



**BUILDING HOMES
MAKING PLACES
ENHANCING LIVES**

Presentation to Croydon's Streets, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee

**Jane Porter
Chief Operating Officer
Optivo**



Who are we?

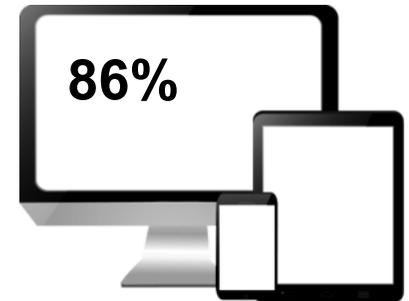
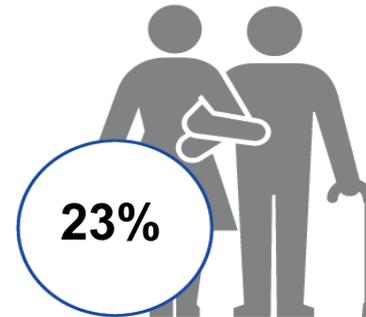
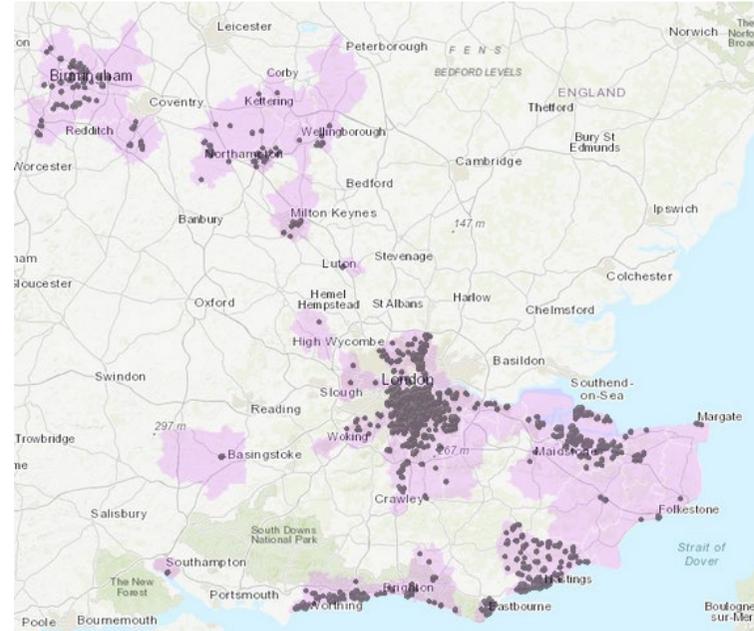
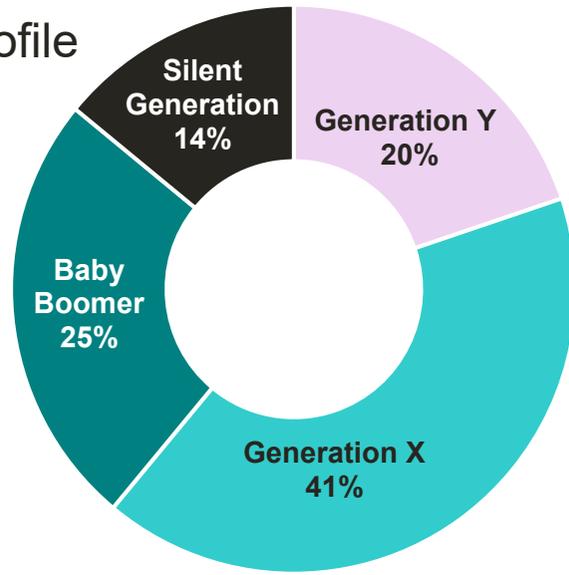


◆ Over 90,000 residents

◆ 43,000 homes

- 68% General needs
- 9% HOPs/ Retirement
- 12% Homeowners
- 8% Commercial (student, keyworker)
- 3% Supported Housing

◆ Resident profile





Overview of our work in Croydon

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Optivo homes in Croydon



		General Needs	Homes for Older People and Supported	SO/ Leasehold	Total
Self-Contained	Bedsit	13	2	6	21
	1 Bed	403	57	311	771
	2 Bed	988	2	612	1,602
	3 Beds	626	0	83	709
	4 Beds	250	0	7	257
	5 Beds	13	0	0	13
	6 or more Beds	1	0	0	1
	Self-Contained	2,294	61	1,019	3,374
Non-Self-Contained	Room	0	31	0	31
	Non-Self-Contained	0	31	0	31
		2,294	92	1,019	3,405

Building affordable homes for Croydon residents



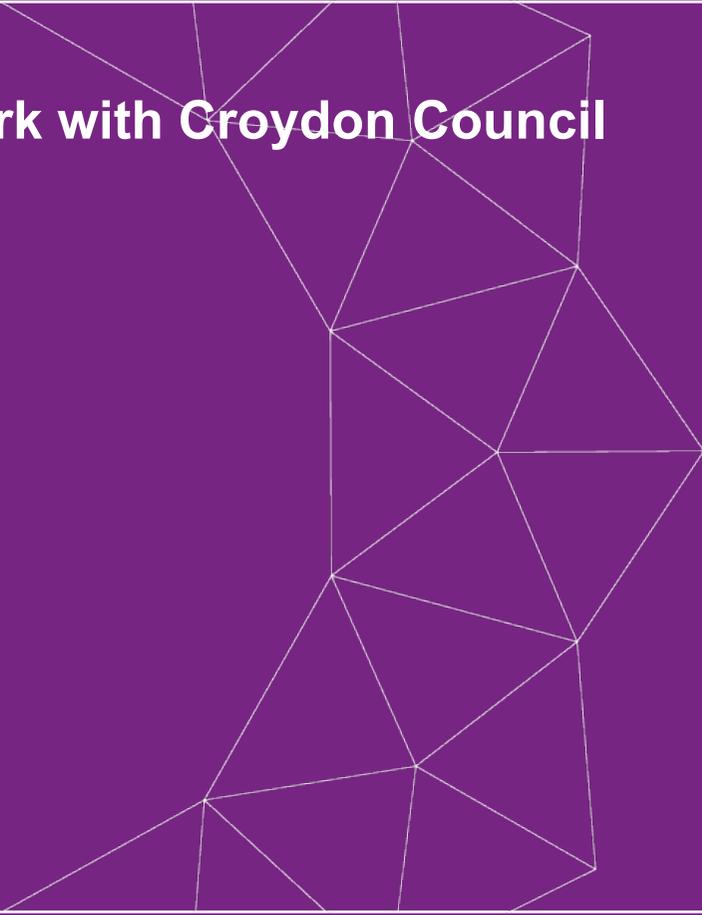
- Optivo is a major builder of new affordable homes in Croydon
- We're building nearly 1,000 homes in Croydon between now and March 2023
- Our schemes include a range of new homes for rent and affordable home ownership
- We're building London Living Rent homes for the Mayor, including 30 on our Cairo New Road scheme
- We're also investing in community facilities – our Canterbury Road scheme includes a nursery
- Keen to work more closely with Croydon Council to bring land into use for affordable homes



Addiscombe Grove, Croydon – Optivo's joint project with Pocket Living



Reflections on our work with Croydon Council

A large, abstract graphic composed of white lines forming a complex, geometric pattern of interconnected triangles and polygons. The pattern is centered on the page and extends from the top to the bottom, partially overlapping the text area. It resembles a stylized, crystalline or architectural structure.

Strengths



Strong joint working between Optivo and Croydon Council to support residents:

- We're partnering to provide homes for the Housing First pilot
 - We're investing heavily in financial inclusion and debt advice
 - New Tenancy Sustainment team to provide dedicated support to residents facing difficulties
 - Good joint work on anti-social behaviour
 - Positive outcomes being delivered for residents on jobs and skills
 - Croydon Works job brokerage - supply chain jobs like Chequers Cleaning
 - Supporting The Croydon Partnership (LB Croydon, Westfields, Hammersons) as partner sponsor on Whitgift Centre Pop-up business school. 100 + people into micro-enterprise / practice trading annually
 - Love London Working - Local delivery on flagship GLA/ESF funded programme - 212 local people into jobs to date!
 - Development plans to build 1,000 new homes in the borough
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Weaknesses



There are a number of challenges where, in partnership, we could build a stronger shared approach:

- Both Optivo and Croydon Council have been through major staff restructures. We need to ensure that new staff establish strong working relationships
- We need to continue to strengthen partnership working to tackle serious anti-social behaviour cases
- All partners have been hit by budget cuts. There's an opportunity to develop a stronger asset-based approach to draw on the collective resources of everyone working in Croydon on housing
- We work with the Council and the Police to re-house Croydon residents fleeing gang violence. But, there's a need for a stronger London-wide approach to support vulnerable families who move with advice and moving costs.

Opportunities

- **More investment in Croydon** - As one of the Mayor of London's Strategic Partners, we have secured an additional £145m to invest in affordable homes. We want to work in closer partnership with Croydon Council to find sites to invest some of this new funding in the borough.
 - **More homes at lower rents** – our Mayoral funding includes homes at London Affordable Rent and London Living Rent. We can offer more genuinely affordable homes to local residents.
 - **More jobs in the heart of Croydon** - Croydon was chosen as the location for the national head office for our merged organisation. This has brought an extra 150 jobs to central Croydon.
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Threats



Housing association finances are now very stretched

- While the Mayor and Government have given Optivo additional funding, the grant per home remains much lower than the cost of building.
- We get £70k grant for London Affordable Rent homes, but land and construction can cost £300k-£400k per home. This is stretching our ability to fund affordable homes through cross-subsidy to the limit.

Reductions in public services continue to affect vulnerable tenants

- Our tenants report multiple challenges, including finding it more difficult to access mental health services, secure support from the police and other agencies.

Welfare changes are very challenging for our tenants

- Continued uncertainty over benefit arrangements will continue to place financial pressure on tenants

Brexit

- 50% of construction workers building homes in London are from the EU. Unless there is a transitional deal to maintain access for these workers, affordable home building could be very badly affected.
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We strongly value our partnership working with Croydon Council.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Council more closely to:

- Build new affordable homes in Croydon
 - Provide stronger support to vulnerable residents
 - Pool expertise and resource to strengthen Croydon's communities
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