

London Borough of Bexley

News Release

For Immediate Release

21 September 2016 / PR 8373

CONSULTATION ON PLANNING CHANGES

Bexley is about to consult residents on the introduction of a 'non-immediate Article 4 Direction' for the borough.

The decision to introduce the Direction relates to growing concerns about an increasing number of houses in the borough being converted to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

At the moment certain works and alterations to unlisted buildings can be carried out without applying for planning permission from the Council. Development of this kind is called 'Permitted Development'. These works include the kind that could be made to a dwelling to turn it into a HMO.

An Article 4 Direction will mean the removal of this 'Permitted Development' right, making it easier for the Council to monitor the number of HMOs and the authority to grant or refuse permission for HMOs in the future.

The next stage will be to consult residents on the proposed changes. Following statutory consultation and subject to confirmation by the Council, the Direction could come in to force on 24 September 2017.

Leader of the London Borough of Bexley, Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE said; "The introduction of an Article 4 Direction isn't something that we are considering lightly. Many other local authorities have already taken this route in their boroughs to make sure smaller HMOs meet set requirements and our reason for doing so is to protect tenants, landlords and the local community.

We know that the majority of HMOs are legal, well run and above board, but there are some that may put health and safety at risk or may be in a totally unsuitable area without the necessary infrastructure. If introduced, the Direction will help us to control and monitor new HMOs, refusing permission where appropriate."

Consultation on the Article 4 Direction will take place between 23 September and 4 November 2016. The consultation will available online at www.bexley.gov.uk/consultation

Alternatively you can email your views to SP>eam@bexley.gov.uk or write to the

London Borough of Bexley, Strategic Planning & Growth Team, Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street, Bexleyheath, DA6 7AT. Any correspondence concerning the Article 4 consultation must be received by 5pm on 4 November 2016.

A copy of the Article 4 Direction and a map can be viewed during normal office hours at the Civic Offices, 2 Watling Street, Bexleyheath, DA6 7AT, at Bexley libraries or online at www.bexley.gov.uk/hmoarticle4

The Article 4 Direction is part of the borough's co-ordinated approach to manage HMOs which includes the development of a new local licensing scheme. The Council will shortly start a separate consultation on the proposed local licensing scheme.

ENDs

Please contact: Jane Parson on 020 3045 4868
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Attachments

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