

BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL

AREA HOUSING STRATEGY

ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT

JULY 2007

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.

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>Funding for the project was agreed with the six other local authorities and the Government Office for the East Midlands during 2006. A Steering Group was formed which commissioned Fordham Research Ltd to undertake the Housing Market Assessment.</p> <p>Fieldwork was completed by December 2006 and reports have now been prepared which are scheduled for sign off in June 2007.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Publish the executive summary of the report on the Council's website</p> <p>Incorporate the report's findings into the Local Development Framework</p> <p>Reach agreement with other partner Local Authorities as to how to make best use of the report with a view to achieving a balanced housing market in the sub region (see Action Point Three)</p>

Action Point Two	Completion of the Local Development Framework
Commentary	The Core Strategy Options Document was published for consultation purposes in 2006. This includes a range of options including proposals relating to housing provision. Further progression in respect of the Local Development Framework is currently 'on hold' due to the emergence of a new Regional Plan. This is currently undergoing public examination.
Future Actions	It is anticipated work in respect of the Local Development Framework can re-commence in Autumn 2007 with the Core Strategy completed by 2010

<p>Action Point Three</p>	<p>Keep our Housing Needs Survey information up to date and complete a full survey in 2008.</p>
<p>Commentary</p>	<p>Information abstracted from the Housing Market Assessment supersedes a 'desk top' update completed in 2005.</p> <p>If necessary it will be possible to undertake a further desk-top update once the Annual Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix is completed for CLG (by 31 July 2007).</p>
<p>Future Actions</p>	<p>Current discussion indicates that future Housing Needs Assessments may be undertaken in partnership with other Local Authorities in line with Housing Sub Markets.</p> <p>Bassetlaw is placed in the Northern Strategic Housing Market Assessment Area covering the authorities of Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire. Discussions between these four authorities are could lead to further partnership working with a view to a joint Housing Needs Assessments and a joint Housing Strategy covering the sub market area.</p>

<p>Action Point Four</p>	<p>Work with Registered Social Landlords to increase the supply of rented housing and other low cost housing (e.g. shared equity housing)</p>
<p>Commentary</p>	<p>In recent years the Council has worked on the basis there will be minimal public subsidy through the Housing Corporations Approved Development Programme available in the district as Regional Priorities lay elsewhere, particularly the Milton Keynes Growth Area. ACIS have however completed 5 shared ownership units at Misterton, this being the last successful ADP funded system in the district.</p> <p>The Council used 'Local Authority Housing Grant' for the provision of emergency access accommodation in partnership with HOPE, a scheme completed in October 2006.</p> <p>The Councils Cabinet have approved contractors to take forward housing schemes on brown-field sites at Sandy Lane, Plantation Hill and Prior Meadows (all Worksop)</p>
<p>Future Actions</p>	<p>Review opportunities to attract public subsidy to the area through the National Affordable Housing Programme.</p> <p>Agree scheme for expenditure of £100,000 'Local Authority Social Housing Grant' in 2007/08.</p> <p>Agree scheme with contractors in respect of disposal of site at Sandy Lane, Plantation Hill and Prior meadows for mixed tenure development.</p>

Action Point Five	Work with developers to create additional affordable housing through the negotiation of S106 agreements
Commentary	The Council continue to have some success in this area. Out-turns for 2003/2006 taken from the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix are shown at Appendix One. Out-turns for 2006/2007 will be available when the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix is completed (by July 2007)
Future Actions	To develop robust policies within the LDF to ensure new supplies of affordable housing units in future years.

Action Point Six	To encourage private landlords to invest in additional private housing stock for rent.
Commentary	A continuing buoyant housing market encourages private landlords to invest in the 'buy to let' sector without further intervention. Our emphasis has changed to encouraging private landlords to take more problematic tenants, including those disadvantaged through homelessness.
Future Actions	Ongoing support for a Landlords Register (operated by HOPE). Develop liaison with Landlords by Homelessness Officers

Action Point Seven	To participate in the Sub Regional Housing / Planning Working Group
Commentary	There are a number of Sub Regional Housing and Planning Groups relevant to the District. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing / Planning Group • Northern Sub Market Housing Group • Housing Reference Group As far as staffing resources have permitted the Council has participated in all of these working groups.
Future Actions	To further develop partnership working with Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire in order to reflect issues arising in the Housing Sub Market.

Action Point Eight	To participate in the evolvement of the Sheffield City Regional Development Programme (The Northern Way)
Commentary	<p>The University of Birmingham Centre 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 and it is anticipated they will now work together to address relevant issues arising from the report.</p>
Future Actions	Continue to monitor future developments in the City Region

Action Point Nine	Make best use of existing stock, including reviewing our 'sheltered' housing stock.
Commentary	<p>The Council has closed one sheltered scheme at Crown Place, Worksop which has now been sold.</p> <p>During 2006/07 the Council commissioned consultants to assist in the preparation of an Older Persons Housing Strategy and a consultation draft was issued in June 2007. The strategy includes a comprehensive review all accommodation in all tenures for older people in the District. It is anticipated this Strategy will be published in Summer 2007.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Agree how proceeds from the sale of Crown Place should be utilised.</p> <p>Complete Older Persons Housing Strategy and place on website.</p>

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 an inspection by the Audit Commission in March 2007 A1 Housing achieved one star status with excellent prospects for improvement. A further inspection will take place in Autumn 2007.</p> <p>A1 Housing and the Council continue to work with the Audit Commission to improve services to a level where two star status will be achieved and are confident of achieving this standard at the next inspection. This will then trigger £62 million in government funding to be spent on improving Council owned properties to Decent Homes standards.</p>
Future Actions	To work with the Audit Commission to achieve two star status during 2007.

Action Point Two	Delivery of decent housing standards in the public sector.
Commentary	<p>Until two star status is achieved the Council and A1 Housing will be unable to access the necessary borrowing approvals to bring all of the Councils stock to the Decent Homes Programme. We now anticipate two star status to be achieved in following inspection in Autumn 2007. A1 Housing's Business Plan has been amended with a target achieving 100% compliance with the Decent Homes Standard by 2013 and annual targets have been amended accordingly. At 1.4.07 the number of non-decent council properties in Bassetlaw had been reduced to 2165.</p>
Future Actions	Agree Action Plan with Audit Commission to achieve 2 star status at inspection in Autumn 2007.

Action Point Three	Improve energy efficiency levels in public sector
Commentary	SAP ratings for Council owned stock improved from 58 to 61 between 1.4.06 and 1.4.07, 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	The ASB Unit now consist of an ASB Co-ordinator, two ASB Officers and a newly appointed Parenting Support Officer. Excellent joint working practises now operate between the various agencies within the Community Safety Partnership and Social Landlords in our area that can where necessary use legislation to bring security and safety to our estates.
Future Actions	Working with various other agencies within the public and voluntary sector and unifying the skills of the Parenting Support Officer 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.

Action Point Five	Delivery of Decent Housing Standards in the Private Sector
Commentary	<p>During 2006/7 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 46 properties occupied by vulnerable people to the full Decent Homes Standard in a further 18 cases works were undertaken to partially meet the standard. We also brought 16 properties to full Decent Homes Standard occupied by non-vulnerable households and arranged partial works to a further 6 properties.</p> <p>We also 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>
Future Actions	<p>Consider possible arrangements for a Home Improvement Agency covering the Bassetlaw Area.</p> <p>Review Housing Grants Policy to place greater emphasis on assisting vulnerable households</p> <p>Review Private Sector Housing Strategy</p> <p>To promote Energy Efficiency in the private sector through the 'Warmfront' partnership.</p>

Action Point Six	Delivery of Decent Homes in the Voluntary Sector
Commentary	<p>The Council conducted a survey of RSL stockholders during 2006. This indicated there were only a minimal number of properties held by RSL's which did not meet the Decent Homes Standard. Nottingham Community Housing Association have applied to the Housing Corporation to sell a small number of properties of this nature (3 or 4 each year) as they become vacant.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Monitor annually as part of HIP process.</p>

Action Point Seven	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.
Commentary	The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey was completed in August 2006
Future Actions	Review PSA 7 (Private Sector Decent Homes Targets and incorporate them in to Private Sector Housing Strategy.

Action Point Eight	To work with Private Landlords through our Landlord Forum to bring privately rented accommodation to the decent homes standard.
Commentary	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.
Future Actions	Take into account the Private Rented Sector in review of Grants Policy

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	Pace a greater emphasis on the prevention of homelessness
Commentary	In December 2006 the Authority completed CLG's Homelessness Self Assessment Tool Kit as part of a fundamental review of the way in which the Homelessness Service operated. In January 2007 the Homelessness Team met with the CLG's Regional Homelessness Advisor and a memorandum was agreed outlining the actions required to re-configure the service. Funding has been put in place to operate a Rent / Tenancy Deposit Scheme and a Homelessness Prevention Fund.
Future Actions	Report to be prepared for Councils Cabinet to rename and restructure the Homelessness Unit. Revised job descriptions will place emphasis on prevention rather than statutory assessment.

Action Point Two	Ensure effective arrangements are in place to monitor levels of homelessness in the district.
Commentary	The Council participated in and part funded the Nottinghamshire Homelessness Watch Survey 2006. Funding has been agreed to purchase a new IT system to monitor homelessness activity and collate PIE returns.
Future Actions	Purchase IT System Take part in Nottinghamshire Homelessness Watch Survey 2007.

Action Point Three	Development of Emergency Access Accommodation
Commentary	During 2006/7 the Council contributed £66,000 towards the Capital costs of Emergency Access Accommodation. This facility was opened by HOPE at Queen Street, Worksop in October 2006 following the conversion of premises previously used as office accommodation. 2006.
Future Actions	<p>Monitor occupancy of Emergency Access Accommodation.</p> <p>Participate in selection of suitable contractors to operate Emergency Access Accommodation when service is tendered by Nottinghamshire Supporting People Partnership</p> <p>Consider what additional provision needs to be made for emergency access accommodation for families.</p>

Action Point Four	Ensuring all clients entering homeless projects have access to training and employment initiatives.
Commentary	The Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group are working in partnership to action this objective.
Future Actions	Develop monitoring arrangements and evaluate.

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	Baseline currently being established through use of MOPP (Move on plans protocol) Audit Tool.
Future Actions	Consider amendments to Allocations Policy following baseline assessment. Periodically review existing protocols.

Action Point Six	To enable older people and disabled people to stay in their own homes.
Commentary	The Council expend over £900,000 on disabled facilities grants in 06/07 completing works in 91 properties
Future Actions	Development 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	Disposal of one property to NACRO for use of Drugs Intervention Programme. Grants paid to Framework and HOPE to set up Rent Deposit / Bond Schemes
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	Grant made to New Roots to extent private rented provision across New Roots services including services for pregnant teenagers and young mothers.
Future Actions	Reconfigurations of the Homelessness Service will allow the opportunity for each Officer to take responsibility for one or more specialist areas in addition to normal duties.

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 June 2007 See also Service Development Plan
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

	2002/03 outturn	2003/04 outturn	2004/05 outturn	2005/06 planned	2005/06 outturn
1. Number of additional local authority dwellings	0	0	0	0	0
2. Number of additional RSL – rented dwellings	57	10	18	17	42
3. Number of additional RSL – shared ownership	22	0	10	11	32
4.a. Total additional LA / RSL dwellings	79	10	28	28	74
5. Number of additional affordable 'other' private sector dwellings (those built for outright sale or discounted private units)	0	0	3	0	17
6a Total (Sum of N4a and 5)	79	10	31	28	91

Table 2. Affordable dwellings built or acquired by RSLs with LA financial support

	2002/03 outturn	2003/04 outturn	2004/05 outturn	2005/06 outturn
1. Total number of dwellings completed / acquired	4	2	1	0
2. Total LA expenditure (£ thousand on accrual accounting basis)	58	90	21	260
3. Average LA funding (£ per dwelling)	6860	22489	10500	17333

Table 3. Provision of additional affordable housing through planning policy (PPG3 and Circular 6/98) in 2005/06

	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	27	34	0	0	0	34	0
3. RSL – shared ownership units	32	27	0	0	0	27	0
4. Units for sale on a discounted basis	17	4	0	0	0	4	0
5. Other units (e.g tenure unknown)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Total	76	65	0	0	0	65	0