



The Housing Strategy

2009-2013

Contents

- 03 Foreword
- 04 Executive summary
- 06 Introduction to the strategy

Part 1: How we have developed our strategy

- 07 Strategic overview
- 10 Our housing vision and strategic priorities
- 10 Policy influences for the Housing Strategy
 - National
 - Regional
 - Local
- 15 Housing Strategy 2004-2008 ongoing priorities
- 15 Stakeholder input
- 16 Evidence base for our priorities
 - Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2009)
 - Housing Needs Assessment (2009)
 - Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey (2008)
 - Council Housing Stock Condition Survey (2008)
 - LDF Core Strategy (2007)
- 18 Our five strategic priorities
 - Increasing the supply of homes
 - Developing sustainable communities
 - Improving the quality of housing
 - Preventing and reducing homelessness
 - Providing accessible information on housing choices

Part 2: How we will deliver our five strategic priorities

- 22 Our action plan
 - Key milestones for the five strategic aims
- 24 Resources to deliver the Housing Strategy priorities
 - Budget strategy 2009
 - Asset Management Strategy 2008-2011
 - Affordable housing programme
 - Council housing
 - Supported housing services
 - Private sector housing funding
 - Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)
 - Repair and renovation loans
 - Home insulation grants (HIGs)
 - Planning resources
 - Recycled funds
 - Council's approach to value for money

- 29 Key challenges identified
 - Specific challenges in delivering affordable housing
 - Dealing with challenges
 - Risk assessment on our strategic priorities

- 32 Partners
 - Key ways partners will contribute to delivering our strategy
 - How we will consult and engage with stakeholders
 - How we will monitor the strategy and engage with stakeholders
 - How we will refresh the strategy up to 2013
 - Future housing strategies

Part 3: Supporting information

- 36 Glossary of terms used
- 41 Document Links for Housing Strategy
- 42 Appendices
 - Appendix 1: Key policy influences
 - Appendix 2: Action plan
 - Appendix 3: Consultation record

“Our housing strategy outlines the need for the council to take an active role in balancing the local housing market across all tenures and how we intend to do this”

Foreword

I am very pleased to introduce our Housing Strategy for 2009-2013. This sets out how, by working in partnership with others, we will achieve our overall aim – maintaining momentum in the housing market in the present economy. Our Housing Strategy outlines the need for the council to take an active role in balancing the local housing market across all tenures and how we intend to do this. We are committed to promoting social inclusion and recognise our responsibility as a place shaper in working towards ensuring that people have access to a variety of housing opportunities in Crawley that best suit their needs.

The strategy sets out a challenging and ambitious programme for us to deliver but one that is entirely appropriate in the current climate, which is likely to have varying degrees of impact over the lifetime of the strategy. We want to provide housing opportunities that would not have been there. Helping people to know what housing options are available in Crawley, get housed and stay housed. We are also working to improve the quality of housing in the town across all tenures through investing in our own stock, increasing enforcement along with grants support in the private sector and complying with design standards in new housing.

Tackling homelessness remains a key priority and we face serious challenges in reducing and preventing this in today's economy. We are expanding our Rent Deposit Scheme to increase access to private rented accommodation, fast tracking a Mortgage Rescue Scheme and working with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to provide good quality temporary accommodation. We will continue to work with partners across the sector to ensure that we maintain a pro-active position in preventing homelessness.

Through our actions we will ensure that we are well placed when the economic downturn is over to move forward in continuing to provide local solutions for Crawley.

CLr Jennifer Millar-Smith
Cabinet member for Housing



“Our vision is for a town where people and organisations aim for excellence in working together”

Executive summary

The current economic climate has meant that our new Housing Strategy is different than it would have been had it been written a year ago. The overall intention of this strategy, in the context of the market downturn, is to keep the momentum going in the housing market to place us in a strong position to move forward strategically when the economy picks up.

This Housing Strategy sets out the council’s vision for housing and how we will use our resources to deliver our five strategic priorities for 2009-2013. We have carried out extensive consultation in developing our priorities. We have used the following evidence to increase our awareness of what Crawley needs and these are referred to in more detail in part 1:

- Local Development Framework (LDF) Core strategy evidence base 2007
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Northern West Sussex) 2008/2009 and the housing needs assessment within the SHMA
- Private sector stock condition survey 2008.

An overarching document, it focuses and co-ordinates a number of other housing related strategies enabling the council to maintain its progress in addressing the housing needs of the borough into the next decade and providing a consistent drive towards our vision.

Our vision is for a town where people and organisations aim for excellence in working together to deliver quality housing and customer-centred housing services to ensure local people have a home that:

- They are proud to live in
- Provides a platform for good health, education and employment
- Is in a safe, clean and quality environment
- Is close to social, leisure, retail and public transport services.

We will achieve this through our ‘place-shaping’ role: using evidence and local knowledge to plan for future housing need and aspirations, enabling people to access the housing and support they need, integrating delivery of housing, planning and economic development, making best use of the existing housing market and looking and working across all tenures.



However, while many of the 100,000 residents living in some of the 40,000 homes across the borough do enjoy and benefit from the area's relative prosperity, the Housing Strategy 2009-2013 recognises there are significant challenges.

Beyond the short term squeeze of the credit crunch the number of new households are still outgrowing the number of homes being built and average household incomes in Crawley remain below the regional average. There is a high demand for housing and in responding to these and other key factors, the Housing Strategy 2009-2013 aims to strike the right balance in responding to both current conditions and long-term trends.

To this end, the council recognises the importance – and challenges – of achieving a good quality Housing Strategy as a component of its corporate and community planning. After wide consultation and taking evidence from the surveys referred to above we have chosen our five strategic priorities for 2009-2013 as:

- Increasing the supply of homes
- Developing sustainable communities
- Improving the quality of housing
- Preventing and reducing homelessness
- Providing accessible information on housing choices.

However, the council recognises that the Housing Strategy will not be a success if carried out in isolation and the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012, the Corporate Plan 2007-2012 and Local Development Framework set out clear commitments to ensure Crawley supports the supply of decent, well-designed, social rented and other types of housing.

Consultation with key stakeholders, including local residents on the draft Housing Strategy, has influenced our priorities. We are happy to receive comments and questions about this strategy which we will reply to where possible and also take into account for our Housing Strategy refresh exercise in March 2010.

In April 2009 we will place an eform on our Housing Strategic Services web page which you can complete about our new strategy. Alternatively, please contact the Housing Strategy manager at the Town Hall or email housing.strategy@ Crawley.gov.uk

Introduction to the strategy

This strategy is presented in three sections:

Part 1

How we have developed our strategy

This sets out the strategic overview and shows how our housing strategy sits within the policy framework for Crawley. We cover our housing vision and list our five strategic priorities. We then consider the key national and regional policy influences for the strategy through to the local policy structure. This is tied into appendix 1 which sets out in a table what has informed our strategy approach. Part 1 goes on to summarise themes from our stakeholders which is set out in detail in appendix 3. We then move onto explaining what evidence we have used in building up our priorities and action plan and the aims and objectives of each of the priorities. This includes reference to the strategic housing market assessment commissioned in 2008, the LDF Core Strategy 2007 and the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2008. We explain why we have chosen each priority for Crawley based on this local evidence base.

Part 2

How we will deliver our strategy

This begins with setting out some milestone actions from our action plan and refers the reader to appendix 2 for our full actions. This section outlines how we will use the council's assets and other funding streams to help us deliver our priorities – and explains about affordable housing funding, private sector, council stock revenue and supporting people money available in Crawley. We then include a section on key challenges in delivering the priorities and how we will deal with them centred on a risk assessment approach. We provide some economic context for this due to the current economic slowdown in 2008. We then explain ways in which partners will help us to deliver our five priorities. We go on to look at our structures for consulting and engaging with stakeholders highlighting the key themes from the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012. We then explain our mechanisms for monitoring progress and sharing this with stakeholders and finally part 2 outlines our arrangements for refreshing the Housing Strategy in 2010 and in the future.

Part 3

Supporting information

Part 3 includes the glossary of terms used in the strategy and a list of links/web addresses to key documents. The three appendices contain the key influences, the action plan which supports the delivery of the priorities and the consultation we have carried out to inform the action plan itself.

Part 1

How we have developed our strategy

Strategic overview

This strategy sits within a framework of policy across the council, the county, the south east region and national housing policies. It is within this framework that activities for delivering housing and other service priorities are shaped.

The challenges facing the town cannot be solved by Crawley Borough Council alone. To create sustainable communities we need to work alongside other agencies providing health, welfare, leisure, education and economic opportunities to enable people to prosper. We believe that working with partner agencies is essential in maximising our capacity to deliver and enable services that meet the needs of our local communities in the most cost effective way.

Housing is recognised as a key priority for the council, the town, the county and the region as a whole. The need for additional affordable housing is stated in the West Sussex Local Area Agreement 2008-2011, the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 for Crawley and the council's own Corporate Plan 2007-2012.



An overview of these strategic partnerships and links in relation to housing services is given in Figure 1 below.



Community Strategy
for West Sussex

West Sussex Compact

Partnership Board

Crawley Compact

South East Plan
(Spatial Strategy)

Regional Sustainability
Framework

Regional Housing
Strategy 2008-2011

SE England Regional
Health Strategy

Regional Economic
Framework

Temporary Accommodation
Statement

VFM Statement

Supporting People
Strategy

Gypsy and Traveller
Strategy

Affordable Housing
Programme

BME Housing Strategy

Environment Impact
Assessment

Crawley Homes
Business Plan

Private Sector
Housing Strategy

HMO Policy

DFG Policy

Warm Front

HHSRS Policy

National Indicators

Budgets

HSS Customer Panel



“The strategy also recognises the importance of the private sector”

Our housing vision and strategic priorities

Our vision for the town is explained on page four.

Our five strategic priorities for 2009-2013 are:

- Increasing the supply of homes
- Developing sustainable communities
- Improving the quality of housing
- Preventing and reducing homelessness
- Providing accessible information on housing choices.

Policy influences

We have given consideration to the current position and the potential impact for our Housing Strategy priorities, the Government policy response and the local action we are taking in response. The policy agendas we have considered are set out fully in appendix 1, some of these are:

- Housing market rescue reforms (the credit crunch)
- Welfare Reform Green Paper (worklessness)
- Modernisation of housing advice and information
- Review of the private rented sector
- Preventing and reducing the incidence of empty homes
- Accelerating the supply of new housing and building sustainable communities

- Mixed communities (place shaping)
- Greater tenant involvement
- Review of the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system
- Housing within an ageing society.

Regional Influences

Our strategy has been influenced by the South East Plan which requires us to deliver a minimum of 375 dwellings per annum between 2006 and 2026 and local authorities are expected to explore whether more can be delivered. Additionally account has been taken of the South East Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011 published in April 2008 by the South East England Regional Assembly. Funding priorities concentrate on the delivery of new affordable housing, improving the quality of housing and improving provision for Gypsy and Traveller groups.

In particular, the strategy is encouraging the construction of larger family sized homes and expects that new and refurbished homes should meet level three of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The strategy also recognises the importance of the private sector and targets funding at improving the quality of the homes of vulnerable households, particularly in respect of heating systems.

In the south east the average age of a first time buyer in the region has risen to 33; the latest regional household projections forecast that 35,850 new households will form a year up to 2026 – more than 70 per cent of those will be single person households; and almost two-thirds of the projected population growth will be people over 60.

Affordable housing will make up 35 per cent of the total housing provision (40 per cent for the Gatwick sub-region). Already there are more than 200,000 households on council waiting lists and more than 7,500 homeless households living in temporary accommodation in the region.



“Over the last few years the borough has been one of the largest providers of new housing in the region”

Local influences

Crawley was a New Town and now has more than 100,000 residents living in some 40,000 homes. Around 65 per cent of the population are aged under 45 with a predicted growth rate of 15 per cent in those over 65 by 2017. Although a relatively prosperous town, Crawley has pockets of deprivation leading to some significant differences between neighbourhoods. With one in five residents being a council tenant the council has a substantial opportunity to impact on the life of Crawley residents.

However, around 40 per cent of the council's stock of social housing does not currently meet the Decent Homes Standard.

For the private sector the recent Private Sector Stock Condition Survey indicates levels of non-decency are at 22 per cent (7,400 properties) with overall repair and renewal costs for this sector in the order of £330m, an average of £10,700 per property. The most common reason for non-decency is thermal comfort and 4.2 per cent of residents in this sector are estimated to be in fuel poverty. The survey indicates 690 vulnerable households live in non-decent properties.

Affordability continues to be a key issue locally. In February 2009, 2,401 unemployed people were claiming Jobseekers' Allowance. This equates to 3.8 per cent of the working age population, which is now the same as the national average and one per cent higher than the south east average.

Unemployment nationally stands at around two million and predictions suggest it could go as high as three million. In Crawley during the last recession the unemployment rate stood at six per cent (about 3,000 people).

Crawley's economy is the most productive within the Gatwick Diamond. The economic make-up of the area is different from neighbouring authorities with a larger proportion of big companies based in the town providing a much higher proportion of employment locally (approximately 50 per cent of all employment is provided by employers with 200+ employees). By contrast there is a smaller proportion of micro businesses – the smallest business size.



The key employment sectors are; transport and communications (31.7 per cent), finance, IT and other business activities (21.7 per cent), distribution, hotels and restaurants (21.1 per cent) and manufacturing (9.3 per cent). The high proportion of employment in the transport sector is a particularly distinctive feature of our local economy and reflects the important contribution of the airport to the local economy. The demand for “knowledge” over the demand for traditional manufacturing can be seen as an important driver for continued economic success.

Over the last few years the borough has been one of the largest providers of new housing in the region. Unfortunately the current instability in the world’s financial markets risks putting the town’s major developments on hold. As a result, there may be a short-term shortage of new homes including new affordable housing. This is likely to put an increased pressure on local people and our housing options services.

Through our Homelessness Strategy we have changed the way we dealt with homelessness, moving from crisis intervention to a homelessness prevention service, helping households to find solutions to their housing needs without having to go down the homelessness route. This approach has led to a sustained reduction in homelessness and avoided significant upheaval and distress for those affected.

Historically, loss of private sector rented accommodation was a main cause of homelessness. However, the last few years have seen much better working between the council and landlords that has resulted in a reduction of homelessness from this sector. The successful growth of the Rent Deposit Scheme for example, now makes the private rented sector in the town a feasible and realistic key tool to help resolve the borough’s housing needs.

The council’s Local Development Framework supports the Community Strategy vision by reinforcing the focus on affordable housing, the local economy, education and the local environment. The Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 provides a clear picture of how the town will grow and change spatially over the next 10-15 years.

The strategy states that good quality new housing is required to meet the growth needs of the local population and the local economy. A mix of house types and tenures is required to meet needs and achieve more balanced communities. There is a significant shortage of affordable homes, and if these are not provided, this will have a damaging impact on residents’ quality of life. It will also make it more difficult for local firms to recruit staff locally which could lead to more in-commuting and affect economic performance.



“The council remains committed to the overall aim of driving sustainability across Crawley”

We recognise the role that housing plays in helping to reduce inequality. Through the Housing Strategy and our BME Housing Strategy we hope to address these issues by:

- Developing a better understanding of the housing situation, needs and aspirations of the BME communities of Crawley through research, consultation and monitoring, and increase the influence that those communities make on the shape of the housing services that we deliver
- Ensuring that housing and other services are easily accessible and customers using our services suffer no disadvantage on the grounds of their colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins
- Working with partners to make sure that housing and housing-related services are appropriate to the diverse cultures existing within the town.

The council’s mission set out in the Corporate Plan 2007-2012, Aiming for Excellence, is:

To be a council that aims for excellence in all that it does and reflects the guiding principles of the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Priorities are focused around similar key themes:

1. **Our communities**
ensuring they are safe, healthy, cohesive and enjoyable;
2. **Our environment**
ensuring that it is attractive, clean, protected and Sustainable;
3. **Our economy**
ensuring it is thriving, vibrant and prosperous; and
4. **Our council**
ensuring it’s engaging, transparent, and business-like with a social conscience, cost-effective and a place-shaping, community leader.



Housing Strategy 2004-2008 ongoing priorities

Please see our Housing Strategy 2004-2008 for the full update of our Action Plan for that period. Our new strategy has been informed by our 2004-2008 priorities where they are still relevant for Crawley. The council remains committed to the overall aim of driving sustainability across Crawley, and, additionally, we are now taking on the place shaping agenda in delivering this aim. We are building on our enabling role with housing providers and developing more joint approaches to housing solutions such as RSL temporary accommodation. We are expanding our housing options model envisaged in our previous strategy by delivering the Mortgage Rescue Scheme to reflect the economic market we are in. Improving our existing stock is still a priority for us and we are delivering our decent homes contracts and continuing to drive up standards in the private sector. As well as providing specialist housing we are extending housing choices information and improving the grants and loans service for vulnerable people as we see this as the next stage in enabling independence.

Stakeholder input

Our strategy has been influenced by the feedback received during the consultation phase. The range of consultation and outcomes from this are captured in the consultation table in appendix 3.

We have also drawn on consultation from related aspects of strategic housing services to inform our strategy including:

- Our 2008 Homelessness Review
- Consultation on the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Strategy in 2007
- Previous and on-going LDF and review consultation
- West of Bewbush Strategic Housing Consultation
- Stakeholder consultation around the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)
- Survey feedback from our combined housing register applicants during 2008.

Key outcomes from the consultation were:

- The need to maximise opportunities to create affordable housing options in Crawley
- The need to maximise opportunities to support economic growth
- Concerns around the economic downturn and the likely impact on housing choices for people
- Targeting scarce social housing resources to those in need while giving equal focus to supporting people in pursuing other options open to them
- The importance of design, density and balance between different types of housing in contributing to sustainability
- The importance of investing in all housing stock to ensure the town's future sustainability.



Evidence base for our strategic priorities

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2009

As partners with six other Sussex councils we commissioned the recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment in 2009. The final report is to be signed off by all the local authorities in April 2009. The assessment identifies two main housing markets in West Sussex, one which is centred on Crawley, Mid Sussex and Horsham, (and the second on the Coastal Urban Area). The Crawley – Horsham Sub-Regional Housing Market extends south to Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill, to East Grinstead, Horley and west/south-west to Billingshurst, Petworth and Pulborough. At the process of drafting we have used the findings to feed into our five priorities. This broad approach has assisted us in achieving a wider and enhanced economic view of Crawley trends within the county. We will make reference to other neighbouring SHMAs such as the East Surrey SHMA as development in surrounding areas (both in scale and type) is likely to influence housing demand in the northern West Sussex housing market.

Housing Needs Assessment (within the SHMA 2009)

The Housing Needs Assessment in the SHMA brings our Housing Needs Survey of 2004 up-to-date. Some early findings have highlighted what we need to focus on and have influenced the choice of our five strategic priorities. We plan to add in further detailed updates to the housing needs section when the Housing Strategy is refreshed in March 2010.

Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey 2008

This recent report has provided up-to-date information on private stock in Crawley. The findings reinforce the drivers from the previous Stock Condition Survey in 2003, which we used to inform our approach to developing the grants and loans services. The evidence shows we need to continue to tackle quality and conditions in the private sector. Please see our Private Sector Stock Condition Report for more detail.

Council Housing Stock Condition Surveys 2004-2008

Following Stock Condition Surveys carried out by external consultants in 2004 and 2006, and the decision of the council to retain its housing stock in 2008, the council has developed an Asset Management Strategy 2008-2011. This sets out the aims and objectives for the maintenance of council housing stock; (Crawley Homes, our landlord function). This Asset Management Strategy identifies the need for substantial investment in the housing stock and to support this need the council is providing increased levels of capital funding for stock investment over the next three years.

This investment programme was informed by the 2004 and 2006 Stock Condition Surveys and has been further developed by a Stock Condition Survey undertaken across all of the housing stock in 2008.

The latest survey reinforced the information of the 2006 survey and is being analysed further during the drafting of this Housing Strategy. The council's investment programme for its stock aims to achieve compliance with the Decent Homes Standard by March 31 2011 and to provide a level of investment in addition to decent homes which will ensure that the stock continues to be well maintained in the future. To deliver this stock investment, the council has appointed two contractors to undertake planned maintenance and decent homes work to its stock across all of its neighbourhoods between 2009/10 and 2010/11.

LDF Core Strategy 2007

The LDF provides strategic vision on the development of the town up to 2016 by considering the local economy and the local environment. Extensive research was carried out on the social and economic characteristics of Crawley to inform our approach. (Please see pages 13-30 of the LDF).

“This Asset Management Strategy identifies the need for substantial investment in the housing stock”

Our five strategic priorities

Strategic priority 1: Increasing the supply of homes

Aim

- To maximise the availability of homes across all tenures affordable to local people.

Objectives

- Meet housing delivery targets
- Increase the supply of social rented and intermediate tenure homes
- Ensure best use of existing housing stock
- Improve access to existing housing.

Why we have chosen this priority

There is an enduring gap in the demand for housing and the supply we are able to provide and this is likely to remain for the foreseeable future. This gap potentially broadens given the current economic situation. The Strategic Housing market assessment has highlighted that affordability issues are significant across our market and we are aware that income levels in Crawley are lower than other parts of Sussex from our LDF core strategy research. Sussex Enterprise, Chamber of Commerce for Sussex strongly supported this priority for Crawley. Their research shows that a first time buyer's mortgage gap for Crawley is £20,463. They estimate this gap across Sussex may have prevented between 3,300 and 6,100 jobs being created and between £100 million and £180 million of economic output being created in the Sussex economy in one year alone.

It is sometimes the case that empty homes can increase the supply of housing in an area by bringing them back into use. In Crawley we have a very low number of long term empty homes in private sector (and RSL) stock in proportion to our overall stock – 0.6 per cent of our stock on average – the national average is 1.5 per cent (Private sector stock condition survey 2008). Our experience has shown that many of these houses are in the owner occupied sector and are waiting to be sold or let. We are therefore monitoring this work during 2009-2010 to assess the proportion of any additional resources we need to dedicate to it.

Strategic priority 2: Developing sustainable communities

Aim

- To ensure local communities are safe, inclusive, well-located places where people want to live and work and are enabled to live independently.

Objectives

- Improve the balance of the local housing market to reflect local need and demand
- Ensure both new and existing communities receive the support and resources needed to flourish
- Improve community safety
- Further develop partnerships to improve the identification of need, co-ordination and delivery of services for vulnerable people
- Ensure we deliver sufficient housing opportunities and housing support services to meet the needs of older people, younger people, BME groups and people with support needs
- Maintain and support the development of services accessible to all the community.

Why we have chosen this priority

We recognise our role in relation to economic, environmental and social well being. The council is committed to creating opportunities to improve communities and promote social inclusion. Crawley has been developed on a neighbourhood principle and there is widespread support for this model. The West of Bewbush consultation feedback supports this approach and provides a vision that we are adapting for sustainable community living in the future. We are committed to ensuring our services can respond to the needs of our growing BME population (13 per cent) and to the projected growth in older people by approximately 24 per cent in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market up to 2016 (SHMA 2009). The council aims to deliver an integrated and accessible transport system in Crawley as reflected in our Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 aims for the economy and the environment. We have a Climate Change Strategy (2008) for reducing the town's CO2 emissions by a minimum of 32 per cent by 2020 and by 60 per cent by 2040 and become Carbon Neutral by 2050 in Line with the draft Climate Change Bill.

We are aware of the importance of initiatives to increase employment opportunities for those who are on long term benefits (usually broadly referred to as economic activity/worklessness initiatives) and the links with housing and we hope to address this over the course of the strategy. We do not have our own resources to immediately address this and feel that in the current economic downturn we need to focus on smart deliverables which we can fund and influence to benefit people more quickly. We will keep up to date with any possible opportunities to work with RSL or other partners on this.

Strategic priority 3: Improving the quality of housing

Aim

- To ensure that homes across all tenures are developed and maintained to high standards.

Objectives

- Ensure all council-owned homes meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Improve the condition of private sector housing stock
- Improve energy efficiency and address fuel poverty across all tenures
- Improve management standards in the private-rented sector
- Ensure all new homes are developed to the highest possible design and quality standards.

Why we have chosen this priority

Meeting and sustaining decent homes standards for our own stock is a key priority for the Council. As a landlord of 8,300 dwellings which house 20 per cent of the residents in Crawley the councils actions can impact on a large number of tenants.

Our Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2008 found that approx 97.8 per cent of dwellings in Crawley could benefit from energy efficiency improvements, some being minor ones. We are committed to utilising the private housing sector as a resource in contributing to affordable housing options in Crawley. The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey highlighted the need for continued investment in the private sector in the form of energy efficiency, improvement repairs and adaptations to homes such as Disabled facilities grants. Thermal comfort is the main reason for failures in decency rates across Crawley and we have focussed our targets for energy efficiency work to reduce fuel poverty.

Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) provide a contribution to the housing offer in Crawley and we want to make sure they provide good quality accommodation. Our private sector survey and HMO consultancy project work (all in 2008-2009) suggests there are more two storey HMOs in Crawley than three storey HMOs. We are therefore increasing our resources in enforcement services across the council.

In delivering our new affordable housing we will ensure these are built to the highest standards possible whilst still attracting maximum grant from central government.

Strategic priority 4: Preventing and reducing homelessness

Aim

- To minimise the number of people who experience homelessness.

Objectives

- Improve the quality of information held about causes of homelessness and use these to inform our prevention initiatives
- Improve access to quality housing options information and advice
- Improve integration of housing support services provided for young people
- Improve the quality of temporary accommodation provided.

Strategic priority 5: Providing accessible information on housing choices

Aim

- To ensure local people are aware of the housing choices available to them.

Objectives

- Increase housing options available through Choice-Based Lettings
- Improve quality and range of housing information and advice services
- Improve accessibility of housing advice services to young people
- Develop the council's Property Store as a cross-tenure accommodation resource.

Why we have chosen this priority

We recognise that the council is often the first port of call for those seeking help with housing. Given that the demand for social rented housing will continue to outstrip supply we need to ensure that people are given effective advice and information about all the options open to them. Currently some 60 per cent of people on the council's housing register have little or no housing need. We want to better balance supply and demand and manage customer expectations. A recent Crawley survey indicated that applicants had not considered options other than social rented housing and we need to address this.

Why we have chosen this priority

There is a multitude of evidence about the detrimental affect of temporary accommodation on peoples well being, health, education and ability to sustain employment. We are committed to reducing this impact by reducing homelessness and increasing our work with RSLs to provide good quality accommodation and support. The financial costs of temporary accommodation are high for the council and we want to reduce these and provide better value for money options with a diverse range of RSL provision.

The SHMA highlighted the importance of macro economics and the impact of this on the local economy. For Crawley, as a hub for business, we may see the effects of reduced borrowing to business and less investment in the form of increased unemployment sooner than some other Sussex councils. This may result in increased threats of repossessions and increased homelessness of families and we need to look at trends to improve our services. We have seen the success of our housing options approach and the reduction in Homeless applications from 688 in 2003/04 to 345 in 2007/08. This is a model we want to build on.

Part 2

How we will deliver our five strategic priorities

Our action plan

A SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) action plan for this Housing Strategy has been developed to support our key priorities (see appendix 2). The council is realistic about its aims and we fully take into account stakeholders' comments about what can be delivered given the demands made on us and the resources available to us. We have acknowledged earlier in this strategy that the demand for housing will continue to outstrip supply. The action plan is designed to focus on what we can deliver and resource during the life of the strategy (2009-2013).

This action plan is directly linked to the action plans for the sub-housing strategies also used by the council (e.g. homelessness, private sector renewal, BME and to the council's corporate and partnership plans and priorities).

Key milestones for the five priorities in 2009-2010 are:

Strategic priority 1: Increasing the supply of homes

1. Delivering our annual new homes and affordable housing targets in line with the Local Development Core Strategy (2007)
2. Endeavour to release at least two land sites in 2010 for affordable housing
3. Council site housing development programmed from 2009
4. Initiative to reduce under-occupation in place to help promote movement as a result of demographic changes
5. Hostel review is completed.

Strategic priority 2: Developing sustainable communities

1. Corporate engagement project successfully engages more customers and residents by driving resident approved approaches and 2009 funding allocation spent
2. Research project completed to provide ongoing understanding of what housing older people want and when
3. Streamline DFG and aids and adaptations process in place-delivering a faster service
4. Increase in credit union activity in Crawley.

**Strategic priority 3:
Improving the quality of housing**

1. Crawley Homes meets decent homes targets annually
2. Annual energy efficiency improvement in private properties from 23.95 per cent in 2008 to 30 per cent by 2011 (following legislative formula)
3. HMO standards (2008) fully implemented and evidenced across the private sector
4. Landlord accreditation scheme implemented.

**Strategic priority 4:
Preventing and
reducing homelessness**

1. Homelessness prevention model continues to prevent homelessness
2. Mortgage Rescue Scheme implemented.

**Strategic priority 5:
Providing accessible information
on housing choices**

1. Allocations policy reviewed
2. The council increases its understanding of local market for low cost housing initiatives
3. Property Store service enhanced to provide more joined up information on housing choices.

“The council is realistic about its aims and we fully take into account stakeholders’ comments about what can be delivered given the demands made on us and the resources available to us”

Resources to deliver our priorities

Budget Strategy 2009/2010 to 2011/2012

In delivering the Housing Strategy 2009-2013 we will use our own assets and other funding streams. In setting the financial boundaries within which we determine our priorities for spending we have taken into account the following:

- Meeting the needs of the community as set out in the Corporate Plan
- Setting low local tax increases
- Protecting the long-term financial health of the council
- Relative priority of individual services
- Achieving a balance between revenue spending and investing in improvements to the infrastructure and facilities within the town
- The continuing decline in Right To Buy receipts.

The methodology used in the Budget Strategy for allocating resources addresses the need for investment in:

- New affordable housing
- Existing council housing stock
- Disabled Facilities Grants
- Private sector renewal loans.

The Budget Strategy also aims to increase the level of investment on capital schemes by a minimum of £1 million from 2011/2012. In terms of revenue finance, the council's financial strategy is to have a balanced budget for 2009/2010. Please see the Budget Strategy for the key objectives and further detail.

Asset Management Strategy 2008-2011

The council is committed to the use of other capital assets in addition to financial resources to support the delivery of new affordable housing.

This approach includes us:

- Providing land at a discount fee to RSLs
- Providing grant funding for development of special needs accommodation (hostels, extra care facilities etc.)
- Requiring up to 40 per cent affordable units on council land sold for residential development by way of contractual obligations
- Investing capital resources in enabling the development of new affordable homes through RSLs/developers
- Continuing to review landholdings to identify and release suitable sites for new affordable homes.

The council itself plans to provide resources to meet our commitment to affordable housing as set out in Figure 2.

Our major source of funding for new affordable housing comes from RSLs who receive financial support from the Homes and Communities Agency towards individual schemes. We actively support our RSL partners in bidding for funding from the Homes and Communities Agency and will continue to work in partnership in developing bids. We work with 14 RSLs currently and are open to new housing provider involvement in Crawley.

Crawley has had increasing success in attracting grants with £20m during 2004-2008 the highest award in Sussex. The new market engagement framework from 2008 has changed this approach to set date funding. Developers also play a key role in the provision of new affordable housing via section 106 agreements (where new developments must contain the required amount of affordable housing provision as laid down in our affordable housing and planning policies).



Figure 2: Capital programme (summary of funding at April 1 2009)

	Actual	Budget			Future Years £000s	Total £000s
	2007/08 £000s	2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s	2010/11 £000s		
Affordable housing	1,600	2,580	4,368	2,863	4,000	15,411
HRA	373	1,069	10,200	10,000	9,600	31,242
Private Sector	592	732	615	644	0	1,991
Total all types	2,565	4,381	15,183	13,507	13,600	48,644
Split of private sector housing						
- Disabled Facilities Grant	497	600	447	455	0	1,999
- Other Improvement/Repair Grants	95	72	48	66	0	281
- Other Improvement/Repair Loans	0	60	120	123	0	303
Total private sector housing	592	732	615	644	0	2,583

“The council provides a discretionary loans service to private housing sector applicants for repairs and renovations”

Council housing

Please refer to our HRA Business Plan 2009-2011 for detailed information on spending on council stock, particularly the funding for decent homes which is being continually monitored. The council is committed to funding the aids and adaptations service to ensure that residents can continue to live independently in council stock.

Private sector housing funding

The council began increasing funding to the private sector service in 2007 to increase resources devoted to enforcement and standards work.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)

This is a funding priority for the council as evidenced in the Best Value Review of Services for Older People 2007. The council also receives some direct government financial support for the provision of DFGs. Funding is made available from central government based on our HSSA return and a calculation of our DFG activity (this funding approach is new in 2008/2009). The total Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant funding from the council up to 2011 is £600,000 in 2008-2009, £447,000 in 2009-2010 and £455,000 in 2010-2011.

Repair and renovation loans

The council provides a discretionary loans service to private housing sector applicants for repairs and renovations of up to £8,000. The total discretionary loan budget up to 2011 is £60,000 in 2008-2009, £120,000 in 2009-2010 and £123,000 in 2010-2011. The council's policy means we place a charge on the property with a view to building up a reusable fund over time.

Home Insulation Grants (HIGs)

In partnership with West Sussex Energy and Efficiency Service (WSEEC) we have been targeting delivery of home insulation grants to households in receipt of benefit and older people since 2005, adding low income households too from August 2008. We have expanded this scheme from summer 2008 to provide grant funding to meet Warm Front client contributions (available through GOSE funding). The council provides funding through the General Fund and in addition we have been successful in securing utilities company funding from the start of the scheme. During 2008-2011 we are in a partnership with British Gas who are providing funding of £224,000. At the stage of writing this strategy we have no indication of how much this funding stream may be after 2011. If we can continue to generate high demand for insulation and spend the full allocation we will be in a strong position to argue for similar funding levels.



Supported Housing Services

Development of new supported housing provision will be dependant on securing resources through Supporting People grant allocations. West Sussex County Council (WSCC) has been awarded £15m in 2008-2009 to fund care across West Sussex.

It is recognised here that the need in Sussex for this support outweighs the resources available. Crawley can access this pot of money by working in partnership with WSCC to provide housing which meets the needs of their priority funding groups set out in the table below:

Figure 3: Supporting people funding for West Sussex 2008-2009

Client group	Number of units	Proportion of units	Proportion of funding
Older people with support needs, including frail elderly	1,144	67.7%	17.6%
People with learning difficulties	19	1.1%	11.1%
People with mental health problems	239	14.2%	28.2%
Young people and young parents	103	6.1%	19.6%
Homelessness	24	1.4%	8.0%
Generic	90	5.3%	9.4%
Cross authority (incl DV/subs misuse)	71	4.2%	6.1%
Total	1,690	100%	100%

Planning resources

Planning assist with the identification of appropriate sites for development, work with developers to bring sites forward to the market, work to encourage the integration of housing with mixed use schemes, and establish policy to promote properly considered housing development which includes affordable housing provision.

Recycled funds

To add to our income available for housing the council has an approach that supports charges on properties in our repairs loans service and this is being considered in May 2009 for the DFG service. This will provide some revenue over the longer term. However, it is limited in its scope.

The council's approach to value for money

The council has agreed a new review framework intended to ensure that performance and value for money are addressed in a way that provides maximum support to services; is fair and transparent; prioritises services for review; and is rigorous in its approach. The programme will have two tracks: a programme of systems thinking interventions and a programme of 'short reviews' focussed on value for money. In 2005 the council entered into a procurement partnership with Horsham and Mid Sussex district councils. This led to the appointment of a joint procurement officer and development of a joint procurement strategy. Through the partnership, efficiency savings have been identified and secured. Work will continue to pursue a balanced approach to procurement seeking further savings opportunities both through local purchasing arrangements and in collaboration with other councils.



Key challenges identified

Using intelligence data available to us we have taken account of challenges facing us in our risk assessment below. The economic downturn is the key challenge in successfully delivering our five strategic priorities. The SHMA (2009) highlights the impact of the macro economy on the micro economy where the global credit squeeze makes raising finance more difficult for business with the housing market said to be at the heart of the downturn. This is demonstrated in a number of ways from people finding it difficult to borrow to house builders being more cautious in this market. It is likely that this climate will continue to impact up to 2011 and possibly beyond. Some figures at 2008/2009 suggest:

- The lowest level of new starts for 60 years
- Construction industry is at a three-year low
- The number of mortgages sold in January 2009, at 23,400, was 52 per cent lower than in January 2008. Of these, only 8,900 were for first time buyers according to the Council of Mortgage Lenders (March 2009).

The planning challenges that exist in terms of delivering affordable housing for the life of this Housing Strategy 2009 to 2013 in light of the context of the South East Plan to be adopted in 2009 are:

- Ensuring on site provision remains the priority in light of the 40 per cent target
 - Balancing the overall provision of affordable housing against achieving the preferred tenure mix
 - Ensure sustainable communities are delivered with developments of both market and affordable housing
 - Ensuring affordable housing provision is achieved through other mechanisms when the council accepts that on site provision at 40 per cent is not achievable, or desirable
- Ensuring that the borough's housing need is met through the most appropriate mix of dwelling type, size and tenure in the context of the level of housing that is anticipated to be delivered overall
 - Ensuring the Core Strategy Review (adoption anticipated mid-2009) and the revised affordable housing policy appropriately seeks to address the borough's housing need in the context of the overall housing requirement for the borough.



Figure 4: Risk assessment

Risk

Economic downturn leads to failure to meet affordable housing delivery targets

Economic downturn leads to increased homelessness and unemployment

Government funding for affordable housing concentrated on identified growth area therefore reducing the amount of SHG available for schemes in Crawley

A significant amount of our homelessness prevention work is enabled by Government grant funding up to 2011 and beyond 2011 there's no certainty of this continuing

The loss of developable land – NE Sector – arising from the decision to reserve land for a potential second runway at Gatwick which has reduced our land availability to deliver affordable housing targets

Sustaining standards in our stock when Decent Homes targets are met

Demographic challenges which means planning for an ageing population's housing needs

An increase in fuel poverty which is a factor in social exclusion and deteriorating property conditions

Level of capital receipts required to fund Housing Capital Programme not achieved

Over-reliance on developer Section 106 schemes may cause delays in the programme over which the Council has no control

Lack of land for housing

Increased demand for social housing

Risk to Supporting People Programme funding due to removal of ring fencing requirement

Dealing with challenges

We are facing the delivery challenges ahead by carrying out an annual refresh on our action plan to enable us to keep abreast of economic circumstances and make changes where necessary. We have carried out a risk assessment exercise to focus our actions (see Figure 4). This sets out some actions we are taking to minimize the risk of not meeting affordable housing targets. These actions sit within the framework of our strategic planning approaches. For example, the Core Strategy takes into account the expectations of government planning policy guidance as well as the 2005 West Sussex County Structure Plan covering the period up to 2016. It also looks ahead to 2026 taking account of the South East Plan being prepared by the South East England Regional Assembly. As such, the spatial strategy places local needs and aspirations in a wider context. The Core Strategy Review will address how the potential South East Plan requirement of 375 dwellings per annum will be met between 2006 and 2026.

In addition to the housing supply position the adopted Core Strategy includes Policy H5: Affordable Housing. Policy H5 sets out our intentions for affordable housing stating that the council will seek 40 per cent affordable housing from schemes of 15 dwellings or more, or on sites greater than half a hectare. The supportive text to the policy states that of the 40 per cent affordable housing 70 per cent should be social-rented accommodation and 30 per cent intermediate accommodation. Please see the LDF Core Strategy which provides detail about the affordable housing requirements up to 2026.

Risk assessment on our strategic priorities

These risks will be monitored throughout the life of the strategy alongside the action plan.

Mitigating action

- Encourage developers to bring forward affordable components of sites
 - Work with developers to find ways of bringing forward housing sites
 - Lobby for increased grant levels via GOSE/Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
 - Exploring all opportunities with our members to deliver affordable housing
- Implement Mortgage Rescue Scheme
 - Expand Rent Deposit Scheme
 - Work with Housing Benefit section in reviewing use of Discretionary Housing Payments and Direct Payments
- Work with development partners to maximise funding opportunities
 - Continue to lobby via HCA
 - Work with HCA and RSLs to identify opportunities to reduce grant funding requirement
 - Updating the SHMA after 2010 to increase our understanding of housing trends and the place shaping needs for the future to help in providing regional evidence
- Making a business case to mainstream our Rent Deposit Scheme and mediation schemes
 - Programming a systems thinking review of our housing options service to identify increased efficiency
 - Working in partnership with other providers such as Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to deliver services e.g. Mortgage Rescue Scheme
- Undertake our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) by April 2011 to identify sufficient land to meet our South East Plan housing requirement for the period up to 2026
- Carrying out future stock condition surveys to make investment decisions
 - The current investment programme runs beyond 2010 and in 2009 we will be developing a detailed investment plan which will identify the ongoing investment requirements. We will also be re-surveying a significant proportion of our stock annually to update our stock condition database
- Commissioning research on specific needs of older and BME communities
 - Assessing the implications of the Private Stock Condition Survey around targeting vulnerable groups in our repair loans and DFG awards
 - Working in partnership with specialist RSL providers
- Increasing resources in our private sector
 - Negotiating funding from British Gas for those on benefit and over 60 who are most vulnerable
 - HIGS being delivered to those on low incomes not just on benefits from summer 2008
 - GOSE top up monies in place for Warm Front initiatives for those in need
 - Working in partnership with WSEEAC
 - Increase our outreach work with vulnerable groups
- Closely monitor sales of stock and land
 - Make clear business case to Members/CMT to ensure affordable housing remains a priority for funding in emerging Capital Strategy
- Assess business case for new government initiatives which may improve flexibility and diverse portfolio
 - Assess council's resources via our housing supply chain/affordable housing forums to lever in private monies
- Seek opportunities outside borough boundaries
 - Review Open Space Strategy
 - Use opportunities afforded by strategic review of garage/hostel sites
- Review allocation policy and eligibility criteria
 - Promote take up of other housing options
 - Develop Property Store as a cross-tenure accommodation resource
 - Bringing forward the development of Town Centre North and recognising the importance this will play in establishing Crawley as a vibrant town centre of regional importance
- Agreement reached to continue with existing arrangements for further year
 - Continue to take forward cluster reviews and retendering arrangements
 - Develop robust evidence base to support case for continued funding



Partners

Key ways partners will contribute to delivering our strategy:

We recognise the council's strategic role in influencing and balancing the housing market to create new and increased choices for people in meeting their housing needs. We need to provide services that respond to residents' wishes and work in partnership with others to increase our capacity to meet key goals. The council cannot deliver the Housing Strategy without fully engaging and working with partners. We have built up effective partnerships within the town and the wider region and will continue to build on these.

These partnerships are:

- Delivery of strategic housing, such as West of Bewbush, working with Horsham District Council, WSCC, partner RSLs
- Working with West Sussex Chief Housing Officers' Group to identify partnership working and drive forward agreed priorities (e.g. approaches to land sites and higher grant rates)
- Planning partnerships with developers on key sites
- West Sussex Planning and Affordable Housing Group (PAHG) – agreeing county-wide approaches to LAA affordable housing delivery targets and interpreting this for Crawley
- Secure by design partnerships for new housing with planning, community safety and the police
- Environmental and economic development initiatives delivering town centre environmental improvements and the development of a Crawley innovation and enterprise hub through LSP action groups involving the council, WSCC and the business community
- Promoting social inclusion through a commitment by all LSP partner organisations to actively deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
- Working with RSL partners and the Homes and Communities Agency to secure resources for the town and jointly explore initiatives through our housing providers' RSL forum
- Working as the delivery vehicle with utility companies' investment to target vulnerable households in fuel poverty
- In partnership with West Sussex Energy and Efficiency Advice Agency to deliver energy efficiency initiatives
- Working in partnership with neighbouring authorities to develop successful funding bids to support projects such as the cross-county SMHA and the West Sussex Partnership, which provides grant funding to meet Warm Front client contributions
- Working jointly with the Home Improvement Agency to identify trends and deliver our DFG service
- Working with consultants and WSCC to consider Supporting People needs across the county
- Working with neighbouring authorities to deliver joint services e.g. procurement and building control
- Gatwick Diamond Initiative; LDF Gatwick Diamond Group driving forward the vision for the area
- Member of the Local Economy Action Group (LEAG), part of the LSP
- Town Centre Partnership to bring together town centre-based businesses and partners, dealing with matters important to the success of the town centre under the headings of skills, marketing and events and the environment.
- Town Centre Regeneration Board.

How we will consult and engage with stakeholders

Although we recognise that we are doing lots of good engagement work with our tenants and residents such as the Crawley Homes Involving People (CHIP) database, neighbourhood forums and Streetcare Champions we know we need to do more to meet the future empowerment agenda. We are committed to developing and improving the following:

- Consulting the customer to improve services
- Developing opportunities to involve people at a neighbourhood level
- Improving the way we engage through better planning and coordination and targeted training and development.

Our drivers for improving engagement in Crawley are:

1. National direction such as the Government White Paper on Empowerment (published in July 2008) 'Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power'
2. Legislation such as Duty to Involve – Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (LGIPH) 2007
3. Social inclusion and community cohesion aims as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
4. Crawleys Audit Commission Landlord Report 2008 which identified areas for improvement in resident involvement
5. Community cohesion funding status awarded in 2008.

The eight strategic themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 agreed through extensive consultation with partners drive our work with stakeholders. There are four underlying principles:

- Working together – Collaboration between organisations becomes a part of the normal and routine way of doing things
- Involving people – People can confidently participate in the decision-making process
- Making things last – Seeking to achieve sustainable outcomes in everything we do
- Dignity, respect and opportunity – No-one is left behind or socially excluded and people from all walks of life are given the opportunity to realise their potential in life.

“The programme was approved by Cabinet in November 2008 and the Link Programme itself became live in April 2009”

Our Community Development and Corporate Policy sections are driving forward a corporate engagement framework which will provide strategic direction for all departments involved in engaging customers and residents. They began a review of the council's approach to resident involvement and influence in April 2008 and found a lack of consistency across the council.

Consequently the project group recommends the development of a senior management level steering group to rationalise Crawley's engagement menu and the implementation of the Link model to manage effective neighbourhood engagement. The programme was approved by Cabinet in November 2008 and the Link Programme itself became live on April 1 2009. Representative officers from Community Development, Democratic Services, Amenity Services and Crawley Homes will meet with councillors from specified ward areas every quarter to coordinate neighbourhood level activity in relation to resident queries and issues. The programme will also enable officers and councillors to consider neighbourhood resident involvement to inform future development of such mechanisms.

The Link model is particularly relevant to Crawley as the neighbourhood engagement model is one widely favoured by all stakeholders consulted. It will also provide focus for a coordinated approach to the development of resident involvement initiatives like the Broadfield and Langley Green neighbourhood forums who are actively involved in the neighbourhood renewal in those areas.

Alongside this our Corporate Policy Unit is working with services to improve the way we engage through improving standards, bringing forward training and development and looking at how we engage those groups which are seldom heard. The council is also committed to surveying residents on an annual basis and there is also a programme of engaging with customers on our strategic projects such as the development of our Supplementary Planning Documents and Core Strategy Review. Currently we are engaging stakeholders in the consultation stages of our Town Centre North and West of Bewbush strategic programmes.

How we will monitor the strategy and engage with stakeholders

The council cannot deliver this strategy alone. The Housing Strategy sits below the umbrella Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 framework which is monitored by the LSP Board. National indicators are used to support the monitoring of actions in the Community Strategy.

The council's Housing Strategy Manager is responsible for coordinating progress, monitoring and reporting against the Housing Strategy actions. We will report on the five strategic aims using the following:

- Quarterly Housing Strategy Working Group meetings around exception reporting to agree corrective actions, beginning in June 2009. This is a corporate group
- Scrutiny of supporting action plans as part of the council's quarterly performance monitoring process
- Monitoring of the minimum performance criteria with our housing provider partners to drive improvement in new housing and stock managed in Crawley
- National indicator performance reporting.

We will share progress with stakeholders in the following ways:

- An annual stakeholder event to challenge our delivery and receive feedback
- Publication of an annual update on our website with a questionnaire
- Housing Providers' forums. The first in March 2009
- Private sector landlords' consultation
- Housing and Homelessness Forum
- Our HSS Customer Panel quarterly meetings and corporate engagement structure
- The Crawley Older People's Forum
- Publicity in Crawley Live, which is sent to all Crawley residents.

The Housing Strategy is an evolving document and will continue to be developed with involvement by our partners. We are committed to refreshing the Housing Strategy annually and the Housing Strategy Manager is tasked with this. The first refresh of the information is due to be completed by April 2010. This is necessary in order to:

- Assess our performance and learn lessons
- Fully update the year's action plan
- Take account of legislative/economic changes
- Update any budgets/new funding allocations.

In the mid-term it is our intention that this Housing Strategy will be incorporated into the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012. We will be exploring the corporate programming of this work. In the longer term the strategy could be delivered in a sub-regional context with our SHMA partners and this option will be assessed during future refreshes.



Part 3

Supporting information

Glossary of terms used

Affordable housing

Housing provided with a subsidy to enable the sale price or rent to be substantially lower than the prevailing market prices or rents in the locality, and where mechanisms exist to ensure that the housing remains affordable for those who cannot afford to access market housing. The subsidy will be provided from the public and/or private sector.

Affordable rented housing

Affordable rented housing is that which is provided, usually by housing associations, (RSLs) and allocated according to needs by the council at rents no greater than target rents determined through the national rent regime. Service charges on affordable rented properties should not be too high as to make a tenancy unaffordable.

Assured Shorthold Tenancy

A tenancy with a minimum term of six months which guarantees the landlord the right to repossess the property at the end of the term.

Audit Commission

An independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively, to achieve high-quality local services for the public. Their work covers local government, health, housing, community safety and fire and rescue services. www.audit-commission.gov.uk

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)

Crawley Borough Council has classified BME residents as all those who do not count as white British, including refugees and asylum seekers.

Brownfield

A piece of industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or underused, and considered as a potential site for re-development.

Choice-Based Lettings

Crawley operates a Choice-Based Lettings Scheme which replaced officer allocation of properties. Although there are differences between these schemes once an individual has registered that they are looking for housing, they then bid for properties that become available. Based on their circumstances they will be awarded a 'priority banding' and this determines the successful bidder.

Citizens' Panel

Standing Crawley research panel consisting of approximately 1,000 residents which takes part in three or four surveys a year.

Combined Housing register (CHR)

This is a list of all people who want to move into or between homes in Crawley; it includes all applicants for housing whether social housing or other such as shared ownership.

Core Strategy

A document that sets out the key elements of the planning framework for the borough. It is comprised of a spatial vision and strategic objectives for the area; a spatial strategy; core policies; and a monitoring and implementation framework with clear objectives for achieving delivery.

Crawley Homes Involving People

A database of tenants who are interested in having their say on various housing services.

Crawley Young Persons Council

Elected 13-25 year olds from Crawley hold monthly meetings to raise and discuss relevant issues to young people. The CYPC has a small budget to support its work.



Decent Homes Standard (DHS)

A set of government criteria against which all housing is measured to ensure that everyone has a decent place to live. In order to be decent a home should be warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities.

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

Government department which sets policies on local government, housing, urban regeneration, planning and fire and rescue.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)

Mandatory grants given by housing authorities to provide and improve adaptation services to disabled people enabling them to continue to stay in their own homes.

Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)

Discretionary payments to assist in the prevention of homelessness.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An assessment of the processes and procedures through which a policy or procedure has been taken, to ensure that it does not unreasonably adversely affect any particular person or group. An EIA will also assess whether the actions or aims of the document will adversely affect any individual or group, and makes sure that all relevant people and organisations have been consulted properly on its contents. The six main equality groups are race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability.

Fuel poverty

The common definition of a fuel poor household is one which has to spend more than 10 per cent of household income to achieve adequate heating (21 degrees centigrade in the living room and 18 degrees centigrade in other occupied rooms).

Gatwick Diamond

Business-led partnership including regional and local government to promote strong economic growth in the region.

General needs housing

General needs housing covers the bulk of housing stock for affordable rent. It is stock that is not designated for specific client groups requiring support or does not have special design features that are specific to housing for older people and supported housing.

Government Office for the South East (GOSE)

The regional office of central government responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of government policy.

Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA)

This act places responsibility on councils to produce reports outlining practical, cost-effective measures for achieving energy saving in homes in their area.

Home Improvement Agency (HIA)

A non-profit making organisation which assists older, disabled and other vulnerable people to have adaptations and repairs/improvements and security measures carried out to their homes to enable them to remain independent in their homes. Crawley Borough Council's Home Improvement Agency is called Anchor Staying Put.

Homes and Communities Agency

The new agency replacing the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships. This government agency funds and regulates Registered Social Landlords in England among other development duties.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The new statutory fit for human habitation standard that relates to all residential dwellings and through which local authorities have a duty to take action in cases of statutory unfitness.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Dwellings that are occupied by three or more persons who form two or more households.

Housing need

Generally regarded as those households who cannot afford to buy a home on the open market or rent a home from a private landlord.

Housing-related support

Housing-related support is services provided to an individual in their own home which enables them to develop and sustain their ability to live independently in their accommodation.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Business plan containing details of performance in managing and maintaining a council's stock.

Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy sets out the council's detailed strategic plans for housing in Crawley and covers a five-year forward period. It sets out what our priorities are across all housing in the private and public sector.

Housing Strategic Services Customer Panel (HHS Customer Panel)

A Crawley panel which meets quarterly. It has a cross-section of multi-tenure residents to help improve housing services.

Intermediate rented housing

Submarket rented housing which is made available on the same basis as affordable rented housing at a rent above target rents but below market rental values.

Key Lines of Enquiry (KLoES)

KLoES are detailed questions that help the Audit Commission measure service delivery and performance while undertaking inspections of local authorities.

Key worker

Defined by national government as public sector employees such as nurses, police, teachers, prison and social services staff. Not all public sector employees are considered key workers and the definition can vary across regions.

Lifetime home standard

The Lifetime home standard consists of 16 design and building requirements which a new home must meet to be considered a lifetime home. The purpose of these features is that they allow greater flexibility and movement within the home for any changing circumstances of a household.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

The Local Development Framework is not a statutory term. However, it sets out, in the form of a portfolio/folder, the Local Development Documents which collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area. The Local Development Framework will be comprised of Local Development Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. The Local Development Framework will also include the Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and the Annual Monitoring Report.



Local Economy Action Group (LEAG)

Forms part of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

LSPs are effective partnerships working across the public, private, business, community and voluntary sectors at local level. The LSPs bring together local plans, partnerships and initiatives to provide a forum through which public service providers such as local authority, health services and police can work effectively to meet local needs and priorities, improve the delivery of public services and the quality of life of local people.

National indicators (NI)

Agreed standards the Government is using from April 2008 to get standard information from local authorities to monitor their services and drive forward improvements.

Newly forming household

Households that are created from within existing households. For example, creation of a new household when a young adult leaves the family home to live independently or the breakdown of a relationship.

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3)

Underpins the Government's strategic housing policy objectives through planning documents.

Private rented sector

Homes available for rent from private individuals/companies as opposed to homes rented from councils or housing associations.

Public Service Agreement (PSA)

A voluntary agreement between the Government and an individual local authority. Under the agreement, the individual council agrees to achieve a level of performance on a particular work area that exceeds existing targets. The agreement includes assurances from government on how it will help in the achievement of the stated goals.

Race Equality Scheme (RES) 2008

Legislative scheme in organisations to ensure processes are reviewed and monitored to ensure full access to council services and facilities.

Regional Housing Board

The board provides strategic direction for housing policy and co-ordination of regional investment.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL)

An independent housing organisation registered with the Homes and Communities Agency under the Housing Act 1996. They may be industrial and provident societies, registered charities or private companies.

Rent Deposit Scheme (RDS)

A scheme that aims to help those in housing need to access and maintain accommodation in the private rented sector by providing a financial guarantee to landlords to cover the deposit and/or rent in advance subject to meeting the scheme's criteria.

S106 affordable housing agreements

Section 106 of the Town and Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority (LPA) to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a land developer over a related issue. The obligation is sometimes termed a 'Section 106 Agreement'. It sets out the conditions on new development which must be met by the developer, e.g. restrictions on allocations, requirements for children's play areas etc.

Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)

A formula applied as a means of rating a home's energy efficiency. The higher the rating, the better.



Statutorily homeless

Households that local authorities must, by law, ensure have somewhere suitable to live.

Supporting People

A term used to describe the partnership of local authorities and service providers administering central government funding for people requiring housing related support.

Strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA)

The SHLAA aims to identify land suitable for housing development. The SHLAA aims to prove the suitability, availability, achievability and deliverability of sufficient land to meet the council's entire housing allocation for the period up to 2026.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

The overall aim of a SHMA is to establish a strategic vision of housing supply and demand, providing authorities and their partners with a better understanding of the local and sub-regional housing markets and a robust evidence base with conclusions and recommendations to inform emerging planning and housing policies sub-regionally.

Supporting People Programme (SP)

The programme funds housing-related support services to a wide range of individuals in order to prevent problems that can often lead to hospitalisation, institutional care or homelessness and can help the smooth transition to independent living for those leaving an institutionalised environment.

Sustainable communities

Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Temporary accommodation (TA)

Accommodation provided by the council either directly or through other agencies, for households that are homeless.

Tenants' Forum

Crawley Homes' principal consultative body on housing policies and service provision.

Warm Front

Warm Front is a central government-funded scheme to provide heating and insulation to certain vulnerable households (e.g. over 60 years, disabled, families with children etc.) in receipt of one of the principal income or disability-related benefits.

West Sussex County Council (WSSCC)

WSSCC is the county authority with overall responsibility for strategy and the provision of a number of county-wide services such as social care services.

West Sussex Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (WSEEC)

Provides help and advice regarding energy efficiency and grants which may be available. It has a partnership with Crawley Borough Council to deliver home insulation grants in Crawley.

West Sussex Structure Plan

Sets out policies to meet the needs of the communities of West Sussex.

Zone Agents

The organisation (usually a RSL) that is responsible for the co-ordination of the Key Worker Living and Homebuy scheme in a given area.

Document links for Housing Strategy

Key documents – links and web addresses where available*

Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy

Corporate Plan 2007-2012

Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2009

Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2008
www.crawley.gov.uk/psh

Council Housing Stock Condition Surveys 2004-2008

Housing Needs Assessment 2004
www.crawley.gov.uk

Budget Strategy 2009
www.crawley.gov.uk/budgets

The West Sussex Local Area Agreement 2008-2011
www.westsussex.gov.uk

South East Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011
www.southeast-ra.gov.uk

Housing Strategy 2004-2008
www.crawley.gov.uk

Homelessness Review (2008)
www.crawley.gov.uk

Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013
www.crawley.gov.uk

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Strategy 2008
www.crawley.gov.uk

Housing choices (survey Oct 2008)

Choice-Based Lettings (survey Aug 2008)

Community Development Strategy 2006-2011
www.crawley.gov.uk

Climate Change Strategy 2008
www.crawley.gov.uk/environment

Asset Management Strategy 2008-2011
www.crawley.gov.uk/housing

Crawley Homes HRA Business Plan 2009-2011
www.crawley.gov.uk/housing

Audit Commission Landlord Report 2008
www.audit-commission.gov.uk

* Some of these documents are not publicly available at drafting of this strategy. Please call the Housing Strategy Manager at Crawley Borough Council if you wish to discuss any documents above.

Appendix 1

Key policy influences for our Housing Strategy 2009-2013

Current Position

Potential Impact on our Housing Strategy Priorities

Housing market rescue reforms (the credit crunch)

The actual impact of the credit crunch remains uncertain but the council has already seen a marked increase in the number of people seeking housing advice and greater numbers applying to the housing register as people find it harder to get a mortgage, house prices fall and house-builders experience adverse market conditions.

The Government package of measures to meet current challenges in the housing market does not offer stability and the turbulence in the global financial markets continues, resulting in increased levels of homelessness. Adverse conditions continue to impact on our capacity to maintain the required number of 'start-ups and completions'.

Welfare Reform Green Paper (worklessness)

'Workless' households tend to be concentrated in particular neighbourhoods, where worklessness and poverty are part of a cycle of disadvantage. John Hills' Ends and Means report on social housing identified, nationally:

- 70 per cent of social tenants have incomes in the poorest two fifths of the population;
- Only 32 per cent of social tenants are in work
- Tenants are likely to have higher rates of disability.

Housing and employment are closely linked: the need for a decent home is fundamental to employment and training opportunities and the ability to work – by tackling worklessness, housing providers can offer a springboard to other opportunities for residents.

From a business perspective, a high level of workless households in an area can result in difficulties for the housing organisations to deliver sustainable regeneration.

Modernisation of housing advice and information

While individual's housing options have grown, the majority of advice services remain based on a broad welfare model and narrowly focused on people in acute housing need. The Government believes "universal" services would improve transparency around products available and better access.

Preventing homelessness, through achieving earlier interventions (crisis prevention). Provision of advice around training or employment. Maximise housing options and extend home ownership to existing tenants by promoting new products such as e.g. Homebuy Direct.

Review of the private rented sector

The national housing agenda about the role of the private rented sector is moving away from dwelling condition toward:

- Provision of sufficient affordable housing for all and the health, safety and well-being of occupiers
- Reduction in carbon emissions through improved energy efficiency.

Improving the quality of housing is a key priority of the Housing Strategy and this is also a key theme, reflected in the independent Review of the Private Rented Sector.

Preventing homelessness:

- The current range of tenancy length available within the sector is an issue for many. The flexibility of a short tenancy is the main attraction offered by the sector. However, for others, a longer tenancy may be appropriate
- Providing accessible information on housing choices: the sector provides housing for vulnerable and low income households – just over a fifth of all private tenants are on Housing Benefit. For these, the challenge is to ensure that there exists in the sector sufficient choice and quality to support their aspirations where reasonable. The independent Review of the Private Rented Sector has this as one of its key themes and the Government intends to address any relevant issues raised by the Review in the Housing Reform Green Paper.

Government Housing Policy Response

Local Action

Facing the Housing Challenge announced measures designed to help alleviate the current challenges and to address long-term need. A £1 billion housing package, including bringing forward £400m from the 2010-11 affordable housing budget to deliver up to 5,500 social rented homes over the next 18 months on top of current assumptions.

The council has strengthened its long-term contingency planning for housing, including its approach to improving the evidence base in private sector housing, by, for example:

- Quarterly monitoring of cases involving mortgage arrears or possession action
- Proactive approach to establishment of Mortgage Rescue Scheme
- Establishment of corporate group to consider impact of economic downturn and develop appropriate local interventions
- Further expansion of the Rent Deposit Scheme (RDS)
- Achievement of 50 homeless preventions through targeted use of DHP.

The White Paper 'Reforming Welfare for the Future' December 2008 sets government proposals to provide housing services and options which help and encourage people towards greater economic independence and social mobility, and deliver greater fairness and make the best use of resources. Linked to wider reforms of the welfare state and government ambitions around preparing people on benefits to get back to work.

Options currently being considered include:

- Targeted, joined-up advice and support at point of entry as part of the housing options package
- Revisiting employment training as part of any housing reviews
- Bonus points in allocations system for employment and skills
- Revisit impediments in current system (e.g. housing benefit reform)
- Some lets made available especially for people seeking to move for work or training.

CLG's Expanding Choice Addressing Need: government's vision for housing advice to become a one-stop, universal, consumer focused service and for housing advice itself, to have an expanded role, focused on helping more individuals realise their long-term housing aspirations.

The council has a well established homeless prevention culture through effective housing options work and will consider the range of services it offers and markets (to attract new groups and existing customers to come forward much earlier) with partners.

The Government commissioned independent Review of the Private Rented Sector from Julie Rugg and David Rhodes at the University of York (23/10/08) generally suggests councils can improve the PRS for both landlords and tenants by increasing licensing to lettings agencies, increasing the complaints process and landlord accreditation type schemes. The Housing Act 2004 introduced extensive powers for local authorities to tackle private rented housing in the worst condition through the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme, mandatory and discretionary licensing regimes and management orders.

The council has carried out a Stock Condition Survey to increase its evidence base alongside the strategic housing market assessment. The council is providing more resources to strengthen its private sector housing enforcement service to continue to improve poor condition properties and poor management standards, including maintenance. The council recognises and continues to seek to maximise the role the private rented sector plays in housing options and meeting temporary accommodation needs of homeless households by providing flexibility and choice. The council is capturing planned improvements and approaches in its private sector renewal framework 2008.

To prevent and reduce the incidence of empty properties

This issue relates not only to long-term empty properties, but second homes, the incidence of “buy-to-leave” and the effect of the credit crunch, on affordable housing developers and housing that associations can not sell.

Improving the supply of homes and developing sustainable communities.

To accelerate the supply of new housing and to build sustainable communities

Long-term imbalance between supply and demand, including increasing the provision of affordable housing to rent and buy. The credit crunch and a fall in S106 schemes and capital receipts from sales is having a major effect on government targets – perhaps as much as 10 years according to the National Housing Federation.

Increasing the supply of new homes. The council is committed to minimising the adverse conditions impacting on the council’s capacity to maintain and keep momentum of start-ups and completions in the affordable housing programme.

Law Commission on tenures

The Law Commission considers “the law governing the relationship [of tenants] with their landlords an irrationally complicated mess” because of an existing multiplicity of tenancy and licence types.

Preventing homelessness and developing sustainable communities. The Law Commission recommended a simple system of secure and standard contracts, in place of the existing multiplicity of tenancy and licence types. It argues for identical contracts for council and housing association tenants. This will increase the security of the nearly 1.5 million housing association tenant households and improvements to council and housing association tenants’ rights e.g. better succession rights and the right to apply to add a partner or flatmate to the contract.

Review of social housing regulation

Professor Martin Cave’s Review of Social Housing Regulation – Every Tenant Matters (June 2007) made clear that there should be a clearer regulation system under an independent regulator for a number of reasons, including the poor level of consumer choice available to social tenants.

Developing sustainable communities. The Government believes the Homes and Communities Agency will focus on the delivery of new affordable housing and work to regenerate run-down areas; and by creating a social housing regulator (the Tenant Services Authority) that will ensure providers improve standards and give tenants a greater say in the management of their homes.

Housing Benefit review

The poverty trap is often at the forefront of any debate on work incentives and Housing Benefit. High rents can discourage people from getting a job.

Preventing homelessness and developing sustainable communities. Local authorities are encouraged to engage with local landlords and to take seriously their evidence that individual customers are getting into arrears. Many local authorities have published their safeguard policies on their websites. The council is gathering evidence at a local level.

Government Housing Policy Response

Local Action

The Homes and Communities Agency will act as a "national clearing house" for developers on prospective schemes which they wish to bring forward to sell.

The Government has discouraged owners from leaving properties empty by reducing VAT to five per cent on the renovation of homes empty for two or more years and by giving local authorities discretion to charge full Council Tax.

As part of the Housing Act 2004 a new power was introduced to allow local authorities to make Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) in respect of long-term empty homes.

The council is refreshing its empty homes procedure, focusing on a targeted approach and proportionate use of resources in making better use of existing capacity. The council has, through the Sussex Empty Homes Forum, developed and committed to a strategic framework for tackling empty homes across Sussex.

Last year, the Housing Green Paper set out plans to increase housing supply to 240,000 additional homes a year by 2016. Government recognises the need for more social housing which is why they are increasing supply by 50 per cent by 2010/2011. The target is to increase provision of new affordable housing to 70,000 by 2010-2011, of which 45,000 will be for new social rented homes and 25,000 for new low-cost home ownership. The Government has also committed to go further in subsequent years to reach 50,000 new social rented homes per annum in the next spending review period.

The council is exploring a number of new government initiatives such as the clearing house options and RSL windfalls and acquisitions to ensure momentum of starts on site is maintained to ensure the delivery of completions in line with LAA targets.

The Government is still considering the implications of the fundamental changes the Law Commission recommends. It also wants to take account of the extensive work underpinning the Review of the Private Rented Sector and is actively engaged with the Law Commission in discussions about Renting Homes.

The council would have to undertake analysis to determine what the impact of the abolition of secure tenancies, assured tenancies, assured shorthold tenancies, introductory tenancies, demoted tenancies and various varieties of common law tenancies would be.

The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

The council will develop effective working partnerships to maximise opportunities for residents and the regeneration of the town.

As part of the Budget 2008 statement, the Chancellor announced a review of Housing Benefit, which is now underway. It is a joint internal review between the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Treasury, which is focusing on the working age Housing Benefit system, looking at its effectiveness, particularly in promoting work incentives, efficiency and fairness, and ensuring it represents value for money for the taxpayer. The review is expected to conclude by December 2008. Jobcentre Plus will pilot a new Better Off In Work Credit.

The council has an established Benefits and Housing Managers' Forum to review the impact of changes and develop appropriate interventions using best practice models. West Sussex Chief Housing Officers Group has identified worklessness as a key focus for a forum in spring 2009.

Current Position

Potential Impact on our Housing Strategy Priorities

Mixed communities (place shaping)

Mixed communities goes beyond planning and tenure. It brings with it, amongst other things, questions about race, willingness to mix (social interaction), the mix of people within social or market housing, the viability of development, employment opportunities, income, choice and services.

Developing sustainable communities. The government developed a Mixed Communities Approach Initiative, which was launched in January 2005. The joint LGA/CIH strategy paper "Visionary Leadership in Housing" maps out a new and challenging role for local authorities, where success will be judged on:

- An authority's capacity to understand and manage local housing markets in their entirety – across sectors, regardless of tenure; and it challenges local authorities to create a vision for their communities, encompassing the entire housing stock in an area
- The last broad objective includes managing neighbourhoods to support wider strategies, planning for housing and communities across all tenures and ensuring that the specific support needs of individuals are in place.

Family homes and reviewing the definition of overcrowding

The Government (through the Homes and Communities Agency) has placed particular financial emphasis on building and acquiring family homes. The current definition of overcrowding is outdated with no minimum space standard.

Developing sustainable communities and preventing homelessness. The Homes and Communities Agency will inherit the agency's existing target that 30 per cent of all new social rented homes should be for families (three or more bedrooms) in 2008/2009 rising to 33 per cent by 2010/2011.

Greater tenant involvement

Greater tenant involvement in the management of their homes has potential to improve the experience of tenants, and to contribute to community empowerment.

Developing sustainable communities, improving the quality of housing and providing accessible information on housing choices: current government initiatives include simplifying the right to manage regulations for council tenants, promoting voluntary tenant management for all social housing tenants and reviewing the Tenant Empowerment Programme to ensure it provides the right support for tenants wanting to explore tenant management.

The Review of the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system

The purpose of the review is to ensure that there is a sustainable, long-term system for financing council housing. The review is due to report to ministers in the spring of 2009, setting out options for the subsidy system. The outcome of the review will be considered as part of the Government's next spending review.

Increasing the supply of homes, developing sustainable communities and improving the quality of housing.

Role of social renting within an ageing society

The Government is currently piloting a number of housing options approaches which are testing the effectiveness of locally determined approaches, including providing older people with financial incentives and practical support to aid downsizing where they choose to move.

All priorities: the agenda is for the social rented sector to provide different forms of care for more people as demographic patterns change and this includes initiatives to reduce under-occupation.

Government Housing Policy Response

Local Action

The Local Government White Paper Strong and Prosperous Communities recognised the importance of the strategic housing role as being “at the heart of achieving the social, economic and environmental objectives that shape a community and create a sense of place”. The Government is currently evaluating the Demonstration Projects and intends to clarify our approach to mixed communities in the Housing Reform Green Paper.

The council has engaged in the IDeA’s programme to improve capacity to deliver the enhanced strategic housing role and a workshop for senior officers and Cabinet Members provided the springboard for the development of the new Housing Strategy. The partnership SHMA is to be published in April 2009.

The Government in developing the new overcrowding standard has already said it will draw upon existing approaches such as that adopted by English Partnerships and other housing practitioners and will consult on these proposals in due course.

We recognise our role as ‘place shaper’ for our area and have increased our understanding of the local housing market and housing need through a cross-county SHMA and local stock condition survey for both council and private sector housing. We will use the SHMA to inform our local response to housing mix requirements. A corporate approach is being taken to the development of housing and planning policy to ensure appropriate alignment. We will be developing our links with the new Homes and Communities Agency, recognising their role as a key delivery partner in supporting our work.

The Government is setting up a National Tenant Voice to ensure social housing tenants have influence at national and regional levels. The new housing regulator, the Tenant Services Authority, will aim to place tenants and their needs at the heart of regulation.

The council has recently refreshed CHIP (Crawley Homes Involvement Panel) and successfully gained the Respect accreditation.

The 2008 Housing and Regeneration Act has now brought in changes which would allow councils to keep the full rental income from new properties they build or acquire – that is, the operating surpluses from those homes would not be redistributed through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system. The Government has also proposed to let councils keep the full capital receipt of any subsequent sale of a new property they build or acquire.

Ongoing work will help to inform any decision about a capital investment programme that will follow the decent homes programme. The council is campaigning on getting the best response for Crawley given our historic contribution to central government.

The Government’s strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society.

The council is committed to enabling older people to live how and where they choose and is addressing current needs by focusing on support within the home through fast tracking home adaptations and increasing take up of the Lifeline service and developing alternative options e.g. extra care schemes. The council is exploring incentives for downsizing in council stock.

Current Position

Potential Impact on our Housing Strategy Priorities

National debate about the future role of social housing

The Government is clear that there is a need to provide social housing for those unable to rent or buy a home of their own: for families on low incomes, people with severe disabilities, the elderly and for others for whom home ownership is unlikely to be the right option. However, there is also the need to ensure that social housing meets the needs and aspirations of tenants, as well as providing a fair service that makes the best use of resources.

All priorities: The Housing and Regeneration Action 2008 includes opportunities for councils to develop housing directly, where this offers value for money and provisions which will remove financial disincentives to council house building.

Co-ordinating management of homes

Professor Martin Cave's Review of Social Housing Regulation – Every Tenant Matters (June 2007) noted that “diversity of provision could be particularly vibrant and beneficial for tenants in relation to the management of social housing” and that “tenants living in relative isolation from their provider's main holdings could benefit from having their housing managed by a body with a larger local presence”.

All priorities: the case for rationalisation of housing management services where this stands to bring benefits to tenants through delivery of better and more efficient services.

Choice-Based Lettings

The Government would like all local authorities to operate choice-based systems by 2010.

Providing accessible information on housing choices: the Government is keen to encourage the extension of choice-based lettings to cover low-cost home ownership options and properties for rent from private landlords, as well as social housing.

Government Housing Policy Response**Local Action**

The Government is exploring these issues on the role of social housing as part of the Housing Reform Green Paper.

The council will evaluate opportunities for direct provision and is considering the appropriateness of this approach in bringing forward small, hard to develop sites in the current economic climate.

The Government recognises that there may be benefits to be gained from authorities reviewing local arrangements where there is evidence that they are creating problems in delivering effective housing management services.

The council has implemented minimum performance criteria for housing provider partners to meet and this includes consideration of the effectiveness of local management arrangements.

Statutory guidance to local authorities issued on choice-based lettings following a consultation exercise.

The council operates a Charter Mark-accredited CBL allocations system and is exploring how it can advertise a range of other housing options, including temporary accommodation.

Appendix 2

Housing Strategy Action Plan 2009-2013

Action	Success Measures	Resources Required
PRIORITY 1: Increasing the supply of homes		
Increasing the supply of housing to address the imbalance between supply and demand in meeting the housing needs of the town.	Meet the adopted Core Strategy target of delivering 4,500 new dwellings between 2001 and 2016 (an average of 300 dwellings per annum) Using the Core Strategy review to deliver the target of 7,500 new dwellings between 2006 and 2026 (an average of 375 dwellings per annum) Deliver an average of 150 affordable housing (AH) homes per year between 2009 and 2013.	Private developers' finance, council's own capital funding, Section 106 monies.
Release housing sites ahead of the finalisation of the SLHAA in 2011 given the reduced involvement of private developers in the local housing market.	Asset Management Group identifies sites to ensure delivery of 150 units per annum SLHAA in place.	Council's own land assets Staff resources.
Utilise the council's assets to deliver local housing solutions subject to Cabinet approval.	Clear direction and project plan agreed for hostel stock programme for bringing forward CBC garage sites for new affordable housing agreed. Sites to secure delivery of 150 units per annum identified.	Council staff resources, possible RSL/external support.
Identify neighbourhood centre improvement land potential for affordable housing.	Affordable housing provided in neighbourhood centres.	Council's project reviews.
Effectively monitor housing affordability by developing affordability measures.	Suite of affordability measures developed.	Staff resources using SHMA 2008 as base.
Return empty properties back into use.	Empty homes framework policy and targets reviewed. Database of empty properties/second homes in Crawley in place.	Council's staff resources, possible RSL/external support.
Promote low-cost home ownership and housing choices.	Increase in new applicants for new Open Market Homebuy by five per cent. Approach to options such as shared equity and buy to rent initiatives agreed.	RSLs Zone agent Council's HSS staff resources, housing capital budget.
Quantify levels of under-occupation in council/ RSL stock and take action to aid downsizing.	Initiative to reduce under-occupation in place to help meet needs as result of demographic changes. Annual increase in take-up of targeted incentive.	Council's HRA Homes and Communities Agency money Staff resources.
Complete a review of the housing type, size and tenure needed to support a balanced and sustainable community in Crawley.	Provides policy for inclusion into LDF Core Strategy Review.	Staff resources.

Lead	Target Date	Links to other Strategies/Priorities
FPM/HEDM	2009 and annually to 2013	West Sussex Local Area Agreement 2009-2011 NI 155 (number of affordable housing delivered) Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 CBC LDF Core Strategy 2007 CBC LDF Core Strategy Review The South East Plan 2006-2026 SE Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011 (RHB) Corporate Plan 2007-2012 Asset Management Strategy 2008-2011
FPM	2009 2010	CBC LDF Core Strategy 2007 West Sussex Local Area Agreement 2008-2011
AMG	2009	West Sussex Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 NI155 Asset Management Strategy 2008-2011
RPC	2009-2011 in line with project programme	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 West Sussex Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 NI155
HEDM	2009 and annually to 2013	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
PSHM	Q2 2009	Private Sector Renewal 2008 Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 Sussex Empty Homes Forum Statement 2008 Corporate Plan 2007-2012
HNM	2009 and annually	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Allocations Policy Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 BME Strategy 2008-2013
HOCH/HOHSS	Q2 2009 2010 onwards	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 LDF Core Strategy 2007 Corporate Plan 2007-2012
FPM	By Dec 2009	LDF Core Strategy Review Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012

Action	Success Measures	Resources Required
PRIORITY 2: Developing sustainable communities		
Drive forward corporate community cohesion project.	Increased social engagement of isolated groups in the community. Funding allocated in consultation with community.	Council's staff resources Community cohesion funding Police contribution Possible county contribution.
Increase tenant involvement in the management of their homes.	Corporate engagement project successfully engages more customers and residents by tracking resident-approved procedures. Resident Strategy delivered.	Council's HRA resources Community cohesion funding RSL funding.
Undertake robust EIAs on a rolling programme to remove barriers to services for residents across neighbourhoods.	Published EIAs fully implemented.	Council's staff resources Existing departmental budgets.
Quantify affordable housing needs amongst older people.	Research project completed to provide ongoing understanding of what housing older people want and when.	Council's own resources.
Promote independent living and housing choices for vulnerable people.	Telecare and extra care initiatives available to residents requiring these services. Increase lifeline customers by 25 per cent by 2009. Plan in place to increase lifetime homes year on year with voluntary target for lifetime homes programmed in all new schemes from 2009. DFG fully utilised.	Council staff resources and capital funding, RSL/HCA funding Council staff resources, HIA, Age Concern funding.
Implement BME Strategy action plan.	BME research project delivered. Actions programmed delivered.	Council's HSS resources, staff resources, CLG monies, Community involvement funding.
Develop a shared understanding of the overall level of need for supported housing in the future.	SP service cluster reviews completed Procurement of appropriate services informed by SP service cluster reviews inform completed South east regional assessment of elderly people and affordable housing study completed in 2011.	Council's HSS resources and staff resources Supporting people funding.
Plan for a diverse portfolio of up to 20 per cent supported housing opportunities on new strategic sites.	Housing support delivered through both design and floating outreach support.	Council's housing capital budget Supporting people funding (WSCC).
Implement DFG Systems Thinking outcomes to Increase efficiency of DFG and aids and adaptations service to all customers.	Streamline DFG/aids and adaptations process in place, delivering a faster service.	HSS and corporate policy resources, staff resources CHHRABP HIA resources.
Promote sustainable lending.	Increased take up of credit union.	Credit union contribution WSCC credit union.
Provide the number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches determined by the South East regional (SER) planning process.	Number of pitches in place.	Central Gov funding.

Lead	Target Date	Links to other Strategies/Priorities
HOCR	2009 and annually up to 2012	Corporate Plan 2007-2012 Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Race Equality Scheme 2008
DOCS/HOCH	2009 and annually up to 2013	CH – HRABP 2008 Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
HREO/HSM	2009 and annually up to 2013	Race Equality Scheme 2008 Corporate Plan 2007-2012 BME Strategy 2008-2013 Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
HSM	2009-2010	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 SE Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011
HEDM HSM	2009 and annually up to 2013 2009 and annually up to 2013	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Corporate Plan 2007-2012 Older People Best Value Review 2006 SE Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011
HSM	2009 and annually	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Race Equality Scheme 2008 BME Strategy 2008-2013 Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 CH – HRABP 2008
HOM/SPWG/SPCB	2009 and annually	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Corporate Plan 2007-2012 Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013
HEDM/FPO	2009 and annually	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013
HSM/PWMCH	2009	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Private Sector Renewal 2008 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2008 CH – HRABP 2008
TSMCH	2009 and annually	CH – HRABP 2008 Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
HOCS	2009 and ongoing	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 BME Strategy 2008-2013

Action	Success Measures	Resources Required
PRIORITY 2: Developing sustainable communities (continued)		
Ensure housing evidence base is kept up-to-date.	SHMA refreshed in 2011. Private Sector Stock Condition Survey programmed in 2013. Achieving ongoing understanding of Crawley housing markets to drive vision for the future.	Council's HSS resources, staff resources
Review the effectiveness of existing partnerships and develop new partnership approaches and ways of working to achieve housing delivery in the economic downturn.	Barriers to delivery identified and addressed. Affordable housing programme sustained.	Council's own staff resources Homes and Communities Agency funding
As appropriate carry out an impact assessment on the private sector in conjunction with relevant partners if greater certainty emerges re the deliverability of a university centre in Crawley.	Stability of communities maintained and benefits to local economy planned for. Strategies in place to deal with opportunity.	Educational resources Developers' money Council staff resource
PRIORITY 3: Improving the quality of housing		
Meet decent homes targets across tenures.	All council stock to meet Decent Homes Standard by March 2011. Achievement of year on year increase in percentage of vulnerable people in decent homes in the private sector.	HRA Council's HSS capital resources GoSE project funding British Gas vulnerable people funding
Improve energy efficiency in the private sector.	Increase Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 target of energy efficiency from 23.95 per cent in 2008 to 30 per cent by 2011. Improvement in thermal comfort in private sector dwellings to comply with DS02, 2.8 CLG Housing objective (incorporates PSA7).	Council's HSS capital resources GoSE project funding British Gas vulnerable people funding
Take forward strategic review of CH sheltered accommodation.	Decommissioning assessed for identified sheltered accommodation units. Older people compact in place.	CHHRABP Council's staff resources
100 per cent of new homes to meet design and quality standard applicable to grant funding requirements.	Design and quality standards met. Current specified standards met on non Section 106 schemes.	HCA RSL Council's Housing Capital budget Developer contribution
Deliver demonstrable improvements in the private rented sector through use of HMO licensing and enforcement action.	All licensable HMOs licensed – to exceed 20 during 2009 and further target to be set for 2010. All properties inspected within 10 days to determine actions. HMO standards fully implemented.	Council's HSS resources and staff resources HMO licensing funding
Implement landlord accreditation scheme.	Scheme used to incentivise landlords to meet expected property and management standards in RDS, HMO and other private lets.	Council's HSS resources, HSS staff resources

Lead	Target Date	Links to other Strategies/Priorities
HSM/FPO	2011 Programmed for 2013	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Corporate Plan 2007-2012
AH forum	2009	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
AMG	2011 to 2013	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 LDF Core Strategy 2007
HOCH HSM	2009-2011 2009 and annually to 2013	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Corporate Plan 2007-2012 CH – HRABP 2008 Asset Management Strategy 2008-2011 HRABP 2008
HSM	Annually and ongoing up to 2011 Annually and ongoing up to 2013	Climate Change Strategy 2008 Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Corporate Plan 2007-2012 Private Sector Renewal 2008
HOCH	Annually and ongoing up to 2013	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Corporate Plan 2007-2012 Older People Best Value Review 2006
HEDM	Annually and ongoing up to 2013	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Climate Change Strategy 2008 LDF Core Strategy 2007 SE Plan 2006-2026
HSM	Annually up to 2011	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 TA Strategy 2008 Empty Homes Policy 2008 HMO Procedures 2008
HSM/HOM	2009	Private Sector Renewal 2008 TA Strategy 2008

Action	Success Measures	Resources Required
PRIORITY 4: Preventing and reducing homelessness		
Deliver Homelessness Strategy actions 2008-2013.	Strategic objectives 1. Homeless prevention 2. Tackling youth homelessness 3. Temporary accommodation – improving quality 4. Tackling homelessness in the BME and hard to reach groups in the community Refer to Homelessness Action Plan for full actions.	Council's HSS resources Staff resources CLG monies up to 2011 Partners' voluntary support
Implement Mortgage Rescue Scheme in partnership with CAB by accessing government funding available after Jan 09.	Levels of homelessness due to mortgage repossession minimised.	CLG initiative funding Council's HSS resources
PRIORITY 5: Providing accessible information on housing choices		
Review allocations policy to better reflect supply and demands in the housing market, customers' needs and the efficient use of council resources.	Allocations policy in place and reviewed within one year of being implemented. All customers fully informed about housing choices available to meet their housing needs in Crawley.	Council's HSS staff resources
Expand Property Store to offer wider solutions in line with CLG's expanding choice model.	People are able to access accurate information on accommodation options across all tenures (including private sector services such as DFGs).	Council's HSS staff resources and funding Zone agent support
Increase outreach housing choice services to at least two neighbourhoods.	Outreach approach fully tested and assessed for future programming. Mobile office programmed and tested.	Council's HSS and HRA resources Zone agent support Council staff resources
Increase trends analysis of housing applicants to inform affordable housing programming and relevant government opportunities.	Increased understanding of local market for low cost initiatives. Appropriate government bids secured.	Council's staff resources Zone agent contribution

Key

Abbreviation	Full title	Abbreviation	Full title
HEDM	Housing Enabling and Development Manager	FPM	Forward Planning Manager
HSM	Housing Strategy Manager	TSMCH	Tenancy Services Manager, Crawley Homes
HOCH	Head of Crawley Homes	HOMCH	Housing Operations Manager, Crawley Homes
HOM	Housing Options Manager	PWMCH	Programmed Works Manager, Crawley Homes
HNM	Housing Needs Manager	AMG	Asset Management Group
CMT	Corporate Management Team	HREO	Human Resources Equalities Officer
PSHM	Private Sector Housing Manager	DOCS	Director of Community Services
HOHSS	Head of Housing Strategic Services	SPWG	Supporting People Working Group
HOP	Head of Planning	SPCB	Supporting People Commissioning Body
FPO	Forward Planning Officer	RPC	Regeneration Project Coordinator

Lead	Target Date	Links to other Strategies/Priorities
HOM	2009 and annually up to 2012	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 TA Strategy 2008 BME Strategy 2008-2013
HOM	2009 and ongoing	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013
HOHSS	2009 to 2010 2010 for review	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 BME Strategy 2008-2013
HNM	2009 and annually	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Corporate Plan 2007-2012
HNM	2009	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012
HNM	2009 and annually	Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 Allocations Policy 2008 BME Strategy 2008-2013

Appendix 3

Housing Strategy 2009-2013 consultation record

Consultation Activity	When	Who Was Involved
Ongoing web content – March 2008 e.g. issues and options paper	Began July 2007	HSM
RSL liaison meetings	Began July 2007	HSM, preferred partners, RSLs, HEDM
Liaison with Horsham DC	Feb 2008 and ongoing	HSM, HEDM
Stakeholder event	April 2008	Housing Strategic Services, HSM led, Crawley Homes, members, RSL partners, local organisations, business, CLG, WSCC tenants and other customers
HSS DMT monthly meetings	March 2008 ongoing	HOHSS, HSM, HOM, HNM

Key Issues Raised

- Small volume of response, which was expected; can be hard to engage people in strategy development
- One tenant rang to say the issues paper did not show enough commitment to the current stock
- People liked the eform approach
- Business enterprise response informative.

- Land availability issues
- Economic concerns
- Focus on service improvement as a gain
- Highlighted post development concerns with affordability
- Overall expression of keenness to work with councils in finding solutions which focus on affordable housing development and regeneration
- Posed the question would the RSL forum give us the strategy buy-in from RSLs? The answer was yes.

- Picture of Crawley as a work hub emerging
- Difference of neighbouring rural issues and sustainability – not Crawley issue
- HDC express some current concerns over creating new demand in West of Bewbush which is not usual Horsham housing offer
- Sharing of GoSE comments on strategies.

- Focus on presentation of the strategy document is vital – only say what you can do
- Focus on deliverables
- Concern about the growth of Crawley expressed by some, dilemma – should it get bigger? Favour building around the edges
- Concern about transport volume
- Praise for some transport initiatives such as Fastway
- Feedback comments from workshops captured in notes
- Keen that we support homeless people to get into secure accommodation.

- Lots of people developing strategies at the same time
- The need to engage with stakeholders
- Discussed issue of aspirations and how they can be used effectively in an action plan etc.

How This Fed Into The Development Of The Housing Strategy And Action Plan

- Business enterprise dimension added – concern with land release etc.

- Improved focus on development programme
- Feed in to section on importance of partnership working
- Adding to debate about concerns about development markets
- Background best practice ideas.

- Feed into section on West of Crawley
- Section on importance of partnership working/agreement on closer joint working
- Agreement on opportunity for joint statement in future strategies
- Discussion on priorities
- Sharing approaches to SHMA interim feedback.

- Gathered opinions and tested our draft priorities – showed support for these. Formed the basis for approach to further consultation documents. Identified requirement for any additional specialist focus groups on key themes
- Gave examples of action preferred to achieve objectives.

- Updates, next steps, lessons learnt from previous strategy development.

Consultation Activity	When	Who Was Involved
Informal meetings with Crawley Borough Council Heads of Service	May 2008 and ongoing until end of July 2008	HSM, Heads of CH, Amenities, Property Services, Planning, Community Development
Crawley Borough Council Heads of Service workshop	18 June 2008	12 Heads of service, HOHSS, HSM
Members' seminar	15 July 2008 NB second seminar 11 December 2008	Head of Service, HSM, PSHM, HNM, Head of Planning, members

Key Issues Raised

- Most comments around three of the five priorities i.e. affordable housing delivery, sustainable communities and quality of housing
- Discussion around perceptions of Crawley e.g. what do we mean by aspirational housing? What do we mean by sustainable communities? Do we mean the same as our customers?
- Some of the HS aims sit in other strategies too
- Need for cross ref with other strategies e.g. Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012 and LDF and CH business plan are key documents
- Is the Housing Strategy fully understood as a stand alone document
- Perhaps there needs to be more publicity about how other depts are working in communities
- Are we missing existing opportunities such as spaces around hostels which could provide housing?
- Lots going on in Crawley which assist with the aims but sometimes they are not captured in a focussed way – the action plan update from 2004-2008 will assist with this – e.g. ASB initiatives feeding into sustainable communities
- Community engagement work e.g. ward councillor initiatives will help with work on local issues
- Neighbourhood parade improvement programme is a good model.

- Difficult decisions need to be made – hard to decide on dilemmas
- Housing need and housing choice a strand throughout
- Flats per se are not bad – it's the context, design, etc.

- Debating what sits under priority choices, issues, concerns, and what this means operationally
- Discussion on vision –
 - Housing Strategy should seek to address the needs of current, future and potential communities
 - Mixed, integrated community is an aim we should aspire to
 - Is it realistic to be talking about increased supply given current housing market climate? Consensus was yes – still possible to increase supply
 - Need diverse approach such as cross-boundary working, proactive empty homes approach, early homeless intervention, incentives on under occupation, allocating to need
 - Adopt highest standards available to improve housing
 - Achievement of Decent Homes Standard for council stock must be high priority
 - Important to give attention to improvement of private sector housing stock
 - Important that approach recognises vulnerable people. Will require additional support in accessing services and build in mechanisms to achieve this
- Posed questions around tenure mix/over numbers – low density/ high density
 - Size of units/under-occupation concerns
 - Housing need v housing preference
 - Mixture of tenure is good and this should suit the demographics of the town
 - 40 per cent AH is about right. This is what we have been doing, within this the 30:70 seems good
- Shared ownership – need to be careful about affordability
- Aspirational issues discussed
 - Economic concerns.

How This Fed Into The Development Of The Housing Strategy And Action Plan

- Views from across the council to feed into questions considered
- Updates on where others see their priorities
- Feed into key achievements section
- Focussed thinking around themes/challenges/the future.

- Support for priorities
- Ideas for actions based on what works e.g. ASB community initiatives
- Challenging priority choices, giving direction.

- Setting visionary approach/focus
- Setting priorities under the strategic aims
- Direction on action plan.

Consultation Activity	When	Who Was Involved
Portfolio holder consultation and consultation with all members	July 2008 to Dec 2008	HSM, HOHSS
Customer Panel Housing Strategy focus group	June and July 2008 – two meetings	HSM, Housing Policy and Research Officer, selected Customer Panel members
Customer Panel quarterly meetings	July 2008 Oct 2008	HSM, Housing Policy and Research Officer, Customer Panel members
Consultation with older people at Crawley CVS event	16 June 2008	Housing Policy and Research Officer and members of the public
Older people's questionnaire	June to July 2008	HSM, HPRO, Home Improvement Agency (HIA – Anchor)
Places for People RSL Milton Keynes visit	June 2008	HSM E and D manager and PFP development manager
Town Access Group	June 2008	HSM and members of TAG

Key Issues Raised

- Discussions about draft.
- Like having five priorities, good to have themes
- Think the council is doing a lot around CBL, homelessness, DFGs
- Want the council to focus on existing stock and design issues in them – feeling houses are outdated. Need more awareness of what decent homes means for them
- Want more use made of Community Wardens
- Want older persons events in neighbourhoods.
- The need to support the Customer Panel in developing its scrutiny and vision role
- Lots of detail doesn't encourage/support/produce constructive feedback
- Active focus on elderly housing and strategic sites and what this may mean for their children/grandchildren
- In Oct 2008 concern about the economy and if we are still going to be able to build and concern about people losing their homes.
- NB Fuller consultation with older people has been collated onto a paper which is available on request
- Most happy with where they live. Stairs and bathing facilities common issues – encouragingly these are the things picked up by DFGs and aids and adaptations.
- Money is the key barrier to people helping themselves solve their housing problems.
- Successes in new town obvious to see
- They have regeneration models to be used in small and big areas
- Joint working with Milton Keynes group to seek solutions
- Decant approaches shared stock
- Tall blocks work for them in the city centre sites – less affordable housing ratios in Milton Keynes up to now but signs this may be changing
- Fit for purpose aims as blocks are refurbished.
- Focus on lifetimes homes and wheelchair accessible debate
- Feel we need to focus more on future needs
- Aspire to 100 per cent lifetime homes which is difficult to meet.

How This Fed Into The Development Of The Housing Strategy And Action Plan

- Input into deliverables on action plan
- Input about presentation and corporate responsibility.
- Focussed working with our customers re comments on draft priorities and what is important to them
- What's good about Crawley thinking, ideas gained for how to meet priorities
- Information drawn out in relation to specialist themes as necessary
- Ideas about future consultation opportunities explored
- Focus group feedback role to the bigger customer panel meeting on 30/7/08.
- Updates, involving customers
- Exercise to focus on achievements from previous strategy to balance views about the council's ongoing aims
- Making the economic links with what we are doing to reduce homelessness and deliver affordable housing
- Linking the focus group (above) into main group.
- Ideas to focus on older people's needs and actions needed in the action plan, moving aspirations etc.
- Partnership working with HIA with opportunity to input into the strategy for their client group. Using the questionnaire on DFG application visits during June/July
- Agreed focussed questions with HIA to draw out aspirations, people's satisfaction, concerns now and the future for older people in Crawley
- Twenty-one questionnaires received
- This consultation has been shared with Open Spaces Strategy work around allocation of open spaces.
- Town centre strategic development site visit and discussion – helped to broaden vision around Town Centre North (TCN)
- National lessons learnt tips
- Neighbourhood models ideas for possible aspirational vision
- Example of starting new approaches and where they end up.
- Gathered opinions on local priorities in relation to disability. Influence for lifetimes home approach and aims for future developments.

Consultation Activity	When	Who Was Involved
Young Persons Forum	8 July 2008	HSM and Young Persons Forum members
Housing Strategy Working Group	June 2008 and ongoing	HSM, HPRO, HSS, Crawley Homes, Economic development, Corporate Policy and Planning
Older people's workshop	9 July 2008	HIA – Anchor, HSM, HRPO, residents of Crawley who have used HIA services Chair of Older People's (voluntary sector) Forum
BME groups	Jan to June 2008	HPRO, reps from BME
Homelessness Forum members	Oct 2008 to May 2008	HOM, HRPO
WSCC	18 Sep 2008	HSM, HRPO
Housing 21 RSL	30 June 2008	HSM E and D manager

Key Issues Raised

- NB Full notes are available on request
- Basic desire expressed for nice design, (traditional) less concrete blocks, no alleyways, good lighting
- Difference between the terminology of an apartment and a flat. An apartment seen as bigger, better, more desirable
- Flats not seen as a bad thing if well designed – i.e. some people's houses are too big for them
- Desire for bigger room sizes
- Desire for balconies ('to give people a view of the moon and the stars')
- Importance of gardens, even when flats provided would like communal gardens for those flats
- Like to have garages
- Want eco-friendly houses
- Support for neighbourhood style model again – local shops, green spaces, wide roads 'social estate'
- No tower blocks.

- What we all want is an increase in all types of accommodation in Crawley
- Credit crunch concerns
- What we do well etc.
- Focus group on specific issues favoured over generic meetings to monitor implementation.

- How people came to live where they did – some Crawley history – came for work, to be near relatives, for healthcare access
- Worry about finances in market downturn – some in this group have taken out second mortgages (done the RTB in their 50s and 60s)
- Council tenants appear to be better informed about housing than private sector residents
- Love the Older People's Directory and value CBC input but desire more of the same
- We should set up home visits for some so they can input into services – explained this is expensive. Some of them know 'indoor members' of groups who are given info at home.

- See consultation table in BME Strategy 2008-2012.

- See consultation list in Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013.

- Discussion around WSCC Accommodation Strategy 2008-2013 and future vision
- The need for better joint working whereby county procedures are able to maximise opportunities in council's development programming for strategic sites in particular.

- Mixed tenure is preferred for client group, which challenges preconceptions
- Importance of outside space
- BME – there is no magic formula to get successful engagement – demand is lower for sheltered etc. Need more of the same consultation at grass roots.

How This Fed Into The Development Of The Housing Strategy And Action Plan

- Visioning exercise on a new development opportunity scenario from younger people's perspective. Collection of information about the aspirations of young people in the town. Seventeen attended
- New ideas – some input into sustainable communities actions likely.

- Direct input on structure, intelligence gathering, links with other strategies, lessons learnt re monitoring. Stats and some text provided from group for inclusion
- Input into action plan – reduce actions and increase focus.

- Questionnaire – focus on issues now and future (similar to consultation event of 16/6 but with further exploration of responses)
- Important to bear in mind that some came for jobs, health and family ties – feed into who Crawley houses discussions.

- Consultation on BME Strategy and action plan feeds into the Housing Strategy.

- Consultation on homeless review and homelessness referred to in strategy.

- The need to increase data on vulnerable people's choice around affordable housing reflected in actions on plan
- The need for the council to be open to initiatives runs throughout our strategy.

- Model type suggestions for new elderly provision – good for aspirational ideas and demand in TCN
- BME take up discussion – flagged up as low demand from this group.

Consultation Activity	When	Who Was Involved
Chercefelle RSL	3 July 2008	HSM, E and D manager
GoSE	June 2008 through to Dec 2008	HSM
Big developer x2 selected by E and DM	July/Aug 2008	HSM, E and D Manager
Small developer x2	July/Aug 2008	HSM, E and D manager
4 RSLs active in CBC	Aug 2008	HSM, E and D Manager
Ad hoc opportunities as presented	Sept-Dec	HSM
Outreach 3way Learning disabilities group	10 September 2008	HSM

Key Issues Raised

- Would love 65 per cent accommodation and 35 per cent outdoor space on schemes.
- GoSE is not signing off strategies as before (Fit for Purpose)
- Direction
- Statement of intent to address Crawley's housing issues
- Sustainable Community Strategy is key – discussed how in the longer term may become one key strategy to include housing
- Need to ensure the action plan can be delivered. Better to put in less and deliver that than more
- Refreshing is important as there are inevitable changes during four to five year span.
- Priorities sent 5/8/2008.
- Priorities sent 5/8/2008.
- Received lifetime homes costs/space differences on schemes/notional examples.
- E.g attendance at Sussex Working in Partnership Community Engagement Event on 9/9/2008 with other councils, police, PCT
- East Surrey Housing Strategy Stakeholder Event.
- Telephone discussion
- Priorities sent, issues paper summarised for audience
- Eform sent.

How This Fed Into The Development Of The Housing Strategy And Action Plan

- Model type suggestions for new elderly provision. See previous page.
- Informal discussions on best practice
- IDeA reading recommended
- 29/10 meeting with south east region manager. Comments around importance of economic situation, evidence bases like SHMA to be highlighted more and some research around worklessness role for the council
- 20/11/2008 GoSE say include worklessness at a later date as responsibility sits more broadly and difficult to make a smart action at this point.
- To gather info on economic/credit crunch concerns
- (5,000 employees laid off by developers such as Barratts, Wimpy and Persimmons between June and July 2008).
- To gather opinions from key stakeholders on priority issues.
- Direct experience of lifetime homes costs/design concerns shared to assist with target setting in this area.
- Best practice
- New agendas
- Data sharing opportunities
- Neighbouring SHMA findings.
- Interest in TCN as a provider of affordable homes for their customers – this will be explored in TCN programming being taken forward.

Contact details

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