

**BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**AREA HOUSING STRATEGY**

**ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT**

**JULY 2008**

## 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

<b>Action Point One</b>	<b>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</b>
Commentary	<p>The Housing Market Assessment was completed and published in September 2007 and can be found on the Council's website at <a href="http://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk">www.bassetlaw.gov.uk</a></p> <p>It has been adopted as an evidence base to support the development of additional affordable housing in the district.</p> <p>Working arrangements have been developed with Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Councils to consider future Housing Development issues on a sub regional basis within the Northern Strategic Housing Market Area of the East Midlands. This partnership working is closely aligned to the development of the Sheffield City Region as this area heavily influences the Housing Market in this part of the East Midlands.</p> <p>The four authorities have commissioned consultants to complete a sub regional Housing Strategy which is scheduled for completion by December 2008. Bassetlaw will then undertake a more comprehensive review of it's own Area Housing Strategy.</p>

<b>Action Point Two</b>	<b>Completion of the Local Development Framework</b>
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 delayed due to the emergence of a new Regional Plan and the publication of National Planning Policy Statement 12 issued in June 2008.
Future Actions	It is anticipated work in respect of the Local Development Framework can re-commence in Autumn 2008 with the Core Strategy completed in 2011.

<b>Action Point Three</b>	<b>Keep our Housing Needs Survey information up to date and complete a full survey in 2008.</b>
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>Four reports have been commissioned by the four authorities in the Northern Strategic Housing Market Area covering the Housing Needs of Older People, Younger People, People with Complex Needs and BME Communities in the sub region,</p>
Future Actions	Consider and take forward recommendations arising from the four reports on special needs groups.

<b>Action Point Four</b>	<b>Work with Registered Social Landlords to increase the supply of rented housing and other low cost housing (e.g. shared equity housing)</b>
Commentary	In recent years the Council has worked on the basis there will be minimal public subsidy through the Housing Corporations. This pattern is now changing and the authority anticipates it now may be possible to attract grant through the new National Housing Programme to enhance and increase affordable housing provision where existing Section 106 agreements exist, or on new schemes to be identified and commissioned by the Council. A Regular Market Engagement process being undertaken by the Housing Corporation 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.
Future Actions	Review opportunities to attract public subsidy to the area through the National Affordable Housing Programme.  Agree scheme for expenditure of £100,000 'Local Authority Social Housing Grant' in 2008/09.

<b>Action Point Five</b>	<b>Work with developers to create additional affordable housing through the negotiation of S106 agreements</b>
Commentary	The Council continue to have some success in this area. Out-turns for 2007/2008 taken from the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix are shown at Appendix One.
Future Actions	To develop robust policies within the LDF to ensure new supplies of affordable housing units in future years.

<b>Action Point Six</b>	<b>To encourage private landlords to invest in additional private housing stock for rent.</b>
Commentary	<p>A buoyant housing market has encouraged private landlords to invest in the 'buy to let' sector further for several years. The recent down-turn in the Housing Market has led to a more stagnant market with house prices currently falling. The impact of the 'credit-crunch' has not been fully assessed.</p> <p>Our emphasis has changed to encouraging private landlords to take more problematic tenants, including those disadvantaged through homelessness. Homelessness Prevention Grant has been made available to recruit an additional worker within the Council's Housing Needs Team to work closely with both Private Landlords and Registered Social Landlords to increase the numbers of homeless and potentially homeless people re-settled in these sectors.</p>
Future Actions	Recruitment of additional officer in Housing Needs Section (2 year project)

<b>Action Point Seven</b>	<b>To participate in the Sub Regional Housing / Planning Working Group</b>
Commentary	<p>The Council is now represented on numerous of sub regional groups covering the Sheffield City Region, the Northern Strategic Housing Market Area of the East Midlands, and various Nottinghamshire. Examples include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Investment Board (City Region)</li> <li>• Housing Strategy Steering Group (HMA area)</li> <li>• Nottinghamshire Housing Reference Group</li> </ul>
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 and the Sheffield City Region.

<b>Action Point Eight</b>	<b>To participate in the evolvement of the Sheffield City Regional Development Programme (The Northern Way)</b>
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 continue to work together 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.

<b>Action Point Nine</b>	<b>Make best use of existing stock, including reviewing our 'sheltered' housing stock.</b>
Commentary	<p>The Council published a revised Older Persons Housing Strategy in 2007 and recommendations arising from it are now being taken forward.</p> <p>A further sheltered scheme at Bircotes (Cumberland House) has now been de-commissioned and the site been sold.</p> <p>Void levels in our remaining sheltered schemes are not excessive and at the present time there is no need for further action.</p>
Future Actions	Keep under review

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

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

<b>Action Point Two</b>	<b>Delivery of decent housing standards in the public sector.</b>
Commentary	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 2013 and annual targets have been amended accordingly in the Council's Best Value Performance Plan. Following a further Stock Condition Survey undertaken by Connaught in 2007 and taking in to account the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System the number of non- decent homes within the Council's stock was 4070 on 1.4.2008.
Future Actions	Implement Decent Homes Programme to achieve 100% compliance by 1.4.2013.

<b>Action Point Three</b>	<b>Improve energy efficiency levels in public sector</b>
Commentary	SAP ratings for Council owned stock improved from 63 to 66 between 1.4.07 and 1.4.08, 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.

<b>Action Point Four</b>	<b>Ensuring our estates provide a safe, secure and attractive environment.</b>
Commentary	The ASB Unit now consists of, two ASB Officers and a 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.

<b>Action Point Five</b>	<b>Delivery of Decent Housing Standards in the Private Sector</b>
Commentary	<p>During 2007/2008 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 80 properties occupied by vulnerable people to the full Decent Homes Standard in a further 4 cases works were undertaken to partially meet the standard.</p> <p>We also were party to a successful bid for additional Decent Homes Funding with Mansfield and Newark &amp; Sherwood District Council's to promote energy efficiency measures through 'Warmfront'</p> <p>A new consultation draft of the Private Sector Housing Strategy has been produced placing a greater emphasis on assisting vulnerable households. Minor amendments to the draft need to be completed reflecting changes to Disabled Facilities Grants arising from the release of Statutory Instruments 1189 and 1190, and the draft will then be circulated for comment to all interested parties.</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 in the North of the county.</p>
Future Actions	<p>Consider possible arrangements for a Home Improvement Agency covering the Bassetlaw Area.</p> <p>Complete and publish Private Sector Housing Strategy following appropriate consultation.</p> <p>To promote Energy Efficiency in the private sector through the 'Warmfront' partnership.</p>

<b>Action Point Six</b>	<b>Delivery of Decent Homes in the Voluntary Sector</b>
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	Monitor annually as part of HIP process.

<p><b>Action Point Seven</b></p>	<p><b>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.</b></p>
<p>Commentary</p>	<p>The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey was completed in August 2006. Findings of the Survey have been taken in to account as the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy has been prepared.</p>
<p>Future Actions</p>	<p>.Environmental Health Unit to update data on H4EM website.</p>

<p><b>Action Point Eight</b></p>	<p><b>To work with Private Landlords through our Landlord Forum to bring privately rented accommodation to the decent homes standard.</b></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>

<b>Action Point Nine</b>	<b>Develop pro-active initiatives with private sector landlords to improve housing management and increase awareness of legislation.</b>
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**

<b>Action Point One</b>	<b>Pace a greater emphasis on the prevention of homelessness</b>
Commentary	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 have been significant improvements in performance since the service was launched.  A revised Homelessness Strategy was published on 1 July 2008.
Future Actions	To appoint an additional worker funded from Homelessness Prevention Grant to undertake a two year project to increase the availability of accommodation for homeless people with both private and housing association sectors.

<b>Action Point Two</b>	<b>Ensure effective arrangements are in place to monitor levels of homelessness in the district.</b>
Commentary	<p>The Council participated in and part funded the Nottinghamshire Homelessness Watch Survey 2007.</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 in to the Homelessness Strategy.</p>
Future Actions	Take part in Nottinghamshire Homelessness Watch Survey 2008.

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

<b>Action Point Four</b>	<b>Ensuring all clients entering homeless projects have access to training and employment initiatives.</b>
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

<b>Action Point Five</b>	<b>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.</b>
Commentary	Move on protocol in development available to all supported housing providers. Will be implemented on introduction of choice based lettings
Future Actions	Choice based lettings to be implemented by A1 Housing and Bassetlaw District Council (Target Jan 2009)

<b>Action Point Six</b>	<b>To enable older people and disabled people to stay in their own homes.</b>
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

<b>Action Point Seven</b>	<b>To ensure that the housing and housing support needs of unpopular groups including drug users and ex offenders are met.</b>
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

<b>Action Point Eight</b>	<b>To ensure that all housing and housing support needs of pregnant teenagers and young mothers are met.</b>
Commentary	Grant made in 2006/07 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.

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

**VI Monitoring the Strategy**

<b>Action Point One</b>	<b>Publish an Annual Supplement to update the Area Housing Strategy</b>
Commentary	Completed in 2007 and 2008
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

	<b>2006/2007 outturn</b>	<b>2007/2008 planned</b>	<b>2007/2008 outturn</b>	<b>2008/2009 planned</b>	<b>2009/2010 proposed</b>
1. Number of additional local authority dwellings	0	0	0	0	0
2. Number of additional RSL – rented dwellings	44	44	38	9	18
3. Number of additional RSL – shared ownership/equity	9	22	24	9	0
4.a. Total additional LA / RSL dwellings	53	66	62	18	25
5. Number of additional affordable ‘other’ private sector dwellings (those built for outright sale or discounted private units)	0	3	0	0	0
6a Total (Sum of 4a and 5)	53	69	62	18	25

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

	<b>2005/2006 outturn</b>	<b>2006/2007 outturn</b>	<b>2007/2008 outturn</b>	<b>2007/2008 plannd</b>
1. Total number of dwellings completed / acquired	15	0	0	1
2. Total LA expenditure (£ thousand on accrual accounting basis)	260	0	0	100
3. Average LA funding (£ per dwelling)	17333	0	0	100000

Table 3. Provision of additional affordable housing through planning policy (PPG3 and Circular 6/98) in 2007/2008

	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	0	0	0	0	0
2. RSL – rented units	72	38	0	0	0	38	0
3. RSL – shared ownership units	33	24	0	0	0	24	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	105	62	0	0	0	62	0