

HOUSING STRATEGY 2009-2012

Action Plan November 2009-October 2010: Progress update

Priority 1: Provision of affordable housing

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Progress to October 2010
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	260 new affordable homes completed during 2009-10.
2.	With partner RSLs, develop local lettings plans to achieve a balanced community whilst meeting local need	Local lettings plans agreed and in place at least three months prior to completion of all new developments of 20 affordable homes or more	Local lettings plans developed, but not always three months prior to completion. Timetable now reviewed to ensure this can be achieved in future.
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	Completed.
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	Progress update to SHAB February 2010. Addressed where possible through Local Lettings Plans. Also being addressed on a Kent-wide basis by the Strategy Enabling sub-group, part of Kent Housing Group.
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	2008-09 completions reported to SHAB November 2009. Some of the 2009-10 data has been delayed. Report deferred to February 2011.
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	A Tunbridge Wells Borough Council-led initiative that has been deferred through 2010. The possibility of merging this with

¹ Adopted June 2009

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			a Kent-wide (KCC - funded) piece of work commissioned in response to the draft Kent & Medway Housing Strategy is now being explored.
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	A Tunbridge Wells Borough Council-led initiative. Deferred pending completion of the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy.
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	Gypsy & Traveller grant programme abolished during May 2010, thereby defeating the funding bid for the Coldhabour site. Now identified as a future funding priority within the West Kent Local Investment Plan.
9.	With Parish Councils and <i>Action with Communities in Rural Kent</i> , implement a rolling programme of rural housing needs studies to identify the need for new rural affordable housing	Complete three studies by March 2010	Draft studies completed for Addington and West Malling.
10.	Evaluate the Housing Service against the Audit Commission's reviewed key lines of enquiry (KLOE) for Strategic Housing, 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 May 2010	Completed – although report to SHAB deferred from May 2010 to November 2010.
11.	Review Housing Strategy	§ Agree timescale and key milestones by December 2010 § Strategy effective April 2012	
12.	Update and review the objectives within the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2009-2012 on an annual basis, reporting to Members on progress against each objective	§ Progress update and annual review to Strategic Housing Advisory Board November 2010 and November 2011 § Final progress update May 2012	Progress update and review to SHAB November 2010.
13.	With West Kent partners and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), participate in the <i>Single Conversation</i> process and the development of a Local Investment Plan	§ Optimise public investment in the borough and the sub-region § Timescales to be identified by the HCA	<i>Single Conversation</i> process now referred to as the <i>Local Investment Plan (LIP)</i> . Draft LIP for West Kent submitted to Cabinet October 2010 and HCA during October 2010. Reported to SHAB November 2010.

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)

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14.	Review West Kent Homelessness Strategy	<p>§ With partners, agree timescale, key milestones and any additional resources required by December 2009</p> <p>§ Strategy effective July 2011</p>	Timescales and key milestones identified. Consultants appointed to lead review, which is now underway.
15.	With West Kent partners, review and update the West Kent Homelessness Strategy Action Plan from July 2010 to June 2011	<p>§ With partners, agree timescale and key milestones by October 2009</p> <p>§ Action plan effective July 2010</p>	Completed. Reported to SHAB February and July 2010.
16.	Evaluate feedback obtained from customers to ensure that where possible, services reflect customer views and preferences	Report annually to Strategic Housing Advisory Board: <p>§ 2008-09 – report November 2009</p> <p>§ 2009-10 – report July 2010</p> <p>§ 2010-11 – report July 2011</p>	Completed to July 2010.
17.	Support 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.	Community Legal Services funding of Maidstone court desk service now exhausted. Service ongoing at Tunbridge Wells but future funding position unclear.
18.	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 accommodation	Review scheme, reporting to Strategic Housing Advisory Board November 2010	Ongoing as part of Housing Options service. Scheme review deferred to early 2011.
19.	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.	Progress reported to SHAB as standard item for all meetings.
20.	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.	On-line registration system at initial trial stage only. Draft common assessment framework developed and being taken forward by Kent CBL Partnership. (see report to SHAB, November 2010)
21.	Provide ongoing training for Customer Services staff on	§ Initial briefing and work shadowing to commence in	Training ongoing. Customer Services staff

² Approved May 2009

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	homelessness and housing needs issues, including choice-based lettings	July 2009 § Training ongoing thereafter, with progress monitored in consultation with the Customer Services Manager	included in all training updates – the most recent session addressed the on-line mutual exchange service which went live in October 2010.
22.	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 May 2010	Completed – although report to SHAB deferred from May 2010 to November 2010.
23.	By 2010, reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation by 50% of the December 2004 level	§ A key Government target, for achievement by April 2010. § Target for the borough - 41	Completed. Target achieved and maintained since July 2009.
24.	Ensure that families with children do not remain in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks	An ongoing Government target	Target achieved.

Priority 3: Private sector renewal and energy efficiency

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Progress to October 2010
25.	Evaluate and recommend an Accreditation scheme to improve standards in the private sector	§ Develop proposals by April 2010 § Report to Strategic Housing Advisory Board May 2010	Completed. Reported to SHAB May and November 2010.
26.	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	Housing assistance applications: 164 completed 2009-10 and 110 completed 2010-11 (April - October). Partnership ongoing to March 2011. Progress reported to SHAB as standard item for all meetings and to GOSE as required.
27.	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	Completed as part of the LIP process. (NB: Regional Housing Board disbanded).
28.	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 renewal at the appropriate time	2009-10: 1 additional HMO licensed. 2010-11: 2 additional licenses being processed but one may be temporarily exempted due to sale of property. Review of existing licenses due 2011-12.
29.	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	Ongoing (RSL target date is December 2010). Progress update to SHAB

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			November 2010.
30.	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	Timescales and key milestones identified and subsequently reviewed. A more detailed report to SHAB November 2010.
31.	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	Review ongoing Progress reported to SHAB November 2010.
32.	With Russet Homes, develop a system to ensure that DFGs s to their tenants do not exceed allocated budget	Finalise and implement by August 2009	Completed – monitoring system in place and ongoing.
33.	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	Housing Assistance software implemented October 2010. Enforcement software implemented September 2010.
34.	Finalise draft Energy Efficiency Statement and Action Plan	Finalise by August 2009	Completed.
35.	Reduce the number of empty private homes	Bring seven homes per annum back into use	2009-10 - 9 homes brought back into use. 2010-11 - 2 (April – October.)
36.	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 May 2010	Completed – although report to SHAB deferred from May 2010 to November 2010.
37.	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	Completed to July 2010.

Priority 4: Assisting vulnerable households

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/timescale	Progress to October 2010
38.	With West Kent partners, provide new accommodation-based support for vulnerable young people	Scheme to be completed and occupied by March 2011	Progressing in line with schedule.
39.	As part of Kent's Housing PFI, provide seven units of accommodation for people with learning disabilities	Scheme completed and occupied August 2009	Completed.
40.	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	The need for services for people fleeing domestic abuse and those with substance misuse problems are identified in the draft

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			West Kent LIP (for capital funding) and the Kent Supporting Peoples Five-Year Strategy 2010-2015 (for revenue funding).
41.	Contribute to the development of the Kent Supporting People Strategy 2010-2015 to ensure that it reflects the priorities of the Council and it's West Kent partners	§ Strategy due for completion April 2010 § Summary of key priorities to Strategic Housing Advisory Board May 2010	Completed.

Priority 5: Addressing crime reduction

No	Objective	Measurable outcome/outcome	Progress to October 2010
42.	Reduce the opportunity for crime to occur on new affordable housing schemes	100% social rented housing to meet <i>Secured by Design</i> standards	Standard met by 40% of completions during 2009-10. (NB: Standard introduced in Affordable Housing SPD 2008, therefore impact is gradual)
43.	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)	214 checks undertaken April – September 2010.