

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CITY PLANNING

MONITORING OF STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS

1 SUMMARY

The monitoring note attached to this report (see Appendix 1) updates the Committee on trends in the numbers of student household living in particular parts of the City. The information relates to November 2009. The conclusion is that the number of student households living in the general housing stock is continuing to increase, despite the provision of significant amounts of new purpose-built student housing in the last few years.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That the report and monitoring note be noted.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Students form an important element of the City's population, with full-time university students comprising about 1 in 8 of the population. Their numbers have been increasing in recent years and this has contributed to Nottingham City being one of the fastest growing local authority districts, in population terms, since 2001 – about one-third of the 27,700 (10.3%) increase between 2001 and 2008 shown in the latest revised Office for National Statistics Mid-Year Estimates of Population has been due to the increase in full-time university students.
- 3.2 About 2,400 new purpose-built student flats were built in the City between April 2001 and October 2009, comprising some 7,200 bedspaces. By providing an alternative to students living in general housing, these make an important contribution to the housing-stock, particularly since Communities and Local Government changed their definitions to allow them to count towards the 1,000 net dwelling increase per year required in the East Midlands Regional Plan. Despite this success in building new flats, however, the majority of students continue to live in the general housing-stock.
- 3.3 Creating and maintaining balanced communities is an important aspect of the Nottingham Local Plan and will be so in the emerging Local Development Framework. An element of this is how student households are concentrated in particular areas.
- 3.4 The main way of assessing how the location of student households is changing is the monitoring of council tax student exemptions. Appendix 1 gives the results of the latest monitoring.
- 3.5 The current policy with regard to student developments is amplified in the Building Balanced Communities Supplementary Planning Document (reissued March 2007).

4 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

This is an information report only.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

None.

9 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Transform Nottingham's Neighbourhoods

10 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS

None.

11 VALUE FOR MONEY

None.

12 List of background papers other than published works or those disclosing confidential or exempt information

None.

13 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- Nottingham Local Plan (November 2005)
<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=536&p=0>
- Building Balanced Communities Supplementary Planning Document (reissued March 2007)
<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=675&p=0>
- Action Plan to Respond to Recent changes in legislation in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation, Executive Board Report, 18th May 2010
<http://open.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/comm/download3.asp?ditype=inline&filename=43206/HMOFinalJD.doc>

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Monitoring of student households in selected areas – November 2009

Introduction

As new purpose-built student accommodation has been provided in the last few years, it has been hoped that, in line with City Council policy, the number of students in the general housing stock will have started to go down. In order to investigate this, changes in the numbers of student council tax exemptions are monitored annually. When looking at these changes it is important to look at data for similar months in each year, because of the cycles in an academic year. The latest information, relating to November 2009 and changes since October 2008 is examined in this report.

This follows previous analysis of council tax data from November 2004, October 2006, October 2007 and October 2008, which suggested there was no evidence that the number of student households in the general housing stock had been reducing.

Please note: Changes to the way council tax student exemptions data is provided, means that we are no longer able to look at numbers of properties changing from student to non-student and from non-student to student over the year.

Summary of Findings

The number of student Council tax exemptions increased across the monitoring areas between 2008 and 2009. A contributory factor to this is that the number of full-time students rose by several hundred more than the number of new purpose-built bedspaces which were provided. This illustrates the problem that, although the City Council's policy of moving students towards purpose built accommodation can be seen as having been working well, unless the new bedspaces provided each year exceed the increase in student numbers it is unlikely to ever be entirely successful.

The areas selected

Because of problems with monitoring student council tax exemptions over time in the city as a whole, due to inclusion of purpose-built blocks in the data, this analysis, as with the previous analyses, looks at five areas where either such blocks have not been built or their effects can be removed.

The three main student areas have been chosen: Dunkirk, Lenton and the Arboretum. Two lower demand areas, Forest Fields and the Meadows, have also been included, to see if trends there are different – i.e. areas less popular with students lose student households first.

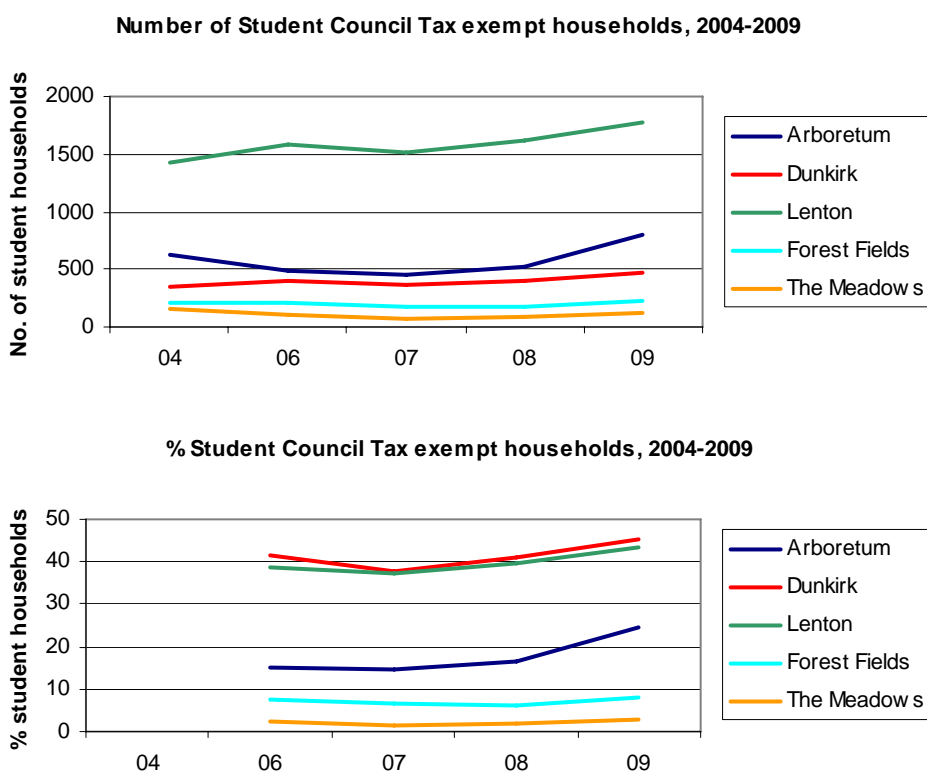
The boundaries of these areas are shown on the attached map, together with the proportion of council tax properties that were occupied by students in November 2009. The map shows information for Census output areas, which are used in the City Council's methodology of assessing the proportion of dwellings occupied by students in particular neighbourhoods (see "Building Balanced Communities Supplementary Planning Document", reissued November 2007, <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=675&p=0>).

Changes since October 2008

Table 1 shows changes in the total number of student exemptions by area in October 2008, and November 2009.

The council tax data shows there have been increases in the numbers of student households in all five monitoring areas since 2008, taking the overall number to 3,373, an increase of 20%. Some of this increase could be due to the data having been extracted from the council tax system slightly later in the Autumn Term.

- Arboretum and Lenton have seen the largest increases in numbers of student exemptions - 267 and 153 properties respectively.
- Forest Fields and The Meadows have also seen large percentage increases – of 30.2% and 45.7%, but the actual numbers of student exemptions in these areas are much lower.



Proportions of student households in November 2009

In previous years, there have been discrepancies with the way halls are recorded for the purpose of Council Tax exemptions – sometimes they have been recorded as a single property, sometimes as flats and sometimes by bedspace. As such, the figures in Table 1 that relate to the percentage of properties in an area use the number of properties minus the number of halls as the denominator.

As the monitoring areas were originally chosen as areas where halls/purpose-built blocks were absent, this only affects a few output areas where such blocks have been built recently.

2 in 5 households in the Dunkirk and Lenton areas are student households, a slight increase on the proportions in 2008.

Table 1. Change in student households (October 2008 to November 2009) in selected areas

	Total Households minus Halls (Nov 2009)	Student Households (Nov 2009)		Student Households (Oct 2008)		Change 2008-2009	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Arboretum	3,238	797	24.6	530	16.6	267	50.4%
Dunkirk	1,019	462	45.3	399	41.0	63	15.8%
Lenton	4,088	1,772	43.3	1,619	39.5	153	9.5%
Forest Fields	2,731	224	8.2	172	6.3	52	30.2%
The Meadows	4,514	118	2.6	81	1.8	37	45.7%
Total of areas	15,590	3,373	21.6	2,801	18.1	572	20.4%

Source: Council Tax student exemptions.

New purpose-built accommodation and the increase in student numbers

For the purposes of monitoring student accommodation, the number of full-time students is most relevant, because part-time students are less likely to have moved to Nottingham for the purposes of studying, indeed, many may not live in the area at all.

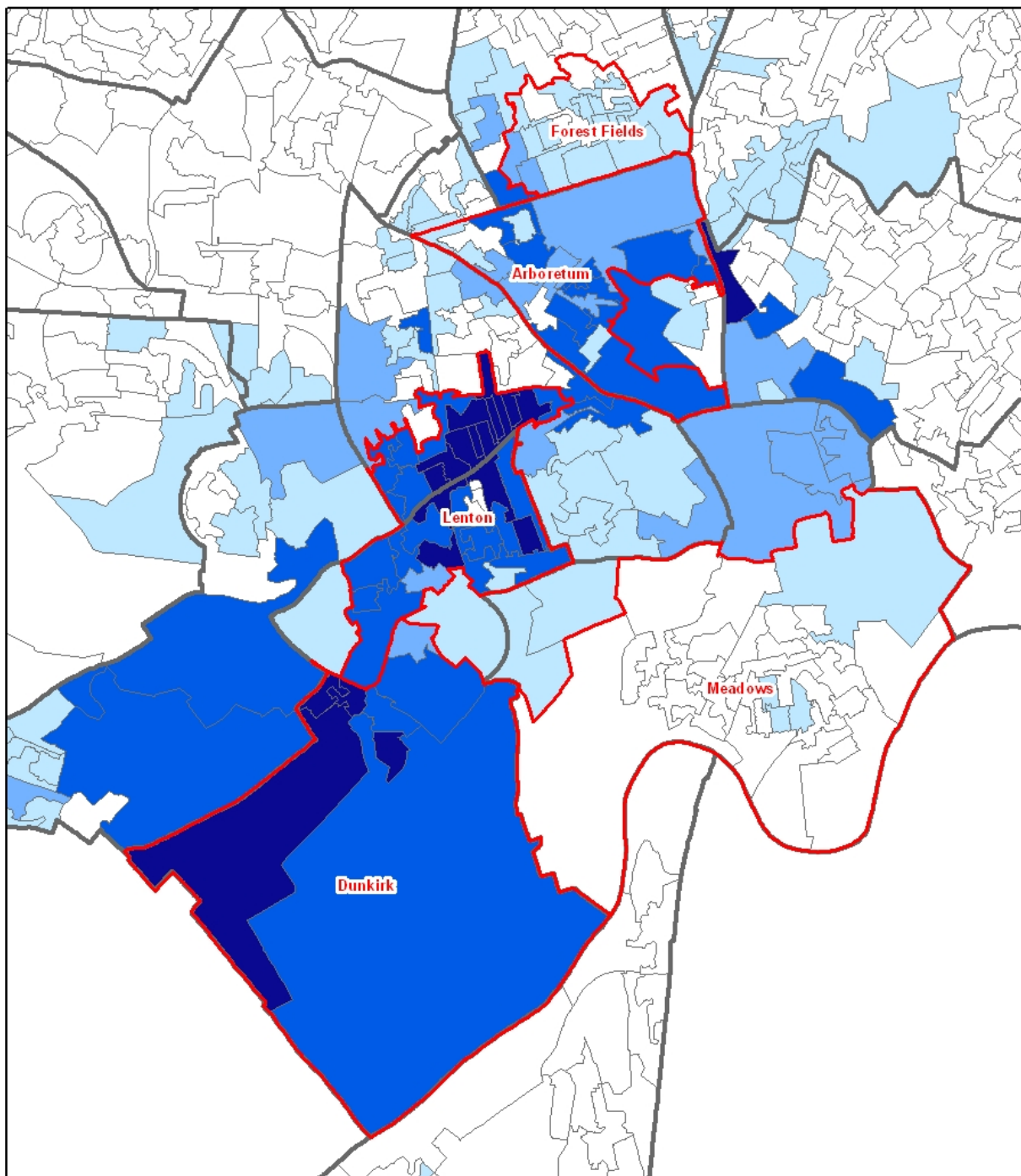
Information from the universities suggests that there has been an increase of about 1,300 full-time students in the current academic year, about 1,000 of them at NTU. If this increase is carried through to later in the academic year, when the official numbers are monitored, this will be only slightly smaller than last year's increase of 1,600, which was the largest increase since 2003.

The only significant increase in purpose-built student accommodation in this academic year is 302 bedspaces at the Opal development off Ilkeston Road. In crude terms then it seems that the growth in full-time students exceeded the number of new bedspaces by about 1,000. Over the last two years the shortfall was 2,000. When considering this number, it should be borne in mind that not all of them will be living in the City and that there is a trend for more students to live at home.

It remains to be seen what the impact of financial restrictions on the universities will be on the number of student admissions in the next academic year and following years, as the universities are not able to provide forecasts. It is clear, however, that even if they do not continue to increase, a steady supply of new purpose-built accommodation is required if there is to be a significant reduction in the numbers of students in the general housing stock. This will need to be well-designed if it is to compete with existing student houses. The current production of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document give an opportunity to address this issue fully. To put this into context, the only significant schemes currently being built or at an advanced stage of planning are 751 further bedspaces at Opal (opening in 2010 and 2011) and a net increase of 630 bedspaces at NTU's Clifton Campus.

In terms of controlling the number of student households in the general housing stock, changes to planning legislation have recently been introduced which enable more control over the conversion of properties into houses in multiple occupation for students and others. Executive Board approved an action plan to take advantage of these changes at their meeting on 18th May 2010. This action plan also includes a review of purpose-built student accommodation (its design, location, specification etc.) by the end of 2010.

Graham Gardner
Policy and Information Team, May 2010



Title: Student Households as percentage of all households (minus Halls)

Key		Output Areas	monitoring areas
		% Student Households, Nov 2009	Wards
□	0% - 5%		
□	5.1% - 15%		
□	15.1% - 25%		
□	25.1% - 50%		
□	50.1% - 83.1%		

Map produced on:
16/03/2010

Map produced by:
Policy and
Information Team



**Nottingham
City Council**

Environment and Regeneration

0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Kilometers



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