

HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

OCTOBER 2009 - MARCH 2012

The following objectives have been developed to ensure that the Council meets the five key priorities that are identified in the Housing Strategy 2009-2012:

1. Provision of affordable housing
2. Tackling homelessness
3. Private sector renewal and energy efficiency
4. Assisting vulnerable households
5. Addressing crime reduction

Each objective is SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based), and has been developed to:

- § Maximise the use of scarce financial resources
- § Reflect partner, service user and stakeholder feedback
- § Promote and develop joint working with a broad range of partners
- § Build upon existing achievements
- § Reflect current policy and legislation, and proven good practice
- § Reflect national, regional and sub-regional priorities, specifically those identified within:
 - § Sustainable Communities: Homes for All (January 2005)
 - § Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes; Changing Lives (March 2005)
 - § Housing Green Paper (July 2007)
 - § Kent Supporting People Strategy (2005)
 - § South East Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011 (March 2008)

Progress against each objective will be monitored annually by the Strategic Housing Advisory Board. Individual objectives and targets will also be updated on an annual basis where appropriate.

Priority 1: Provision of affordable housing

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
1.	Achieve 40% affordable housing on all qualifying sites, ensuring that unless circumstances dictate otherwise, 70% are social rented, and 30% intermediate affordable housing	190 new homes by 31 March 2010 100 new homes by 31 March 2011 180 new homes by 31 March 2012 100% social rented housing to meet full <i>Lifetime Homes</i> standard Minimum 10% social rented housing (schemes of 10 units or more) to be wheelchair accessible	HCA grant required	HSEO
2.	With partner RSLs, develop local lettings plans to achieve a balanced community whilst meeting local need	Local lettings plans agreed place prior to completion of all new developments of 20 affordable homes or more	Within existing resources	HSEO
3.	Develop proposals for taking forward recommendations made within the 2008 <i>Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)</i> ¹	Report with recommendations and timescales to Strategic Housing Advisory Board/Planning and Transportation Advisory Board November 2009	Within existing resources	HSEO & Chief Planner (Policy)
4.	Develop positive incentives to address the under-occupation of family homes in the social rented sector, estimated in the 2008 SHMA to be approximately 18%	With stock-holding RSLs, review and update existing incentives, reporting progress to the Strategic Housing Advisory Board February 2010	Within existing resources	HSEO
5.	Evaluate feedback obtained by RSLs from residents on new affordable housing delivered within the borough	Report annually to Strategic Housing Advisory Board, identifying how customer feedback will be used to influence future services: § 2008-09 completions – report November 2009 § 2009-10 completions – report July 2010 § 2010-11 completions – report July 2011	Within existing resources	HSEO
6.	With West Kent partners, undertake a review of accommodation for older people in order to ensure that it meets current and future needs and aspirations	To be identified by the West Kent Sheltered and Extra Care Housing Project Board	Existing resources HCA funding RSL partner funding	HSEO (TWBC led)
7.	With West Kent partners, develop a sub-regional housing strategy action plan for West Kent to maximise joint working and share good practice	Identify timescale and key milestones by September 2009	Within existing resources	HSEO (TWBC led)
8.	With Kent County Council, provide additional pitches to meet the shortfall in accommodation for gypsies and travellers, as identified in the emerging RSS Partial Review	§ Funding bid - outcome expected October 2009	Budget in place for project costs	HSEO & Principal Planning Officer (KCC led)
9.	With Parish Councils and <i>Action with Communities in</i>	Complete three studies by March 2010	Resources from 2010 to	HSEO

¹ Adopted June 2009

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
	<i>Rural Kent</i> , implement a rolling programme of rural housing needs studies to identify the need for new rural affordable housing		be identified	
10.	Evaluate the strategic and enabling function against the Audit Commission's key lines of enquiry (KLOE) to measure the effectiveness of the service and identify areas for improvement and review	Report with recommendations and timescales to the Strategic Housing Advisory Board February 2010	Within existing resources	HSEO
11.	Review Housing Strategy	§ Agree timescale and key milestones by December 2010 § Strategy effective April 2012	Within existing resources	HSEO

Priority 2: Tackling homelessness

NB: A more comprehensive list of objectives relating to the homelessness function will be found in the *West Kent Homelessness Strategy: Towards 2010 (2007)*

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
12.	Review West Kent Homelessness Strategy	§ With partners, agree timescale, key milestones and any additional resources required by November 2009 § Strategy effective July 2011	Resource requirements to be assessed	HNSM
13.	With West Kent partners, review and update the West Kent Homelessness Strategy Action Plan to July 2011	§ With partners, agree timescale and key milestones by July 2009 § Action plan effective July 2010	Within existing resources	HNSM
14.	Evaluate feedback obtained from customers to ensure that where possible, services reflect customer views and preferences	Report annually to Strategic Housing Advisory Board: § 2008-09 – report November 2009 § 2009-10 – report July 2010 § 2010-11 – report July 2011	Additional resources may be required	HNSM
15.	Provide court desks at Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone to advise customers attending possession hearings	Monitor cases assisted, reporting to Strategic Housing Advisory Board as part of quarterly Housing Needs update.	Funded by CLG	HNSM
16.	Provide Deposit Bonds to eligible households in accordance with current procedure ² and within budget, in order to prevent homelessness and minimise the use of bed and breakfast and other forms of temporary	Review scheme, reporting to Strategic Housing Advisory Board November 2010	Budget for 2010-11 onwards to be identified (Part CLG funded)	HNSM

² Approved May 2009

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
	accommodation			
17.	Monitor the impact of choice-based lettings to ensure that all customers (and specifically those that are most vulnerable) are not being excluded from the process	Report quarterly to Strategic Housing Advisory Board as part of Housing Needs update.	Within existing resources	HNSM
18.	With other <i>Kent Homechoice</i> partners, develop proposals for cross-boundary mobility, on-line registration and the advertising of private rented accommodation	Timescales to be confirmed by CBL Project Board Progress updates to Strategic Housing Advisory Board as part of Housing Needs update.	Within existing resources	HNSM (CBL Project Board led)
19.	Provide ongoing training for Customer Services staff on homelessness and housing needs issues, including choice-based lettings	§ Initial briefing and work shadowing to commence in July 2009 § Training ongoing thereafter, with progress monitored in consultation with the Customer Services Manager	Within existing resources	HNSM
20.	Evaluate the housing needs function against the Audit Commission's key lines of enquiry (KLOE) to measure the effectiveness of the service and identify areas for improvement and review	Report with recommendations and timescales to the Strategic Housing Advisory Board February 2010	Within existing resources	HNSM

Priority 3: Private sector renewal and energy efficiency

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
21.	Evaluate and recommend an Accreditation scheme to improve standards in the private sector	§ Develop proposals by October 2009 § Report to Strategic Housing Advisory Board November 2009	Resource requirements to be assessed	PSHM
22.	Lead and oversee the second and third years (2009-11) of the North and West Kent Private Sector Renewal Partnership to deliver initiatives agreed with the South East Regional Housing Board	§ Complete 89 housing assistance applications per annum § Monitor progress monthly through partner steering group and report to GOSE six monthly § Report six monthly to Strategic Housing Advisory Board	Funded by Regional Housing Board and Housing Assistance budget.	PSHM
23.	As part of the North and West Kent Private Sector Renewal Partnership develop and submit an appropriate bid for Regional Housing Board funding for further private sector renewal initiatives from 2011 onwards	§ Timescale to be confirmed by GOSE	Within existing resources	PSHM
24.	Ensure that qualifying HMOs are licensed to comply with current legislation	§ Identify the landlords of any licensable HMOs and work with them on the submission of license applications by March 2010 § Review existing licenses annually, to ensure	Within existing resources	PSHM

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
		renewal at the appropriate time		
25.	Monitor the progress by stock-holding RSLs towards meeting the Decent Homes Standard by March 2010	Report progress to Strategic Housing Advisory Board November 2010	Within existing resources	PSHM
26.	Undertake private sector stock condition survey to inform future strategic priorities and comply with Government guidance	Identify timescale and key milestones by November 2009. Complete study by March 2011	Within existing resources	PSHM
27.	With In Touch, the OT Bureau and partner RSLs review the Disabled Facilities Grant process to ensure a seamless service to eligible households	§ Complete review process by March 2010, reporting with results to Strategic Housing Advisory Board May 2010 § Process 100% applications within 28 working days	Budget in place for 2009-10	PSHM
28.	With Russet Homes, develop a protocol to ensure that DFG grants to their tenants do not exceed allocated budget	Finalise and implement by August 2009	Within existing resources	PSHM
29.	Implement new housing assistance software to ensure more effective monitoring and recording of grants and enforcement activity	§ Housing Assistance software fully implemented by March 2010 § Enforcement software fully implemented by September 2010	Within existing resources	PSHM
30.	Finalise draft Energy Efficiency Statement and Action Plan	Finalise by August 2009	Within existing resources	PSHM
31.	Reduce the number of empty private homes	Bring seven homes per annum back into use	Within existing resources	PSHM
32.	Evaluate the private sector housing function against the Audit Commission's key lines of enquiry (KLOE) to measure the effectiveness of the service and identify areas for improvement and review	Report with recommendations and timescales to the Strategic Housing Advisory Board February 2010	Within existing resources	PSHM
33.	Evaluate feedback obtained from customers to ensure that where possible, services reflect customer views and preferences	Report annually to Strategic Housing Advisory Board: § 2008-09 – report November 2009 § 2009-10 – report July 2010 § 2010-11 – report July 2011	Resource requirements to be assessed	PSHM

Priority 4: Assisting vulnerable households

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
34.	With West Kent partners, provide new accommodation-based support for vulnerable young people	Scheme to be completed and occupied by March 2011	Capital and revenue funding in place	HSEO
35.	As part of Kent's Housing PFI, provide seven units of accommodation for people with learning disabilities	Scheme completed and occupied August 2009	Capital and revenue funding in place	HSEO

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Resource implications	Lead officer
36.	With West Kent partners and the Supporting People Team assess the need for new accommodation-based support in the sub-region	Agree initial proposals by October 2009	Capital and revenue funding to be identified	HSEO

Priority 5: Addressing crime reduction

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/outcome	Resource implications	Lead officer
37.	Reduce the opportunity for crime to occur on new affordable housing schemes	100% social rented housing to meet <i>Secured by Design</i> standards	Within existing resources	HSEO
38.	Improve the security of homes occupied by vulnerable households	Home security checks per annum TBC (NB: The Homesafe funding that provided these checks has been withdrawn. The new Handyperson Scheme will be able to pick up some of these checks, but the exact extent is currently the subject of discussion)	Within existing resources	PSHM

National and local performance indicators

The housing service is monitored against the following national and local performance indicators:

Description	Target 2009-10	Target 2010-11	Target 2011-12
NI 155: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	190	100	180
NI 156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation	35	32	29
NI 187: Percentage of people receiving income-based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating	15	14	13
NI 139: The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home (%)	N/A	30	N/A
LPI 401: Percentage of households from the housing register that were provided with permanent accommodation by our housing association partners	95	95	95
LPI 402: Number of households that become homeowners through low cost home ownership initiatives	30	30	30
LPI 403: Percentage of homelessness applications where we make a decision and write to the applicant within 33 working days	100	100	100
LPI 404: Percentage year on year improvement in energy efficiency of homes within the borough	3	3	3
LPI 405: Number of homes improved/adapted in the private sector for elderly or disabled persons – TMBC assisted	350	350	350
LPI407: Number of homes made decent for vulnerable households	37	37	37