	1	1	1	1	5
OX15	1	5	5	8	3	5	10	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
OX16	2	7	4	16	29	25	16	5	8	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OX17	1	1	6	3	11	6	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
OX18	2	5	4	9	8	19	7	17	3	9	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
OX20	1	1	4	3	8	20	10	24	5	13	2	11	3	3	1	1	3	3	1	2	1	3
OX24	6	4	2	6	13	16	7	8	2	8	6	6	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	7
OX26	1	7	12	15	26	55	32	54	17	25	4	8	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
OX27	2	1	1	3	5	3	5	4	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
OX28	5	8	10	20	24	49	18	52	12	20	6	11	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1
OX29	2	5	14	20	23	56	33	45	16	29	2	18	3	12	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	5
OX33	1	9	17	16	20	18	15	7	11	3	9	1	7	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	2
OX35	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OX37	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OX39	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OX41	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OX44	1	5	5	3	18	5	9	5	5	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
OX49	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
OX58	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Note:
Analysis excludes non-OX postcodes and missing postcodes, but may still contain invalid or otherwise problematic postcodes.
Sources: Core Personnel and Core Pay

Figures 2 and 3 - Where University staff live

Staff recruitment and retention

1.4. To remain one of the best Universities in the world, the University of Oxford must attract and retain the best academic minds and provide them with the best possible support. However, the current high cost of accommodation in Oxford is a significant barrier to both recruitment and retention, which is especially relevant to the recruitment and retention of academics, researchers, technical staff, and other support staff. For those on lower incomes, rental accommodation in the City can be a high cost, whilst staff living outside the City bear the cost of commuting and traffic congestion when travelling to work. For those considering joining the University from elsewhere, the costs of living within the City or commuting from outside of the City, could prove to be prohibitively high.

1.5. The most recent data from the annual HR audit indicates that recruitment problems are increasing with 70% of departments now reporting recruitment difficulties (up from 62% of departments in 2016, 46% in 2015 and 50% in 2014). The severity of the problem varies by division and by type of post, but common areas of difficulty are academic posts, research staff, specialist roles such as medical statisticians, bio-informaticians, and clinical trials co-ordinators, IT posts, finance posts, and some administrative and support posts.

Oxford affordability issues

- 1.6. The Office for National Statistics in a report on Housing affordability in England and Wales: 1997 to 2016 explains that on average, working people could expect to pay around 7.6 times their annual earnings on purchasing a home in England and Wales in 2016. The figure often quoted for Oxford is that 16 times annual salary is needed to purchase a home.
- 1.7. Indicative incomes required to purchase or rent properties in Oxford. The data in the table below is from the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). It indicates in Oxford that in 2013 a household income of at least £36,900 was required to afford to rent market housing, or £61,700 to buy a property, even at the lower quartiles of the market.

Area	Lower quartile purchase price	Lower quartile private rent	Affordable rent	Lower quartile social rent
Cherwell	£52,900	£24,900	£19,900	£15,600
Oxford	£61,700	£36,900	£29,500	£15,800
South Oxon	£67,100	£30,700	£24,500	£16,700
VoWH	£56,900	£26,600	£21,300	£17,600
West Oxon	£53,700	£26,600	£21,300	£18,000

Table 43: Indicative income required to purchase/rent without additional subsidy (based on 2013 data)

- 1.8. An up-to-date source of data on Oxford affordability issues is the City Council commissioned update of the Oxfordshire SHMA, published as a background paper for the Local Plan 2036. This report considered in detail this issue of unaffordability in Oxford.

Table 44: Indicative affordability (income) thresholds for different tenures of housing – by size

	LQ purchase	LQ private rent	Affordable rented	Social rented
1-bedroom	£41,200	£29,500	£25,400	£16,200
2-bedrooms	£59,600	£36,000	£31,000	£18,600
3-bedrooms	£75,900	£42,900	£36,900	£22,600
4-bedrooms	£101,900	£60,000	£51,700	£22,700

- 1.9. The data in this table is from 2017 and indicates in Oxford that a household income of at least £36,000 was required to afford just to rent a 2-bedroom market property, or £59,600 to buy a 2 bed property, even at the lower quartiles of the market. This is significantly higher than the median household income in Oxford at the time of £40,700.
- 1.10. This table illustrates why home-ownership, and in many cases market rent accommodation, is beyond the means of many households in Oxford.

Lower paid staff

1.11. Based on an analysis of the estimated earnings bands in figure 4 it can be seen that in January 2017, 36% of all University staff earned less than £30,000 and 69% earned less than £40,000 – just above appropriate minimum threshold level of £36,000 to rent in the private market in Oxford. 90% of the University’s workforce earned less than the £60,000 minimum threshold required to purchase in Oxford’s private market (as indicated in paragraph 1.9 above).

Estimated Annual Earnings for Staff in Post 31 January 2017

Estimated Earnings Bands	% Total	Number of Records
£0 - 9,999	4.0%	547
£10,000 - 19,999	10.4%	1,408
£20,000 - 29,999	21.7%	2,950
£30,000 - 39,999	32.7%	4,447
£40,000 - 49,999	13.3%	1,814
£50,000 - 59,999	7.3%	990
£60,000 - 69,999	3.5%	477
£70,000 - 79,999	1.4%	188
£80,000 - 89,999	1.3%	179
£90,000 - 99,999	0.9%	121
£100,000 +	3.5%	479
Grand Total	100.0%	13,600

Estimated Earnings:

For each appointment in the 31 January snapshot actual earnings from the January Payroll have been annualised. Where an individual was not paid in January or the value was anomalous, the scale salary has been substituted for estimated annual actual earnings.

Sources: Core Personnel and Core Pay

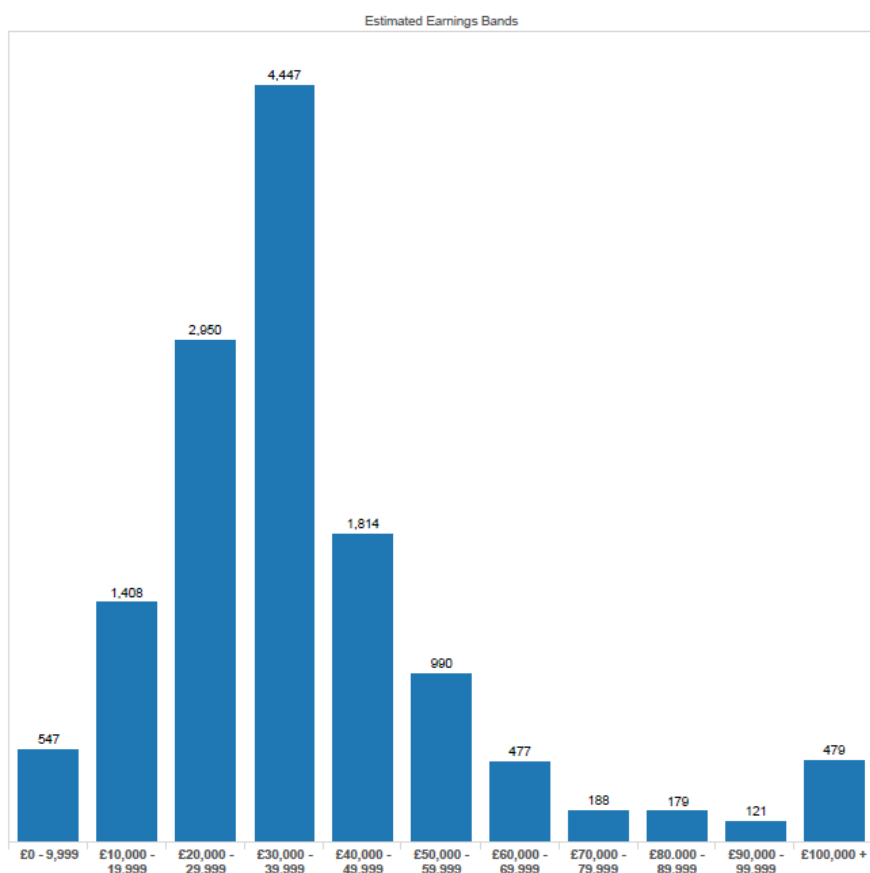


Figure 4- University staff number by salary grade

University staff accommodation survey

1.12. The University conducted a housing needs survey for University employees during the period 15 June to 2 July 2018. A very high proportion (17.5%) of staff responding to the survey said it was difficult to find accommodation in the Oxford area and would have been interested in renting housing offered by the University if it had been available when they started employment.

1.13. Across the board, the proportions of respondents were broadly representative of the four key staff groups - academic, research, academic-related (non-research) and support.

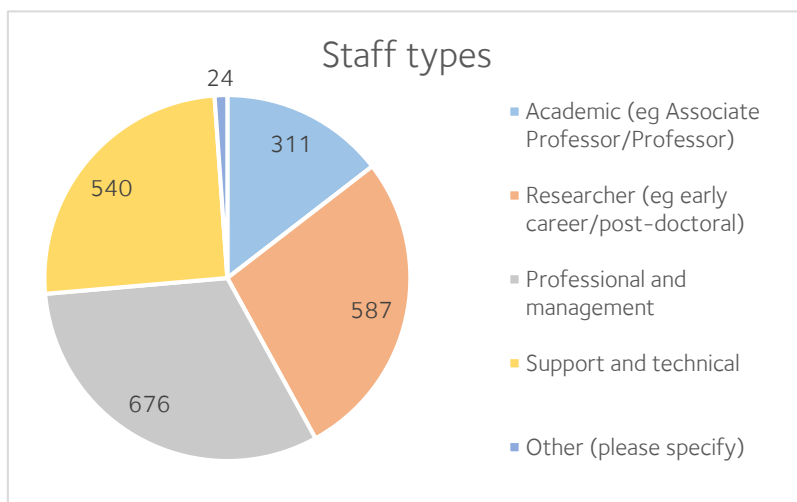


Figure 5- Staff types

1.14. 83% of those responding to the question said that they would have been interested in renting University accommodation had it been available when they were new starters.

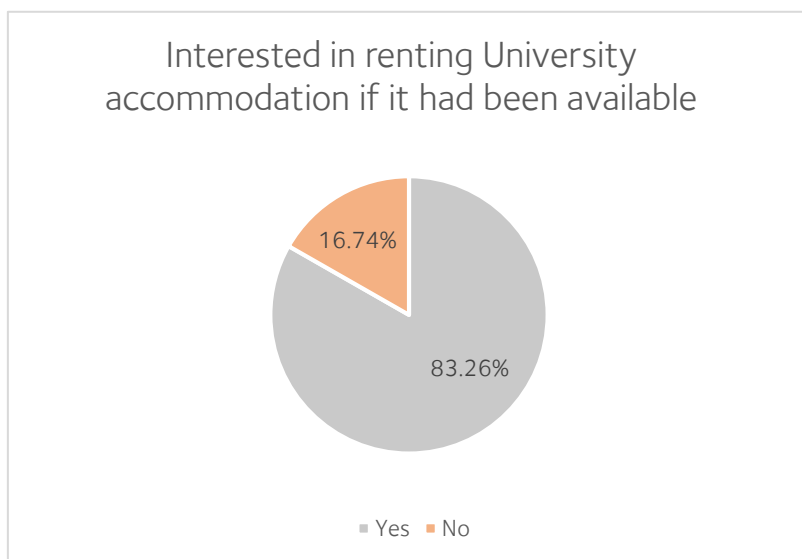


Figure 6- Interest in renting

1.15. Existing staff (44% of all survey respondents) indicated that they would be interested in renting University accommodation in the future. See Figure 7.

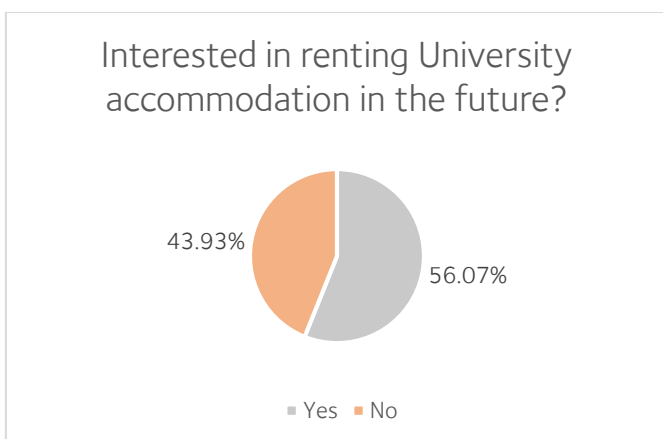


Figure 7- Interest in renting in the future

1.16. 96% of survey respondents considered it was difficult or very difficult to find suitable housing in Oxford and the surrounding area. They were also asked to give their views of the reasons for the difficulty (Figure 8).

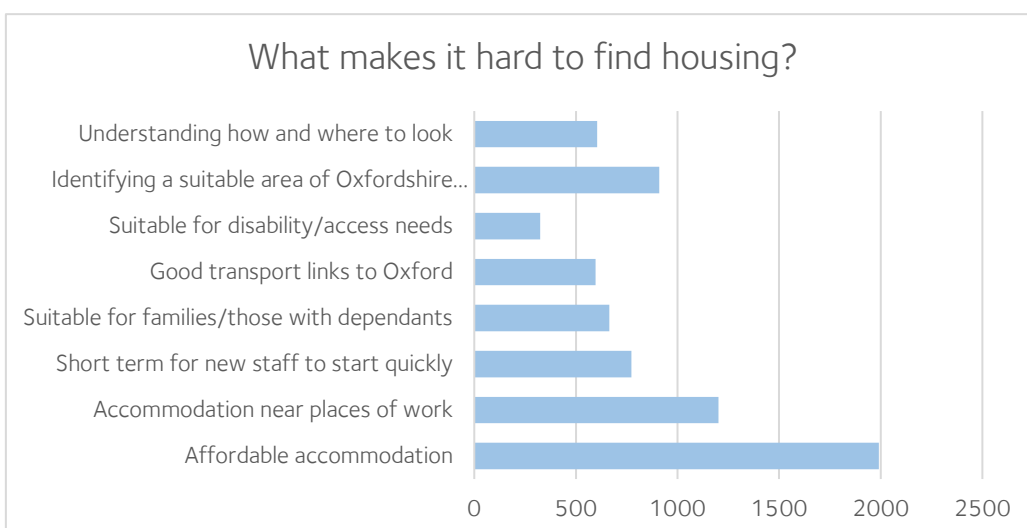


Figure 8- Reasons why hard to find housing

1.17. Survey respondents also said the top 3 priority groups for University housing should be: staff in lower paid posts, new starters and those with particular needs such as disabilities.

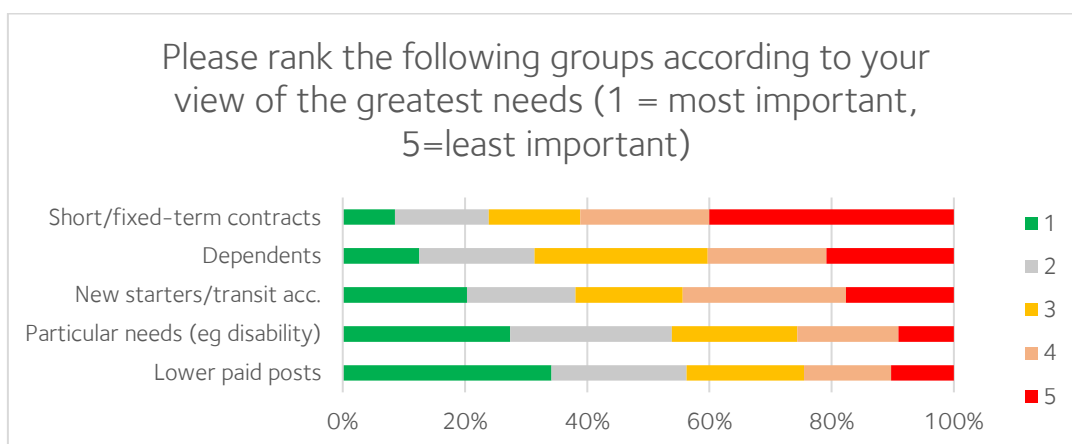


Figure 9- Priority housing needs

1.18. 41% of those responding said that they would prefer a 1 bed flat and 70% indicated that they would be willing to share with others (see Figure 10).

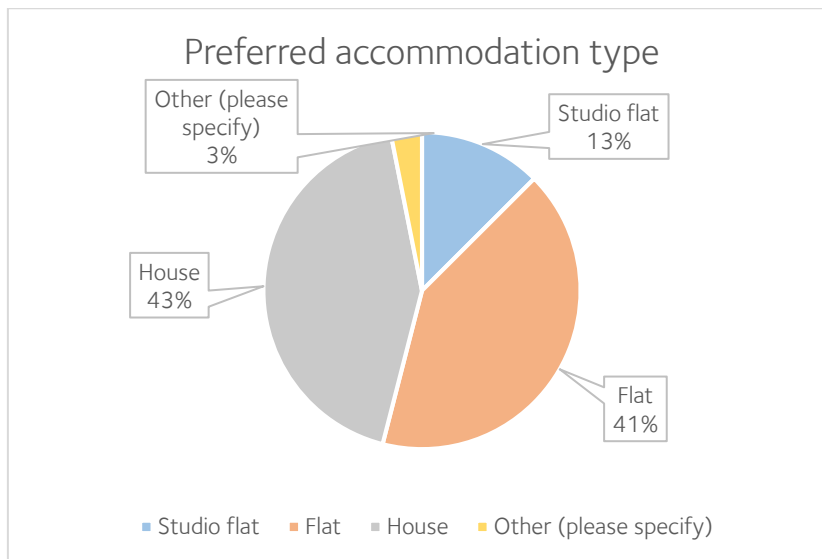


Figure 10- Accommodation preference

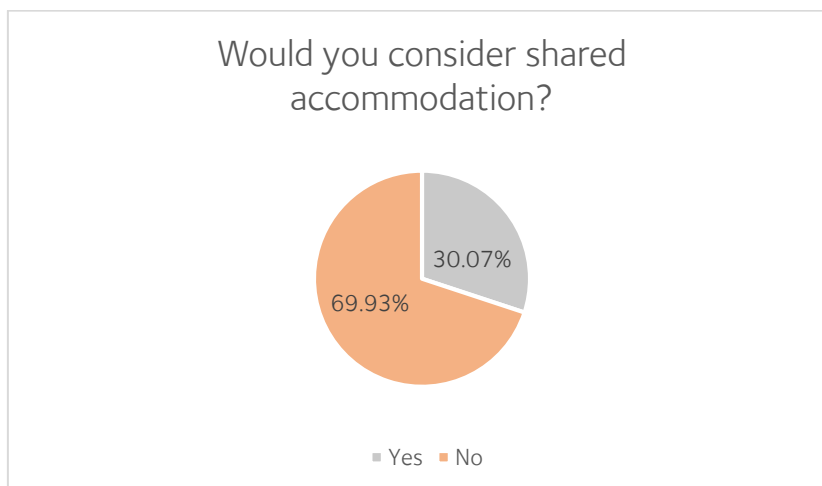


Figure 11 -Willingness to share

1.19. Half of respondents consider 30 minutes their maximum commuting time. This is the projected commuting time between Begbroke and Broad Street, Oxford by public transport, bicycle or motor bike and car.

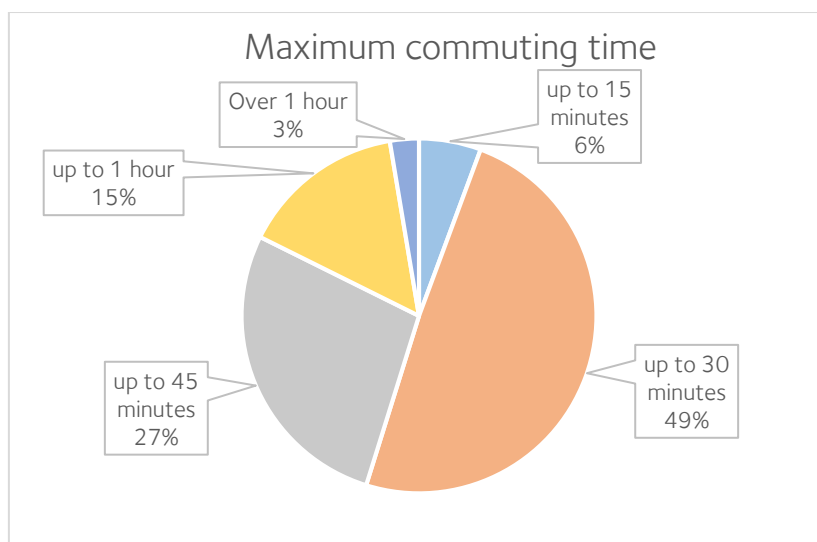


Figure 12 -Opinion on commuting time

Estimate of need

- 1.20. The indication from the staff survey is that there is a potential pool of interest of 6,000 staff (excluding colleges and others) to rent the proposed subsidised housing to be provided by the University as 'affordable housing' under Policy PR2 and other policies of the Plan to respond to the type and level of need in Oxford. This has been estimated by applying the percentage of existing staff who expressed an interest (44%) as a ratio to the University's total headcount (13,611).

2. University strategy to provide subsidised staff housing.

- 2.1. The University proposes to start the construction of at least 1,000 subsidised homes for University and College staff by 2023. These homes will not only address the need (e.g. mix, tenure, size) they will also ensure that the developments will be targeted at those in need and be viably delivered in line with the Plan's housing trajectory. Depending on the success of this programme the University would continue to grow the number of units over the next 5-year period. This accommodation will be offered to a diagonal cross section of academic, research, technical and support staff who meet the University's criteria for priority needs.
- 2.2. This is confirmed in the University's Strategic Plan.
- 2.3. The following are the relevant strategic priorities:
- 4. Aim to increase by 2023 undergraduate student intake by up to 200 a year, with a focus on strategically important subject areas including computer science, engineering, biomedical science and joint degrees in economics.
 - 5. Aim to increase by 2023 postgraduate taught student intake by up to 450 a year and postgraduate research student intake by up to 400 a year, while maintaining quality
 - 7. By 2023, in partnership with the private sector, to have started the construction of 1,000 additional graduate rooms including the establishment of at least one new graduate college.
 - 17. Develop an equitable and transparent means of allocating new affordable homes for University and college staff (see priority 28).
 - 19. Expansion of the innovation districts in and around Oxford, including at Begbroke Science Park and Osney Mead.
 - 28. By 2023, in partnership with the private sector, to have started the construction of at least 1,000 new subsidised homes for University and college staff.

Anticipated interest in 1,000 units of staff accommodation

- 2.4. The University of Oxford (excluding Oxford University Press) itself employs 13,600 staff (headcount) as at July 2017. In the year up to 31 July 2017 there was a turnover of 17.4% of all staff (1,624 on permanent contracts and 738 on fixed term contracts). At present the University and Colleges provide minimal staff accommodation, however, it is anticipated that the proposed 1,000 units of new subsidised homes for University and college staff will be fully utilised. This is supported by the results of the staff survey which indicated that there was considerable interest from respondents in renting accommodation should it be provided including that at Begbroke (Proposed allocation PR8 in the Plan). 32% said that they were 'very interested' in renting here. See Figure 13.

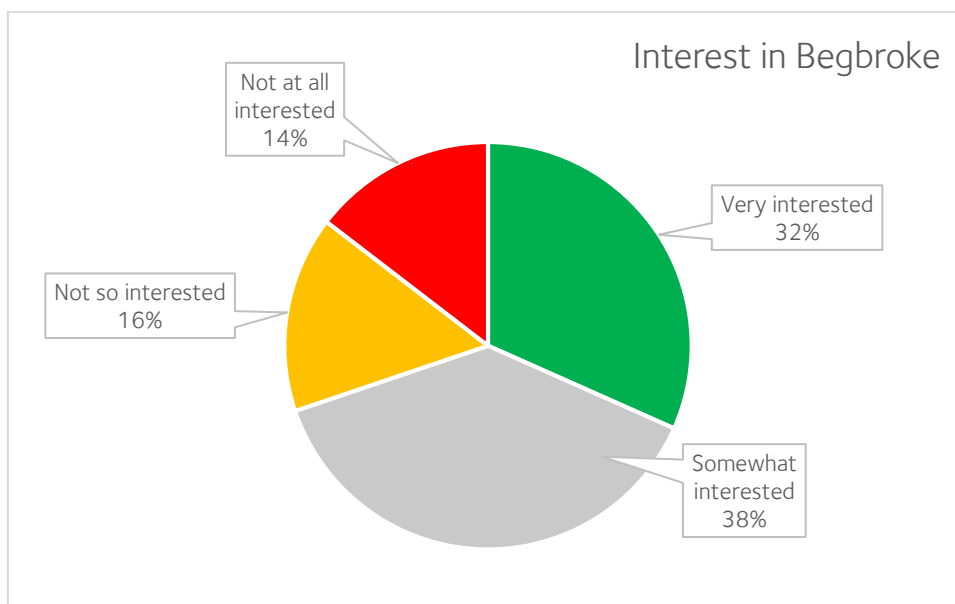


Figure 13-Level of interest in Begbroke

Staff Accommodation Strategy

2.5. The University has prepared a Staff Accommodation Strategy which provides evidence of its commitment to a diagonal apportionment of housing across its lower paid staff. This strategy was agreed by the University's Personnel Committee on 3 May 2018 and supported by Planning and Housing Strategy Group on 9 May 2018. This Strategy has been adopted following wide consultation across the University including the Student Union.

2.6. The Staff Accommodation Strategy confirms that:

“The range of staff whom we would intend to be eligible for the University's accommodation will be a diagonal cross section of all lower paid academic, research, professional services and support staff including those employed by the Colleges.”

3. Staff housing allocations and lettings principles

3.1. The University is drafting an “Allocations and Letting Policy” to support the Accommodation Strategy and the University's Strategic Plan, which will clarify eligibility criteria for its staff accommodation. It has already given consideration to the principles that should guide such eligibility criteria. It is anticipated that demand will be highly likely to outstrip supply and transparent and equitable allocation and prioritisation criteria are critical and should take account of:

- Benefiting a diagonal cross section of staff
- The difficulties identified by the staff survey (affordability, lack of familiarity with the area, proximity to places of work)
- Particular individual needs such as disability

- 3.2. The University will be seeking to offer accommodation to both new and existing staff. A proportion of new staff will come from overseas, either to take up a new post or returning to continue their work after a time abroad. All groups of staff contribute to the accommodation need of the University and who, in looking to find accommodation locally, will form part of the overall Oxford need. As a leading University it is normal that staff recruitment will involve those from overseas and such people when recruited will need somewhere to live.
- 3.3. The University has committed to a policy which will benefit a 'diagonal cross-section' of staff so it is important that all staff groups (i.e. support, academic-related, academic) are eligible to apply. The "Allocations and Letting Policy" will clarify and set eligibility criteria. The principles of the scheme will be based around a set of:
- **overarching eligibility criteria**, which all applicants would have to meet in order to have their applications further considered, and where the overarching criteria are met,
 - **additional needs-based criteria**, against which applications which would be scored, ranked or otherwise assessed.

Overarching criterion 1. Pay and grade

- 3.4. Household income is a determining factor.
- A pay/grade threshold (proposed to be below the bottom of grade 8, £38,883 pa). This would incorporate all support staff, and the majority of research staff (postdoctoral researchers are of particular strategic importance and typically at a grade 7).
 - Plus a further criterion taking account of combined household income (maximum rate to be determined).
 - Salary-based criteria can become complex when staff are promoted or secure more highly paid work i.e. individuals could be promoted out of eligibility to accommodation.

Overarching criterion 2. Previous or current housing location

- 3.4. Need to demonstrate no current, suitable accommodation within commutable distance.
- Those coming from overseas to take up a post at the University to be further prioritised, due to additional lack of familiarity, access to explore housing options locally from overseas, etc.
 - Eligibility is dependent upon living more than [25 miles] from Broad Street.
 - Eligibility will also give consideration to commuting time. A journey to work of less than [30 minutes] may also be a factor where staff commute from further afield than [25 miles] but because they live on a regular and direct bus or train route have a quicker commuting time.

Additional personal needs based criteria

- 3.5. Applicants who meet the overarching eligibility criteria as set out above, would then have their applications assessed, using a points based set of needs-based criteria which could include:

- Disability, requiring housing that purpose-built accommodation can address, this should be weighted highly
- Other personal circumstances, which require accommodation close to Oxford (e.g. complex care arrangements for local dependents)
- Work responsibilities, requiring easy access to Oxford
- Staff who have worked overseas for the University, on return to the UK
- Staff on short-fixed-term contracts (under 12 months) or with short contract extensions, which make an open-market tenancy harder to secure
- Other exceptional circumstances

3.6 There would be a weighting, points-based system, so that decision making is reasonably transparent. Individuals should be able to make personal applications, but their employment will need to be validated by their employing department.

Additional University needs based criteria

- 3.6 Possible criteria relating to recruitment where there is a hard to fill post, or in cases of retention of key staff, this could be considered.
- 3.7 It would be difficult, complex and politically sensitive to evaluate and prioritise such cases in a transparent, fair way and it is possible that these may not form part of the formal scheme. Although, the 'other exceptional circumstances' criteria above could allow scope for representations to be made by departments in cases of extreme need to e.g. secure a key appointment.

Length of tenancies

- 3.8 Employees would be offered a minimum of 3 year tenancies, especially under a potential build to rent scheme. However, there is no requirement for tenants to agree to a 3 year tenancy and fixed term staff with shorter contracts could therefore opt to sign up for a shorter tenancy, to be coterminous with their employment contract.
- 3.9 A fair and transparent method of allocating accommodation which is linked to employment needs will also include arrangements for ending tenancies when employment ends and re-allocation of accommodation in line with the Policy.

Equality considerations

- 3.10 An equality impact assessment of the final prioritisation methodology will be needed, and any methodology used must not directly or indirectly discriminate against staff groups with particular protected status or characteristics.
- 3.11 Part-time employees are specifically protected against less favourable treatment in employment law. Criteria related to contractual terms such as hours are to be avoided. This is also important since flexible working applications are frequently agreed, and full-time workers may become part-time at any point.

- 3.12 Fixed-term contract employees also have protection in employment law against less favourable treatment. Terms should not require an extended minimum length letting term because this would directly exclude most fixed-term staff, in particular many research staff who are typically on contracts of less than three years in total duration.
- 3.13 Research staff are likely to include many from overseas and criteria which are harder for them to meet should not be included so that discrimination is prevented against a group of staff who are more likely to be of diverse ethnic or national origins.
- 3.14 Fixed-term staff are already particularly disadvantaged in the housing market more generally, therefore criteria which are harder for them to meet, than for permanent staff, should be excluded because they might not be considered equitable and transparent.

4. Proposed affordable housing for rent.

- 4.1. The University is currently developing its affordable housing approach and commits to:
- Provide for the housing needs of its employees, in particular by addressing the sector of society between those able to access traditional affordable housing and those able to access market housing for sale or rent.
 - Build Affordable housing for rent (as defined in the NPPF and the draft Local Plan).
 - Develop a significant percentage of affordable housing for rent on the University land allocated in the Local Plan.
 - Set its rent policy and rent level at least 20% below market rents.
 - Make the accommodation available to a cross section of its staff
 - Retain the affordable housing for rent in perpetuity
- 4.2. The University is not a private sector developer who acquires land from a third party, builds and makes a profit for shareholders. It uses its own land to build to meet priority needs and to offer accommodation at affordable rents. The intention is that the cost, quality, and location of the accommodation it will be able to offer its staff will be attractive to those either in existing housing need or wishing to move to Oxford to work at the University.
- 4.3. The proposal is that the University will be providing affordable housing for rent. This is defined in the revised NPPF 2, published in July 2018, where the glossary explains that affordable housing for rent is where the level of rent is at least 20% below the market rent prevailing in the area.
- 4.4. The University is likely to deliver the affordable accommodation as a build to rent scheme. The NPPF 2 glossary, which will be relevant at the time of any planning application (if the Plan is found to be sound), goes on to define how a build to rent scheme falls within the definition of affordable housing for rent.
- 4.5. The University intends to adopt realistic eligibility criteria, lettings policies and rent levels. It will be assessing in detail the rent policy and rent levels of its subsidised staff accommodation to make sure that it is affordable to a cross section of its staff. It is preparing

the Allocations and Letting Policy, following the principles explained above, that will carefully consider the likely occupants of its accommodation, their household income, consideration of where proposed rental levels are in relation to University salary grades and thus their affordability to a cross section of its staff. The University is aware of the guidance of Shelter² and others that in terms of affordability a suitable guide is that no more than 35% of net household income should be spent on rent for housing. Nevertheless, the University will need to carefully consider the emerging percentage of subsidy below open market rents arising from this work. The University will need to balance affordability to its staff against the financial costs for its development to maintain the viability of each project and balance this with the University's own aspirations for full occupancy.

- 4.6. The University is not proposing to offer its accommodation at social rents. It does not collect data on whether any of its staff are on the Oxford City Council register for rented accommodation. However, whilst it will be offering its accommodation to a cross section of its eligible staff, its intention is to provide for its own needs and address the sector of society between those able to access traditional affordable i.e. social rented housing and those able to access market housing for sale or rent. This is the sector of affordable housing which Oxford City Council is encouraging its major employers, such as the University, to provide through its draft Local Plan Policy H3, employer-linked affordable housing. The University supports the principles of this Policy but has made representations to the City Council on the draft Plan.
- 4.7. It will be providing only a small percentage of affordable housing compared to the overall need and, as such, will be under pressure to ensure that properties are let to occupants in a way that has the maximum impact both on their situation and on the vitality of the University.
- 4.8. This new accommodation will significantly reduce the existing pressure on the local private rented sector that the University's staff currently exert through competing with others in the market. Alleviating this added pressure is to the benefit of Cherwell District and Oxford City Councils and also those in need, as new University-provided accommodation will release existing accommodation for others in need.
- 4.9. Allowing staff housing close to Oxford City will reduce traffic congestion and pressure on the highway network as a higher percentage of University staff will be within public transport, cycling and at PR8, potentially within walking distance of their workplaces (e.g. Begbroke Science Park).

² Shelter report: Private rent watch 2011. This report drew on earlier research to propose that an appropriate level of affordability is no more than 35% of local median take home pay (which represents deducting income tax and NI from salary)

5. Mechanism to secure affordable housing in perpetuity

- 5.1. The University can agree that the affordable housing for its staff should be secured in perpetuity. This is a term used by the Government in the NPPF and national Planning Practice Guidance in the context of affordable housing for rent.

- 5.2. In practice, the University considers the requirement will be included in any S106 Agreement that accompanies a planning permission for development on a University/Collegiate site. It follows from Oxford City and Cherwell District Councils' expectation that the University will hold this accommodation in perpetuity, that it agrees to a commitment not to offer any of the accommodation for sale either outright or as shared equity/shared ownership part sale and part rent.