

CABINET

18 DECEMBER 2012

HOUSING STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Howard Doe, Housing and Community Services

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration Community and Culture

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Summary

The Housing Strategy was approved in October 2011. It contains a commitment to annually review and assess progress against the targets, which this report seeks to do.

1 Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The Housing Strategy was developed in partnership with the Strategic Housing Partnership Board and a diverse range of partners and stakeholders. The Strategy sits alongside a number of other Council policies including the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Strategic Plan for Older People and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 1.2 The Housing Strategy is consistent with the Policy Framework and a review of progress is a matter for Cabinet.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy aims to reflect policies and priorities at national, regional and local level. It will help to deliver the strategic housing priorities for Medway and sets the direction for housing in Medway until 2014. It is designed around three aims and has seven outcomes.

Theme One – Bridging the Gap

Working to create a pathway into suitable housing and home ownership by increasing choice

Outcome One	Deliver a range of tenures, properties and locations to meet need
Outcome Two	Make the best use of existing housing
Outcome Three	Contribute to sustainable and cohesive communities

Theme Two – Early Prevention Providing suitable, appropriate and timely housing advice to help people make the right housing choice	
Outcome Four	Provide advice across agencies to prevent crisis and increase choice and access
Outcome Five	Improve housing offer to better meet a range of housing needs
Theme Three - Health and Housing Improving health through quality housing and places	
Outcome Six	Ensure good quality homes, which are energy efficient
Outcome Seven	Improve and maintain independence and inclusion by providing effective support

2.2 The Strategic Housing Partnership Board is responsible for monitoring the performance against the Housing Strategy and the progress of the Action Plan on a quarterly basis.

2.3 The Board includes representation from a wide range of stakeholder and partner organisations and receives quarterly monitoring reports detailing progress against the Action Plan.

3 Achievements

3.1 Across all themes there has been significant progress against the priority actions. A total of 15 actions have been completed and the majority are on target to be delivered by 2014. A detailed report of the progress against the Strategy Action Plan is given below, the information contained within the reports has been achieved or reflects progress over the first year of the strategy.

Theme One – Bridging the Gap			
Outcome One - Deliver a range of tenures, properties and locations to meet need			
Total Action Points	Actions Completed	Actions on Target	Actions off Target
4	n/a	4	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured at least 25% of newly built homes as affordable on every site meeting the Council's size threshold • Delivered 327 affordable homes across Medway, which have housed 327 households • £34.6 million investment secured to deliver affordable housing • 134 shared ownership units have been delivered 			

Outcome Two - Make the best use of existing housing			
Total Action Points	Actions Completed	Actions on Target	Actions off Target
8	2	6	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered the Creating Space initiative to help tackle overcrowding and improve housing conditions 17 on-line mutual exchanges have been completed between 01/10/2011 and 30/09/2012 128 empty properties brought back into use resulting in the level of empty homes in Medway currently being 1.31%% (as of 30/10/2012) The development of the allocations policy is underway and is due to be submitted to Cabinet for approval in February 2013 A review of accommodation for older people in Medway has been completed and a joint needs assessment undertaken with Social Care 			
Outcome Three - Contribute to sustainable and cohesive communities			
Total Action Points	Actions Completed	Actions on Target	Actions off Target
7	1	6	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked in partnership with the local authorities in Kent to renew the Creating Sustainable Communities protocol. The document is now called Creating Successful Communities and will be used to inform all new affordable housing schemes Local lettings plans are now in place for all developments over 10 units Continuing to work with the local community to respond to individual issues raised through the Community Partnership. Support and help is given to the most vulnerable residents in conjunction with Health and Social Care Working in partnership to develop a program of multi-agency operations to provide high profile interventions within target communities 			
Theme Two – Early Prevention			
Outcome Four - Provide advice across agencies to prevent crisis and increase choice and access			
Total Action Points	Actions Completed	Actions on Target	Actions off Target
6	3	3	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A common set of standards has been agreed with Housing Associations to support clients through benefit changes. An early warning system is now in place where evictions may ensue InTouch was commissioned to provide a new sanctuary scheme there were 40 completions between 01/10/2011 to 30/09/2012. Working in partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau across Medway to provide debt and financial advice 			

Outcome Five - Improve housing offer to better meet a range of housing needs

Total Action Points	Actions Completed	Actions on Target	Actions off Target
6	2	4	0

- Working in partnership with mhs, Moat, Hyde and L&Q we have secured the right to 16 units to house Looked After Children
- Over 1373 referrals were made through the Supported Housing Gateway during 01/10/2011 to 30/09/2012 helping to improve the accommodation options available to vulnerable people
- There are currently 116 clients in temporary accommodation
- A joint needs assessment has been completed with Children and Adult Services and will be used to commission services in the future
- Continuing to work with private landlords through the Landlords Accreditation Scheme and Landlords Forum there are currently 281 accredited.
- The use of the HomeBond scheme has been revised and a new scheme put in place to help improve access to private rented accommodation

Theme Three – Health and Housing

Outcome Six - Ensure good quality homes, which are energy efficient

Total Action Points	Actions Completed	Actions on Target	Actions Removed
8	3	4	1

- Continuing to licence or take legal enforcement action against licensable HMOs currently 110 HMO's are licensed with a further 4 currently being processed.
- A program of inspections are in place for non-licensable HMOs
- The licensing arrangements of residential mobile home sites have been reviewed
- Provided 264 Vulnerable households living in non-decent accommodation since 01/10/2011.
- Provided financial assistance to 250 vulnerable and low income homeowners and tenants to ensure that their home meets minimum standards
- A Continued Professional Development scheme has been developed for accredited landlords and courses are held regularly at Gun Wharf. These help accredited landlords improve standards and professionalism.
- Due to changes in funding we are no longer able to assist households via energy efficiency loans. This target has been removed from the Action Plan.

Outcome Seven - Ensure good quality homes, which are energy efficient			
Total Action Points	Actions Completed	Actions on Target	Actions off Target
7	2	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered 16 wheel chair compliant homes since October 2011 A scheme of nine homes has been delivered in Gillingham which has been specifically designed for clients with Learning Disabilities 96 households have received major adaptations to their homes via the Home Adaptation Service to ensure that their homes are suitable to their needs 2565 vulnerable people have been helped to feel safe within their own homes via the HomeSafe scheme 40 vulnerable households have been assisted to carry out adaptations, repairs and improvements to their home via the HomeSafe scheme. Working in partnership with Social Care to undertake housing needs analysis on a range of client groups including those with dementia and learning disabilities The Victory Pier extra care scheme has been complete containing 60 units of 1 and 2 bedroom flats. The extra care schemes on Rochester Riverside and Liberty Park are currently on site due for completion in 2014. 			

4 Advice and analysis

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy has proved a useful and effective framework in delivering real improvement to lives of people within Medway by:-
- helping people to *benefit from the areas regeneration*, whilst
 - assisting *older and vulnerable people maintain their independence* and,
 - creating a *cleaner and greener environment*, and where
 - people feel *safer in their community*.
- 4.2 The Housing Strategy is relevant and useful and provides the basis on which to continue to improve services, attract resources and invest in Medway.

5 Risk Management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Changes to the environment in which the Housing Strategy operates	Possible impact on service demand, funding and opportunities for intervention	Action Plan reviewed quarterly, with action being taken to mitigate risk

6 Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 6.1 The Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider this report on 13 December 2012 and its views and recommendations will be reported to Cabinet in an addendum report.

7 Financial and legal implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from the review. The Housing Strategy and Action Plan are used to direct and provide evidence to attract external funding primarily from the Homes and Community Agency.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 The Cabinet is asked to note the progress against the aims of the Housing Strategy.

9 Suggested reasons for decision

- 9.1 The Housing Strategy and its Action Plan sets the strategic direction for Housing Services in Medway, contributing to the Council's core values and strategic priorities and giving context for the attraction and investment of resources.

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Background papers

Cabinet report - Housing Strategy 2011-14
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgconvert2pdf.aspx?id=8503&nobdr=2>

Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012-13

Delivery and Monitoring

The Medway Strategic Housing Partnership Board was established in 2007 as a dynamic forum of key public and private players involved in housing, brought together to help deliver decent and safe homes for all residents living in Medway.

The action plan sets out the actions we will take, and each action has a timescale and a target or performance indicator to achieve. Actions may have one or more organisation leading or contributing to its implementation.

The actions are flexible and may alter to meet changing circumstances, but are all based on achieving the vision and priorities. Many actions and projects are well underway and some have already been noted within this strategy.

It is important that the action plan is monitored to ensure that progress is on target, (especially in these changing times), and to ensure that our actions remain the right ones.

The Strategic Housing Partnership Board will monitor progress of the action plan on a quarterly basis and separate task and finish groups will be set up to carry out specific projects meet the outcomes of the strategy.

Theme One – Bridging the Gap

Outcome One - Deliver a range of tenures, properties and locations to meet need



Green

Working to create a pathway into suitable housing and home ownership by increasing choice

Action Point	ACTION	Target Date	TARGET OUTCOME	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	2011/12			
					Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
1.1	Secure at least 25% of newly built homes as affordable on any site meeting the Council's size threshold	Ongoing	25% affordable housing achieved	Target Achieved	☺	☺	☺	☺
1.2	Deliver at least 204 additional affordable homes per annum	Ongoing	Delivery of at least 204 units of affordable homes	35 units delivered in Quarter 2 of 2012/13. 327 units delivered since Oct 2011	☺	☺	☺	☺
1.3	Work with Registered Providers and the HCA to secure an annual investment in affordable housing of £20m	Ongoing	Secure over £20m of investment in affordable housing per annum	£3.7 million secured in Quarter 2 with £34.6 million of investment in affordable housing has been secured since Oct 2011	☺	☺	☺	☺
1.4	Deliver a minimum of 85 new Shared Ownership units per annum	April 2013	Deliver 85 or more new Shared Ownership Units per Annum	12 Shared Ownership units were delivered in Quarter 1 with 128 units delivered since Oct 2011	☺	☺	☺	☺

Outcome Two – Make the best use of existing housing



Green

Working to create a pathway into suitable housing and home ownership by increasing choice

Action Point	ACTION	Target Date	TARGET OUTCOME	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	2011/12		2012/13	
					Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
2.1	Report the void levels within the affordable housing stock on a quarterly basis	Ongoing	Monitored and reported Quarterly Via the Quarterly Monitoring Report (QMR)	Target Achieved	☺	☺	☺	☺
2.2	Deliver the “Creating Space” initiative to help tackle overcrowding and improve the housing conditions of 15 households per annum	April 2012	Complete the Creating Space initiative and identify ways to improve the housing conditions of 15 households per annum	Target Met	Action Completed			
2.3	Achieve 25 on-line mutual exchanges per annum	April 2013	25 on-line mutual exchanges completed	17 on-line mutual exchanges competed since Oct 2011	☺	☺	☺	☺
2.4	Develop a range of options to help bring 100 empty homes back into use per annum	April 2013	Bring 100 empty homes back into use per annum	205 empty properties brought back to use in 2011/12 and 63 empty properties in the first 2 quarters of 2012/13	☺	☺	☺	☺
2.5	Maintain the number of long term private sector empty homes below 1.6% of all private sector stock	Ongoing	Maintain and Monitor the level of empty homes below 1.6%	The level of empty homes in Medway is currently 1.31%	☺	☺	☺	☺
2.6	Consult, develop and implement a new Allocations Policy for Medway	April 2013	Allocations policy developed and implemented	Allocations policy is currently being developed and drafted	☺	☺	☺	☺
2.7	Develop a delivery programme for Extra Care and Sheltered Housing to meet demand	April 2012	Meet the number of units of Extra Care Housing identified by Adult Social Care of 550 units	Victory Pier Extra Care Scheme completed. Rochester Riverside and Liberty Park Extra Care scheme on site	☺	☺	☺	☺
2.8	Undertake a review of accommodation for older people in Medway	April 2012	Work ongoing	Joint need assessment completed	Action Completed			

Outcome Three - Contribute to sustainable and cohesive communities



Green

Working to create a pathway into suitable housing and home ownership by increasing choice

STATUS	ACTION	Target Date	TARGET OUTCOME	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	2011/12		2012/13	
					Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
3.1	Achieve a balanced approach with regards to tenure with 60% social rented homes and 40% intermediate homes	Ongoing	Achieve a split of 60% social rented homes and 40% intermediate homes on all sites	Target Achieved	☺	☺	☺	☺
3.2	100% of affordable housing schemes to meet Secured by Design standard	Ongoing	All affordable homes meet Secured by Design standard	Target Achieved	☺	☺	☺	☺
3.3	Lead on the development of the affordable element of Development Briefs for all major residential sites in Medway	Ongoing	Lead on developments briefs on all major residential sites	Lodge Hill development brief adopted	☺	☺	☺	☺
3.4	Ensure new affordable housing schemes meet the standards set out within the "Creating Sustainable Communities in Kent and Medway" protocol	Ongoing	Re-written now called <i>Creating Successful Communities</i>	Target Achieved	☺	☺	☺	☺
3.5	Adopt in association with Registered Providers Local Lettings Plans for all development of more than 10 units	April 2012	Local Lettings Plans in place	Local lettings plans in place for all developments over 10 units.	Action Completed			
3.6	Continue to target resources to improve the worst housing conditions primarily in the All Saints, Luton and North Gillingham areas	Ongoing	Targeted work undertaken to alleviate poor housing conditions in highlighted areas	Continue to work with local community to respond to individual issues raised through the community partnership whilst working with health and social to support and target the most vulnerable residents	☺	☺	☺	☺
3.7	Work with partners to undertake proactive targeted multi agency operations to provide high profile interventions within target communities	Annually	Ongoing targeted multi agency operations including Police, Uk Border Agency, Environmental Health and others	Following the success of previous operations future program is currently being developed whilst small-scale operations continue	☺	☺	☺	☺

Theme Two – Early Prevention

Outcome Four – Provide advice across agencies to prevent crisis and increase choice and access



Green

Providing suitable, appropriate and timely housing advice to help people make the right housing choice

STATUS	ACTION	Target Date	TARGET OUTCOME	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	2011/12		2012/13	
					Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
4.1	Explore further ways of working with Medway Revenue and Benefits Service and the HRA to help prevent homelessness by ensuring that early warning is given of benefit refusals or suspension where eviction may ensue	Ongoing	Early warning system in place	Group established and agreement gained from Housing Association to work to common standards to support clients through change	☺	☺	☺	☺
4.2	Review the advice and assistance available in cases of domestic abuse and to those in the Sanctuary scheme	December 2011	Review current procedure's and make changes were necessary	Intouch have now been commissioned to provide new sanctuary scheme which is now in place	Action Completed			
4.3	Consider the impacts of the Equality Duty 2011 and use analysis to tailor our services	April 2013	Equality Duty data used to tailor services	Mix of different units developed based on identified need	☺	☺	☺	☺
4.4	Continue to work in partnership to develop a clear Housing Pathway for clients with Learning Disabilities	April 2013	Develop and implement a Housing Pathway for clients with Learning Disabilities	Easy read housing information and housing pathway now available	☺	☺	☺	☺
4.5	Review the range of debt and financial advice available and how these services are sign posted	December 2011	Complete Review of advice and information available	Review is now complete Medway Council now working with Citizens Advice Bureau across Medway providing debt and financial advice	Action Completed			
4.6	Work in partnership with agencies to improve young people and parents' knowledge of housing issues	April 2013	Improve young people and parents' knowledge of housing issues	Operational Joint homeless protocol for young people completed	☺	☺	☺	☺

Outcome Five – Improve the housing offer to better meet a range of housing needs



Green

Providing suitable, appropriate and timely housing advice to help people make the right housing choice

STATUS	ACTION	Target Date	TARGET OUTCOME	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	2011/12		2012/13	
					Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
5.1	In partnership with Registered Providers and Children's Services implement an initiative which will deliver at least 10 homes for Looked After Children	Ongoing	Deliver 10 or more homes for Looked After Children	The Rights have been secured for 16 units with mhs, Moat, Hyde and L&Q	☺	☺	☺	☺
5.2	Maintain the Supported Housing Gateway with 1,200 referrals made per year to promote the most effective use of accommodation and support funded by Supporting People	Ongoing	1,200 or more referrals to be made per year	There were 370 referrals made in quarter 2 2012/13 and 1373 since October 2011	☺	☺	☺	☺
5.3	Work with HomeChoice to improve the move on of clients out of Temporary Accommodation	Ongoing	Reduction of clients housed in temporary accommodation	At the end of October 2012 there were 112 clients in temporary accommodation	☺	☺	☺	☺
5.4	In association with Children's Services, identify the resources required to ensure young vulnerable persons are being offered suitable housing options and choices	April 2012	Resources identified	Joint needs analysis being undertaken with children and adults services which is now drawing to a close and will be used to commissioning services	Action Completed			
5.5	Maintain the Landlord Accreditation Scheme and Landlords' Forum to encourage and support private landlords	Ongoing	Provide ongoing support to Private Landlords	Landlord Accreditation Scheme and Landlords' Forum Running work ongoing	☺	☺	☺	☺
5.6	Review the use of the HomeBond scheme to help improve access to private rented accommodation	April 2012	Revised Scheme in Place	Completed Revised Scheme in Place	Action Completed			

Theme Three - Health and Housing

Outcome Six – Ensure good quality homes, which are energy efficient



Green

Improving health through quality housing and places

STATUS	ACTION	Target Date	TARGET OUTCOME	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	2011/12		2012/13	
					Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
6.1	Continue to develop links with Health to assist in the delivery of an area based approach	April 2012	Develop Links with Health	System of joint working established and in place	Action Completed			
6.2	Licence or take legal enforcement action against 100% of licensable HMOs	Ongoing	100% of HMO's Licensed or action being taken	110 HMO's currently licensed with 4 further HMO's in the process of being licensed	☺	☺	☺	☺
6.3	Maintain the program of inspections of non-licensable HMOs in accordance with the prioritisation scheme	Ongoing	Maintain inspections	This work is ongoing with a member of the Private Sector Housing Team doing inspections	☺	☺	☺	☺
6.4	Review the site licensing arrangements of residential mobile home sites	April 2012	Review all agreements	Completed successfully	Action Completed			
6.5	Reduce vulnerable households living in non-decent sub-standard accommodation by 350 per annum	April 2013	Reduction in vulnerable households living in non-decent sub-standard accommodation	264 Households living in non-decent sub-standard accommodation have been assisted since 01/10/2011	☺	☺	☺	☺
6.6	Provide financial assistance to 250 vulnerable and low income homeowners and tenants to meet minimum standards	April 2013	Assist vulnerable and low income homeowners and tenants to meet minimum standards	250 vulnerable and low income homeowners and tenants assisted since 01/10/2011	☺	☺	☺	☺
6.7	Develop a scheme of professional development courses for accredited landlords to improve standards and professionalism	April 2012	Better Private Sector Landlords	Continued Professional Development (CPD) course's for landlords are held regularly at Gun Wharf.	Action Completed			
6.8	Assist 35 households per year via energy efficiency loans and grants and give advice to 1,500 people via the Energy Savings Trust Advice Centre		Provide assistance and advice	Due to changes in funding we are no longer taking this action point forward	Cancelled			

Outcome Seven – Improve and maintain independence and inclusion by providing effective support.



Green

Improving health through quality housing and places

STATUS	ACTION	Target Date	TARGET OUTCOME	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	2011/12		2012/13	
					Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
7.1	Deliver 10 fully wheelchair compliant homes per year	April 2013	10 or more fully wheelchair compliant homes per year	16 Wheel chair units delivered since Oct 2011 target achieved	☺	☺	☺	☺
7.2	Deliver 9 homes specifically designed for clients with Learning Disabilities	April 2012	9 or more homes designed for clients with Learning Disabilities	9 specifically designed units delivered on Marlborough road	Action Completed			
7.3	Provide at least 150 households with major adaptations within their home through our Home Adaptations Service	April 2013	Assist 150 or more households per year	92 Disabled Facilities Grants completed since Oct 2011	☺	☺	☺	☹
7.4	Through the HomeSafe scheme provide minor works, safety and security checks to allow 2,700 vulnerable people to feel safe within their own homes	Annually	2700 household to be assisted to remain and feel safe in there home	2565 households were assisted between 01/10/2011 to 30/09/2012	☺	☺	☺	☹
7.5	Assist 3,940 vulnerable households to undertake adaptations, repairs and improvements to their home	Annually	3940 vulnerable household assisted.	2865 vulnerable household were assisted between 01/10/2011 to 30/09/2012	☺	☺	☹	☹
7.6	Work with the Institute of Public Care and Adult Social Care to undertake housing needs analysis on a range of client groups including those with dementia and learning disabilities	April 2013	Assessment completed	Work now being led by Adult Social Care work ongoing	☺	☺	☺	☺
7.7	Deliver a minimum of 100 extra care units by 2013	April 2013	Delivery of 100 or more Extra Care units	60 units delivered on Victory Pier with a further 41 units being delivered on Rochester Riverside	☺	☺	☺	☺