

### **Strategic links with other documents**

Key documents have been taken into account in the development of this Strategy to ensure consistency across the Council and with our partners in other agencies.

All the East Herts documents can be accessed from the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk) or by contacting the Strategic Housing Service on 01279 655261.

### **Local Links**

East Herts District Community Strategy – East Herts Together: A local strategic partnership (LSP) has been established in East Herts to develop strategic working with key partners from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors within the district. The Community Strategy 2003 sets out a long term vision for East Herts and has been developed through the shared priorities of the individual organisations that make up the LSP.

The 2007/08 Action Plan for the Local Strategic partnership agreed six priorities:

- Neighbourhood and Environmental Management
- Economic Development and Learning
- Leisure and Cultural Development
- Services for Vulnerable People
- Healthier Lifestyles
- Community Safety

A new Sustainable Communities Strategy is being developed and will be consulted on in 2008 and be published in 2009.

The East Herts Housing Strategy: East Herts Housing Strategy is an overarching strategy, for all tenures of housing, that lays out the key housing and housing related issues in East Herts and how the Council, with its partners, will respond to them. The Strategy for 2008 onwards is currently being developed and will be published in autumn 2008. The Homeless Strategy sits below the Housing strategy providing a more detailed work programme for homelessness and the prevention of homelessness.

Empty Homes Strategy: The Strategy explains East Herts Council's approach to bringing empty homes back into use. It contains details of the range of powers available to the Council to achieve this work and how the powers can be used.

Affordable Warmth Strategy for tackling fuel poverty in East Herts 2007-2012: Through this strategy the Council will endeavour to offer advice, guidance and if eligible assistance to all private sector residents on ways of achieving adequate and affordable warmth. In addition the strategy will aim to improve

the health and quality of life of lower income households by assisting them in accessing affordable warmth.

East Herts Council Public Health Strategy 2008-2013: The Strategy has been developed to assist the Council by deciding what health priorities to focus on and giving opportunities for East Herts Council to work in partnership with other like-minded organisations. The Strategy helps all those whose work involves improving the health of individuals to understand their role and contribution.

East Herts Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008: The Strategy has been developed by the East Herts Crime Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) which is a multi-agency partnership consisting of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sector agencies. The Strategy aims to bring agencies together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and increase people's sense of community safety.

### **Hertfordshire County Links**

Hertfordshire Supporting People Strategy 2007-2012: The primary purpose of supporting people as defined by central government is to:

*'offer vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by providing a stable environment which enables greater independence'*

The Hertfordshire Supporting People Strategy has a number of key actions that have a significant bearing on this strategy such as the remodelling of the floating support services to improve access and consistency of provision across the County. The progress of these actions is monitored by the Hertfordshire Commissioning Body. The strategy can be accessed on the following website link:

Local Area Agreements (LAA): Local Area Agreements are three year agreements between central government, local authorities, local strategic partnerships and other key partners. They set out targets to deliver national outcomes in a way that reflects local priorities. Hertfordshire County Council is our lead agency for developing and monitoring the LAAs that East Herts contributes to. The Hertfordshire LAA 2006-2009 sets out around 40 targets within four blocks:

- Children and young people
- Safer, stronger and sustainable communities
- Healthier communities and older people
- Economic development.

The LAA has clear links to homelessness and homeless prevention, especially around sustaining tenancies for young people and the targets can be accessed via the following website link:

A new LAA for 2009 onwards is currently being developed and consulted on by Hertfordshire County Council.

## Performance Monitoring

### a) Performance Indicators

The Council has a structure for monitoring both its national and local performance indicators. These performance indicators are monitored monthly by the Council's Performance Division and are reported into the Council's performance management process. A table of previous housing related performance indicators is set out below.

	Actual 06/07	Target 07/08	Actual 07/08
<u>BV 64</u> : Number of private sector dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority	14	12	Not yet available
<u>BV 43b</u> : Number of HMOs inspected and action initiated to secure repair and improvement	10	12	Not yet available
<u>BV 183b</u> : Average length of time in hostel accommodation for households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need that include dependent children or a pregnant woman	20 wks	14 wks	14 wks
<u>BVPI 213</u> : Number of homeless households for whom housing advice work resolved their situation per 1,000 households in the District	3 hseholds per 1,000 hseholds	3 hseholds per 1,000 hseholds	Not yet available
<u>BV 78a</u> : Housing benefit – speed of processing new claims – average time			
New affordable homes **	159	200	81 (to be confirmed)

*\*\* The programme is a five year one that is scheduled to produce 200 units on average per annum*

The Government have developed a set of new National Indicators and performance framework that the Council will be reporting on from 2008/09 onwards.

## Glossary

**A8 European Countries**- A8 states of Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Estonia and the Czech Republic. Workers from the A\* states can access the UK labour market, subject to certain conditions. However people who come to the UK and do not work or support themselves are not able to access benefits or social housing.

**Affordable housing** – Housing that is available to meet the needs of people who cannot afford to buy or rent housing generally available on the open housing market. Affordable housing can mean social rented (council or housing association), low cost home ownership, some private rented and shared ownership.

**Assured shorthold tenancies** - A tenancy agreement with a private landlord for a period of 6 months that can be renewed.

**Audit Commission** - A body appointed by the Government to be responsible for (amongst other things) the appointment of local authority's external auditors and best value inspectors (Including the Housing Inspectorate), and promoting the best use of public money in local government.

**Bed and Breakfast accommodation** – Bed and breakfast hotels used a temporary accommodation for homeless people

**Benchmarking** – To measure the quality of something by comparing it with something else of an accepted standard.

**BVPI's** - Best Value performance Indicators. These are national targets set by Government for local authorities to measure themselves against. From April 2008 these will be replaced with National Indicators.

**Capital Expenditure** - Broadly, this is expenditure, which will have a value over more than one year, and is therefore for the purposes of investing in a Council's assets. In the Housing context, this will mean expenditure in the acquisition or construction of housing, and in substantial repairs and improvements.

**Choice Based Lettings (CBL)** - A new method for Council's allocating homes, which requires people on the Housing Register to select and express an interest for available social housing rather than waiting for the council to offer them a home. The scheme gives applicants more choice in where they live.

**Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)** – An organisation that can give free advice and information to local people in person or by telephone.

**Common Housing Register** – This involves a single form for all applicants in a particular area complete and a single pool of applicants from which new or

existing social tenants requiring a transfer to alternative social housing can be allocated vacant social housing.

**Communities and Local Government** - Government department, with a remit to promote community cohesion and equality and responsibility for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government.

**Connexions** – National Organisation providing support for young people. Includes employment, education and training and links into social care and housing.

**Floating Support** – support services provided by Supporting people Services to enable vulnerable people to obtain or sustain a tenancy for example assistance with attaining life skills such as budgeting. Support is provided in a persons own accommodation, by visiting workers, for a specific period or for as long as the individual requires it and then transfers to another household.

**General Fund** - The Local Authority account that records the revenue income and expenditure for all of its functions, except the landlord function as owner of housing stock. The duty to the homeless, the 'enabling' role in promoting Housing Association activity in the area, and grants for private sector housing are General Fund activities.

**HB** - Housing Benefit – this is a type of benefit to assist residents in paying rent for their home.

**HMO – House in Multiple Occupation**- A dwelling occupied by more than one or numerous households.

**Homeless Presentation** - People applying for housing to the locale authority under the Housing Act 2002

**Housing Association** – See RSL

**Housing Corporation** - The main government agency for supporting Registered Social landlords in England. It makes grants available to RSLs and supervises and regulates their work.

**Housing Register** - The Council's register of households who have applied for housing.

**Housing Strategy** - A Housing Strategy is an over-arching document that reviews housing-related issues in a local authority's area, sets out its housing objectives, establishes priorities for action both by the local authority and by other service providers and stakeholders, and sets out a clear Action Plan in agreement with the council's local partners.

**Insecure Accommodation** – Accommodation that is insecure includes; tenants or owner occupiers likely to be evicted (lawfully or unlawfully); person with no legal rights or permission to remain such as squatters or young people asked to leave the family home; persons with only a short term permission to stay, such as those moving around friends' and relatives' houses with no stable base.

**LSP** - Local Strategic Partnership, a single body comprising representatives from public, private and voluntary sectors for the planning of local services.

**PCT – Primary Care Trust** – NHS bodies with responsibility for delivering better health care and health improvements in a local area.

**Private Sector leasing** – An arrangement through which a local authority or a housing association leases accommodation from the owner of a private property, guarantees the rent for the period of the lease and sublets the accommodation to a family in need. In East Herts the leasing is undertaken by Frays Housing Association.

**RSL** - Registered Social Landlord or housing association - A not for profit social housing organisation that is registered with the Housing Corporation. They are organizations that provide housing for rent and low cost home ownership. The commonest form of registered social landlord in England is a housing association.

**Sanctuary Scheme:** A multi-agency approach to enable those at risk of domestic violence the option to remain safely at home.

**Stock Transfer** - The transfer of a Local Authority's entire Housing Stock to one or more RSLs.

**Supporting People** - The Supporting People programme provides housing related support services. In East Herts it is administered and managed by Hertfordshire County Council.

**Tenure** – There are four tenure categories. These are:

1. Owner occupied which includes accommodation that is owner out right or brought with a mortgage
2. Rented privately which is all non-owner occupied property other than that rented from local authorities and plus that rented from private or public organisations by virtue of employment.
3. Rented from Registered Social Landlords
4. Rented from Local Authorities

**Have your say**

If you have any views on the East Herts Council Homeless and Homeless Prevention Strategy please let us know via email or by using the postal address shown below.

1. [housingoptions@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:housingoptions@eastherts.gov.uk) OR

2. Please use the space below and return to the following address:

Strategic Housing Services  
East Herts Council  
Wallfields  
Pegs Lane  
Hertford  
Herts  
SG13 8EQ

Name: (Optional)

Address: (Optional)

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WITH THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM.**