

BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL

AREA HOUSING STRATEGY

ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT

JULY 2009

I Introduction

The Councils Area Housing Strategy was awarded 'Fit for Purpose' status by the Government Office for the East Midlands in June 2006. As part of our commitment to the ongoing review our strategic aims and objectives, the Council agreed to publish an annual supplement to the strategy in order to keep the document updated and inform all stakeholders as to our progress in delivering the strategy.

It should be noted that the Area Housing Strategy referred to in this document was intended to have a 'shelf life' of three years. Since the strategy was first published partnership working in the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Housing Market Area has significantly developed and a Sub Regional Area Housing Strategy will be completed shortly.

On completion of sub-regional Strategy, Bassetlaw will decide whether it is appropriate to then complete its own 'stand alone' Area Housing Strategy, incorporate this into the Sustainable Communities Strategy, or incorporate the document into our Annual Service Delivery Plan.

II Methodology

This document reviews the various action points identified within the original strategy and identifies new action points to carry the strategy forward.

III Additional Housing to meet need and demand

Action Point One	Complete a Housing Market Assessment for the District in partnership with the neighbouring authorities of Bolsover, Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Newark and Sherwood, Mansfield and Ashfield
Commentary	<p>The Housing Market Assessment was completed and published in September 2007 and can be found on the Council's website at www.bassetlaw.gov.uk</p> <p>It has been adopted as an evidence base to support the development of additional affordable housing in the district.</p> <p>Our working arrangements with Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Councils have been productive as we collectively consider future Housing development issues on a sub regional basis within the Northern Strategic Housing Market Area of the East Midlands (the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw HMA). Our partnership working is closely aligned to the Sheffield City Region, this influencing the Housing Market in this part of the East Midlands.</p> <p>The four authorities have commissioned consultants</p>

	to complete a sub regional Housing Strategy which is now scheduled for completion by August 2009.
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Action Point Two	Completion of the Local Development Framework
Commentary	<p>Unavoidable delays have occurred in progressing the Local Development Framework (LDF), following the decision by the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) in 2007 not to approve the LDF timetable. The key reasons for this were, first, to ensure that a satisfactory evidence base was in place to support proposed policy areas and, second, to ensure that the LDF was not advanced before the content of the emerging East Midlands Regional Plan was sufficiently clear. There were also concerns from GOEM about the impact on the LDS of the revisions to national Planning Policy Statement 12, which sets out what is expected of a Local Development Framework.</p> <p>Since this time, as the evidence base for the LDF has progressed and local aspirations have become clearer, it is evident that the planning documents originally proposed will be insufficient to address the challenges that face the District. Similarly, changes to national planning guidance in relation to Local Development Framework requirements (e.g. Gypsy and Traveller site provision) have also been made. Consequently, it has become necessary to revisit the planning documents that will be required to form the Local Development F</p>
Future Actions	<p>A revised timetable has now been submitted to GOEM and formal consultation work is expected to commence in September. A final Core Strategy should be in place by early 2011.</p>

Action Point Three	Keep our Housing Needs Survey information up to date and complete a full survey in 2008.
Commentary	<p>The Housing Market Assessment published in September 2007 supersedes earlier Housing Needs information and a general Housing Needs Survey is not required.</p> <p>Reports have been completed by consultants for the four authorities in the North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw Market Area covering the Housing Needs of Older People, Younger People, People with Complex Needs and BME Communities in the sub region. Following this working groups were set up to develop Action Plans relating to Older People, Younger People and People with Complex Needs. These are to be incorporated within the Sub Regional Area Housing Strategy.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Deliver objectives on a sub regional basis as set out in the Action Plans for Older People, Younger People and People with Complex Needs.</p>

Action Point Four	Work with Registered Social Landlords to increase the supply of rented housing and other low cost housing (e.g. shared equity housing)
Commentary	<p>In recent years the Council worked on the basis there would be minimal public subsidy made available from through the Housing Corporations programme. This pattern is now changing. Grants for affordable housing are now administered through the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the authority anticipates it now may be possible to attract more substantial levels of support grant through the new National Housing Programme. This could either enhance and increase affordable housing provision where existing Section 106 agreements exist, or new schemes that may be forthcoming. A Regular Market Engagement process being undertaken by HCA will help enable this. Account will be taken of shortages of affordable housing identified within the sub-regional Housing Market Assessment and the council will be working more strategically within the sub-region to ensure wider needs are met. It is anticipated that investment decisions made by HCA from April 2011 will be subject to a sub regional agreement in setting investment priorities.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Review opportunities to attract public subsidy to the area through the National Affordable Housing Programme.</p>

Action Point Five	Work with developers to create additional affordable housing through the negotiation of S106 agreements
Commentary	<p>The Council continue to have some success in this area. Out-turns for 2008/2009 taken from the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix are shown at Appendix One.</p>
Future Actions	<p>To develop robust policies within the LDF to ensure new supplies of affordable housing units in future years.</p>

Action Point Six	To encourage private landlords to invest in additional private housing stock for rent.
Commentary	<p>A buoyant housing market encouraged private landlords to invest in the 'buy to let' sector up until the current economic 'down-turn'. There is now a more stagnant Housing Market though house prices may have now 'bottomed-out'. The impact of the 'credit-crunch' in Bassetlaw has yet to be fully assessed.</p> <p>Our emphasis has changed to make best use of the private sector by encouraging landlords to take more problematic tenants, including those disadvantaged through homelessness. Our Housing Needs Team, which was formed in November 2007, is firmly focused on activities relating to Homelessness Prevention and has assimilated liaison with private landlords into its work to help achieve the above objective.</p> <p>The Council's Cabinet have agreed the recruitment of two additional officers to strengthen the Council's Strategic Housing Team. This will provide greater capacity to deal with Private Sector Housing Issues.</p>
Future Actions	Recruit to vacant posts in Strategic Housing Team

Action Point Seven	To participate in the Sub Regional Housing / Planning Working Group
Commentary	<p>The Council is now represented on numerous sub regional groups covering the Sheffield City Region, the Northern Strategic Housing Market Area of the East Midlands, and various Nottinghamshire.</p> <p>Examples include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Investment Board (City Region) • Housing Strategy Steering Group (HMA Area) • Nottinghamshire Housing Reference Group
Future Actions	To continue developing partnership working with Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire in order to reflect issues arising in the Housing Sub Market and the Sheffield City Region.

Action Point Eight	To participate in the evolution of the Sheffield City Regional Development Programme (The Northern Way)
Commentary	<p>The University of Birmingham Centre's for Urban and Regional Studies School of Public Policy published a report for Sheffield City Council, 'Housing and Economic Growth in the Sheffield City Region' in January 2007.</p> <p>The four Northern Sub Market Authorities are all affected by developments in the Sheffield City Region continue to address relevant issues arising from the report.</p>
Future Actions	Continue to develop partnership arrangements with the four authorities in the Northern HMA and the Sheffield City Region.

Action Point Nine	Make best use of existing stock, including reviewing our 'sheltered' housing stock.
Commentary	The Council has used the (former) Housing Corporation's STARFISH toolkit to establish the viability of low demand schemes and as a result two schemes have been closed.
Future Actions	One further scheme is currently under review.

IV Managing Existing Housing and Ensuring it is of a Decent Standard.

Action Point One	For the Council and A1 Housing to achieve two star status.
Commentary	<p>Following inspection in Autumn 2007 two star status has been achieved, and A1 Housing are now working towards achieving three star status.</p> <p>Improvement Plan in place</p>
Future Actions	To work with the Audit Commission with a view to achieving three star status by 2010.

Action Point Two	Delivery of decent housing standards in the public sector.
Commentary	<p>Now two star status has been achieved the Council and A1 Housing can access the necessary borrowing approvals to bring all of the Council's stock to the Decent Homes Standard. A1 Housing's Business Plan has a target to achieve 100% compliance with the Decent Homes Standard by 2012 and annual targets have been amended accordingly.</p> <p>Following a Stock Condition Survey undertaken by Connaught, and taking into account the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the number of non-decent homes within the Council's stock was 3260 on 1.4.2009. 830 Council properties were brought up to the decent homes standard in 2008/09.</p>
Future Actions	Implement Decent Homes Programme to achieve 100% compliance by 1.4.2012.

Action Point Three	Improve energy efficiency levels in public sector
Commentary	SAP ratings for Council owned stock improved from 66 to 70 between 1.4.08 and 1.4.09, thus reflecting investment through A1's Capital Programme to improve energy efficiency.
Future Actions	Continue to invest in energy saving measures through the Capital Programme.

Action Point Four	Ensuring our estates provide a safe, secure and attractive environment.
Commentary	<p>The ASB Unit now forms part of the Community Safety Team and consists of two ASB Officers and a Parenting Support Officer. Excellent joint working practices and relationships now operate between and within the various agencies from the merged Bassetlaw Newark & Sherwood Community Safety Partnership and Social Landlords in our area. These relationships can where necessary use legislation available to bring security and safety to our all our estates regardless of tenure.</p>
Future Actions	<p>The development and implementation of a co-located team consisting of both statutory and voluntary sector agencies. Working across tenure with various other agencies within the public and voluntary sector and tenants and owner-occupiers to address issues in relation to Anti Social Behaviour. Unifying the skills of the Parenting Support Officer, Youth Services, Children’s Services and the varied and extensive skills of other Officers we aim to raise the level of RESPECT with our communities and thereby reduce levels of anti-social behaviour, through a sustained programme of Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement and Rehabilitation. Tackling Anti Social Behaviour through a multi-agency problem solving approach that leads to more effective and sustainable outcomes for communities thereby increasing community confidence in agencies too address the issues appropriately.</p> <p>.</p>

Action Point Five	Delivery of Decent Housing Standards in the Private Sector
Commentary	<p>During 2009/10 the Housing Grants unit refined monitoring arrangements in order to profile how successfully grants expenditure has been targeted towards vulnerable households. We have also taken a holistic approach in respect of applicants applying for Disabled Facilities Grants and wherever possible also brought the properties they occupy to Decent Homes Standard. During the year we brought 108 properties occupied by vulnerable people to the full Decent Homes Standard in a further 43 cases works were undertaken to partially meet the standard.</p> <p>We were party to a successful bid for additional Decent Homes Funding with Mansfield and Newark & Sherwood District Council's to promote energy efficiency measures through 'Warmfront'.</p> <p>The Private Sector Housing Strategy was completed and published.</p> <p>The Council are still in discussions with neighbouring Local Authorities and the Nottinghamshire Supporting People Team regarding the possibility of setting up a Home Improvement Agency.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Consider possible arrangements for a Home Improvement Agency covering the Bassetlaw Area.</p> <p>To promote Energy Efficiency in the private sector through the 'Warmfront' partnership.</p> <p>Work in partnership with other local Authorities to secure improvement in NI187</p>

Action Point Six	Delivery of Decent Homes in the Voluntary Sector
Commentary	<p>The Council conducted a survey of RSL stockholders during 2008. This indicated there were only a minimal number of properties held by RSL's which did not meet the Decent Homes Standard.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Monitor annually as part of HIP process.</p>

<p>Action Point Seven</p>	<p>Completion of Private Sector Stock Condition Survey in partnership with Derby City Council, Nottingham City Council, Mansfield District Council, Gedling Borough Council, Broxtowe Borough Council, Ashfield District Council, Newark and Sherwood District Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and Bolsover District Council.</p>
<p>Commentary</p>	<p>The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey was completed in August 2006.</p>
<p>Future Actions</p>	<p>Environmental Health Unit to update data on H4EM website.</p>

<p>Action Point Eight</p>	<p>To work with Private Landlords through our Landlord Forum to bring privately rented accommodation to the decent homes standard.</p>
<p>Commentary</p>	<p>The Council has worked in partnership with a group of Landlords to establish a Landlords Association in Bassetlaw. Facilities are available to circulate information to Landlords through the Benefits Newsletter.</p>
<p>Future Actions</p>	<p>Officers to attend meetings of the Bassetlaw Landlords Forum on request.</p> <p>Promote East Midlands Landlords Accreditation Scheme in Bassetlaw.</p>

Action Point Nine	Develop pro-active initiatives with private sector landlords to improve housing management and increase awareness of legislation.
Commentary	The development of an independent Landlords Association in Bassetlaw offers fresh opportunities to engage with private landlords. The Association are minded to develop an independent self-accreditation scheme.
Future Actions	PEHO to attend Landlords Association Meetings.

V Meeting the Housing Needs of Vulnerable People

Action Point One	Place a greater emphasis on the prevention of homelessness
Commentary	<p>In November 2007 the Homelessness Unit was restructured and renamed as the Housing Needs Unit. Though continuing to be responsible for the statutory assessment of applications from homeless people, the emphasis is now placed on prevention, and there has been significant improvements in performance since the service was launched.</p> <p>A revised Homelessness Strategy was published on 1 July 2008.</p> <p>A Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group has been established to ensure delivery of the Strategy.</p>
Future Actions	These will be determined by the Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group. The Group will also assist in the achievement of sub regional objectives relating to homeless issues..

Action Point Two	Ensure effective arrangements are in place to monitor levels of homelessness in the district.
Commentary	<p>The Council participated in and part funded the Nottinghamshire Homelessness Watch Survey 2008.</p> <p>A new IT system to monitor homelessness activity and collate PIE returns has been purchased.</p> <p>A review of Homelessness in the District has been completed and incorporated into the Homelessness Strategy.</p>
Future Actions	Take part in Nottinghamshire Homelessness Watch Survey 2009.

Action Point Three	Development of Emergency Access Accommodation
Commentary	Opened in October 2006.
Future Actions	Not Applicable

Action Point Four	Ensuring all clients entering homeless projects have access to training and employment initiatives.
Commentary	<p>Training facilities are now available at Hope House and are available to service users of the emergency Access Accommodation and other HOPE clients.</p> <p>The Council has secured 'Places for Change' funding to refurbish Framework's Potter Street Project which will expand and enhance training facilities on this site.</p>
Future Actions	Delivery of 'Places for Change' project at Potter Street, Worksop.

Action Point Five	To expand the supply of 'move on' accommodation for people resident in homelessness projects, including improving access to our stock through the development of appropriate protocols and the use of tenancy support services.
Commentary	Move on protocol agreed and available to all supported housing providers. Implemented from March 2009..
Future Actions	Monitor success of move on protocol through Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group.

Action Point Six	To enable older people and disabled people to stay in their own homes.
Commentary	The Council expended £976,921 on disabled facilities grants in 08/09 completing works in 120 properties. In addition to this the Council successfully completed minor works such as grab rails at 678 Private Sector and 412 Public Sector homes through our Preventive Adaptations Scheme.
Future Actions	Continuation of Preventative Adaptations Schemes

Action Point Seven	To ensure that the housing and housing support needs of unpopular groups including drug users and ex offenders are met.
Commentary	The Council have assisted DAAT in progressing the Nottinghamshire wide SMASH project.
Future Actions	Participate in the Nottinghamshire Supporting People commissioning process. Ensure housing needs information on 'special needs' groups is available for the District.

Action Point Eight	To ensure that all housing and housing support needs of pregnant teenagers and young mothers are met.
Commentary	See Supporting People Review (Notts County Council)
Future Actions	Participate in Supporting People Review and Tendering Processes of Services.

Action Point Nine	To complete a Housing Needs Assessment for Gypsies and Travellers as set out in Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985.
Commentary	Completed 2006
Future Actions	Incorporate provision for Gypsies and Travellers sites into LDF.

VI Monitoring the Strategy

Action Point One	Publish an Annual Supplement to update the Area Housing Strategy
Commentary	Completed in 2007, 2008 and 2009.
Future Actions	Annual Service Delivery Plan outlining key Service Objectives Performance Indicators to be published on Councils Best Value Performance Plan.

Appendix A: Affordable Housing Provision

Table 1. All additional housing completions

	2006/07 outturn	2007/08 outturn	2008/9 outturn	2009/10 planned	2010/11 proposed
1. Number of additional local authority dwellings	0	0	0	1	5
2. Number of additional RSL – rented dwellings	44	38	3	36	76
3. Number of additional RSL – shared ownership	9	24	4	5	27
4. Total additional LA / RSL dwellings	53	62	7	42	108
5. Number of additional affordable ‘other’ private sector dwellings (those built for outright sale or discounted private units)	0	0	0	0	0
6 Total (Sum of N and 5)	53	62	7	42	108

Table 2. Provision of additional affordable housing through planning policy (PPG3 and Circular 6/98) in 2008/09

	No of units granted planning permission	Total no of units completed (sum of cols. c to g)	Number of units completed and funded by:				
			ADP (only)	LASHG (only)	ADP and LASHG	No ADP or LA support	Mixed Funding
1. Local Authority	0	0					
2. RSL – rented units	35	3	0	0	0	3	0
3. RSL – shared ownership units	6	4	0	0	0	4	0
4. Units for sale on a discounted basis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Other units (e.g tenure unknown)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Total	41	7	0	0	0	7	0