

# Homes in Multiple Occupation Consultations. *Have your say!*

**20 SEPTEMBER 2022 – 15 NOVEMBER 2022**

**A Home in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is defined as a property rented to at least three people who are not from one 'household' (e.g., a family) but share facilities such as a bathroom and kitchen. HMOs meet a variety of needs for private rented housing, ranging from young professional 'house-shares' and students wanting to live off campus, as well as providing a vital source of housing supply for people on lower incomes as well as a range of other reasons. For many people, HMOs provide a practical and affordable housing option that meets their housing needs. They provide an important contribution to peoples' housing choice.**

- With the city's growing population, there is a need to ensure that new development supports thriving communities by ensuring the right mix of housing types in a neighbourhood, securing appropriate design, and supporting well managed properties. Some HMOs are purpose-built, e.g., student accommodation, but many are created through the conversion of buildings. Within areas of Coventry where there are a lot of HMOs there are increasing concerns about the changing nature of communities and neighbourhoods, and the impact of this change.
- Coventry City Council is looking at introducing some new planning policies which will be used to help decide whether planning applications for HMOs in Coventry are acceptable or not. The policies focus upon issues such as the need for a range of different housing options to serve the community, matters relating to maintaining positive residential environments, and acceptable parking standards to ensure that new HMO developments do not have a negative impact on the surrounding areas. It is the aim of the policy document to ensure that potentially harmful concentrations of HMOs do not arise and that a high standard of accommodation is delivered and maintained.
- However, while this new policy document sets our views on a potential preferred approach, we are seeking views and any input on any alternative approaches that you may want to put forward and what evidence we should consider to support this.
- In conjunction with the Development Plan Document, Coventry City Council will be introducing an 'Article 4 Direction'. Currently, under 'Permitted Development' rules, planning permission is not required for the change of use a family dwelling to a small HMO (less than 6 unrelated occupants in a single dwelling). The introduction of an Article 4 Direction will withdraw these permitted development rights, so planning permission will need to be obtained before the use can be changed. The Article 4 Direction will apply to eleven wards in Coventry which have been identified as having especially high concentrations of HMOs already, so the impacts of further changes would need to be very carefully considered to assess whether or not this might negatively affect the surrounding area.

**Consultations are now under way, and we want to hear from you! Comments can be provided through the consultation platform, accessed via the following link or you can use our comments form [www.coventry.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-consultations](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-consultations)**

Handwritten forms can be scanned and emailed to us at [planningpolicy@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@coventry.gov.uk), alternatively, they can be posted (addressed to the **Planning Policy Team**) to **PO Box 15, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry, CV1 5RR.**

The deadline date for representations to be submitted is **15/11/2022.**

# FAQ

## What type of policies will the document contain?

The four draft policies address the key issues that have been raised which will be used when considering HMO planning applications.

## Can we still convert houses into HMO's?

Once the new rules are adopted you may need to submit a planning application to change a house into a HMO – this will be the only way can convert a house to a HMO in the 11 wards to which the Article 4 will apply.

## How will HMO applications be assessed?

They will continue to be assessed against the policy in the adopted Coventry Local Plan and once adopted, the policies in the HMO DPD. As with all planning applications, other factors will be considered alongside relevant policies.

## What areas will this affect?

The Article 4 Direction will apply to the 11 specific Coventry wards only (Cheylesmore, Earlsdon, Foleshill, Lower Stoke, Radford, St. Michaels, Sherbourne, Wainbody, Whoberley, Westwood and Upper Stoke). The policies in the DPD will be applied and used to assess all HMO planning applications across the city.

## What will happen to existing HMOs?

The Article 4 Direction will not be applied retrospectively once it comes into force (expected autumn 2023) so any lawful HMOs operating within the 11 specified wards will not need to apply for planning permission.

## Do these policies still affect areas outside the areas listed?

Yes – the HMO DPD policies will apply to HMO planning applications across the city.

## Will this affect landlords of HMOs?

Yes – once the Article 4 comes into force, all landlords in the affected wards will have to apply for planning permission if they want to create a new HMO.

## If a house is already a HMO can it be converted back to a residential home?

Yes of course however, it may still require planning permission.

## Will Purpose Built Student Accommodations be affected?

No – the Article 4 Direction and HMO DPD relate specifically to HMO proposals. Purpose Built Student Accommodation will continue to be considered against the policy in the adopted Coventry Local Plan.

## When will this policy be introduced?

The HMO DPD is currently expected to be adopted in autumn 2023. The Article 4 direction is to be introduced as a non-immediate direction; it is expected to be in place by autumn 2023.