

The Housing Strategy Operational Action Plan 2009-2014

Strategic Priority 1:- To continue to maximise the delivery of new affordable homes					
<i>The Aim:- To optimise the supply of affordable housing within available resources to meet identified and prioritised needs</i>					
Objective	Who	When	Resources	Outputs	Outcomes
<p>1.1 To maintain a sound evidence base for the development of affordable housing through research exercises and the use of external research findings (including the Strategic Housing Market Assessment)</p> <p><i>Task One.</i></p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager</p> <p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator</p> <p>Research and Development Officer</p> <p>Senior Planning Policy Officer</p>	Ongoing	Within existing staffing resources	<p>Information to support bids for funding for Social Housing Grant and other housing-related sources of funding.</p> <p>Support the maintenance of an up-to-date and constructive planning policy framework.</p>	Increased success in securing funding for and delivering affordable housing in Hertsmere.
<p>1.2 To hold meetings of the Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Liaison Group at least twice each year.</p> <p><i>Task Two</i></p>	<p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator</p> <p>Research and Development Officer</p>	Ongoing	Within existing staffing resources	<p>~ Dissemination of information on development opportunities and Council policies.</p> <p>~ Effective allocation of development opportunities to RSLs.</p>	<p>~ RSLs well-informed of Council policies.</p> <p>~ Maximisation of RSLs' skills and assets.</p> <p>~ Increased co-operation between RSLs.</p> <p>Reduced duplication and waste.</p>
<p>1.3 To optimise the use of Council resources for the provision of affordable housing.</p> <p><i>Task Three</i></p>	<p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator</p> <p>Research and Development Officer</p> <p>Asset Management</p>	Ongoing	<p>Within existing staffing resources</p> <p>Council assets</p>	<p>~ Decrease in the costs of development for RSLs.</p> <p>~ Swifter development of affordable housing.</p>	<p>~ Increase in the amount of affordable housing in the borough.</p> <p>~ Use of Council assets to directly improve the well-being</p>

	Panel				of Hertsmere residents.
1.4 To optimise the use of Social Housing Grant for the development of social housing. <i>Task Four</i>	Affordable Housing Co-ordinator The Homes and Communities Agency (formerly the Housing Corporation)	Ongoing	Within existing staffing resources. Social Housing Grant	Year-on-year increase in the number of affordable housing units developed in Hertsmere.	Increase in the amount of affordable housing in the borough
1.5 To maximise the delivery of additional units of affordable housing through the Planning process. <i>Task Five</i>	Affordable Housing Co-ordinator Planning and Building Control Unit	Ongoing	Within existing staffing resources. Developer contributions	Year-on-year increase in the number of affordable housing units development in Hertsmere.	Increase in the amount of affordable housing in the borough.
1.6 To plan and develop low cost home ownership schemes in Bushey and Potters Bar (previously low cost home ownership options have been almost wholly concentrated in Borehamwood). <i>Task Six</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Affordable Housing Co-ordinator. Research and Development Officer Registered Social Landlords Lea Valley Homes (Zone Agents) Policy and Transport Manager	To be advised	Social Housing Grant Developer contributions	~ the development of units for low cost home ownership in Bushey and Potters Bar. ~ the increase in tenure options for residents of Bushey and Potters Bar, including tenants of social rented housing who may wish to move on to low cost home ownership.	~ more housing options for residents of Bushey and Potters Bar. ~ some "freeing-up" of social rented accommodation if tenants wish to move to low cost home ownership.
1.7 Consultation to take place with parish councils on the need for	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager.	30 March 2009	Within existing staffing resources	~ the production of a research paper giving	~ an information base to guide any proposed

housing in rural areas. To cover Elstree, Shenley and South Mimms. <i>Task Seven</i>	Research and Development Officer. Allocations Team Planning Policy Team Parish Councils in Elstree, Shenley, Ridge and South Mimms.			details of housing needs, aspirations and supply in the three rural areas.	development of affordable housing in rural areas, and to inform any planning decisions on rural areas.
1.8 To investigate housing development options in terms of land assembly and delivery vehicles.	Head of Housing and Health. Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Planning Asset Management	Ongoing	Within existing resources.	Sites identified. Delivery vehicles chosen.	Additional affordable housing. Reduced pressure on the Green Belt.

Strategic Priority 2:- To work with partners towards a socially inclusive sustainable community

The Aim:- To use an holistic approach to improve the quality of life in Hertsmere's more deprived neighbourhoods

Objective	Who	When	Resources	Outputs	Outcomes
2.1 To produce a regeneration plan to tackle both housing need/homelessness and worklessness in the four Borehamwood wards <i>Task eight</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Research and Development Officer. Housing Options Officer.	To be arranged	Preliminary work within existing staffing resources. Employment Participation.	Housing and employment/training advice services for young mothers and single people aged 25-44.	Services to increase access to both housing and employment/training services. An increase in homelessness prevention.

	<p>WorkNet</p> <p>Homestart</p> <p>William Sutton Homes</p> <p>Local Strategic Partnership Economic Development sub-group</p> <p>Hertsmere Community Partnership</p> <p>Citizens Advice Bureau</p> <p>Job Centre Plus</p> <p>Oaklands College</p>				
<p>2.2 To progress regeneration initiatives in the Leeming Road area.</p> <p><i>Task nine</i></p>	<p>Head of Housing and Health.</p> <p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager</p> <p>Research and Development Officer</p> <p>Planning and Building Control Team</p> <p>William Sutton Homes</p> <p>The Community Investment Partnership</p>	To be arranged	<p>Preliminary research work to be carried out within existing staffing resources.</p> <p>Additional resources may be required.</p>	<p>A timetabled and costed holistic plan to improve housing supply, services and the environment around a defined area in Borehamwood.</p>	<p>Improve the quality of life of residents within Hertsmere's most deprived Super Output areas.</p>

	The HCA				
2.3 To carry out research into the Cowley Hill ward and Brookmeadow ward. <i>Task ten</i>	Affordable Housing Co-ordinator. Research and Development Officer. Head of Corporate Support and Community Services Community Partnerships Officer.	Initial research exercise completed by the Housing Strategy Team and William Sutton Homes in September 2008. Results presented to the Local Strategic Partnership. Further research to be undertaken.	Within existing staffing resources.	To produce an information database to support the case for a regeneration initiative, and to define which what initiatives are required within the regeneration programme.	A comprehensive and holistic plan to improve the quality of life of residents within Hertsmere's deprived Super Output areas.
2.4 To conduct discussions with registered social landlords on low cost home ownership products using income data. <i>Task eleven</i>	Affordable Housing Co-ordinator Research and Development Officer Lea Valley Homes Citizens Advice Bureau.	31 March 2009	Within existing staffing resources	~To produce a set of findings on the sale of low cost home ownership properties in the borough in 2005-2008 including the previous address of purchasers. ~ To provide a set of recommendations on how low cost homeownership can be made more affordable to local residents.	Improvements to the provision and marketing of low cost home ownership to ensure greater take-up among local residents. Take-up of low cost home ownership options among households currently on the Hertsmere Housing Register.

Strategic Priority 3:- To improve the condition of housing stock in the private sector

The Aim:- To improve the overall condition and energy efficiency of privately owned housing in the borough. To ensure that the Government's Decent Homes target for privately-owned homes is met. To tackle privately owned properties which have been identified as most vulnerable to poor condition.

Objective	Who	When	Resources	Outputs	Outcomes
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3.1 Home Repairs Assistance – to publicise the new grant system. <i>Task twelve</i>	Principal Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator.	Ongoing	Existing and planned staffing resources	A regime to offer practical and accessible financial aid to vulnerable households on limited income.	More take-up.
3.2 To continue proactive inspections of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) <i>Task thirteen</i>	Principal Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator.	Ongoing	Existing and planned staffing resources	To identify HMOs within the borough	Improve the quality and safety of HMOs.
3.3 To explore the possibilities of working with private sector partners in the delivery of financial assistance. <i>Task fourteen</i>	Principal Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator		Existing and planned staffing resources.	To ensure that the services offered are the most economical possible.	
3.4 To devise new local performance indicators for the private rented sector. <i>Task fifteen</i>	Principal Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator. Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator. Housing Supply Officer.	April 2009	Existing and planned staffing resources.	To create a system of monitoring performance that accurately reflects the needs of the housing stock while recognising the limits to the team's staffing	Accurate measurement of performance, leading to effective methods for service improvement.
3.5 To adopt an affordable warmth strategy for the borough. <i>Task sixteen</i>	Energy Conservation Officer. Climate Change Officer Working Herts	July 2009	Within existing staffing resources.	A plan which co-ordinates all the initiatives to reduce fuel poverty.	A reduction in the incidence of household fuel poverty in the borough.
3.6 To introduce Empty Homes loans, Conversion loans and Decent Homes loans. <i>Task seventeen</i>	Principal Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator. Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator.	March 2009	External consultant	An incentive for owners of empty homes to bring their properties back into use.	A reduction in the number of individual empty homes in the borough.
3.7 To revise the Be Warm Be Wise	Energy Conservation	31 March 2009	Within existing	A scheme whose	An updated service

<p>scheme.</p> <p><i>Task eighteen</i></p>	<p>Officer.</p> <p>Climate Change Officer.</p> <p>Working Herts.</p>		<p>staffing resources.</p>	<p>eligibility criteria and remit is updated to take account of recent and long-term changes e.g. new Government schemes, more people who are aged over 60 who work.</p>	<p>which meets the needs of residents of the borough</p>
<p>3.8 To achieve an annual improvement in domestic energy efficiency.</p> <p><i>Task nineteen</i></p>	<p>Energy Conservation Officer.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Within existing staffing resources.</p>	<p>Use of a range of schemes to bring households out of fuel poverty.</p>	<p>A reduction in the incidence of household fuel poverty in the borough.</p>

Strategic Priority 4:- To ensure the needs of vulnerable groups are met					
<i>Aim:- To ensure affordable and appropriate housing options are available for the full range of special needs housing groups, as specified in the Hertfordshire Supporting People strategy.</i>					
Objective	Who	When	Resources	Outputs	Outcomes
<p>4.1 To contribute housing expertise to the Council's Gypsy and Traveller strategy, particularly in the areas of site design and support services.</p> <p><i>Task twenty</i></p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager.</p> <p>Planning and Building Control Team</p> <p>Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Within existing staffing resources.</p> <p>Possible application for Social Housing Grant.</p>	<p>A set of recommendations on the design of sites and the development of management services.</p> <p>A response from RSLs on interest in designing and providing sites and developing services for gypsies and travellers.</p>	<p>Provision of the number of pitches required in the borough on sites designed to a high standard, and high quality management services for the sites.</p>
<p>4.2 To examine the feasibility of an extra-care scheme for older people in either Bushey or</p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager</p>	<p>To be advised.</p>	<p>Social Housing Grant.</p>	<p>To produce the case for a new extra care scheme to meet needs and</p>	<p>Housing for older people which takes into account</p>

<p>Radlett. The scheme would incorporate features which would make it suitable for older members of the Jewish community.</p> <p><i>Task twenty one</i></p>	<p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator.</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords</p> <p>County Council Adult Care Services</p> <p>Supporting People team.</p> <p>Faith Communities.</p>		<p>Supporting People funding.</p>	<p>aspirations in the borough. A scheme which is designed to be suitable for members of the Jewish Community.</p>	<p>demographic changes and the needs and aspirations of members of minority faith communities.</p>
<p>4.3 To examine the feasibility of an extra-care scheme for people with learning disabilities in either Bushey or Radlett. The scheme would incorporate features which would make it suitable for members of the Jewish community.</p> <p><i>Task twenty two</i></p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager.</p> <p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator.</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords</p> <p>County Council Adult Care Services.</p> <p>Supporting People team.</p> <p>Faith Communities.</p>	<p>To be advised</p>	<p>Social Housing Grant</p> <p>Supporting People funding.</p>	<p>To produce the case for an extra-care scheme for people with learning disabilities to enable them to live in their own self-contained accommodation yet receive support services when required. The scheme would be culturally appropriate for residents of the Jewish community.</p> <p>A mix tenure scheme would enable residents to wholly or partially purchase their own accommodation.</p>	<p>Attractive housing options for local people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>A reduction in the need for local residents to be accommodated in supported housing elsewhere in the United Kingdom, away from their support networks. This particularly applies to members of the Jewish community, many of whom have to be accommodated in Manchester.</p>
<p>4.4 To examine the feasibility of commissioning a further leasehold scheme for older people to assist</p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager.</p>	<p>To be advised.</p>	<p>Social Housing Grant</p> <p>Supporting People</p>	<p>A case for a leasehold scheme which includes a high level of space</p>	<p>~ a decrease in the number of older people living in unsuitable</p>

<p>owner-occupiers who are having difficulty maintaining/accessing their current properties.</p> <p><i>Task twenty three</i></p>	<p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator,</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords.</p> <p>County Council Adult Care Services.</p> <p>Supporting People.</p>		<p>funding.</p>	<p>standard and very high levels of accessibility and adaptability, with the aim of providing a long-term sustainable housing option for older people who wish to “downsize” to smaller accommodation.</p>	<p>accommodation in the private sector. ~ an increase in accessible, adaptable and affordable housing options for older people.</p>
<p>4.5 To examine the feasibility of commissioning a scheme for intermediate care for older people who are leaving hospital and are not yet ready to return to their own homes.</p> <p><i>Task twenty four</i></p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager.</p> <p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords.</p> <p>County Council Adult Care Services.</p> <p>Supporting People</p> <p>The Primary Care Trust.</p>	<p>To be advised</p>	<p>Social Housing Grant</p> <p>Supporting People</p>	<p>A case for additional intermediate care options for older people.</p>	<p>~ less bed blocking in hospitals. ~ older people better able to settle into their homes, having received support services in intermediate care.</p>
<p>4.6 To examine the feasibility of commissioning further provision for people with mental health needs, consistent with the Council’s Mental Health Accommodation Strategy.</p> <p><i>Task twenty five</i></p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager</p> <p>Affordable Housing Co-ordinator.</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords</p>	<p>To be advised</p>	<p>Social Housing Grant</p> <p>Supporting People</p>	<p>A case for additional housing options for people with mental health issues.</p>	<p>Further pathways of housing and support for people with mental health issues.</p>

	County Council Adult Care Services. Supporting People				
4.7 To complete the work as Regional Centre of Excellence for Youth Homelessness. <i>Task twenty six</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Housing Options Officer Herts Young Homeless Group Aldwyck Housing Association	June 2009	Regional Centre of Excellence grant from the Government. 2007/08 - £ 20,000 2008/09 - £ 10,000	~ Two seminars on youth homelessness-related issues to be staged in June and July 2008. ~ A brochure on youth homelessness in Eastern England to be produced by October 2008. ~ Plans to be devised with Herts Young Homeless Group and Aldwyck on initiatives for the period up to 2009.	~ Dissemination of good practice to other local authorities and homelessness organisations across the Eastern region. ~ Increased publicity and a case for resources to deal with youth homelessness in the Eastern region. ~ Publicity for Hertsmere and its ability to implement initiatives on behalf of the Government.
4.8 To carry out a review of the Council's leaflets and charters. <i>Task twenty seven.</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Allocations Team Homelessness Team	To be advised.	Within existing resources.	User-friendly accessible leaflets which are fully up-to-date and comply with the Plain English standard	Leaflets form an effective mechanism for disseminating information on housing options and the Council's housing-related services.
4.9 To carry out regular assessments of applications for:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Register • Homelessness Assistance • Home Repairs Assistance • Disabled Facilities Grants. 	Housing research and development officer	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Information on the concentrations and variations of applications from areas of the borough, age groups, gender, ethnic backgrounds and age	An effective information database which can form a basis for new methods of marketing services and targeting specific groups. Ensure

<i>Task twenty eight</i>				groups.	equality in service delivery
4.10 To establish a new Housing Options and Advice Service. To include early intervention activities, home visits, and advice on housing need including privately rented accommodation. <i>Task twenty nine.</i>	Head of Housing and Health Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Housing Options manager Homeless Managers Homelessness Prevention Officer Allocations Team Customer Services.	To be advised	Within existing resources	A more proactive housing advice service, targeting households in the Housing Register and other identified groups in housing need. A reduction in homelessness acceptances and A reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by priority need households.	~ A reduction in homelessness applications – better prevention of homelessness. ~ Increased uptake of alternative options to social rented housing such as low cost home ownership and the private rented sector.
4.11 To create an on-going dialogue with community groups who can provide information on the housing needs of ethnic minority and faith populations. <i>Task thirty</i>	Research and Development Officer. The County Council's Community Team (Gerry Foster)	To be advised	Within existing staffing resources.	To produce a set of quantitative and qualitative data on housing need and aspirations among minority ethnic and faith communities.	~ To provide a range of information to support bids for particular housing schemes. ~ To ensure that the needs of specific groups within the community are taken into account when planning the provision of new housing.
4.12 To monitor, revise and update Hertsmere's Homelessness Strategy.	Housing Needs and Strategy manager	31 July 2009	Within existing staffing resources.	To revise the new homelessness strategy and action plan.	More homeless people helped

<i>Task thirty one</i>	Homelessness Team				
4.13 To examine the feasibility of a supported housing scheme for people who have both physical disabilities and learning disabilities. <i>Task thirty two</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Affordable Housing Co-ordinator Research and Development Officer Registered Social Landlords County Council Adult Care Services Supporting People	To be advised	Social Housing Grant	To produce a case for a housing scheme specifically for people who have both learning and physical disabilities. To research and produce an information paper on the specific design needs of this group.	To provide housing options to meet both the needs and the aspirations of people with both learning and physical disabilities.
4.14 To examine the feasibility of a supported housing scheme consisting of 1 and 2 bedroom flats plus staff flat built to Lifetime Home standard and the Wheelchair standard for people with physical disabilities. <i>Task thirty three</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Affordable Housing Co-ordinator. Registered Social Landlords. County Council Adult Care Services. Supporting People	To be advised	Social Housing Grant	To produce a case for a housing scheme for people with a range of, physical disabilities, incorporating a range accessible standards from Lifetime Home to Wheelchair standard.	To provide housing options to meet both the needs and the aspirations of people with a range of physical disabilities.
4.15 To examine the feasibility of a low cost home ownership scheme for people with learning disabilities.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Affordable Housing Co-	To be advised	Social Housing Grant	To provide a case for a scheme to enable people with learning disabilities to own their own homes,	To provide a wider range of housing options for people with learning disabilities.

<i>Task thirty four</i>	ordinator Registered Social Landlords The County Council Adult Care Services. Supporting People.			based on good practice employed elsewhere.	
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Strategic Priority 5:- To ensure best use is made of existing housing stock					
<i>Aim:- To ensure that existing housing stock is used to its maximum capacity to ensure that housing needs and aspirations can be met. To ensure that sustainable housing pathways are available in the borough, including opportunities for “upsizing” and “downsizing”</i>					
Objective	Who	When	Resources	Outputs	Outcomes
5.1 To develop and implement the Empty Homes Strategy. <i>Task thirty five</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Housing Supply Officer Private sector housing coordinators	31 March 2009	Within existing staffing resources.	A report on the options available for decreasing the number of properties in the borough which have been empty for more than 12 months e.g. private sector leasing, Empty Dwelling Management Orders, acquisition by RSLs.	~ A reduction in the number of empty homes in the borough. ~ Re-use of existing properties to accommodate households in housing need.
5.2 To monitor the role of the Tenancy Liaison Officer to provide assistance to both landlords and tenants in order to sustain privately rented tenancies. <i>Task thirty six</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Watford Borough Council – Homelessness and Housing Advice Manager.	Officer to be in post by 30 September 2008. Evaluation to take place in September 2009.	Homelessness Grant	The appointment of an officer to provide support to landlords and tenants of the private rented sector (initially restricted to tenants who accessed the sector through the Rent Deposit Scheme).	~ Prevention of the breakdown of tenancies in the private sector, particularly among tenants who might be considered vulnerable. ~ More landlords willing to accept

					nominations from the Council and participate in the Rent Deposit Scheme
5.3 To research the need for a pilot 12 month "top-up" scheme to supplement Housing Benefit and the new Local Housing Allowance. <i>Task thirty seven.</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager. Housing Supply Officer Housing Benefit Team	31 December 2008	Within existing resources.	To receive approval from Executive for a sum of money to be reserved for a "top-up" fund between open market rent levels and Local Housing Allowance levels. The scheme will initially be restricted to households who have accessed the private rented sector through the Rent Deposit Scheme.	~ More landlords willing to accept nominations from the Council and to participate in the Rent Deposit Scheme.
5.4 To research methods of reducing under-occupation by carrying out a consultation exercise with existing under-occupiers on the Housing Register. <i>Task thirty eight</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager William Sutton Homes Aldwyck Housing Association.	To be completed by 31 March 2009	Within existing staffing resources. William Sutton resources Aldwyck Housing Association resources.	A survey to be carried out of William Sutton and Aldwyck tenants to assess which under-occupying households would be willing to move to smaller accommodation, and what incentives they would require to do so.	An information database to inform Hertsmere Council, William Sutton and Aldwyck on the strategy which needs to be devised to reduce under-occupation and free-up family-sized homes for larger households
5.5 To implement the new Choice-Based Lettings Scheme in the borough. <i>Task thirty nine</i>	Housing Options Manager	December 2008	Capital and revenue costs for development have been agreed. Ongoing costs to be assessed and agreed.	The introduction of a new Choice-Based lettings scheme, complying with the Government's requirement that all local authorities should have introduced Choice-Based	Provide choice for social tenants, improved service and cross-border movement.

				lettings by 2010.	
5.6 To review the Rent Deposit Scheme, and recommend and implement changes. <i>Task forty</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Research and Development Officer Housing Supply Officer	31 January 2009	Within existing staffing resources	A report on how the scheme has operated and the changes which need to be made to ensure it continues to enable the provision of appropriate housing for people in housing need.	More people helped to access private rented housing.
5.7 To implement Private Sector Leasing in the borough. <i>Task forty one</i>	Head of Housing and Health Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Pathmeads	31 March 2009	To be advised	Agreed scheme in place.	An additional resource for maximising the use of existing housing stock. Improved service to homeless people.
5.8 To devise a re-modelling scheme for a number of socially rented bungalows in Potters Bar which are small and not very accessible. <i>Task forty two</i>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Affordable Housing Co-ordinator Aldwyck Housing Association	To be advised	Preliminary research – within existing staffing resources. Social Housing Grant.	A plan to propose the re-use of property/land for more appropriate and aspirational housing for older people.	Updated housing stock for older people which meets both needs and aspirations.