

Housing Strategy

Action Plan 2012-2015

Action Plan 2012-15

1. Introduction

This high level strategy has highlighted a number of the key challenges and housing issues in East Herts. Our three year action plan has been developed around the Strategic Objectives of:

- Maximise the delivery of new affordable homes, whilst ensuring the best use of existing housing
- Meeting the needs of a growing elderly population
- Meeting the needs of vulnerable people and stronger communities

The three Strategic objectives and subsequent priorities and actions, reflect the challenges highlighted in the Housing Strategy.

2. Detailed Action Plans

The actions contained in the Housing Strategy Action Plan are relatively high level. Detailed action plans around specific issues such as homelessness and empty properties can be found in the relevant sub strategies and work plans.

3. Monitoring and communications

The Strategy Action Plan will be updated every six months by officers to monitor progress and monitored by the Council's Community Scrutiny Committee by an annual report. We recognise that it is important to report on progress with East Herts' residents and partners. Progress on the Housing Strategy will be made available to all residents and partners through the strategic housing section of the council's website and the Council's Housing Forum.

June 2012

| Priorities | Outputs and Targets | Lead | Target date | Key Partners |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Strategic Objective 1: – Maximise the delivery of new affordable homes, whilst ensuring the best use of existing housing | | | | |
| 1. Optimise opportunities for increasing new affordable housing supply, particularly family sized homes and the range of affordable housing options through effective partnership working | <p>Investigate and undertake, if considered necessary, work to refresh the SHMA.</p> <p>- Aim to deliver up to 40% affordable housing on eligible housing sites</p> <p>Achieve the right mix, tenure and proportion of affordable housing based on need.</p> <p>Maximise funding opportunities for the delivery of new affordable housing</p> <p>Promote and assist our register provider partners to release larger homes that are under occupied</p> | <p>East Herts Housing Services and Planning Policy</p> <p>East Herts Housing Service and Planning</p> <p>East Herts Housing Service and Planning</p> <p>Housing Service</p> <p>Housing Service and Registered Providers</p> | <p>Annual monitoring</p> <p>Annual monitoring</p> <p>Annual monitoring</p> <p>Annual monitoring</p> | <p>Broxbourne Borough Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Epping Forest District Council, Harlow District Council, Uttlesford District Council</p> <p>East Herts Housing Service, Planning, Developers and Registered Providers</p> <p>East Herts Housing Service, Planning, Developers and Registered Providers</p> <p>Housing Service</p> <p>Housing Service and Registered Providers</p> |
| 2. Monitor the impact of the Council's Local Plan Policies on the delivery of new affordable housing and take action as appropriate | - Relevant Core Indicators and key information monitored in the East Herts Annual Monitoring Report, with appropriate action guided by Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment | East Herts Planning Policy | Annual monitoring | Herts County Council, East Herts Housing Services and Planning Policy |

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| 3. Generate new affordable housing planning policies for inclusion within the East Herts District Plan to replace current policies in the Local Plan. | ~ Affordable housing requirement ~ Affordable housing site size thresholds ~ Affordable housing tenure split ~ Affordable housing dwelling sizes | Planning Policy Planning Policy Planning Policy Planning Policy | | East Herts Housing services and Planning Policy |
| 4. Work with partners to meet identified rural affordable housing needs | Appropriate rural housing developed | Housing Service | Annual monitoring | Housing Service, Parish Council's and Registered Providers |
| 5. Run a Housing Forum at least 3 times a year and consult on proposed housing reforms | Consult, inform and let influence our external stakeholders on the Council's future housing policies. | Housing Service | Annual monitoring | Housing Service and external housing stakeholders |
| 6. Launch the East Herts Council backed Local Authority Mortgage indemnity Scheme (LAMS). | First time buyers are more likely to be able to access private housing. Monitor the take-up of the scheme. | Housing Service | Quarterly Monitoring | Housing Service, residents and mortgage lender |
| 7. Review and update Affordable Warmth Strategy and action plan 2007-12, to ensure strategy is fit for purpose for Green Deal and HECA. | Enable and encourage the provision of affordable warmth in private sector homes through advice, grants, discounted measures and partnership initiatives | Private Sector Housing | 2013-14 | Private sector Housing , residents and landlords |
| 8. Implement the actions in the Empty Homes Strategy | Bring Private sector empty homes back into use through encouragement and using appropriate legislation. | Private Sector Housing | Annual monitoring | Private sector Housing, home owners. |
| 9. Regulate private rented sector housing via advice, inspection, enforcement and House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing | Ensure HMO accommodation is suitable and of a good standard | Private Sector Housing | Annual monitoring | Private Sector Housing, Landlords |

| Priorities | Outputs and targets | Lead | Target date | Key Partners |
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| Strategic Objective 2: Meeting the needs of a growing elderly population | | | | |
| 10. Continue to work with our Registered Providers to either regenerate their existing older persons housing, or re-commission for alternative client group, or re-develop. | Monitor number of units of older persons accommodation made fit for purpose or re-developed. | Registered Providers | Annual monitoring | Housing Service and Registered Providers |
| 11. To work with the County Council and Registered Providers to identify future opportunities within the district for flexi-care. | New flexicare accommodation provided in appropriate locations. | County Council and Registered Providers | Annual monitoring | County Council, Housing Service and Registered Providers |
| 12. To introduce and monitor a fixed price tendering scheme for certain adaptation works through Papworth Trust Home Solutions. | Aim for swifter joint process with Home Improvement Agency for completion of level access shower works through Disabled Facilities Grant. | Private Sector Housing | Annual monitoring | Private Sector Housing |
| 13. Continue with the Ageing Well Initiative and monitor the outcomes | | East Herts Council | Annual monitoring | |

| Priorities | Outputs and targets | Lead | Target date | Key Partners |
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| Strategic Objective 3: Meeting the needs of vulnerable people and stronger communities | | | | |
| 14. Promote community cohesion and support the local economy by providing housing that is affordable for local people. | ~ Monitor the mix of market and affordable housing in terms of type and tenure in sustainable locations | Planning policy and Housing service | Annual Monitoring | Planning Policy, Housing, Developers and Registered Providers |
| 15. Ensure that housing policies and practices promote equalities and diversity | - Carry out Equality Impact Assessments on: revised Housing register and Allocations policy and Housing Strategy Through the District Plan, seek to deliver Gypsy & Traveller pitches and Travelling Showperson plots. | Housing Service Planning policy | Apr-13 | Housing Service Planning Policy |
| 16. Continue to prevent homelessness through the provision of good quality advice and developing new solutions to housing need | Develop and publish Homeless and Homeless Prevention Strategy. | Housing Service | Sep-13 | Housing Service |
| 17. Work with supported accommodation Providers to provide and make effective use of supported accommodation and appropriate access to move on accommodation in the district | Monitor existing and new supply of supported accommodation. Develop new and monitoring existing re-housing protocol with supported accommodation Providers. | Housing Service | Annual Monitoring | Housing Service, Registered Providers and Herts County Council |
| 18. Monitor effect of changes introduced in April 2012 in the way Herts County Council deal with Disabled Facilities Grants, and liaise as appropriate to ensure effective joint service. | Monitor trends in number of grants approved | Private Sector Housing | Annual Monitoring | Private Sector Housing |

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| 19. Review the council's allocations policy in response to legislation changes. | Develop and publish a revised Housing Register and allocations Policy for the Council. | Housing Service | Mar-13 | Housing Service, range of housing stakeholders including Registered Providers |
| 20. Produce a Tenancy Strategy for the District | Develop and publish a Tenancy Strategy for East Herts | Housing Service | Apr-13 | Housing Service, range of housing stakeholders including Registered Providers |
| 21. Maximise the opportunities to enhance and develop services to vulnerable residents of East Herts | - Ensure adequate representation by East Herts Council at the County Council's various working groups for vulnerable residents and maintain regular liaison with providers of supported accommodation. | Housing Service | Annual Monitoring | Housing Service, Herts County Council and Registered Providers |
| 22. Review future Home Improvement Agency Services and funding levels in conjunction with the HIA in the light of changing County Council services and reduced core funding. | Seek to identify opportunities for continued support for East Herts residents with reduced core funding | Private Sector Housing | | Private Sector Housing, Papworth, Herts County Council |
| 23. Provide guidance and advice to residents, tenants and landlords on their rights and responsibilities through a variety of media | - Review and expand information on Council's website, provide articles for the Council's resident magazine, press releases. | Housing Service, Private Sector Housing | Annual Monitoring | Housing Service, Private Sector Housing |