

Housing Strategy 2005 to 2010



INSIDE FRONT COVER

If you would like additional copies of this strategy or want it in an alternative form or language, please contact:

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This publication describes Worthing's housing and Worthing Borough Council's plans for housing for 2004/5 to 2008/9. It can be made available in large print, on tape and in different languages. Please phone the Social Housing Enabling Officer on 01903 221131 for further details.

Ce document vous informe des projets de logement de la municipalité de Worthing dans les cinq prochaines années, de 2005 à 2010. Si vous souhaitez en obtenir une traduction, écrivez en votre langue aux services du logement à l'adresse suivante : Housing Services, Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing BN11 1HH.

We welcome any comments on this strategy. These should be directed to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Worthing Borough Council's Housing Strategy 2005 to 2009 sets out the Council's plans for housing in Worthing over the next few years. It is based on a thorough assessment of housing needs in the town, notably through the Housing Needs Survey 2004, and the House Condition Survey 2004.

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY 2004 KEY FINDINGS

89% of households in Worthing live in accommodation that meets their needs

Flats and terraced houses in Worthing cost £116,000 to £157,000. Affordability is a major issue due to the relationship between local incomes and house prices, particularly for people forming a household for the first time

68% of newly forming households cannot afford to rent in the private market

89% of newly forming households cannot afford to buy their own home

Social housing in Worthing provides only 9.4% of all dwellings, less than half the national average

The population of retired people will increase from 23% currently to 26% by 2021

A summary of the Housing Needs Survey is available from the Council at Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing.

HOUSE CONDITION SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

The estimated total number of non-Decent homes in the private sector in Worthing is 18,288 of which 13,556 are owners occupied and 4,732 are rented. These represent 43.74% of all private sector stock in Worthing, much higher than the national figure of 32%

Of those homes failing the standard, 1,796 (9.82% of all non-Decent homes) fail on unfitness, 4,515 (24.69%) on serious disrepair, 1,577 (8.62%) on amenity provision and 15,132 (82.74%) on thermal comfort. Some 4,232 fail to meet the standard under more than one of these criteria.

68.04% of private rented dwellings are non-Decent compared with 38.89% of owner occupied dwellings

It is estimated that 4,335 vulnerable households are living in non-Decent homes in the private sector in Worthing, 54.84% of all vulnerable households

26.37% of vulnerable households are living in non-Decent private rented homes compared with 7.18% in owner occupied non-Decent homes

We also carried out surveys of local employers about any recruitment or retention difficulties they face due to a lack of affordable housing, and made detailed assessments of the housing needs of vulnerable people with support needs. Summaries of our findings are contained in the full Housing Strategy.

OUR PRIORITIES

Through consultation with residents and stakeholders we have agreed a number of priorities to address local housing needs over this period. These are :

Ensuring a sustainable housing market

The development of new housing is critical to meeting housing needs. Whilst 95% of housing needs can be met through the existing stock, the remaining 5% rely on a supply of new properties to rent or buy. We are committed to balancing the need for more housing with environmental concerns and the need to ensure that development is sustainable in the longer term, with adequate infrastructure and a balanced mix of different types and tenures of housing.

Meeting the need for affordable housing

Within this overall need to maintain an adequate supply of housing there is a clear need to develop more affordable housing options, particularly for those living in unsuitable housing and unable to move because of the costs, and for newly forming households.

Tackling homelessness

As a local authority we have a duty to assess the needs of homeless people and find housing for those with priority needs who have become homeless through no fault of their own. In most cases this will involve a period in temporary housing. We are committed to reducing the use of temporary housing and costs to the tax payer of providing this. This includes a commitment to preventing homelessness wherever possible.

Renewal and regeneration

Worthing has significant areas of older housing and a high level of need for housing renewal, particularly in private rented stock. We are also concerned to tackle areas which need regeneration, such as Teville Gate.

Meeting the needs of older people

Worthing has a higher than average proportion of elderly residents, many of whom have significant housing and support needs. Our Strategy focuses on their specific needs.

Addressing housing support needs

There are also a number of people who need support to stay in their own housing. Some people will have spent most of their lives in their parents' home or in residential institutions. We will focus particular attention on promoting increased independence for these and other people with support needs over the next few years.

Supporting the housing needs of key workers

A prosperous economy relies on employers' ability to recruit the staff they need. Many are telling us that they have difficulties recruiting staff because of high housing costs in this area. We need to identify ways of assisting those workers who we rely on to meet their housing needs.

Meeting Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Needs

Nationally there is significant evidence that black and minority ethnic households live in poorer housing than others. Our Equalities Scheme commits us to ensuring fair access to services for all residents so we need to ensure that black and minority ethnic households in Worthing have the same choices and opportunities as others.

Creating safe neighbourhoods where people want to live

Community safety is a priority for all residents. People's housing choices are closely linked with their view of particular neighbourhoods, and in particular their perception of crime and anti-social behaviour in different areas. We are committed to building safe neighbourhoods throughout the Borough.

WHAT ACTION ARE WE GOING TO TAKE?

The key actions we propose taking to meet these priorities are:

- West Durrington – the development of over 800 new houses is due to start in 2005. We will ensure that this development is supported by educational, health, leisure and community facilities
- We aim to deliver 70 new affordable rented and 70 low cost home ownership units each year, throughout the life of this Strategy, 700 over 5 years
- We will reduce the number of households forced to live in temporary accommodation and reduce the length of time anyone has to stay in temporary accommodation by 10% over the life of this strategy
- We will support the development of a recovery project for homeless people with substance misuse problems
- We will begin work on Teville Gate in 2005 and ensure a mixed use of this important site with new facilities for local residents and visitors to the town
- We will bring 200 unfit properties up to a reasonable standard as well as 125 properties in substantial disrepair
- We will improve standards in Houses in Multiple Occupation
- We will improve energy efficiency by 2% each year, and allocate 450 fuel poverty grants to vulnerable people in need
- we will develop a wider range of housing support services to older people, including an Extra Care scheme
- we will increase the range of housing options for people with learning difficulties, invest in adaptations, increase the number of fully accessible properties, and develop an Adapted Housing Register to match people to properties
- we will develop a support service for insecurely housed young people and extend services to families escaping domestic violence. We will also extend floating and other support services to a wider range of people
- we will review our Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy in 2005 and set new targets
- we will develop 60 units of shared housing for hospital staff, and assist key workers through low cost home ownership options
- we will improve safety and security for older residents and for those living in Houses in Multiple Occupation
- we continue working with our partners to reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES, PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

We rely heavily on the efforts and contributions of a wide range of developers, service providers and organisations with funding to commission services. We have a number of established partnerships with Registered Social Landlords, Social & Caring Services, West Sussex Supporting People, health authorities and trusts, voluntary sector agencies, and private developers, landlords, and agents.

Some examples of current partnerships

- Development of new affordable housing is carried out through the new Adur, Arun and Worthing Development Partnership
- Homelessness work is directed through Worthing's Homelessness Forum Private sector issues are raised through the Southern Private Landlords Forum

RESOURCES

Success in meeting our targets depends on the careful investment of resources. The Housing Strategy sets out the current resources and options for inward investment to support our plans. Most significantly, we will invest our income from the clawback of receipts from the sale of houses under Right to Buy in housing capital projects. We will also negotiate contributions from private developers of housing schemes to support investment in affordable housing.

We will continue to support bids for funding from external sources and look at how we can share resources with neighbouring authorities to increase the housing choices of local residents.

HOW WILL WE UPDATE RESIDENTS ON OUR PROGRESS

We will publish an annual update of this Housing Strategy covering our progress and major changes during the year.

We will report on targets to Council Members through quarterly reports to their meetings. We will also report on progress through the Council's website.

For a full copy of the Housing Strategy, please contact Housing Services at Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing BN11 1HH, or by telephoning the Council on 10903 239999. The Strategy is also available on our website at www.worthing.gov.uk.

Introduction by Cabinet Member for Community Development and Housing

"I am delighted to present our Housing Strategy for the five year period from 2004 to 2009. We hope you will find this informative and give us your views. Local residents and stakeholders play a vital role in the development of our thinking and achievement of our targets, and we value all contributions.

During the spring we carried out a Housing Needs Survey and a House Condition Survey, both of which provided the information underpinning our strategy and plans. We are very grateful to all those residents who helped by completing our questionnaires and allowing us into their homes. The key findings of these Surveys are presented here and the plans and actions set out in this Strategy have been developed to address the needs identified.

The strategy has also grown out of wide-ranging and detailed discussions with many partners from statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations, the private sector and local residents. Discussions have covered long-term visions for housing within the broader economic and environmental development of Worthing, as well as detailed assessments of short, medium and long-term needs.

The Council through this Strategy is adopting a multi-faceted pro-active approach to addressing the long-term underlying issues relating to residents' housing needs. Throughout the five-year period regular monitoring, implementation and assessment of this Strategy will take place. Crucial to this process is continued consultation with the many different agencies involved and the residents of Worthing.

Worthing is a great place to live and our aim is that all residents can have a decent home. As new residential developments come to the town we would like to see a greater choice of types of housing to meet the needs of all who live here.

I fully endorse this strategy and congratulate the Officers of Worthing Borough Council from Environmental Health, Housing and Financial Services, for their commitment in meeting the housing needs of the residents of Worthing.

Cllr. Mrs Ann Barlow – Cabinet Member for Community Development and Housing



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

This Housing Strategy sets out the Council's intentions and plans for addressing local housing needs over the next five years from 2005 to 2010. It is based on detailed analyses of the housing needs of people living and working in Worthing and on the quality of the housing stock. The challenges Worthing faces reflect many of the issues experienced nationally, and throughout the South East in particular. The plans set out in this strategy have been developed with an eye to national guidance and to regional priorities.

THE NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

A number of key documents set out the context in which housing services need to be delivered over the next few years.

Sustainable Communities : Building for the Future

This wide-ranging plan sets out the government's agenda for the next 10 to 15 years. The plan established Regional Housing Boards and devolved decisions on the allocation of funding, allowing for priorities to be set and implemented at regional level. It also calls for a 'step change' in delivery of new affordable housing, addressing the projected shortfall in development compared with the projected increase in housing need.

The central goals of the plan are to:

- Deliver more affordable homes more quickly – 200,000 over the next 10-15 years
- Redistribute resources to those areas with the highest level of need
- Enhance 'liveability' – places where people want to live
- Increase the density of building
- Deliver buildings that meet different needs over time
- Produce a well-integrated mix of homes of different types and tenures
- Bring homes in all sectors up to the 'decent homes' standard

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002

This Order allows for the greater use of loans as well as grants to assist owners to improve their properties and gives more flexibility to help owners move out of worn out or obsolete housing.

Local Government Act 2003

The Local Government Act 2003 has enabled Local Authorities to determine their own capital investment programmes for the delivery of quality public services. Under this Act the Council may borrow money but is required to consider the affordability of its capital investment during all the years in which it will have a financial impact on the Authority, e.g. implications for Council Tax and Council housing rents. To ensure long-term affordability, decisions also have to be prudent and in the long term repayments must be sustainable.

The Housing Act 2004

The Housing Act 2004

- establishes a new health and safety rating system for inspecting private sector housing
- introduces mandatory licensing of larger houses in multiple occupation
- gives local authorities new powers to selectively license private landlords
- introduces new overcrowding orders and Management Orders for empty houses
- introduces home information packs to make home buying and selling easier

- modernises the Right to Buy scheme to tackle profiteering
- increases competition for Housing Corporation grant by allowing grants to be paid to organisations other than Registered Social Landlords – notably private developers

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 abolishes structure plans, replacing them with Regional Spatial Strategies which will set out specific housing allocations to each district. The Act also abolishes Local Plans and introduces Local Development Frameworks, made up of several Local Development Documents, including a Core Strategy. There is also a requirement to produce a Statement of Community Involvement. Local authorities must adopt the new documents by June 2007. The Act also introduces some changes to compulsory purchase procedures to make the system quicker, fairer and simpler, and enable authorities to assemble land more quickly for regeneration, new major infrastructure projects and other schemes aimed towards implementing the Sustainable Communities initiative.

Details of these Acts can be found on the HMSO website at www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2004.htm

THE REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

There is increasing recognition that local authorities need to take a broader view of housing needs and supply beyond their immediate boundaries and link into regional and sub-regional groupings tackling issues on a larger scale. The key bodies in the South East are:

The South East Regional Assembly (SEERA)

This is the representative voice of the South East, made up of nominees from local authorities, voluntary organisations and community groups. Its responsibilities include the development of planning and transport guidance for the region, both of critical importance to the planning of new housing. It also oversees the work of the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) which Worthing links into through the West Sussex Coastal Area Investment Framework.

The South East Regional Housing Board

The Sustainable Communities plan introduced a new regional approach to housing establishing Regional Housing Boards to develop their own strategies and address housing needs in their region. There is a possibility that these will be merged with the Regional Planning Boards to allow for cohesive decision-making to promote affordable housing in the region. A Regional Housing Forum passes on the views of local authorities throughout the region and includes representation from West Sussex.

The Regional Housing Boards are responsible for developing strategic priorities and targets, and allocating funding to meet these. As well as participating individually in consultation on the development of the Regional Housing Strategy, we work with other local authorities in West Sussex to identify priorities in this part of the region. Worthing Borough Council is also working with neighbouring authorities to assess housing need more widely and analyse the similarities and differences in our housing markets.

The Regional Priorities are to increase the supply of housing; affordable housing, including housing for key workers; regeneration and neighbourhood renewal; homelessness and

supported housing; and quality and sustainability. All of these priorities are covered by our own priorities, set out on page 12.

Details of the Interim South East Regional Housing Strategy and consultation on the forthcoming strategy can be found at www.go-se.gov.uk

THE LOCAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Worthing's Local Strategic Partnership – Worthing Together – has produced a Community Strategy for Worthing. This provides an overall framework for a range of more specific local policies and strategies, including this Housing Strategy.

Worthing's Community Strategy - The Town We Want

This Strategy, called 'The Town We Want', was developed in consultation with local residents both individually and through their community forum meetings, and with the many stakeholders represented through several sub-groups within the Local Strategic Partnership. It was published in May 2004. The Strategy recognises the importance of housing to people living and working in the town. Our vision is that:

"Every resident will have access to the housing, health, care and support they need to be able to live life to the full, independently and integrated into the community.

The gap between the most deprived wards and the most advantaged will have been reduced. There will be a wide range of affordable housing options for people whether they are low-paid, dependent on pensions, benefits or other financial support, or earning average incomes or above."

Worthing Borough Council's Corporate Plan

Worthing Borough Council's draft Corporate Plan aligns the Council's high level objectives with the priorities set out in the Community Strategy and incorporates Members' vision for the town. The draft Plan sets out the Council's values and aspirations which include a commitment to:

- *Ensure a sufficient supply of affordable and quality housing*
- *Help deliver the right quantity of high quality housing identified in the Housing Strategy and not accommodate excessive levels of house-building in Worthing*
- *Encourage increased home-ownership, by enabling the provision of more low cost and shared ownership housing, at the highest appropriate density*

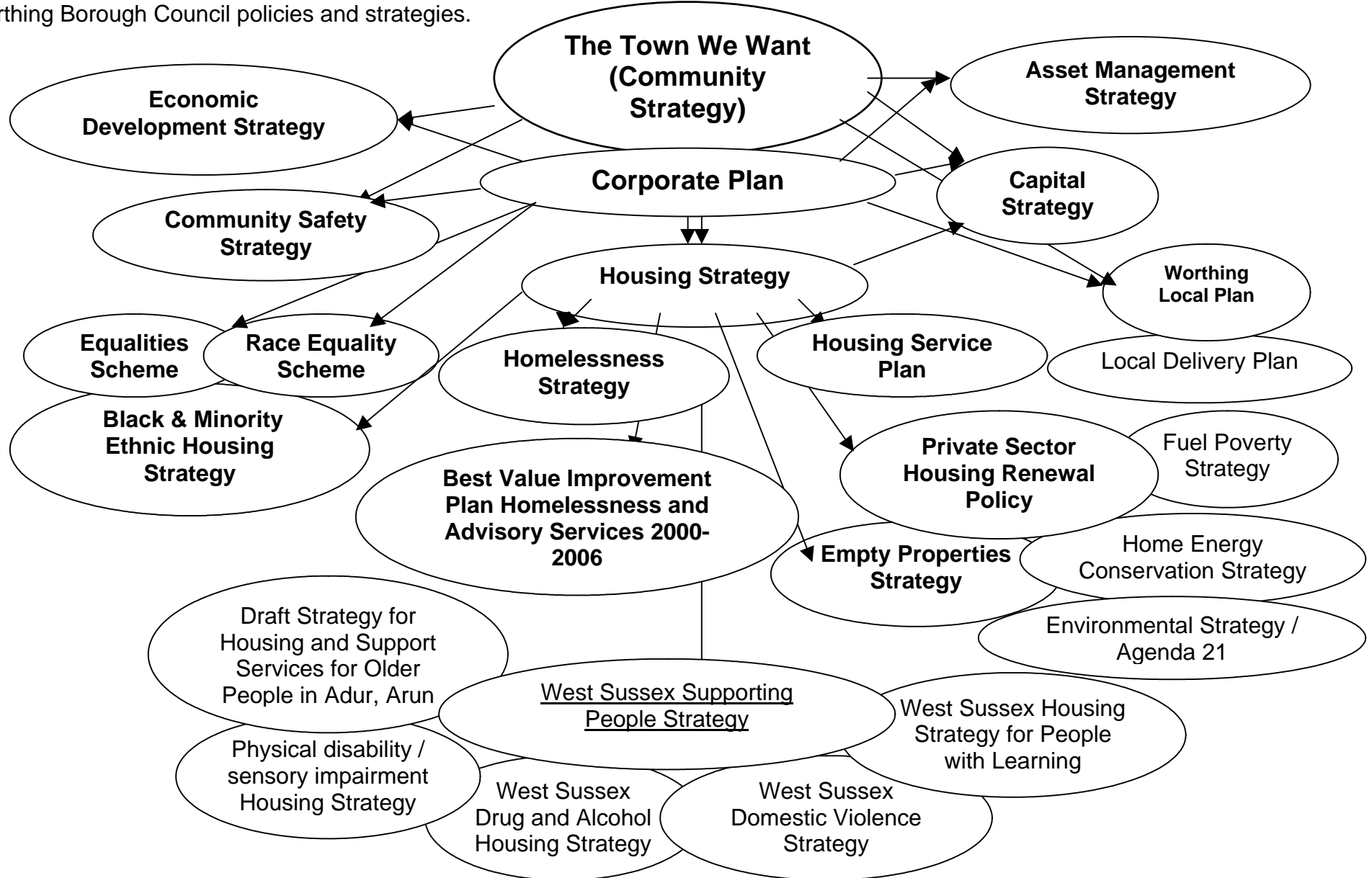
The outcome which the Council is committed achieving is thus to

- *Improve the delivery of housing generally in the Borough, including the provision of high quality, affordable and key worker housing*

The Council is concerned to support redevelopment of Worthing's Town Centre and Seafront, within the framework of the proposed Master Plan for future development. Investment in business and economic regeneration will underpin other developments including housing and community development, and housing development will in turn contribute to this regeneration.

Housing and related strategies

The diagram below shows how the Housing Strategy sits within the framework of the Community Strategy and the Council's draft Corporate Plan alongside a number of closely related Worthing and West Sussex strategies which govern our work. Full copies of these are available through Worthing Housing Services at Portland House, Richmond Road, Worthing. Those in bold are adopted Worthing Borough Council policies and strategies.



CROSS-BOUNDARY WORKING

There is increasing recognition nationally and regionally of the value and importance of working across local authority boundaries. Worthing Borough Council is leading the way in this, working on a possible merger with Adur District Council. We are currently assessing the viability of this and will be consulting with residents in both areas over the next few years.

In addition to its formal links with regional bodies, the Council is an active participant in a number of regional, sub-regional and countywide partnerships. We are members of the South East Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Authorities Group for Local Authorities which have sold their stock and of the Sussex Empty Homes Forum. We also attend meetings of the Sussex Private Landlords Association. Some of our key partnerships are described below.

West Sussex Planning and Affordable Housing Forum

This forum, set up in 2003, brings together Planning and Housing Officers from local authorities across the county, representatives from the Government Office of the South East, the Housing Corporation, Registered Social Landlords, and the National Federation of Housing. In 2004 the Forum has considered targets for the delivery of affordable housing and key worker housing, and the development of planning policies to promote the delivery of affordable housing.

Adur, Arun and Worthing Development Partnership

In addition to the formal structures and long-standing partnership and forum meetings we contribute to, Worthing's officers meet with colleagues in neighbouring authorities Sussex to share ideas, resources and practice. Officers from Adur, Arun and Worthing are currently developing a sub-regional Partnership Agreement with selected Registered Social Landlords to oversee development across the three local authority areas.

Adur, Arun and Worthing Interagency Housing Group

This group brings together officers from housing teams and senior managers from Social & Caring Services and the Teaching Primary Care Trust. Additional housing, health and social care staff are invited according to the issues under discussion. Since the group first started meeting in 2003 it has produced a shared Older People's Housing Strategy and established a Housing Needs Panel looking at the housing needs of people with learning difficulties.

West Sussex Supporting People

The Supporting People allocations for housing-related support schemes in and around Worthing are managed through a countywide process. The Supporting People team work closely with Lead Officers in each of the local authorities. In Worthing a local stakeholder group meets monthly to share information on supported housing issues within the Borough to consider specific issues, such as the outcome of reviews, or the analysis of need and development of strategy. The Adur, Arun and Worthing Supported Housing Forum was launched in February 2004 bringing together all stakeholders and providers of supported housing to look at the operation of the Supporting People programme and influence the way this develops.

Adur and Worthing Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Management Forum

In 2003 we established the Adur and Worthing RSL Management Forum recognising the work of many RSLs in both local authority areas. We are currently developing this as a forum for evaluating RSL performance in key areas and sharing best practice, as well as debating issues of common concern such as homelessness prevention, mediation services and anti-social behaviour.

HOUSING NEEDS IN WORTHING

Our main source of information about housing needs in Worthing is our Housing Needs Survey. We carried out a Survey in 2004 and found that there were 2,108 existing households living in inadequate housing in the Borough whose needs could only be met by moving. Of these 420 are estimated to require affordable housing. In addition there were 169 households in temporary accommodation in Worthing who need re-housing. There are therefore a total of 589 households already in affordable housing need. 118 units are needed each year to deal with this backlog of housing need.

In addition the Survey found 2,096 concealed households living within the Borough. These are households currently forced to live within another household because they are unable to afford their own housing. The majority are young adults living with parents. It is estimated that 401 of these will need re-housing each year. 265 of these concealed households each year will need affordable housing. Whilst a majority of these new households said that they would prefer to own their own housing, 89% were unable to afford to buy their own housing and 66% were unable to afford to rent on the private market.

In addition, 295 existing households fall into priority need each year.

To summarise, there are currently 705 households needing affordable housing each year.

Backlog of housing need	118
Concealed households	265
Existing households falling into housing need	322
TOTAL ANNUAL NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING	705

The current supply of housing through re-lets of existing affordable properties is 291 each year.

There is an annual shortfall of 414 affordable housing units to meet existing needs.

In addition to the existing level of need, we need to bear in mind the likely growth in the number of households forming. Current projections predict increases in the population of Worthing of approximately 0.1% each year. Household formation is forecast to rise at over 3 times this level because of the large increase in single person households, elderly people living longer, high levels of separation and divorce, and an increase in the number of young people forming single person households. The estimated growth in the number of households over the 5 year period covered by this strategy is 825. Of these we estimate that 66%, or 544 households, will need affordable housing.

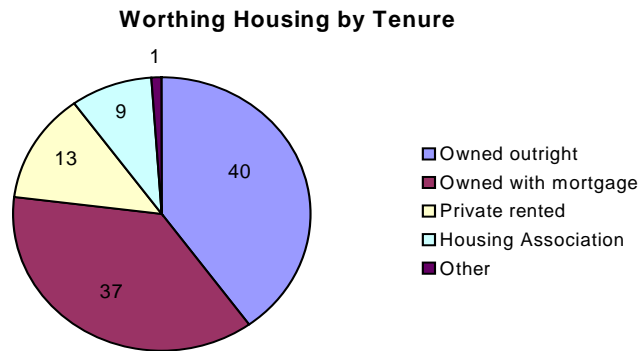
We will carry out our next Housing Needs Survey in 2008. Our Housing Register allows us to monitor changes in the level of housing needs in the meantime. At the moment this Register gives us imperfect information, as some of those on our Register may also be included on Housing Association Registers. We are working towards introducing a Common Register shared by the Council and Housing Associations in the area to improve our understanding of current levels of need. This Common Register will also provide a

more streamlined service to people needing housing, reduce administrative costs and lay the groundwork for a Choice Based Lettings scheme in the future. The Housing Needs Survey also analysed the needs of concealed households. Not surprisingly the majority needed one or two-bed properties, although well over half (59%) would prefer a two-bed property and 22% a three-bed property.

Table 1	Size	Need %
	One bed	54.0
	Two bed	43.1
	Three bed	2.9

HOUSING SUPPLY

As the chart below shows, the percentage of social rented housing in Worthing is very low, the second lowest in West Sussex, and less than half the national average. The private rented sector is also relatively small. This creates significant problems for Worthing residents in housing need. 95% of needs are met through the flow of existing housing stock and, with such a small rented sector, vacancies in rented housing, either private or social sector, are very restricted.



There is also a significant mismatch between supply and demand in terms of the size of properties needed. One and two bedroom units represent only 47% of Worthing’s current housing stock at present. An analysis of supply and demand shows that there will be a shortfall of 3,010 affordable units by 2009. Of these there will be an estimated shortfall of 2,129 one-bed properties and 773 2-bed properties. This is in addition to a predicted shortfall of 239 one and two-bed properties in the private sector.

LOCAL HOUSING COSTS

Table 2 below shows the cheapest prices (otherwise known as the access level prices) for properties in Worthing found at the time the Housing Needs Survey was carried out in April 2004 and the salary level required to secure a mortgage on these. These are for the very cheapest flats and houses and are not typical of the majority of properties on the market and that prices increased by an average 4.75% in the last year.

Table 2	Property type	Access price	Access salary required
	1-bed	£81,250	£25,700
	2-bed	£94,950	£30,100

Table 3 shows the average range of private sector rents and access level rents and salaries for different sized properties based on the cheapest on the market at the time of the survey:

Property type	Average rent	Access salary required
1-Bed	£475-500	£18,240
2-Bed	£575-620	£22,800
3-Bed	£685-725	£27,400

In summary:

- a household income of £18,240 is required to be able to access private rented housing
- an income of £25,700 is needed to access the cheapest one-bedroom property for sale

**This needs to be looked at in comparison with typical incomes in Worthing:
46.2% of households in Worthing are estimated to have less than £20,000 annual income**

56.5% are estimated to have less than £25,000

66.7% are estimated to have less then £30,000

THE NEEDS OF SPECIFIC RESIDENTS

The housing needs of Older People are covered on pages 31 to 33; people with support needs on pages 34 to 38; key workers on pages 39 to 40; and people from black and minority ethnic communities on pages 41 to 42.

The full Worthing Borough Housing Needs Survey 2004 and Worthing Supply /Demand Analysis 2004 are available for inspection at Portland House, Worthing Borough Council, Richmond Road, Worthing. A summary of the Housing Needs Survey is attached at Appendix C. Additional copies are available from Worthing Borough Council at Portland House.

THE CONDITION OF WORTHING'S HOUSING

In addition to the need for new affordable housing it is crucial that we consider the condition of Worthing's current stock of housing. We need to invest in this to ensure that people are living in housing of a decent quality, to extend the life of properties and reduce the need to replace housing quickly, and to minimise the need for wider regeneration.

Our 2004 House Condition Survey revealed some major problems with the existing housing stock including unfit and significantly defective housing. Much of this is due to the age of properties, and there is some evidence to suggest that recent investment has tackled some of the worst conditions effectively. However, problems remain in many properties and we face serious challenges addressing not only those with the worst problems, but also ensuring that properties occupied by vulnerable people are brought up to the Government's Decent Homes standard. Details of the survey results are included on pages 27 to 29.

PRIORITIES FOR HOUSING IN WORTHING

Based on the data we have collected from surveys in 2004, our priorities for 2005 – 2010 are:

- 1 Ensuring a sustainable housing market** - We need to address deficiencies in the housing market which have led to a lack of suitable housing for our new households, in particular an under-supply of smaller housing units.
- 2 Meeting the need for affordable housing** - A significant number of Worthing's households need assistance securing housing which they can afford, both rented and for sale.
- 3 Tackling homelessness** - The Council has a duty to assist homeless households and those threatened with homelessness. We need therefore to prioritise services to prevent homelessness and protect those most at risk, as well as providing temporary housing of a decent standard. We also need to ensure a sufficient supply of affordable rented housing to 'move on' eligible households from temporary to permanent housing.
- 4 Renewal and regeneration** - The vast majority of Worthing's housing needs are met through the existing stock. Our recent House Condition Survey highlights areas of significant concern, which we need to address. The state of repair of private rented housing is one area where we will consider increased intervention.
- 5 Meeting the needs of older people** - Older people face particular problems as they often have higher support needs but lower incomes, and may require specialised housing. With the projected increase in older households we need to ensure Worthing has enough housing to meet these needs.
- 6 Addressing housing support needs** - A number of people need support to live independently and avoid becoming homeless. With the move to greater independence and choice for disabled people, people with learning difficulties and others with support needs, we need to ensure we have suitable housing to meet these needs.
- 7 Supporting the housing needs of key workers** - A prosperous economy relies on employers' ability to recruit the staff they need. Many are telling us that they have difficulties recruiting staff because of high housing costs in this area. We need to identify ways of assisting those workers who we rely on to meet their housing needs.
- 8 Meeting Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Needs** - Nationally there is significant evidence that black and minority ethnic households live in poorer housing than others. Our Equalities Scheme commits us to ensuring fair access to services for all residents so we need to ensure that black and minority ethnic households in Worthing have the same choices and opportunities as others.
- 9 Creating safe neighbourhoods where people want to live** - Community safety is a priority for all residents. People's housing choices are closely linked with their view of particular neighbourhoods, and in particular their perception of crime and anti-social behaviour in different areas. We are committed to building safe neighbourhoods throughout the Borough.

Key priority for housing 1

ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE HOUSING MARKET

Worthing Borough's Housing Needs Survey 2004 demonstrated a clear need for more flats and smaller units to be built, primarily one and two-bedroom properties. In determining the mix of new building required in terms of size and type of housing, the Council needs to bear in mind the sustainability of neighbourhoods, and create balanced communities, taking account of the existing surrounding stock and current levels of supply and demand.

As far as the affordable sector is concerned current vacancy rates fall far short of demand. There are major shortfalls, particularly of one and two-bedroom properties for single people and couples, and for young families.

The role of planning

Worthing Borough Council recognises the key role played by planning in the provision of housing for the Borough, and, in 2003, brought its strategic housing and enabling functions together with planning policy in the Strategic Housing and Planning Team.

The Worthing Local Plan, in particular, addresses the housing needs of the community. Adopted in September 2003, this sets out a framework of policies to guide and encourage development in the Borough up to the year 2006. The Plan reflects the need to protect environmental resources, including the quality of the existing built environment, and to balance development coming forward from within the existing urban area as opposed to green-field sites on the edge of town. Policies are in place both to protect existing and create new quality residential areas.

The Local Plan places great emphasis on making the best use of land and resources, maximising the density being achieved on residential sites. The Local Plan seeks to ensure that the housing needs of the Borough's residents are met. As part of the future Local Development Framework, further work will be done on ensuring a mix of size of units within developments, whilst still maintaining the requirement for a high standard of design. An initial Local Development Scheme has been drafted and approved by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Tourism. This will deliver a Statement of Community Involvement, a Core Strategy and a Delivering Development Opportunities Document. It is the Delivering Development Opportunities Document that will address the overall housing supply issues, our broad approach to the delivery of affordable housing and new policies regarding the mix and density of development. There will be a specific Supplementary Document dealing with the delivery of affordable housing.

In looking at the longer term delivery of housing within the Borough we have agreed an Action Plan with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This looks at allocated sites and the likely yield from previously developed land as well as setting out the actions the Borough Council will take in ensuring an adequate supply of housing.

Sites for residential development

West Durrington is a major 'strategic' greenfield site which will provide upwards of 800 new houses over the next few years. On its own this represents 25% of the provision of new dwellings required under the Worthing Local Plan. We anticipate development beginning

during 2005/6. The site will include key amenities such as a community centre, a library, youth facilities, education provision, and a medical centre.

The remainder of new housing will be developed within the existing urban area and on previously developed land. Our Urban Housing Potential Study identified potential for 632 additional units on a number of key 'gateway', seafront and town centre sites expected to be developed in during the next five years. Most are likely to include some residential development alongside retail, leisure and business development. We want these sites to include a sustainable mix of uses and see housing as an important component of this. We identified 8 further sites with the potential for 15 or more units each. The study will be supplemented during the year with an analysis of sites coming forward for development of 5 or less units. To supplement the findings of the study, further work will also be undertaken in respect of sites currently allocated for non-residential use and existing employment areas, to assess the potential for bringing forward additional housing sites under the Local Development framework.

As part of the Housing Delivery Action Plan, we are examining all existing allocations of sites to ensure that development opportunities are maximised. A more robust approach to increasing densities is also a key part of the Action Plan, with revised policies incorporated within the Delivering Development Opportunities Document to establish zones where higher densities can be achieved.

We have also adopted a more proactive approach in dealing with landowners, to enable allocated sites to come forward within the adopted Local Plan period. In respect of the site allocations in the adopted Local Plan, to ensure that they are deliverable we have ensured that there is a regular dialogue with landowners to establish any obstacles to delivery. For example, the Council continues to stress the need for road improvements to be brought forward as a priority for development of the site in East Worthing south of the Upper Brighton Road, and maintains regular dialogue with the relevant owners and the Highway Authority (Local Plan Policy H5). The site allocated under Policy H6 has been allocated for residential use for a few years and has no infrastructure constraints. The Council has re-established contact with the landowners to keep up to date with the landowners intentions and any obstacles to delivery.

EMPTY PROPERTIES

Council Tax records indicate that there were 1,067 residential properties in Worthing left empty on 1st April 2004. This is an unacceptably high level of empty homes. 443 had been empty for more than 6 months. The Council has now appointed an Empty Properties Officer to tackle this problem. We have also established a corporate Empty Properties Working Group and a dedicated Empty Properties database, and have contacted the owners of all those which have been the subject of complaints to the Council.

In 2004 the Council published a new Empty Properties Strategy, setting an initial target of bringing 30 properties back into use in 2003/4, 50 in 2004/5 and 50 in 2005/6. These targets were designed to be more ambitious reflecting our commitment to tackling this problem. 36 properties were brought back into use in 2003/4 as a result of the Council's activities. However, many of these were on sites which were completely redeveloped, rather than individual properties in the private sector.

What will happen if we do not develop plans to balance the housing market?

- if key sites are not delivered at the suggested densities and unidentified sites do not consistently come forward, housing completions will be low
- if supply is reduced, house prices may increase further and people will be unable to find and afford the housing they need in Worthing
- if we do not secure the right mix of housing size and tenure, we will not be able to meet housing demand or ensure sustainable communities
- major employers rely on affordable housing to attract and keep employees. Maintaining a supply of affordable and low-cost housing is vital if we are to ensure the town’s continued prosperity.
- existing housing resources are wasted through properties left empty
- empty housing stock is at risk of falling into disrepair and vandalism and has a negative impact on the environment reducing the value of neighbouring properties

Options for balancing the housing market	Partners	Risks and opportunities
Deliver a minimum of 800 new homes at West Durrington	Site owners, developers and RSL partners	Depends on negotiations between developers, County Council and Worthing Borough Council on infrastructure and other contributions
Target delivery of 290 new homes per year as per the Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan	Private and RSL development partners	Identify opportunities for housing delivery through the Local Development Framework
Deliver 80 homes on Site H5	Private and RSL development partners	Depends on success securing the East Worthing Access Road
Bring forward additional housing within the urban area	Private and RSL development partners	Depends on additional sites coming forward and being secured for housing
Make more efficient use of existing buildings and land	Land and property owners Private and RSL development partners	Recruitment of Empty Properties Officer may help identify suitable opportunities. Maximising housing density where sites are suitable

Options considered

- New build or re-use of existing properties, such as empty properties – it was considered that in practice all options for increasing the supply are required to meet the level of need identified.
- Private Sector or social housing – again, both sectors are critical to the supply of suitable housing with significant flow between the two. There should be a mix of tenures wherever possible as well as mixing housing and other uses on larger sites where this is appropriate.
- Right sort of properties via planning – generally smaller properties are required, but there should be a limit on the number of one-bedroom properties developed as these meet only very limited needs. Households are able to meet their housing needs for longer in two-bedroom and three-bedroom properties as their requirements for space increase. Two and three-bedroom properties are therefore seen as a more sustainable option in the longer term.

Key action points

- 1 Analyse the local housing market, opportunities and resources in Adur, Arun and Worthing
- 2 Encourage development of smaller properties, taking account of sub-area needs
- 3 Ensure that Local Development Documents are delivered within the agreed timetable
- 4 Maximise the density of housing developments and exceed current level of 53 dwellings per hectare
- 5 Encourage high quality, environmentally friendly and sustainable development
- 6 Increase the number of empty properties brought back into use

Key priority for housing 2

MEETING THE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

An analysis of Worthing's housing needs and the need for affordable housing is set out on pages 9 to 11. Definitions of affordable housing vary, but broadly it is

“housing provided with a subsidy to enable the asking price or rent to be substantially lower than the prevailing market prices or rents in the locality”. (South East England Regional Assembly)

This includes:

- housing for rent generally provided by a Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord, but also including discounted market rent housing
- shared ownership provided through a loan to the purchaser
- shared equity where some of the equity is retained by the developing or managing organisation

An analysis of supply and demand for affordable housing in Worthing showed that 96% of the total shortfall of affordable housing related to one and two-bedroom properties, with only small shortfalls of three and four-bedroom properties. Overall there was a predicted shortfall over the 5 years from 2004 to 2009 of 2,070 affordable housing units in Worthing.

With a private rented sector of only just over 11% of all homes in the Borough, the lack of affordable housing to buy is a huge problem for many living or working in Worthing. Some 20% of households have incomes which would allow them to benefit from low-cost market housing options but would otherwise be unable to buy their housing.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

What is affordable?

Our assessment of the numbers of households likely to need or benefit from different types of affordable housing is based on the incomes required to afford these housing options.

- The household income required to buy a property is calculated on the basis of securing a mortgage on 95% of the purchase price, based on 3 times gross household income. In Worthing, the minimum household income currently required to buy a one-bedroom flat is £25,700 and for a two-bedroom flat £30,100.
- The household income required to rent a property at current rents is £18,240 for a one-bedroom flat, and £22,800 for a two-bedroom flat.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing

The most critical factor affecting affordability of housing which the Council is able to influence is the supply of new affordable units. The Local Plan currently requires the provision of 30% social housing on sites of 25 dwellings or above. The contribution made by developers to affordable housing is one form of subsidy protected through legal agreement to ensure that the affordability of that housing is retained.

Whilst our current policies have been relatively successful over the past 10 years, with an average of 33% of all completed houses being affordable, it is acknowledged that the Local Plan framework needs to take on a more proactive role in the provision of this type of housing.

To this end, the review of the Local Plan, under the new Local Development Framework will seek to lower the threshold to 15 dwellings and subsequently increase the number of sites where an affordable element can be negotiated. We will also review our targets on different sites and our definition of affordable housing to give clearer guidance to developers. We will develop a Supplementary Planning Document on Housing in 2005. Based on the findings of our Housing Needs Survey we will consider Increasing the percentage of affordable housing secured through the planning system from 30% to 40%, and lowering the site threshold from 25 units to 15 in line with the proposed revisions to government Planning Policy Guidance 3.

Housing Association rented: Around 45% of households currently in inadequate housing and needing to move have incomes below the minimum £18,240 required to rent in the private market so could only afford Housing Association or Intermediate (below-market) rents. The vast majority of households on the Council's Housing Register earn below £10,000 or are dependent on benefits so are likely to be in need of Housing Association rented properties.

Intermediate rented: This could be any subsidised property for rent at below full market rent levels but higher than Housing Association rents. Any intermediate rented housing at rents of between £350 and £650 a month, depending on the size of the property, could provide a valuable alternative for those with insufficient priority to secure Housing Association accommodation, but unable to afford private sector housing.

Shared equity: Schemes may be based around different percentages of equity being bought by the occupier or retained by the provider, and costs and affordability will vary accordingly. Some schemes offer 50-80% of the equity for sale with the remaining 20-50% being retained by the developer / freeholder. No rent is charged on this but the occupier is not able to buy more than 80% of the equity. The minimum income required to buy 80% of equity in this way is likely to be in the range of £20,000 to £30,000, depending on the size of property. Income thresholds will vary depending on the share of equity available and the value of the property. 20% of households in Worthing have an annual income of between £20,000 and £30,000 so might be able to afford shared equity schemes.

Other schemes in Worthing have offered 50% of the equity for sale with rent charged on the remaining 50%. In these schemes the occupier may buy additional equity, as and when they can afford this, up to the full 100% giving them outright ownership. A minimum income of around £18,000 to £20,000 is generally needed to buy under a shared ownership arrangement. Again, some 20% of households earn between £20,000 and £30,000, the minimum needed to buy at full market prices, so might benefit from shared ownership schemes.

Homebuy: This scheme is open to Housing Association tenants and those on the Council's Housing Register. It offers loans for 25% of the purchase price of a home on the private market. Again, households are likely to need a minimum of £20,000 to be able to afford this option. After an initial allocation for just 2 loans under this scheme in Worthing in 2003/4, 11 households took up loans in 2003/4. There is provision for 6 loans in 2004/5, but we will encourage demand to maximise the use of loans in Worthing as far as possible.

What kind of housing do we need to develop?

The Housing Needs Survey showed a strong need for smaller units. In terms of the size of new housing needed, the Survey demonstrated an overwhelming need for one and two-bedroom properties. However, in determining the balance of one and two-bedroom units we need to take account of what is needed to ensure a sustainable mix in the local area and of current experience of urgent housing needs. Generally, two and three-bedroom properties meet people's longer term needs, reducing the need to move. We are also able to benefit more than one household when a larger property becomes vacant, using it to transfer a household from a smaller property which can then be re-let to a smaller household. We have also noted that those on the Housing Register requiring a two or three-bedroom property wait twice as long as those needing only a one-bedroom property.

The Housing Needs Survey identified a need for 705 affordable housing units each year to meet current levels of need. With an average of 291 units becoming available through re-lets each year, this means we need to build or acquire 414 new affordable housing units each year to meet our existing needs. This is clearly unachievable given current rates of building and pressures on land in the Borough. In setting our targets we therefore took account of the level of new housing delivered over the last 4 years to determine how many new rented units would be required to address urgent housing needs. Over the last 4 years we have averaged 64 new units. Within this we have been able to make a slight reduction in our use of temporary accommodation. We would like to continue making this reduction so have agreed a target of 70 new rented units each year.

In addition we are keen to promote shared ownership and other low-cost home ownership options in Worthing to meet the needs of a large number of residents and local employees on relatively low or middle incomes. We have set an ambitious target of 70 units of low-cost home ownership units each year to be reviewed annually depending on our performance against this target and our experience of take-up of these options. Additionally, we will seek to identify additional resources to support a dedicated officer to promote and monitor use of low-cost home ownership. We are committed to securing a development programme which continues to address minimum housing needs but also addresses the demand in this area for low-cost home ownership.

What will happen if we do not address these affordable housing needs?

- If we do not secure sufficient affordable housing within residential developments, or the right mix, we will not be able to deal with existing housing need or future needs
- If we focus predominantly on one-bedroom flats at the expense of two-bedroom flats, maisonettes and terraced housing we will be unable to house those with the most urgent needs, ensure stable communities or address likely future demand and changing expectations

What other options do we have for dealing with problems of affordability?

We are considering a wide range of options for assisting local people to secure affordable housing. These include:

Extended Rent Deposit scheme

In 2004/5 the Worthing Homelessness Forum agreed funding for a new Rent in Advance / Deposit Guarantee scheme for single people and others not eligible for assistance under current schemes. Worthing Citizen's Advice Bureau is delivering this scheme in liaison with

other providers of services to single homeless people. Initially, we are maximising the use of this scheme by targeting loans to those currently occupying supported housing who are ready to move on to their own housing. This will not only free up places for other people needing this support, but will also allow us to establish the scheme with landlords providing a pool of well-supported tenants who have had stable accommodation and are ready for independent living. We will look at ways of extending such schemes to other households in need in the future.

A Credit Union

The Worthing Community Partnership and others responding to consultation have identified a need for a Credit Union to help people currently struggling with rent and other arrears, and those dependent on private sector housing who need to save for deposits for housing for sale or rent. Many face affordability problems in their current housing and would be more likely to avoid arrears and stay in their home with the support of such a scheme. In addition, 47% of those newly forming households who responded to a survey question about their savings had less than £1,000, approximately the sum required for a deposit, rent in advance and initial costs in a first rented property. 75% had less than £5,000, the minimum needed for a deposit on a property and legal costs of buying.

The Partnership has drawn up a three year development plan and will be bidding with Littlehampton and Bognor as a consortium to the Community Fund for funding to support a shared Development Officer post. The Council will support the Partnership in its efforts to establish a Credit Union.

Do It Yourself Shared Ownership

As well as building new units of housing we are keen to assist others to buy equity in existing properties. We are considering putting some funding towards a small DIY Shared Ownership scheme. This will depend on how the housing market and prices are predicted to change over the next few years, and an assessment of the financial viability of such a scheme at this time in Worthing.

Home Ownership Loan Fund

We are considering setting up a fund to assist first-time buyers with their legal and moving costs where a lack of savings would otherwise prevent them from taking up Homebuy or Keyworker Living Loans. By offering these loans we would be able to maximise take-up of these schemes by residents and employees living or working in Worthing.

Housing Options worker specialising in home ownership

We are currently investigating ways of funding an additional Housing Options worker who will spend some time promoting take-up of loans and other opportunities for affordable home ownership. This worker will also help identify people eligible for low cost home ownership who, by moving, would free up a rented property which could then be used by someone in housing need on a lower income.

Maximising Planning Gain

We are setting aside some funding to allow us to make appraisals of the financial viability of providing affordable housing on sites.

SUMMARY OF TARGETS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Targets	Partners	Risks and opportunities
Develop a minimum of 70 social rented units per annum and 70 low-cost home ownership units annually	Private sector and RSL development partners; Regional Housing Board; Housing Corporation	Depends on level of allocations from Regional Housing Board, our success negotiating affordable housing contributions from developers and the level of Right to Buy receipts available to subsidise schemes
Target approximately 70% (100) affordable units as 2-bedroom properties; 10% (15) as 1-bedroom properties; and 20% (25) as 3+ bedroom properties	Private sector and RSL development partners	Depends on the availability of sites suitable to secure mix of different sized units
Promote take-up of Homebuy, Key Worker Living and other low cost home ownership schemes	Moat Housing Association, RSLs, West Sussex County Council Keyworker Housing Coordinator	Depends on availability of subsidies to Worthing residents under these schemes
Develop a Credit Union	Worthing Community Partnership	Identify funding for initial 3 year post to establish the Credit Union
Extend the Rent in Advance / Deposit Guarantee scheme for single homeless people	Worthing Citizens Advice Bureau; Worthing Homelessness Forum	Identify additional funding to extend the scheme

How we selected our partners

Worthing Borough Council has worked with 6 'preferred RSL Development Partners' for the last 3 years. These partners were selected jointly by officers from the Council and the Housing Corporation on the basis of their financial viability and capacity for development; their track record on delivering high quality development and housing management services; and their understanding of the housing and community needs of Worthing. We have now assessed these partners and others with recent involvement in affordable housing development in this area for membership of the new Adur, Arun and Worthing RSL Development Partnership. All partners must continue to demonstrate a commitment to developing housing in this area and high quality services. The selected partners are:

Chichester Diocesan Housing Association / Hyde Housing
 Downland Affinity
 Guinness Trust
 Kelsey Housing Association
 Martlets Housing Association
 Raglan Housing Association
 Servite Houses
 Southern Horizon
 Southern Housing Group
 Worthing Homes

Moat Housing Group was selected by the Housing Corporation as Zone Agent for key worker living schemes in Sussex.

Key priority for housing 3 TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

227 households applied to Worthing Borough Council as homeless in 2003/4. Of these, 121 were accepted as homeless. The numbers of people applying and accepted as homeless have reduced significantly over the last few years due, in part, to the Council's proactive approach working to prevent homelessness:

	Applied	Accepted
2000/1	658	158
2001/2	434	138
2002/3	285	170
2003/4	227	121

The table below gives a full breakdown of the causes of homelessness 2000 to 2004

<i>REASON</i>	<i>2000/01</i>	<i>2001/02</i>	<i>2002/03</i>	<i>2003/04</i>
Parents / relatives unable to accommodate	41	52	46	40
Relationship breakdown	15	13	29	26
Mortgage arrears	3	1	2	1
Rent arrears	31	3	6	6
Loss of rented/tied accommodation	57	60	68	34
In institutional care	3	3	5	0
Other	8	6	14	14

- We achieved our 2003/4 target of reducing homelessness by 25% against all of the main causes of homelessness in Worthing compared with 2002/3
- We achieved our target of reducing the number of households becoming homeless for a second time from 11 in 2002/3 to 3 in 2003/4, of whom just 1 had been homeless previously in the last 2 years
- The numbers applying and accepted as homeless reduced significantly over the course of the year. 54 households applied to the council in the first 3 months, falling to 52, 46 and 43 in the following three quarters. 38 were accepted as homeless in the first quarter, 35 in the second, 20 in the third, and 28 in the final quarter.
- The number of households in temporary accommodation dropped from 193 at 1st April 2003 to 169 at 31st March 2004
- Worthing successfully achieved the government's target to ensure that families are only placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation in an emergency by November 2003. We did this through prevention work rather than by adding to our stock of alternative temporary housing, very much in line with current Government guidance.

These successes were a direct result of the Council's new multi-track Housing Options scheme which works with families in danger of becoming homeless, providing intensive advice and support in retaining their homes or securing alternative housing. As a result of its work Worthing was highlighted by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) Homelessness Directorate as an example of good practice (January 2004) and has been invited to act as regional champions for best practice in this field.

Affordability

31% of households who responded to the Worthing Housing Needs Survey 2004 were in receipt of financial support. Of these 35% were in receipt of Housing Benefit. This represents over 10% of all households in Worthing who rely on payment of Housing Benefit for their housing costs. An efficient Housing Benefit service is therefore critical in supporting people keeping their housing. Worthing Borough Council is the top performer in West Sussex in terms of the speed with which it processes Housing Benefit claims. We aim to maintain this high level of performance.

The Housing Options scheme

The Council's Housing Options Officers identify any families applying for housing through the Housing Register who are in insecure accommodation and may be threatened with homelessness, advise them on their housing options, and provide any assistance needed to help secure alternative accommodation.

Since the start of this scheme, Worthing Borough Council has successfully negotiated lettings for its clients supported by the Rent in Advance scheme with 54 new private sector landlords. We invest between £350 and £800 per household on Rent in Advance or tenancy renewal fees and anticipate successfully recovering around 70% of these through repayments.

We are now developing this scheme with an extended 'Ready to Rent' programme aimed at supporting those looking for private rented accommodation, covering a broader range of needs from budgeting advice and independent living skills to drawing up a savings plan. We are also developing a 'Looking to Let' programme aimed at prospective landlords covering, for example, advice on rent levels, Housing Benefit, tenancy law, landlord and tenant responsibilities.

Temporary accommodation strategy

Nationally, the number of households becoming homeless has grown whilst the number of new social housing units for rent has decreased. In Worthing, whilst the number of people accepted as homeless has decreased over the last 5 years, the number of new housing units built each year has also decreased. Without vacant properties – either new or available for re-let – households are reliant on temporary accommodation. This represents a cost to the council and serious disruption to the household needing to move in. It is vital that we continue to focus on reducing the number of households living in temporary accommodation.

During 2003/4 we successfully achieved the Government's target of having no families in Bed and Breakfast except in emergencies, and then for a maximum of 6 weeks. We have successfully maintained this target in 2004/5. However, there were 169 households living in other forms of temporary accommodation at the end of 2003/4. We aim to reduce this by at least 10% over the life of this strategy.

We are currently working on a temporary accommodation strategy. The aims are:

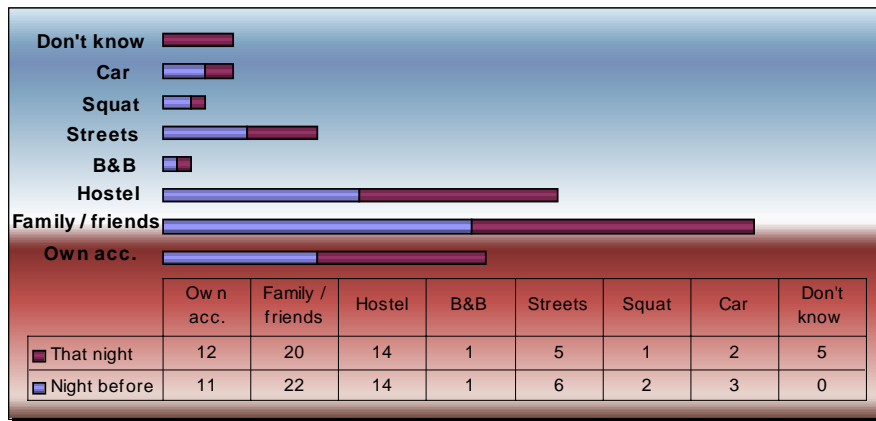
- to reduce reliance on temporary accommodation by preventing homelessness
- to reduce the negative impact of any period in temporary accommodation on homeless households
- to make the most effective use of current resources to deal appropriately with homelessness
- to secure long-term benefits to the Council and to the residents of Worthing.

Key to these targets is our collaboration with Worthing Homes and other major providers of social housing. We are increasingly identifying ways to use housing more flexibly, converting temporary tenancies to permanent where this avoids an additional move for a homeless household. We have also developed a long-term leasing arrangement with Worthing Homes allowing them to buy back former rented properties to be used initially as temporary housing. We are also planning a programme to replace temporary hostels with shared facilities in an effort to move away from using this kind of accommodation.

Single homeless people and street homelessness

Worthing currently carries out a count of rough sleepers every three years. The last, held in November 2001, found 3 people sleeping rough on the night. Worthing Churches Homeless Projects worked with 550 single homeless clients in 2003/4.

We carried out a snapshot survey during one week in December 2003. Eight service providers took part, including voluntary organisations, health services, day centres, advice and support services, and Probation. The survey found 64 single people using the services, including 16 women, and 31 under 25 years old. The survey asked people where they slept the night before and were planning to sleep that night. The majority of respondents slept in the same place on both nights:



More than two thirds (43) of the respondents had one or more support needs and just under half (31) had a been in the army, had been in local authority care, spent time in prison, or was a former asylum seeker.

We propose a pilot project targeting the new Rent In Advance / Deposit Guarantee scheme at people in supported housing needing to move on. This will not only free up vacancies in supported housing, but will ensure that those assisted by the scheme will have support to set up and maintain their tenancies. By doing this we aim to take a higher level of responsibility for the outcomes for vulnerable single homeless people ensuring that they are properly supported in their tenancies; reduce reliance on the social sector; and achieve more sustainable outcomes.

Worthing’s Homelessness Forum

This Forum meets regularly and brings together all those involved in providing services to all homeless people - voluntary sector organisations, health and caring services, probation, education, Registered Social Landlords and housing advice services. The forum develops and

implements Worthing's Homelessness Strategy under the leadership of the Council and is currently undertaking a full homelessness review.

Over the last year the Forum has:

- Completed an audit of homelessness services in the town
- Produced a Directory of Services to Homeless People published Summer 2004
- Secured Homelessness Directorate funding for a Rent in Advance / Deposit scheme for single homeless people
- Held a 'breakfast' event bringing together practitioners from across the homeless sectors, including staff from health, probation, Social Services and the voluntary sector

Priorities for the next year are:

- To review the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan in the light of the results from the audit and review of homelessness
- To further develop the Rent in Advance scheme and a Common Assessment Model
- To support the development of a recovery project for single homeless people, led by Worthing Churches Homeless Projects.

What if we do not take action to prevent homelessness or improve services?

- Impact on health and welfare of people at risk of becoming homeless and impact on educational development of children of homeless households
- Community sustainability and safety problems
- Costs to local residents and businesses through tax
- Danger of reverting to reliance on Bed and Breakfast – financial and social welfare costs, and open to legal challenge and costs
- Over-reliance on other forms of temporary accommodation with similar costs
- Vulnerable to changes in the market if we don't develop a flexible strategy

Opportunities and risks

Worthing's Housing Options scheme involved a change of approach and staffing structure, involving a steep learning curve, which continues as we discover a number of new threats and opportunities in dealing with homelessness. We now have to manage vacancies in temporary accommodation much more carefully. On the other hand, we are more able to use temporary accommodation flexibly and move people who have been in supported housing into more independent living.

A challenge over the next few years relates to the impact of any changes in the wider housing market. In particular, rising costs of mortgages can quickly increase the number of people made homeless. Rented accommodation would be more in demand making it more difficult to secure accommodation for homeless people reliant on benefits.

Conversely, a sudden drop in housing prices could make private sector accommodation more easily accessible. The state of the national and local economy and their effects on unemployment rates will be other important factors. Our temporary accommodation strategies need to be sufficiently flexible to allow for these fluctuations in market conditions. Given that private rented housing provides the best value for money as temporary accommodation, compared with other, more expensive options, this is of particular concern.

Options for tackling homelessness	Partners	Targets
Develop and implement a Temporary Accommodation Strategy	Temporary and permanent Housing Association housing providers; private sector stakeholders	December 2005
Reduce dependence on temporary accommodation with shared facilities and review all temporary accommodation	Worthing Homes; Bed and Breakfast proprietors; Housing Corporation; Chichester Diocesan HA	Reduce number of households in temporary accommodation by 10% over the life of this Strategy
Review standard of Emergency Temporary Accommodation	Private landlords; Bed and Breakfast proprietors	Complete review by Summer 2005
Facilitate development of a supported housing scheme for single homeless people with substance misuse problems	Worthing Churches Homeless Projects; Homelessness Forum; Drug and Alcohol Action Team	December 2005
Extend Housing Options to single homeless households and couples	Worthing Homes Ltd., Chichester Diocesan HA, private landlords, Social & Caring Services	2005/6
Identify floating support to those in the private sector to prevent repeat homelessness and support people in temporary accommodation	West Sussex County Council Supporting People team; Youth Accommodation Support Service	Through Supporting People review and commissioning process by end 2006
Evaluate Housing Options and advice services and explore alternative ways of providing these to ensure value for money	Other local authorities; local advice agencies	2005/6
Develop 'Ready for Rent' and 'Looking to Let' case work service	Local landlords and prospective landlords	2005/6
Develop links between local authority and private sector landlords to support the private rented sector, landlords and tenants	Neighbouring authorities; private sector landlords, lettings and managing agents, Housing Benefit	Launch private sector forum 2005. Assess potential of joint forum with Adur and establish if appropriate
Support the development of a Common Assessment tool to ensure proper support services are made available to homeless people through a single referral point	Worthing Churches Homeless Projects; Worthing Homelessness Forum	Fund initial project development and develop Common Assessment tool 2005/6

Key priority for housing 4

RENEWAL AND REGENERATION

This section covers the overall need and policies for housing stock renewal and plans for specific areas of Worthing needing regeneration. 27% of all dwellings in Worthing were constructed before 1919. This is considerably higher in the central area of the town where just under 50% were constructed pre-1919. This presents significant challenges in terms of renewing and replacing housing which no longer meets decent standards.

As part of our House Condition Survey 2004 we completed approximately 1,200 external surveys of dwellings in Worthing in 2004. Of these, 730 surveys also included a full internal survey of the dwelling. This strategy draws on the key findings. Over the next few months we will analyse the data in greater detail to establish variations between tenure, neighbourhoods, and household income groups, and will carry out a review of our Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy to target the most vulnerable groups. A full copy of the current policy is included at Appendix E.

The quality of Worthing's housing stock

The main findings of the House Condition Survey completed in June 2004 were:

- 4.17% of the Borough's total housing stock (i.e. 1,921 properties, or 1 in 24 properties) is classified as unfit for habitation, close to the national average of 4.20%
- In addition, 10.15% (4,675) of properties are significantly defective. Without preventative action targeted at these properties they are likely to fall into unfitness.
- The average cost to deal with unfitness alone is estimated as £4,700 per dwelling, significantly lower than our estimates from previous surveys
- The highest levels of unfitness occur in Central, Heene and Selden wards where most older properties are located
- Unfitness levels in the private rented sector are significantly higher than in other tenures at 16.04%. The national figure is 10.9% for the private rented sector
- Unfitness levels in the owner occupied sector are lower than the national average – 1.95% compared with 3.2% nationally.

The number of properties found to be unfit is higher than our previous estimates. When combined with properties found to be defective, this gives a total figure of 14.32%, representing 1 in 7 dwellings. However, the estimated costs of dealing with unfit properties are lower. This change is likely to have arisen primarily from owners investing in some improvements themselves, and, to a lesser degree, from the Council's actions. Some 56.67% of all the unfit properties are in privately rented accommodation compared to 33.3% owner-occupied and 10% in the RSL sector. This raises particular concerns about the quality of Worthing's rented sectors and has implications for how resources are targeted under future Housing Renewal policies.

An initial overview suggests that unfitness and disrepair are geographically spread throughout the Borough. However, there is evidence of some clustering of poorer properties in some of the more deprived wards. Future investment policies may take account of where unfit properties are located, focusing particularly on these wards.

Policies will also need to address the changes in assessment of housing conditions under the Health and Safety rating system being introduced over the next year and formulate the House

Condition Survey to provide data for this. The new rating system will affect the number of properties regarded as defective.

Decent Homes

As part of the Government 2000 Spending Review, the ODPM agreed a target by 2010 to: *“bring all social housing into a Decent condition with most of this improvement taking place in deprived areas, and for vulnerable households in the private sector, including families with children, increase the proportion who live in homes that are in Decent condition”*

In order to be regarded as a Decent Home a dwelling should:

- be above the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- be in a reasonable state of repair
- have modern facilities and services; and
- provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

The Worthing Borough House Condition Survey 2004 found that:

- the estimated total number of non-Decent homes in the private sector in Worthing is 18,288 of which 13,556 are owners occupied and 4,732 are rented. These represent 43.74% of all private sector stock in Worthing, much higher than the national figure of 32%
- of those homes failing the standard, 1,796 (9.82% of all non-Decent homes) fail on unfitness, 4,515 (24.69%) on serious disrepair, 1,577 (8.62%) on amenity provision and 15,132 (82.74%) on thermal comfort. Some 4,232 fail to meet the standard under more than one of these criteria.
- 68.04% of private rented dwellings are non-Decent compared with 38.89% of owner occupied dwellings
- It is estimated that 4,335 vulnerable households are living in non-Decent homes in the private sector in Worthing, 54.84% of all vulnerable households
- 26.37% of vulnerable households are living in non-Decent private rented homes compared with 7.18% in owner occupied non-Decent homes

The high levels of non-Decent housing in the private sector are greater than previously estimated. Standards in the private rented sector are of particular concern and we will work with landlords to ensure that they maintain their properties to a higher standard.

The government's Decent Homes Target Implementation Plan, 2003, sets out targets in relation to the proportion of vulnerable households in the private sector living in Decent Homes.

We need to increase the percentage of vulnerable households living in Decent Homes by 23.84% to meet the government's target for 2010. The estimated cost is £26.41 million.

This target is clearly not achievable, but we will review our Private Sector Renewal policy and develop plans to maximise our chances of achieving these targets.

The Council also monitors progress towards the Decent Homes standard amongst our Housing Association partners. The major providers are shown below.

Association	Failing decent homes standard (%) 2003
Worthing Homes Ltd	12.7
Servite Houses	0.3
Southern Housing Group	21.4
Downland HA	3.2
National Top Quartile	1
National Mean Average	23

Worthing Homes owns 2,314 dwellings. Their stock survey showed that an estimated 87% of their dwellings met the Decent Homes standard, and their investment strategy sets out a plan for achieving 100% by 2010. Servite Houses have 299 properties in Worthing and an estimated 0.3% properties which do not meet the standard, but will be carrying out further stock surveys during the summer of 2005. Southern Housing Group has 491 properties in Worthing of which 88 do not meet the standard, and a further 7% are estimated to be non-Decent by 2010. They are currently refurbishing their properties in Durrington. This will leave a further 61 properties in need of refurbishment to ensure they meet the standard. Downland Housing Association estimate they have up to 6% non-Decent homes across the South East, including 168 in Worthing and the surrounding area. They are conducting a 100% survey of their stock and will have plans in place by April 2005 for bringing all properties up to the standard by 2010.

‘Staying Put’ and Care and Repair Service

This service, run by Anchor Trust and supported by Worthing Borough Council and Supporting People, carries out minor repairs and energy efficiency works for older owner-occupiers to help them bring defective properties up to standard. It also carries out minor works and disabled adaptations through ‘care and repair’ for older and vulnerable residents. In 2004 the scheme was linked with the Home Improvement Agency in Arun in line with the county-wide aspiration of providing a consistent, ‘joined up’ service across West Sussex, and improving the use of resources. A full review of Home Improvement Agencies in West Sussex is currently underway.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The House Condition Survey estimated that there were 1,035 Houses in Multiple Occupation. Of these 143 are bedsits. The remaining 892 are shared houses, guest houses or residential care homes. The Council currently monitors 891 Houses in Multiple Occupation, focusing inspections particularly on those with a history of poor standards.

An HMO Licensing Scheme was introduced by the Housing Act 2004. This will require landlords of HMOs above certain thresholds (relating to the number of units, storeys and occupants) to apply to the Council for a licence. There is also the option of introducing a wider scheme, subject to Government approval. We will review our database and take a proactive approach to giving landlords advice and assistance about their obligations under the new regime.

Teville Gate

This area is in urgent need of redevelopment and was identified by residents in the Community Strategy consultation as a major concern. One of the Council's Key Improvement Priorities is to continue to work with the owners and prospective developers of Teville Gate to help bring about a suitable redevelopment, as quickly as possible. This site is also within the Action Plan agreed with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, to continue to work with the landowner to resolve any obstacles to redevelopment e.g. existing occupiers/leases. The intention is that the planning position should be resolved, with a possible start on site in 2005. There is regular dialogue with the landowner and the Council's Members receive a regular update on progress.

Options

Resources for assistance are limited. Resources available to the Council for private sector renewal through discretionary assistance have substantially reduced. At the same time, the Council has had to make more resources available for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants due to increasing demand for adaptations. The amount available for expenditure on assistance for repairs and renewal is therefore severely limited. The Council will need to review its Private Sector Renewal Policy as a matter of urgency and identify ways of targeting these resources to have the maximum impact on house conditions in the Borough. The Council will not immediately introduce a voluntary landlord accreditation scheme, but has noted with interest the experience of this in Brighton and Hove where, following an initial hostile response from landlords, this is now gaining support. We will continue to monitor experience of landlord accreditation scheme and consider whether or not this is appropriate in Worthing.

What happens if we do nothing

- Deterioration of the housing stock – waste of a valuable resource; those with major defects are likely to become unfit for habitation
- People having to live in sub-standard housing and impact on health of local residents
- Increased pressure on social housing
- Damage to wider economy, particularly tourism and both new and existing businesses

Options	Targets, risks and opportunities
1. Analyse the results of the House Condition Survey in greater detail to establish areas in priority need within the Borough 2. Revise Private Sector Housing Renewal policy and develop an Action Plan to address Decent Homes targets 3. Identify resources to support this plan	Agree revised Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy and publish March 2005 Success achieving the government decent homes target will rely on private sector owners to bring their properties up to an acceptable standard
Improve standards in housing stock through : renovation assistance for unfit properties –up to a maximum of £10,000 per property (grossly unfit) or £5,000 for homes that are marginally unfit or in substantial disrepair	Bring 40 unfit properties up to a reasonable standard each year – 200 by the end of 2008/9. Bring 25 houses in substantial disrepair up to a reasonable standard – 125 by the end of 2008/9
Assist vulnerable home owners with minor repairs and energy efficiency measure	Work with Home Improvement Agency to complete 125 'care and repair' projects on behalf of elderly or vulnerable clients

<p>Improve standards in HMOs £20,000 grants for improvements to security and energy efficiency, and to improve facilities - in partnership with the 'Staying Put' Scheme, West Sussex Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, Sussex Police, and HMO landlords</p>	<p>Implement new HMO Licensing scheme. Improve standards in 10 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) through the Single Regeneration Budget and in 20 HMOs through ongoing inspections and enforcement measures by 2005/6</p>
<p>Improve energy efficiency ratings in partnership with W Sussex Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, EAGA partnership (Warm Front scheme), the Anchor Trust and Seeboard Continue allocation of fuel poverty grants to older and more vulnerable residents Energy advice and information; referrals to local energy advice centre and Warm Front scheme</p>	<p>Improve energy efficiency ratings by 30% between 1996 and 2011 – or 2% per year. Achieved 14.5% improvement to date compared with 16% target.</p> <p>90 grants annually - WBC to fund from September 2004 when SRB funding ends, with match funding from SEEBOARD</p>
<p>Use programme of inspections and enforcement to bring properties up to Decent Homes standard</p>	<p>Complete 180 HMO inspections each year targeting on a risk assessed priority basis</p>

A copy of the current Private Sector Renewal Policy is attached at Appendix E

Key priority for housing 5
MEETING THE NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE

Over the last year Worthing Borough Council has been working on a Draft Strategy for Older People’s Housing and Support Needs with colleagues in Adur and Arun District Councils, Social & Caring Services, and the Primary Care Trust. The Strategy sets out priorities for housing and support services for older people to 2010. The aims are to:

- Develop flexible services to address changing needs
- Promote person-centred provision and choice for older people
- Provide independence and care in a more homely environment closer to home and reduce reliance on institutional care
- Promote good health and well being, prevent hospital admissions and reduce delayed discharge
- Enable local communities to have more say in service provision
- Achieve national standards for services
- Work in partnership and develop integrated systems across services and agencies

Table 1, below, shows the breakdown by age group of older people living in Adur, Arun and Worthing in actual numbers. Source : Census 2001 (ONS)

Table 1	60 to 64	65 to 74	75 to 84	85 & over	Total
Adur	3,313	6,257	4,770	1,870	16,210
Arun	3,457	7,245	5,919	2,429	19,050
Worthing	4,748	9,478	8,602	4,524	27,352
Total	11,518	22,980	19,291	8,823	62,612

This area has a higher than average percentage of older people in the population. Worthing has the highest percentage in the country of residents aged 85 or over (4.6% compared with the national average of 1.9%). Nationally there has been a rapid increase in the number of people living to over 100 with approximately 6,000 people in this age group and a 7% annual increase. These people generally have very high care and support needs. Of all the older people living in Adur, Arun and Worthing, over 60% live in single person households, and 38% live in households with other older people.

One of our key concerns is the number of older people living in poor quality housing. In Worthing 172 older people are without sole use of a bath or shower and toilet, 45 of them aged 85 or over. 1,560 older people in Worthing have no form of central heating in their home, 252 of whom are aged 85 or over.

This clearly presents a challenge to agencies providing services to older people and the Strategy ensures that we will work together to pool resources and ensure needs are met. The Strategy examines current services and identifies gaps. Key issues include fuel poverty; repairs and improvements to housing conditions; care and extra care; the future of sheltered housing; home security; health and safety in the home; access and mobility; adaptations; new ‘assistive’ (home communications) technologies.

Review of sheltered housing

Worthing has significantly less sheltered housing units than most other areas in West Sussex and no units for frail elderly people. The Housing Needs Survey analysed the housing needs of older people over the next 5 years and estimated an annual demand for sheltered housing of 808 places in private sector schemes and 642 in affordable schemes. Whilst much of this requirement can be met through existing stock there are concerns about the existing sheltered housing stock, particularly in the RSL sector, and its long-term viability. Some schemes have inadequate access and insufficient space and may become very hard to let over the next few years. The Council has begun work with providers to ensure that these schemes are remodelled or redeveloped to maximise their potential, and that the supply of affordable sheltered units is maintained to a standard and in locations required by residents. One option is more flexible use of units previously designated 'sheltered' and other current 'general needs' properties to allow for older people to remain integrated into the local community.

Extra Care Scheme

There is also an established need for 'extra care' housing for older people with medium and high support and care needs. A need has been identified for a minimum of 35-40 units, including some for older adults with learning difficulties and some for older people suffering with dementia, and a mix of rented and shared equity units. There are no 'extra care' places in the Borough to date. We are working with Social & Caring Services, Hanover Housing Association, and the Primary Care Trust to develop a scheme on the site of an existing, outdated sheltered scheme. The proposed scheme was selected following invitations to specialist and local Housing Associations to submit proposals. The selected scheme can be delivered within the prescribed time-scale of 2 years. It will be designed and developed to ensure a high degree of independent living. Once this scheme is established we will review further needs and consider options for commissioning additional units.

Extra care housing is also vital in keeping the flow of stock moving as it provides an attractive alternative to under-occupying properties which could be better used by families needing to move to larger homes.

Community Alarms

A number of problems have been identified with funding for Community Alarm services across West Sussex and a review, led by Supporting People, is underway to resolve these. The amount of funding is now fixed but the demand for community alarms is growing. Funding does not currently target those people most in need of the service and is spent exclusively on people who rent rather than across tenures.

Home Improvements and adaptations

Worthing Borough Council targets Housing Renewal grants, Disabled Facilities Grants, Fuel Poverty grants, 'Staying Put' and other discretionary grants at older people to help them stay in their own homes. Worthing's Home Improvement scheme, known as Staying Put and run by Anchor Trust, is funded primarily from the Supporting People budget, although Worthing Borough Council also contributes major funding along with West Sussex Social and Caring Services. The scheme dealt with 278 enquiries in 2003/4, an increase of 17 on the previous year. 121 jobs were completed to a total value of £456,194, an average of £3,770. The Council also part funds the SAFE (Security Action for the Elderly) scheme. Both are extremely valuable in assisting people who wish to stay in their own home, addressing wider needs and issues, including the fear of crime.

What will happen if we do not plan for the needs of older people in the next few years?

- Older people will not enjoy independence and a good level of choice about their housing and life style, and their options will fall far short of their aspirations
- There will be a shortfall of suitable affordable accommodation
- Older people will be forced to move into residential care if additional home care and extra care places are not available, losing their independence and costing the local tax payer because of the higher costs of residential care
- There will be high levels of vacancies if current sheltered schemes are not updated or replaced
- Older people will stay in unsuitable housing, under-occupying when they would prefer to move, and, in many cases, unable to maintain the property in a good condition

Options	Partners	Targets
Monitor supply and demand of private sector housing for older people; seek balance of development between private sector, low-cost market and affordable units	Specialist private sector sheltered housing providers	Investigate costs, supply and demand of private sector specialist housing for older people, and analyse need and demand in different locations - 2005
Monitor demand and supply of affordable sheltered housing units; encourage and monitor use of Elderly Accommodation Council vacancy details on website	RSL partners through Management Forum	Ongoing Develop monitoring reports 2005
Develop Extra Care housing in rented and leasehold properties	Social & Caring Services, Supporting People, Hanover Housing Association	Develop Extra Care scheme – mixed tenure – with Hanover HA – Autumn 2006
Assess the need for additional extra care and explore options for remodelling existing sheltered care schemes	Social & Caring Services, Supporting People, RSL partners	Assess demand for additional extra care places 2006/7
Extend and promote the use of communications technology to allow people to live more independently. Invest in updated Care Line equipment and expand Community Alarm service to cover all tenures	Worthing Homes, other RSL partners, Supporting People, Age Concern	Financial support to updated Care Line equipment and review of Community Alarm Service and West Sussex Supporting People priorities 2005
Continue supporting and review need for extended Home Improvement Agency and other 'Staying Put' services. Review need for repairs and renewals assistance to older people.	Anchor Trust 'Staying Put'; Supporting People	Review Home Improvement Agencies in West Sussex and agree future priorities across the county through SP commissioning process

Key priority for housing 6

ADDRESSING HOUSING SUPPORT NEEDS

Housing officers meet regularly with Supporting People staff to review developments in supported housing schemes in Worthing. We have set up a forum in coastal West Sussex for providers and stakeholders to discuss issues of common concern and share best practice.

A survey of data held by statutory and voluntary agencies across West Sussex carried out in the 2004 highlighted significant gaps in supported housing in some areas. The data provided an overview of needs and supply in each local authority area. A county-wide database is being developed to record needs in the future and inform strategy and commissioning decisions. Details of the Supporting People budget are shown on page 51. We have also published a draft Strategy for Housing with Support for consultation.

The housing needs of vulnerable older people are dealt with on pages 31 to 33, as are those services used primarily by older people, but available more widely, such as Community Alarms and the Home Improvement Agency. The support needs of homeless people are discussed on pages 22 to 26.

PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

There are 6 supported housing schemes for people with learning difficulties in Worthing providing accommodation for 37 people. 10 new places were developed at the St. Paul's scheme in 2004. As a result of these new places the number of people with learning difficulties waiting for supported housing reduced from 20 in April 2004 to 13 by the end of 2004.

However, whilst people with learning difficulties are relatively well provided for in Worthing, both West Sussex Social & Caring Services and the West Sussex Health & Social Care NHS Trust are reviewing residential units and will develop a wider range of housing options to meet clients aspirations over the next 10 years. We are working with these agencies who are committed to using recycled capital to help fund any additional housing provision required as a result of these plans. There are currently 273 adults with learning difficulties receiving social & caring services in Worthing, and 140 young people. It is anticipated that the level of residential care places will fall from 254 currently to 181 over the next few years, and that there will be a need to increase supported housing units and floating support.

The West Sussex Learning Difficulties Partnership Board published its Housing Strategy in 2003 stressing the need for more choice and independent accommodation. Worthing Borough Council is working with colleagues in health and social caring services to identify individual needs and ensure a smooth transition to independent living. We will also need to deal with any shortages in suitable housing, particularly for those with mobility problems, and have developed a new Housing Needs Panel to match people to properties.

PHYSICALLY DISABLED PEOPLE

'Valuing Independence', the West Sussex Strategy to meet the needs of adults with a physical impairment seeks to ensure they can live in the community with the appropriate level of support, as a viable alternative to residential care. The strategy research identified a lack of

available suitable housing as presenting considerable barriers to this with many waiting for long periods for suitable vacancies or adaptations.

There were 372 people on the Council's Housing Register at 1st April 2004 requiring ground floor housing, of whom 82 needed wheelchair accessible housing. 26 were physically disabled people needing housing with support. The House Condition Survey conducted in 2004 found that 38.5% of households had one or more residents considered to be disabled or infirm. 13.8% contained at least one member who was registered or could be registered as disabled. The Housing Needs Survey, on the other hand, identified only 18% of households as including someone with a special need. We will carry out a more detailed analysis of both sets of data to make as accurate an assessment as possible of the level and type of need, and the areas of the town where this is concentrated.

There are currently 5 schemes providing 53 units of supported housing for physically disabled people in the town. All but one of these is in shared accommodation. Very few disabled people are now willing to live in shared housing so our emphasis is on developing fully accessible and adapted housing to meet specific needs. The next few years will also see the gradual replacement of shared housing with self-contained units.

According to the Housing Needs Survey 48% of all disabled people in the Borough have a walking difficulty and 913 are wheelchair users. Although over 900 properties have already had wheelchair adaptations, in only 29% of cases does a wheelchair user live in a home that has been suitably adapted, suggesting a mismatch between accessible properties and those where wheelchair users live. We are establishing a database of adapted properties and will introduce an Adapted Housing Register to help match people to suitable properties.

There is high demand for Disabled Facilities Grants, both in the private sector and from RSL tenants. The use of the 'deferred payment' approval option in 2004/5 has increased financial pressures, but the 2005/6 allocation from central government falls far short of what is needed.

Disabled Facilities Grants 2000 to 2004

Year	Expenditure	No. of grants completed
2000/01	£288,948	55
2001/02	£356,119	64
2002/03	£484,750	93
2003/04	£437,621	65

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USERS

There are currently 11 accommodation based supported housing services for mental health service users in Worthing, 5 in shared housing schemes, and 6 for people living in independent, self-contained housing. 109 people use these services. In addition there is a floating support service for a further 30 people living independently in Housing Association accommodation.

There were 16 mental health service users on Worthing's Housing Register at the end of December 2004 waiting for housing with support. Places are allocated through a Mental Health Referral Panel, made up of West Sussex Social Services, West Sussex Health & Social Care NHS Trust, Worthing Borough Council, and providers of supported housing. Whilst

Worthing is comparatively well served by the current level of provision, there is a lack of floating support to help those in the private sector or moving to permanent housing. The Mental Health Referral panel has also been unable to place a number of people because their need is too high or they have complex dual or multi-diagnosis needs, and this has delayed their discharge from hospital. There is also a need for more specific data about the needs of younger people with mental health problems, older people with mental health problems, and those with multiple needs.

PEOPLE WITH SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUES

Worthing has no supported housing services for people dependent on alcohol, and only one scheme for drug users. This provides floating tenancy support to people living in Housing Association properties. Worthing has the highest rate of population in treatment in West Sussex for both alcohol and drugs dependence. An "Analysis of Alcohol and Drug Service Provision in Worthing", carried out by Care Equation Limited on behalf of the Worthing Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, highlighted an urgent need for supported housing for this group.

At least 50% of homeless people have an addiction problem – mostly alcohol and/or opiates. People with substance misuse issues accounted for over 60% of the work of Worthing Churches Homeless Projects' Community Link team last year. Half were assisted in securing accommodation, but a significant number were unable to do so. This group, unlike others with a need for support, need on-site support and shared housing schemes at certain times, rather than independent accommodation.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Worthing has benefited from an extremely effective Youth Accommodation Support Service (YASS) which assisted young people who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in finding and settling in their own accommodation. This service played an important role in preventing homelessness amongst young people. During the year, however, the Service was forced to close due to lack of funding. Since then, there has been an increase of up to three times in the number of homelessness applications to the Council by 16 and 17 year olds in just one quarter and a rise in the number of teenagers now living in Bed and Breakfasts with only minimal support. A number of young people are placed in Worthing's Bed and Breakfasts by neighbouring authorities. Providers of supported housing have also reported a drop in the quality of referrals. Our priority with respect to young people is to replace the YASS scheme as soon as possible with a scheme covering the southern coastal area of West Sussex.

There are currently 5 housing schemes providing support for 47 young people at risk. Two of these support those with a history of offending. The biggest gap in provision is for young people with complex needs, including substance misuse, those with mental health problems and those who have previously committed high risk offences including arson, crimes of violence and sex offences. The other major gap is in prevention services and move-on support for young people to help them cope with independent living and prevent tenancies breaking down.

Worthing has the highest rate of births to teenage mothers in West Sussex. In December 2004 there were 32 teenage mothers on the Housing Register, significantly higher than in previous years. Two of those registered were 16/17 year old parents. 10 were living with their

partners, 3 with family or friends, 2 in supported housing, and 15 in other temporary accommodation. Worthing has one supported housing scheme providing 5 units for teenage and other vulnerable mothers. Support for other teenage parents is provided through floating support schemes. It is vital to monitor demand very closely in light of the sudden increase in teenage parents in need. We hope that local efforts to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies will have a positive impact.

PEOPLE ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In 2003/4, 18 women and their families were accepted as homeless as a result of domestic violence, 15% of all acceptances. Worthing has one refuge with places for 5 families. The Refuge received 399 referrals in 2003/4 but was only able to accommodate 19 families. Move-on has also been a problem in the past, although monthly meetings established this year to review individual cases and housing needs have been effective in freeing up spaces. Our priority is now to identify a further property for those with lower support needs.

EX-OFFENDERS

In 2003/4 the Sussex Probation Resettlement Officer received 113 referrals for offenders under Probation supervision needing accommodation in Worthing. Data collected for the Housing Needs Survey showed that 61 people were released from prison into the Worthing area during the year. 22 of the single homeless people surveyed in December 2003 had previously spent time in prison. An audit carried out in December 2002 revealed a shortage of places for those using the Resettlement service.

However, whilst Worthing has the highest number of referrals to Probation for accommodation for ex-offenders in West Sussex, it also has the highest number of supported housing places for ex-offenders. Worthing currently has a scheme for 7 young people in the criminal justice system, and one for 5 adults. The main concern is a lack of accommodation with support for young offenders, although there is also some pressure on accommodation for the older group with only one supported housing scheme, taking those who are at 'high risk' of re-offending.

The West Sussex Supporting People team is currently reviewing supported housing services to ex-offenders and future commissioning will be determined by the results of reviews, and our analysis of needs and supply across the county.

FLOATING SUPPORT

Worthing currently has one scheme providing support to 27 homeless people and families with support needs, and one providing support to those with substance misuse problems.

A survey of Worthing's social landlords was carried out in 2004 to identify the level of unmet tenancy support needs. Most identified occasional incidences where tenants were in need of support. Some 21 tenants in the Borough were identified as needing support but not currently receiving this. A further 5 households were in temporary accommodation without access to support. It is estimated on this basis that there are at least 25-30 people living in RSL properties at any one time who are in need of floating support but are not receiving this. We are therefore keen to develop a generic floating support scheme to assist these and other vulnerable people living in the private sector.

PEOPLE WITH A RANGE OF NEEDS

It is important to remember that individual service users have very different needs. Some young people, for example, may also have mental health needs. A number of people with learning difficulties may also be physically disabled. Whilst some people's support needs can be met through generic support schemes, such as floating support, others may need a very high level of support which addresses complex needs. Services need to be sufficiently flexible to meet with this range of needs and with changes in people's housing and support requirements over time.

The West Sussex Housing Strategy for People with Learning Difficulties is available from the People with Learning Difficulties Team at West Sussex Social and Caring Services, Southey Road, Worthing.

'Valuing Independence' is available from Social and Caring Services at Centenary House, Durrington Lane, Worthing.

Copies of the West Sussex Drug and Alcohol Team's Housing Strategy and the "Analysis of Alcohol and Drug Service Provision in Worthing" can be obtained from the Drug and Alcohol Action Team at West Sussex County Council.

What will happen if we do nothing?

- These people will become homeless and we will have a duty to house with associated increase in costs to the Council, but no suitable accommodation in which to place people
- Damage to the health and general welfare of vulnerable individuals and, in some cases, risks to the wider community

Options	Partners	Targets, risks and opportunities
Develop housing options for people with learning difficulties and others moving to more independent accommodation	West Sussex Social & Caring Services; West Sussex Health and Social Care Trust; RSL partners; Supporting People	Identify independent housing for people moving out of residential care over 10 year programme
Develop additional wheelchair accessible housing, mobility and ground floor affordable housing Encourage mobility-friendly private sector developments	RSL development partners; Regional Housing Board / Housing Corporation; private sector developers	Minimum 10% of all affordable housing
Invest more in adapting properties and set up an Adapted Housing Register (AHR) and database of adapted housing	West Sussex Social & Caring Services; West Sussex Health and Social Care Trust; RSL partners; Supporting People	Budget additional funding for Disabled Facilities Grants; Identify funding for AHR and recruit provider 2005
Collect data on specific groups of mental health service users	Community Mental Health Team; Supporting People; Resettlement and Outreach Team	Stakeholders meeting 2004; SP needs assessment 2004 and ongoing
Expand floating support scheme to a wider range of people needing help to maintain tenancies and live independently, including users of Mental Health services	Supporting People	Depends on SP Strategic commissioning priorities from 2004 onwards and availability of SP funds 2005/6
Develop supported housing places for mental health users with more complex needs	Supporting People; Regional Housing Board / Housing Corporation; specialist RSL providers	Depends on availability of Supporting People funds
Develop supported housing for homeless people with drug and alcohol misuse problems	Worthing Churches Homeless Projects; Drug & Alcohol Action Team Homelessness Forum	2005/6 Depends on success of fundraising and ongoing revenue
Identify funding to replace Youth Accommodation Support Service	Supporting People	Depends on availability of Supporting People funds
Identify a property for families escaping Domestic Violence with lower support needs	Worthing Women's Refuge; partner RSLs	Depends on availability of properties becoming available to lease
Develop additional housing related support for young people in the criminal justice system	Supporting People; Regional Housing Board / Housing Corporation; specialist RSL providers	Depends on SP Strategic commissioning priorities from 2004 onwards and availability of funding

Appendix D outlines the West Sussex Supporting People priorities for Worthing in 2005/6.

Key Priority for Housing 7

SUPPORTING THE HOUSING NEEDS OF KEY WORKERS

In 2003 /4 we conducted a survey of the major key worker employers in Worthing :

- **Health staff** : Worthing and Southlands Hospitals NHS Trust has 3,200 employees, 7.2% of the total working population in Worthing. The NHS Trust employs 1,412 nurses, 1,129 at Worthing hospital and 283 at Southlands hospital in Shoreham. Nurses at Worthing hospital account for 2.5% of the working population in Worthing. The hospital has had to run recruitment drives abroad for the last few years and has difficulty accommodating employees from abroad. Lower paid nursing staff have problems affording housing in the area.
- **Teachers** : West Sussex County Council employs 903 teachers in Worthing, 2% of the total working population. Just under half of local schools reported that their teaching staff experienced problems getting a mortgage because of property prices. Some had difficulty affording the high rents in the area. Younger or newly qualified teachers have particular problems because they are repaying student loans. Some have left Worthing after gaining a few years experience to move to areas with cheaper housing. Senior and more experienced teaching staff are difficult to recruit from outside the borough because of the pronounced increase in housing costs.
- **Police** : The West Downs Sussex Police Division employs 93 Police Officers stationed in Worthing, 0.2% of the total working population. They experience problems retaining police constables and sergeants due to high house prices in Worthing and surrounding areas. Most police officers either move to the North of England where property prices are cheaper or to metropolitan areas that offer higher pay levels.
- **Fire Service** : Worthing's Fire Service employs 132 people, 0.3% of the working population.
- **Worthing Borough Council** employs 521 permanent and 227 casual and temporary staff, 1.2% of the total working population. Certain technical and skilled posts cannot be filled locally, and while public sector pay levels are the biggest problem, the cost of living in the South is another barrier in attracting people into the borough to work.
- **Public Transport Operators** Approximately 201 bus drivers work in public transport in Worthing, 0.5% of the total working population. One of the two major operators, Stagecoach, report severe staff shortages. They have problems recruiting and retaining drivers and have a staff turnover rate of 13.5%. Housing is a major problem for drivers, Salaries are too low to secure a mortgage and many report financial difficulties due to high rents.

Key Worker salaries in Worthing	Type	Salary Level £
Nurses	Qualified	13 465 to 30 005
	Unqualified	10 050 to 13 920
Teachers	Qualified	18 105 to 33 150
	Unqualified	13 266 to 20 979
Ambulance service	Paramedics	18 000 to 25 000
	Non-emergency	15 000 +
	Call handling	16 000 to 24 000
Fire service	Fire fighters	20 238
Police Officers	Constables	20 000 to 29 000
	Sergeants	29 000 +
WBC	All permanent	Variable
Bus operators		14 924 to 15 444

The main demand amongst key workers was for two and three-bedroom properties.

West Sussex definition

Whilst many local people are employed as key workers in public services, and can be assisted through key worker housing programmes, Worthing also has many essential public sector staff and others working in retail, manufacturing, real estate, and financial services, many with below average earnings, who are not eligible for these programmes. A number of local businesses consulted told us that they were concerned at the cost of housing, and said that this presented difficulties for them recruiting and retaining the staff they need.

Glaxo Smith Kline : “the biggest problem is recruiting these staff from other parts of the UK, as house prices relative to the Midlands and the North make it difficult to attract potential employees. “

District and Borough authorities in West Sussex have agreed a broader definition of key workers with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, including all public sector staff and others providing public services such as voluntary sector and public transport workers, and some private sector employees, and will apply this in schemes where key workers have a priority but fall outside the Government sponsored programmes.

The key findings of research into key worker housing needs conducted in West Sussex and Worthing are that:

- the majority of people who do not already own property need help to become home owners
- there is demand for two and three-bedroom houses and flats rather than one-bedroom flats
- some groups need low cost rented units – notably the more transient health care staff

What will happen if we do nothing?

- Local children will suffer from under-staffing in education services, affecting the levels of educational attainment
- Key health and social care services will be inadequate to meet local needs, which are relatively high given the large numbers of older residents in the Borough
- Worthing will be a less attractive place for people to live and businesses to locate or grow

Options	Partners	Targets, risks and opportunities
Target low cost housing and shared ownership units in West Durrington at key workers initially	RSL partners, West Durrington developers, West Sussex County Council	Opportunity to test the market amongst key workers for low cost home ownership
Develop specifically targeted key worker units for hospital staff	Worthing Homes; Worthing & Southlands hospital	Develop shared units for 60 hospital staff by end 2006/7
Promote use of Key Working Living scheme	Moat Housing Association; West Sussex County Council Keyworker Housing Coordinator	Maximise take up of loans – target 10 key workers p.a. Expansion depends on recruitment of Home Ownership specialist
Target key workers for take up of low cost home ownership and shared ownership schemes	RSL Development Partners; West Sussex Keyworker Housing Coordinator	Target average 5 units shared ownership to be sold to key workers annually

Take-up by key workers in Worthing of the key Worker Living scheme run by Moat in Sussex has been very high to date, with 24 loans out of the 135 allocated for 13 authorities going employees based in Worthing so far in 2004/5.

Key priority for housing 8

MEETING BLACK & MINORITY ETHNIC HOUSING NEEDS

94.8% of Worthing's residents identified themselves as White British in the 2001 Census. The remaining 5.2% identified themselves as black or of minority ethnic origin.

Of 260 households who approached the Council as homeless in 2003/4, 34 did not provide details of their ethnic origin, 4 identified themselves as African / Caribbean, 1 as Indian / Bangladeshi, and 3 of another ethnic origin (3.5% in total). This is below the percentage of BME households in resident in Worthing.

Of the 1,648 Housing Register applicants at 1st April 2004, 137 did not provide their ethnic origin, 1,422 gave their ethnic origin as White or White British; the remaining 89 were of another ethnic origin (5.9%). This accurately reflects the population as a whole. Based on these figures, there is no indication from this data that BME households in Worthing experience higher levels of housing need or homelessness than other households.

However, previous years have shown a different picture. Worthing developed a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy in 2000 and reviewed this in 2003. At the time we drafted this Strategy the number of BME households approaching the Council for Housing Advice or as homeless was higher than we would expect compared with the number of BME households in the wider population. This picture changed in 2003/4, but we need to continue monitoring levels of service use and the reasons behind any changes.

Our Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy links in with the Council's Race Equality Scheme and Equalities Scheme, both of which are available on the Council's website at www.worthing.gov.uk or from the Town Hall. In 2003/4 Worthing Borough Council instigated a Community Equalities Group. This group considers and provides feedback on a range of Council policies and includes BME representation.

The broad aims of the BME Housing strategy are :

- to improve our understanding of the causes of high demand for housing services amongst BME communities and develop strategies to address these *
- to develop more detailed data on BME housing needs to inform future housing related policies and development
- to contribute to the development of meaningful links with Worthing's BME residents and seek their views on current services and proposed policies and development
- to improve the accessibility of current services and provision
- to encourage providers of housing related services in all sectors to improve their policies and practice in relation to BME residents through modelling good practice and promoting discussion of needs and concerns

What happens if we do nothing?

- the Council has a duty to ensure that its services are accessible to all members of its community. To do this, it is vital to monitor our services and feedback from customers to ensure that we are operating fairly, and address any barriers that we identify.

Key Action Points

- Analyse and report on the causes of homelessness and priority need amongst BME homeless households and liaise with agencies in contact with these households to help reduce homelessness
- Continue monitoring the proportion of applications for housing support from BME households relative to the general population
- Introduce ethnic monitoring processes in private sector housing work
- Analyse Census data on a Ward by Ward basis to identify the current housing conditions of BME households in terms of tenure, size of housing, and amenities, compared to the general population
- Explore ways to assess levels of any 'hidden' need for sheltered accommodation, recognising the different needs of older people from BME communities
- Explore ways to collect and analyse data on the housing needs of young people within BME households, including 'hidden' needs, beyond the data already available through Housing Services records and the Register
- Liaise with Worthing Borough Council's Equalities Working Group and with Community Development and Community Safety officers to co-ordinate actions to develop links with BME residents, both as individuals and through their organisations
- Establish regular liaison with key agencies, including the Asylum Seekers team, on BME related issues, such as safety, harassment and asylum seekers
- Continue to make interpreting and translation services available for housing customers
- Consider ways of overcoming equalities and access issues in developing choice based lettings schemes
- Monitor RSLs' strategies and performance on BME issues
- Present regular (annual) updates on incidences of racial harassment to the RSL Management Forum, bringing together RSL and police information where possible. Use this Forum to discuss actions taken to reduce and deal with racial harassment, in the context of Good Practice Standards.

Key priority for housing 9

CREATING SAFE NEIGHBOURHOODS WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE

Safety continues to be a high priority for Worthing residents, featuring high on the priorities of those who responded to public consultation on Worthing's Community Strategy. Worthing is a comparatively safe town, with rates of crime and disorder below the national averages, but the fear of crime is a major factor in how people feel about where they live.

Housing and housing management play an important role in reducing crime and disorder. Work on community safety is co-ordinated through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Worthing was part of a successful bid for Beacon Council status in 2004 for its work on Community Safety and will now disseminate the good practice for which it won the award.

Making housing safer

The design of new housing areas can be critical to neighbourhood safety. The revised West Durrington Development Brief requires provision of youth facilities, leisure and recreational facilities, as well as seeking to "*minimise crime through the design and layout of the development*". The layout of the development will be discussed with the police to ensure that it is 'secure by design' to ensure that housing is well protected and cycle and walkways are safe.

We are also working to make our existing neighbourhoods safer. In smaller developments we work with our partner RSLs to ensure a broad mix of tenants, including those transferring from existing Housing Association properties, homeless families currently living in temporary accommodation, and other households in housing need. It can be helpful in some areas to include families with a record of successful tenancies and, in some cases, older children alongside new tenants with young families, many of whom may be single parents on low incomes. This also allows us to meet more people's housing needs as we can use the vacancies created by those transferring to re-house our homeless households and others in urgent housing need.

We are also working with Worthing Homes to address some of the problems identified in one particular area of East Worthing where there is a high concentration of affordable 1-bed properties. As those in the greatest housing need are often very vulnerable, this has led to a concentration of people with high support needs in one area. In particular new tenants who had previously had no fixed abode were moving in but unable to sustain tenancies over any length of time. We have begun to change the mix by using some of the properties for temporary accommodation for single parents with one young child on a short-term basis. We are also working with Worthing Homes and supported housing providers to use these properties for people who have already been through a supported housing programme and have some support available to them when they move to a permanent tenancy.

The importance of community development has also been highlighted. Housing Associations contribute funding for a Community Development project in Durrington, for example and our Local Strategic Partnership is developing local action teams to tackle environmental and neighbourhood concerns.

Making properties more secure is also a priority. In Worthing, Sussex Police recorded a 19% reduction in recorded burglary dwelling in 2003/04 compared to 2002/03. Central Ward had the highest level of recorded residential burglary, with 52 crimes, and Durrington the lowest, with only 15 recorded for the whole of 2003/04.

The Council has worked to improve security in more vulnerable dwellings, with grants to enhance security for flats within Houses in Multiple Occupation. We also developed the Security Action For the Elderly (SAFE) / Handyperson scheme in partnership with Anchor Trust, West Sussex County Council and Arun District Council. This scheme is run in association with the Staying Put scheme. The target is to carry out security improvements under the SAFE or SAFE Plus schemes for victims of crime, reducing repeat victimisation to less than 1%, and as a preventive measure for other vulnerable people, including elderly and disabled people.

Tackling Anti-social Behaviour

Sussex Police recorded 335 incidents classed as acts of Anti-Social Behaviour in Worthing between January and March 2004. Whilst incidents occurred throughout each ward, police incident data reveals the acts of Anti-Social Behaviour were clustered around 2 areas, namely the town centre (Central Ward) and Northbrook & Durrington Wards. The most common complaints were about the behaviour of young people -accounting for 58% of the Anti-Social Behaviour in Worthing, 194 out of the 335 incidents recorded.

The need to tackle anti-social behaviour has long been recognised as part of our work with local Housing Associations. An Anti-Social Behaviour working group was set up with Housing Associations and Community Safety officers to agree a protocol for dealing with anti-social behaviour and the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs). Between April 2003 and March 2004, one ASBO was made in Worthing and five ABCs. Applications to the courts for ASBOs and ABCs are likely to increase in the next few years placing new demands on our services.

In 2003/4 Worthing Borough Council employed an Anti-social Behaviour Officer shared with Adur District Council. This post was funded by contributions from local Housing Associations. The Council now employs its own dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, using some of these funds and a grant from the Home Office.

Racial Harassment

In Worthing, Sussex Police recorded 98 racist incidents between April 2003 and March 2004 compared with 78 incidents the previous year. They also recorded 60 racially aggravated crimes between April 2003 and March 2004 and detected 24 racially aggravated crimes. This equates to 22.2 racially aggravated crimes per 1000 ethnic minority population. The Council works closely with Community Safety Officers and the Racial Harassment Officer for West Sussex to monitor the incidence of racial harassment and work to reduce this in the Borough.

Domestic Violence

Between April 2003 and March 2004, Sussex Police recorded 6556 incidents of domestic violence in West Sussex. Of all Domestic Violence incidents recorded by Sussex Police, 18% (1200) of these incidents occurred within Worthing.

Worthing Borough Council's development work on Domestic Violence is channelled primarily through the West Sussex Domestic Violence Forum with members from the Women's Refuge project, Social and Caring Services; Housing Services; the Police and Special Investigation Unit; Probation; Victim Support; Educational Welfare; and the Primary Care Trust and Hospital Trust.

2004 saw the establishment of the Worth Project, a hospital based project, screening all pregnant women and those attending Accident and Emergency providing specialist support and referrals to those at risk. It is not possible yet to assess the impact on the numbers of those seeking assistance with accommodation. The local Women's Refuge maintains an emergency standby space free for anyone referred through this scheme.

We have also begun using the London Borough of Harrow's 'Sanctuary' model where appropriate, providing support and additional security (doors, safe room) in close liaison with the police and the Women's Refuge Project for those women who wish to return home.

Our Housing Options staff have started attending a multi-agency drop-in session at the Welcome In this year, along with the police, a social worker and a Victims' Support worker.

Housing dangerous offenders

The Council's Housing Services team works closely with the police and other members of the local Risk Assessment and Management group to ensure that dangerous offenders are housed in appropriate locations where they are least likely to represent any threat to the local community. We will continue to give this work a high priority.

Key Action Points

- Ensure plans for West Durrington are 'secure by design'
- Improve security in 30 Houses in Multiple Occupation from 2004/5 to 2005/6
- Improve security in 100 houses through the Security Action For the Elderly Scheme annually
- Develop sustainable lettings plans for new affordable housing schemes over 15 units
- Continue work with Registered Social Landlords, the Local Strategic Partnership and Local Action teams to address problems in neighbourhoods experiencing high levels of disorder and anti-social behaviour.
- Extend reporting of racial harassment and hate crimes
- Develop a 'Sanctuary' scheme in Worthing for women and families experiencing Domestic Violence who wish to return home

MAKING THE BEST USE OF OUR RESOURCES

This section outlines both recent and projected expenditure on housing in the Borough. Section 1 sets out recent capital expenditure on the provision of affordable housing and on repairs assistance and adaptations to our private sector homes. Section 2 shows our capital expenditure plans in 2004/5 and future years, and Section 3 examines the Council's housing revenue expenditure on service provision.

The Council transferred its housing stock to Worthing Homes in 1999 and no longer retains a Housing Revenue Account. All housing expenditure is managed within the Council's General Fund.

Section 1: Capital Expenditure

The Council's investment in housing is considered, as part of the capital programme, each autumn and is prioritised in line with the Council's Capital Strategy. The Cabinet recommends at its December meeting the overall programme to the Council.

In the 5 year period following the transfer of our stock to Worthing Homes, we spent £6.1m on Social Housing Grant contributing towards 215 completed homes and £1.7m on private sector renewal. On 1st April 2003 LASHG was abolished and new regional funding arrangements were established. Up to this date the Council had funded the provision of affordable housing almost entirely through LASHG. In June 2003 the Council agreed to invest its Right to Buy Clawback Receipts in affordable housing partnership schemes with Worthing Homes. A recommendation to commit Right to Buy Clawback Receipts to a wider range of housing capital uses will be taken to the Council's budget meeting in February 2005.

Actual Expenditure 2003/2004

Capital Expenditure 2003/4 Schemes	Funding Source	Budget £	Expenditure £	% Spend of Budget	Units/ Grants	Units Completed
Affordable Homes – Housing Corporation – figures provided by Housing Corporation.	ADP including Homebuy and transitional LASHG	456,391	1,123,000	246%*	12	39 **
	Starter Home Initiative	852,308	831,000	97.5%	40	39**
Worthing Borough Council	Right to Buy Clawback Receipts ***	510,630	0	0%	24	0**
Total units		£1,819,329	£1,954,000	107.4%	76	78
Disabled Facilities Mandatory Grants	60% Specified Capital Grant (Government)	243,200	262,573	108%	64	64
	40% Worthing Borough Council Capital Receipts	192,050	175,048	91%		
Private Sector Discretionary Grants	Capital Receipts £178,880 SRB £35,000 Seeboard £43,020	256,900	197,038	76.70%	204	204
Total grants		£692,150	£634,659	91.9%	268	268
TOTAL		£2,511,479	£2,588,659	103%	344	346

* Southern Housing attracted additional funding for Homebuy during the year. The Housing Corporation also paid for additional units through transitional LASHG funding

** Note : completions may be one or two years after the initial allocation is made. This accounts for variations between allocations and completions.

***This was one scheme which subsequently attracted funding through Worthing's Supported Capital Expenditure paid as grant by the Housing Corporation releasing the original Right to Buy allocation to be budgeted for other projects. The scheme began in April 2004.

- 29 new units were completed – 23 rented, 6 shared ownership compared with 37 planned
- 10 properties were acquired under Homebuy compared with 10 planned. 19 additional properties were acquired through the Sussex wide scheme run by Moat Housing Association.
- 39 properties were bought with Starter Home loans for key workers compared with 40 planned

Section 106 Agreements

Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Council is able to secure contributions, through the development of sites, to the provision of affordable housing. Section 106 agreements were completed on 3 sites:

- Litten Tree has provided a sum of £10,000 towards affordable housing
- 13-15 Mill Road provided 12 key worker units now let
- Warnes Hotel – site at 89 High Street and commuted sum of £135,000 secured

Section 2: Capital Expenditure plans for 2004/05 and Future Years

Options for funding new affordable housing

1. Re-invest the Right to Buy receipts in partnership schemes with Worthing Homes
2. Supported Capital Expenditure : In December 2003 the Government announced that debt-free authorities which currently pool their Credit Approvals could opt instead to receive these in the form of a housing capital grant through the Housing Corporation
3. Regional Housing Board (RHB) allocations paid direct to RSLs for their housing schemes.
4. Alternative means of procurement such as the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). PFI was explored in 2003/4 but is not suitable for Worthing schemes in its present form primarily for stock renewal on major sites. The Council will continue to consider this and other alternatives in future.
5. Allocate additional Council resources to provide direct grant assistance to RSLs operating in the Borough, through the annual capital bidding process, for consideration alongside other priorities for capital spending. Currently £1.6m of the Council's Capital Receipts is allocated each year to fund the Capital Investment Programme, plus £0.5m for Coast Protection Works each year.

Our priorities for investment in affordable housing

- The main priority is spending on building new affordable housing units. However, capital is also required to support the costs of adaptations, and a range of initiatives to improve access to housing and home ownership.
- Spending of Right to Buy Clawback on new affordable housing will be broadened out to include all our RSL development partners, and no longer restricted to Worthing Homes.
- We do not anticipate subsidising low cost home ownership options on section 106 sites, as we would expect these to be delivered without subsidy. We may consider subsidising rented units on section 106 sites and all forms of affordable housing on other sites.

Private Sector Renewal

The allocation of resources to private sector renewal has been subject to a major review in light of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order published in July 2002. A new Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy was agreed in July 2003. This established new Renovation Assistance loans of up to £10,000 for houses grossly unfit for habitation, and Repair Assistance loans of up to £5,000 for marginally unfit houses and houses in substantial disrepair, both repayable upon sale of the property. Grants up to a maximum of £2,000 for minor works remain largely unaltered. These include 'Staying Put' grants to the elderly and energy efficiency grants. The average grant in these programmes is £600. Some assistance will also be available in exceptional circumstances for projects which fall outside these main priorities such as Empty Properties and Houses in Multiple Occupation. Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are unchanged and are still funded 60% by Specified Capital Grant, subject to

a maximum prescribed by Government, and 40% by capital receipts. However, we will need to invest additional resources given the significant gap which has opened up between demand and the level of Specified Capital Grant allocated to Worthing.

Proposed Capital Expenditure 2004/05 and Future Years

The following table shows the analysis of spending between new affordable housing and investment in existing private sector housing under the priorities for housing investment for the years from 2004/05 to 2008/09. Figures in italics indicate that the sums are projected and are subject to decisions regarding funding for capital bids submitted for Council resources, Housing Corporation allocations and Department of Health Extra Care funding.

Housing Priorities	WBC Key Priorities	Funding Source	2004-05 £'000	2005-06 £'000	2006-07 £'000	2007-08 £'000	2008-09 £'000	Est. Units / Grants
New Affordable Housing	1,2,3,5,6,7,8	Housing Corporation – Supported Capital Expenditure converted to grant	1,183	1,260				64
	1,2,3,5,6,7,8	Worthing Borough Council - Right to Buy Clawback, Capital Receipts, commuted sums	3,128	2,241	941	915	700	199
	1,2,3,5,6,7,8	<i>Housing Corporation or other Worthing Borough Council Resources*</i>	0	2591	1984	1780	905	182
	1,2,5,6	<i>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH</i>		1,397				40
Total New Build			4,311	3,501+ 3,988	941+ 1,984	915+ 1,780	700+ 905	263 + 222
Private Sector Housing	4,9	Specified Capital Grant (Government)	240	264	270	270	270	1,314
		Single Regeneration Budget Capital Grants**	28	20	20	0	0	68
		Private Sector sources	29	15	15	15	15	89
		Capital Receipts	403	527	380	380	380	2,003

Total			700	826	685	665	665	3,474
TOTAL			5,011	4,327+ 3,988	941+ 2,669	915+ 2,445	2,270	3,959

- * Housing schemes which might be funded by the Housing Corporation or by Council resources. We will consider using commuted sums from section 106 sites as additional resources.
- ** Single Regeneration Budget funding under Round 6 with partners in neighbouring authorities and the voluntary sector. This is for a number of housing related services, including schemes to improve standards in Houses in Multiple Occupation and energy conservation, and the Security Action for the Elderly Scheme.

Additional Funding

To deliver our affordable housing targets - 70 rented and 70+ low cost home ownership units each year, a total of 700 over 5 years - we need to secure affordable housing with no subsidy from section 106 sites and ensure we maximise take-up of externally-run Homebuy and Keyworker Living Schemes. Even assuming we secure the external resources shown here to supplement our own programme, we will need to secure an additional 43 units each year through these options.

The Council will continue to support RSL bids for funding from the Regional Housing Board to meet regional and local priorities. These do not appear in the Council's own budget as they are paid directly from the Housing Corporation to the RSLs developing schemes. However, the Council plays a key role facilitating the development of these schemes, assisting with site identification and negotiations with private sector owners and developers, and ensuring the right mix of housing is secured.

The proposed development at West Durrington is a site of strategic importance in the South East and we are hoping that the Housing Corporation will be able to contribute some funding towards affordable housing on this site from regional funds. The Council is seeking 25% affordable and 5% low-cost housing through a section 106 agreement relating to this development. We are also seeking funding from the Department of Health for our proposed Extra Care scheme.

In addition to these resources, the Council will actively explore any opportunities for inward investment to support future housing capital projects and through its negotiations with developers.

Section 3: Revenue Budget

The revenue budget of the Council's services largely comprises staff costs and short-term projects. It is prioritised and managed through the setting of the Council's budget, considered by the Cabinet in the autumn. Monthly monitoring and re-allocation is undertaken to ensure that budgets are utilised and that they meet strategic objectives.

Revenue Expenditure

The Council's revenue expenditure in 2003/04 is analysed below.

<u>HOUSING SERVICES</u>	
Housing Advances	279,570
Homelessness	23,489
Housing Advice	177,877
Housing Benefits Administration	520,876
Housing Benefit Payments	626,489
Housing Standards – HMOs	53,403
Housing Strategy	91,857
Private Sector Housing Renewals	117,700
Registered Social Landlords	26,098
TOTAL	1,917,359

The above total compares with a total of £2,171,781 in 2002/03 and the decrease is mainly due to a fall of £73,457 in expenditure on Homelessness. This reduction was the direct result of a Spend to Save Policy which involved payment of repayable Rental Deposits and other initiatives, to assist people threatened with homelessness to secure accommodation.

Revenue funding : additional grants

In addition to funding through the Council's General Fund, including Council Tax, and subsidy for Housing Benefit, Worthing also received £48,200 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to support homelessness initiatives in 2003/04 and £48,000 in 2004/05. A grant of £48,000 has been allocated for 2005/06.

Worthing also received a Planning Delivery Grant of £376,634 2004/5 of which the majority was allocated to the costs of additional planning staff. £16,000 contributed to the costs of employing an Empty Properties Officer, £20,000 to additional costs of producing the new Local Development Framework, and £75,000 to consultants fees for a range of planning studies.

We also received funding from the Home Office of £133,532 in 2003/04 to support our work for safer communities and £254,308 in 2004/05 (including £25,000 for a post to tackle anti-social behaviour). We anticipate the same allocation for 2005/06 as in the current year.

No direct allocation was received for Supported Housing schemes as this funding is allocated through West Sussex County Council.

The budget for providing housing services 2004/05 is analysed below:

Housing Priorities	Key Priorities	2004-05
Homelessness	3	357,280
Housing Advances	3	13,940
Housing Advice	3 , 4	198,660
Housing Benefits Administration	2 , 3	575,870
Housing Benefit Payments	2 , 3	(256,490)
Housing Strategy	all	120,110
Private Sector Housing Renewal	4 , 9	120,840
Housing Standards HMOs	4 , 9	58,600
Registered Social Landlords	2 , 3	30,380
Community Safety Strategy	9	20,000
TOTAL		1,239,190

Supported Housing budgets

In addition, the Council commissions housing related support under the Supporting People programme in partnership with local authorities in West Sussex. The Supporting People Commissioning Body is responsible for a grant allocation of £16m to schemes throughout the county, including 74 in Worthing. Specific allocations will be based on a formula relating funding to levels of need. West Sussex is working on a range of responses

The allocation of Supporting People Grant for West Sussex in 2005/06 is £15,374,370, a reduction of £864,210 from the 2004/05 allocation. This represents a 5.32% reduction in cash terms, which after taking account of inflation is in excess of 8%. This follows a year where West Sussex Supporting People was unable to offer inflationary uplift to the schemes it funds.

Savings made during 2004/05 allow us to make up some of the reductions and offer an inflationary uplift at the start of 2005/06 of 2.5%. However, whilst there is scope to cover this in the immediate term through additional savings, we will need to identify significant savings in 2006/07 and beyond to maintain services at their current level. There are also indications of heavy reductions in the West Sussex budget in later years.

CONSULTING OUR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The fundamental drivers underlying this strategy were national, regional and local assessments of housing need and the views and aspirations of local service users and stakeholders. We invited comments from residents of Worthing, tenant representatives, landlords, lettings agents, public sector agencies, neighbouring authorities and voluntary sector organisations through our website, questionnaires, and a series of meetings. The initial draft was based on the views of stakeholders from workshops and focus groups held during 2003 and 2004. These established our key priorities and offered specific suggestions of ways forward. We set up focus groups to consider the specific needs of older people, disabled people, those with care needs, people from black and minority ethnic communities, tenants and landlords. Further feedback from residents was collected as part of the Community Strategy consultation from public consultation events and the Community Forum meetings held throughout the year in different parts of the town.

We built on these through discussions with colleagues in the Primary Care Trust, West Sussex Health & Social Care Trust, the County Council (Social & Caring Services and Supporting People) and the Local Strategic Partnership. The main fora we used were:

Key Priority 1 Ensuring a sustainable housing market

The Local Strategic Partnership housing group; Worthing RSL Development Forum

Key Priority 2 Meeting the need for affordable housing

The Local Strategic Partnership housing group; Worthing RSL Development Forum

Key Priority 3 Tackling homelessness

Worthing Homelessness Forum; The Local Strategic Partnership housing group; Worthing RSL Management Forum

Key Priority 4 Renewal and Regeneration

Worthing RSL Development Forum; West Sussex Planning and Affordable Housing Group; Sussex Private Sector Housing Forum; Homelessness Forum; the Empty Properties Working Group; Sussex Empty Homes Forum

Key Priority 5 Meeting the needs of older people

Adur, Arun and Worthing Interagency Housing Group; West Sussex Supporting People; Worthing Local Planning Group

Key Priority 6 Addressing housing support needs

Adur, Arun and Worthing Interagency Housing Group; West Sussex Supporting People; Worthing Local Planning Group; the Adur, Arun and Worthing Supported Housing Forum

Key Priority 7 Supporting the housing needs of key workers

Worthing Local Strategic Partnership; West Sussex Planning and Affordable Housing Forum; Worthing's employers

Key Priority 8 Meeting Black and Minority Ethnic housing needs

Worthing Community Equalities Group

Key Priority 9 Creating safe neighbourhoods where people want to live

The Local Strategic Partnership housing group; Worthing RSL Development Forum; Adur and Worthing RSL Management Forum; Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group; Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

Additionally, we drew on public consultation carried out as part of the development of related strategies, including those developed by the Empty Properties Working Group, West Sussex Domestic Violence Forum West Sussex People with Learning Difficulties partnership; Adur,

Arun and Worthing Housing Needs Forum; West Sussex Drug and Alcohol partnership; West Sussex Home Energy Conservation Group. We also discussed detailed needs and plans with operational managers and commissioning managers working with mental health service users, people with learning difficulties, older people, physically disabled/sensory impaired people, children and young people.

In July 2004 we presented the results of the Housing Needs Survey to stakeholders and discussed priorities and options for addressing these. We then drafted this Strategy and, following discussions with the Government Office for the South East, circulated it amongst stakeholders for further comment.

Finally, we carried out a formal impact assessment to ensure that the strategy had no adverse impact on equalities and presented it to the Community Equalities Group.

INVOLVING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Housing and Planning Officers from the Council play an active part in Worthing Together, our Local Strategic Partnership. Throughout the year we worked on the development of housing related aims and action plans for the Community Strategy, along with RSL and voluntary sector colleagues through a housing sector group. Central to this work were the views of residents collected through Community Forum meetings. We also took part in the launch of the Interim Community Strategy talking to residents about any housing related issues.

Local residents also supported the development of this strategy through their responses to the Housing Needs Survey and the House Condition Survey. We also took account of the views expressed in our customer satisfaction surveys.

A strong message from this work and recent public meetings on West Durrington is the urgent need for affordable housing in the area. Whilst local people are concerned about the impact of new housing on the environment, there is a strong message that more housing is needed, both rented and for sale, but must be targeted at local residents and their children, and affordable to those on low to middle incomes.

We also took account of the views collected in the course of developing other reports and strategies, such as the reality check interviews carried out as part of the Homelessness Strategy development and consultation with users of Supported Housing services.

As well as the Housing Needs Survey and House Condition Survey, we carried out a number of specific pieces of research ourselves to underpin the strategy, and drew on existing local research. We wrote to all employers of key workers, including individual schools, and to the larger private sector employers in the town. We also surveyed rents and sale prices by writing to local lettings and estate agents.

REVIEWING AND IMPROVING OUR PERFORMANCE

How well are we performing?

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

Worthing Borough Council's CPA inspection was completed in January 2003. The Council was assessed as 'Fair'. Its performance 'Balancing Housing Markets' was judged to be 'Good' overall. Criticisms relating to a lack of housing needs data in relation to the general market, private sector house conditions and key worker housing needs have all been addressed over the last year. The Council was found to have exceeded targets on the supply of new housing but urged to set more challenging targets. The targets we have set in this Strategy are significantly more ambitious than previous targets.

The Action Plan set out on the following pages provides a range of challenging targets and milestones against which our performance can be judged. This plan will provide the main basis for monitoring our progress delivering this strategy. We have bi-monthly meetings with Council Members and senior officers to continue developing our strategic priorities and targets, and oversee the implementation of this Strategy.

We will publish quarterly updates showing progress against our targets and milestones on our website so that local residents and stakeholders can review our progress. We will review the strategy and action plan annually to take accounts of changes in the national and local housing markets, and ensure our priorities and targets are still relevant.

In addition we report quarterly to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress on Best Value Performance Indicators, Community Strategy Actions and our Key Improvement Priorities. Our progress on these is regularly published on our website.

We also report quarterly to the Cabinet member for Community Development and Housing on:

- completions of affordable housing and progress on schemes in development
- homelessness prevention, applications and acceptances
- placements in Bed & Breakfast accommodation and the costs of this
- applications to the Housing Register and lettings of affordable housing
- private sector renewal activities, assistance, inspections and enforcement
- progress on bringing empty properties back into use
- the use of Disabled Facilities Grants.

We report annually on progress against our Local Plan targets covering density of new housing, the percentage of new housing on brownfield sites and the percentage of affordable housing achieved. Monthly Capital Monitoring reports track spending on budgets for capital items.

Council officers meet regularly with individual RSL development partners to monitor their progress on the development of new schemes and planning for future developments. We also have regular meetings on housing management issues with senior management staff at Worthing Homes. Most recently we have introduced discussion and comparison of performance against key performance indicators as a regular feature of RSL Management Forum meetings.

MONITORING THE STRATEGY - Housing Strategy Action Plan - Summary of Targets and Milestones

Key Priorities and targets	Milestones				
	2004/5/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Ensuring a sustainable housing market					
Deliver a minimum of 800 new homes at West Durrington	Delivery of initial units - 200	200	200	200	
Deliver a minimum of 160 homes up to 2006 on allocated sites	32	32	32	32	32
Deliver 80 homes on Site H5					80
Bring forward the development of Teville Gate for mixed use including residential	Begin redevelopment				
Target delivery of 290 new homes per year as per the Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan and deliver Action Plan to secure these	290	290	290	290	290
Maximise densities on new sites exceeding the current average of 53 dwellings per hectare	53+ per hectare	53+ per hectare	53+ per hectare	53+ per hectare	53+ per hectare
Deliver Local Development Framework to schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Development Opportunities Document Preparation of Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 	Adopt Affordable Housing Document	Adopt Development Opportunities Document		
Bring minimum of 50 properties back into residential use annually	50	50	50	50	50
Meeting the need for affordable housing					
Deliver a minimum of 70 affordable rented units per year	70	70	70	70	70
Promote opportunities for low cost home ownership and develop shared ownership options Target 70 new affordable low cost home ownership units per year, including 10 sales per year through Homebuy and Key Worker Living for Worthing residents	Identify resources to promote and develop low cost home ownership options 70	70	70	70	70
Prioritise smaller units with a preference for 2 and 3-bedroom properties	15 x 1-bed units 100 x 2-bed units 25 x 3-bed units	15 x 1-bed 100 x 2-bed 25 x 3-bed	15 x 1-bed 100 x 2-bed 25 x 3-bed	15 x 1-bed 100 x 2-bed 25 x 3-bed	15 x 1-bed 100 x 2-bed 25 x 3-bed

Tackling Homelessness					
Reduce number of households in temporary accommodation by 10% from 169 at 31 st March 2004	164 at 31 st March 2006	161	158	155	152
Review standard of Emergency Temporary Accommodation	Complete review by Summer 2005				
Reduce average time spent in temporary accommodation from 67 weeks in 2003/4 by 10%	64 by 31 st March 2006	62	60	58	56
Facilitate development of a supported housing scheme for single homeless people with substance misuse problems	Secure capital and revenue – 2005/6	Target date to launch project December 2005			
Develop links between local authority and private sector landlords	Launch private sector forum 2005	Assess potential of joint forum with Adur and establish if appropriate			
Support the development of a Common Assessment tool to co-ordinate support services to homeless people	Fund initial project development 2005/6	Establish Common Assessment tool			
Renewal and Regeneration					
Bring 40 unfit properties up to a reasonable standard each year	40	40	40	40	40
Bring 25 houses in substantial disrepair up to a reasonable standard	25	25	25	25	25
Complete 125 'care and repair' projects on behalf of elderly or vulnerable clients	25	25	25	25	25
Improve standards in 10 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) through assistance	5	5			
Improve standards in 20 HMOs through ongoing inspections and enforcement	10	10			
Complete 180 HMO inspections each year targeting on a risk assessed priority basis	180	180	180	180	180
Improve energy efficiency ratings by 2% per year between 2005 and 2011	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Allocate 90 fuel poverty grants annually to older and more vulnerable residents	90	90	90	90	90
Meeting the needs of older people					
Develop Extra Care housing in rented and leasehold properties	Identify funding for 40 extra care units	Complete 40 units 2005/6			
Extend and promote the use of communications technology to allow people to live more independently.	Financial support to updated Care Line equipment Review Community Alarm Service				
Upgrade older people's housing		Develop action plan covering sheltered schemes 2005/6			

Addressing housing support needs					
Develop housing options for people with learning difficulties moving from residential care over 10 year programme	Establish special needs panel with Adur and Arun District Councils 2004/5				
Enable minimum of 10% wheelchair accessible housing in affordable housing	8	8	8	8	8
Set up an Adapted Housing Register and database of adapted housing to maximise use of existing ground floor, adapted, and accessible housing	Recruit initial project manager 2004/5;	Identify funding, commission provider and develop IT and database 2005/6			
Meeting Black and Minority Ethnic housing needs					
Complete review of BME Housing Strategy	By March 2005				
Supporting the housing needs of key workers					
Develop shared housing for 60 hospital staff	30	20	10		
Ensure take-up of 10 Key Working Living subsidies annually	10	10	10	10	10
Assist 5 key workers annually through new low cost market housing units	5	5	5	5	5
Creating safe neighbourhoods where people want to live					
Improve security in 30 Houses in Multiple Occupation	15	15	Identify funding to extend scheme if needed		
Improve security in 100 houses through the Security Action For the Elderly Scheme	100	100	100	100	100

UPDATING THE STRATEGY

Worthing Borough Council is keen to ensure that this Housing Strategy is a living document that is used as a tool to drive our work forward. Officers from Health and Housing Services, the Strategic Planning and Housing team, Planning Services and Financial Services meet regularly with the Cabinet Member for Community Development and Housing and her Policy Advisor to discuss progress against the action plan, and to consider any concerns and issues as they arise. This group also discusses the strategic implications of any new legislation and other policy developments which may affect the Council's ability to deliver on its commitments. Resources are reviewed along with options for developing and improving services.

Over the last year discussions have included the implications of the abolition of Local Authority Social Housing Grant; a review of the use of Right to Buy Clawback; the ODPM's housing statement on Sustainable Communities; the impact of changes to the way private sector renewal is funded; and the Interim South East Regional Housing Strategy.

We will conduct a major review of our performance each summer, reporting to our partners and other stakeholders on progress against our targets, and reviewing our priorities and targets. These reviews will also take account of the feedback we have had from customers and other stakeholders, and of new legislation, government guidance and regional priorities, and changes in the Council's own local policies. We will publish an annual update on the Housing Strategy outlining the major changes, summarising our performance against each key priority and the action plan, and showing updated targets.

Glossary of terms and acronyms

Use of planning system / section 106 agreements / s106

Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Council is able to secure contributions, through the development of sites, to the provision of affordable housing.

RSL Registered Social Landlord – Housing Association, Trust or other type of provider of affordable housing, regulated by the Housing Corporation

LASHG

Local Authority Social Housing Grant – this was grant from the Housing Corporation for expenditure on affordable housing which, when the Council became debt free, could be recycled. In effect this meant that the Council could spend its own capital resources on affordable housing and receive the equivalent sum 'recycled' from the Housing Corporation for spending on other capital schemes. This grant was abolished in March 2003

Transitional LASHG

This was grant paid directly to RSLs during the year immediately following the abolition of LASHG, to ensure that schemes which were already in progress could be delivered. This is no longer available.

ADP Approved Development Programme. This is funding allocated and paid to RSLs for affordable housing by the Housing Corporation. This is now overseen by a Regional Housing Board and by the Officer of the Deputy Prime Minister to ensure that national and regional strategic targets are met. There are now two ways in which this funding is allocated : through the 'traditional route' where RSLs bid for subsidy for individual schemes; and through the Partnering Programme Agreements (PPAs) where the Housing Corporation enters into a longer-term partnering arrangement with an individual RSL to deliver a package of schemes.

RTB / clawback

Right to Buy. The Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) agreement relating to the sale of Worthing Borough Council's housing stock to Worthing Homes agreed that a percentage of the receipts from the sale of former Council properties under the Right to Buy programme would be clawed back by the Council, and a percentage retained by Worthing Homes. The current agreement with Worthing Homes commits both parties to investing their portion of these receipts into new affordable housing development. Right to Buy Clawback is the element currently received by Worthing Borough Council.

PFI Private Finance Initiative. A scheme whereby the Government supports annual payments to private companies contracted to carry out major renewal and regeneration over a 30 year period.

APPENDIX A TARGETS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2003 / 4

Housing Aim	TARGET	Progress
Meeting the need for affordable housing	Deliver 22 new affordable housing units through use of Right to Buy receipts	23 units for rent completed
		6 units for shared ownership completed
		10 loans taken up through Homebuy scheme and 39 through Starter Home Initiative
Tackling homelessness	No placements of families in Bed & Breakfast for more than 6 weeks	Achieved November 2003
	Reduce repeat rate of homelessness by 5%	Achieved
	Reduce homelessness against main causes by 5%	Achieved
Addressing housing support needs	Scheme for 10 new housing units for learning disabled people and those with mental health problems to start on site	Achieved Scheme completed October 2004
	Complete an assessment of the housing needs of older people in Worthing	Needs assessed. Draft Strategy for Adur, Arun and Worthing in hand
	Help identify site and funding for scheme for 12 single homeless people with substance misuse problems	Site identified. Charitable fundraising hampered by lack of match funding from any statutory agency to date
Renewal and regeneration	Bring 40 unfit properties up to a reasonable standard and 25 houses in substantial disrepair up to a reasonable standard	Achieved
	Bring a minimum of 25 Houses in Multiple Occupation up to an approved standard	Scheme delayed
	Bring 30 empty properties back into use	36 brought back into use
	Improve energy efficiency of Worthing's housing stock by 2% per year	1.5%

**KEY IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES (WBC KPI) AND BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (BVPI)
2003/4 AND 2004/5**

Performance Indicator		Target 2003/4	Outturn 2003/4	Milestone / Target 2004/5
Housing and Homelessness				
WBC KPI	Improve the delivery of housing generally in the borough, including the provision of high quality, affordable and key worker housing	New target	New target	Implement Housing Delivery Action Plan
WBC KPI	The proportion of homeless application on which the authority makes a decision and issues written notification to the applicant within 33 days.	New target	91.6%	93%
WBC KPI	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority	New target	New target	Up to 10
WBC KPI	The percentage change in the average number of families, which include dependent children or a pregnant woman, placed in temporary accommodation under the homelessness legislation compared with the average from the previous year	New target	New target	5%
BVPI 62	The proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit or demolished as a result of action by the local authority	3.33%	3%	3.33%
BVPI 64	The number of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during 2003/4 as a direct result of action taken by the local authority	30	36	50
BVPI 183a	The average length of stay (weeks) in bed and breakfast accommodation of households, which include dependant children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need *	New target	17.34	10
Planning				
BVPI 106	The % of new homes on previously developed land	90	100	45.2

* Note : this Best Value Performance Indicator reflects the length of stay in B&B of families who have moved to permanent housing during the year, and thus reflects typical length of stay in B&B during 2002/3 rather than 2003/4. The position improved dramatically during 2003/4 with no families staying in B&B longer than 6 weeks from November 2004.

Appendix B – see attached PDF

Appendix C WEST SUSSEX SUPPORTED HOUSING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

All local authorities in West Sussex and their partner organisations are working towards a comprehensive strategy for housing related support across the County, with the active participation of the Health community, Social and Caring Services and the Probation service. We aim to encompass the needs of all client groups and make the best use of all funding resources.

It is our belief that the majority of people who need housing related support can be accommodated very satisfactorily in ordinary housing, in ordinary residential areas, whether in self-contained or shared accommodation. In many cases this may be within their existing housing, but with the introduction of a degree of support as required. Individuals should be able to exercise influence and choice, wherever possible, regarding their home setting. Our long-term aim is to provide as comprehensive a service as possible, available to users regardless of geographical location, tenure, level of need or ability to pay, in so far as this can be achieved within the resources available to us. We wish to develop more preventative, lower intensity services which offer high quality support and value for money.

We are aiming to produce a Strategy for Housing with Support in West Sussex by the end of March 2005. The Strategy is being developed through the Supporting People programme, which is administered locally by the Supporting People Team in West Sussex County Council. Decisions on strategy and commissioning are taken by the Supporting People Commissioning Board, made up of representatives of each of the local authority partners, the Primary Care Trusts and of the Probation Service. Service providers and users are consulted on a regular basis through the Coastal Supported Housing Forum, the North Sussex Supported Housing Forum and the Providers' Forum, as well as local stakeholder groups and individual discussions.

The Strategy will be based on a long-term vision and agreed commissioning priorities, and on an analysis of current needs and supply. It will be updated annually as our understanding of needs and supply improves, and we collect more information from our reviews of current services.

The Matrix below sets out our current priorities for Worthing based on our current understanding of needs and supply. These are the priorities emerging from the 1st stage of the work on needs analysis and will be built into the Supporting People strategy and refined over time. Meanwhile, given the fact that we are not in a position to commission new services, our target is to bring all SP funded services up to level C of the Quality Assurance Framework by the end of 2004/5. We will also be inviting proposals for a small development fund. These might include pump-priming new schemes, for example, or small pilot projects.

PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3	OTHER NEEDS
Extra Care	Substance and alcohol misuse	Homelessness	Mental Health; Physical disability; Offenders Domestic Violence

Source: Draft Strategy for Housing and Support in West Sussex 2005/6

APPENDIX D PRIVATE SECTOR RENEWAL POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Poor quality housing has an adverse impact on the health and well being of occupiers. It can also have wider economic and social effects.
- 1.2 The Council's Housing Strategy recognises the importance of improving the quality of housing across all tenures in order to protect and to improve health and quality of life. It also acknowledges that the local housing stock is an asset to protect and enhance for future generations of Worthing residents.
- 1.3 This policy supports the aims of the Council's Housing Strategy, and in particular sets out to:
 - i) reduce the number of properties that are unfit for habitation or in substantial disrepair, through a combination of encouragement, enforcement and financial assistance.
 - ii) facilitate work with Anchor Staying put Agency to assist the elderly to maintain or adapt their own homes so that they may continue to live independently for as long as they wish.
 - iii) improve the energy efficiency of homes, particularly those occupied by vulnerable people experiencing fuel poverty.
 - iv) Enable owners to bring empty properties back into use.
 - v) Provide financial assistance to those residents living in the worst housing conditions and in the greatest need.
 - vi) Deliver a high quality value for money private sector housing service working in partnership with others to improve the health and well-being of residents in Worthing.
- 1.4 It is the primary responsibility of home owners to maintain their own properties. Whenever owners can afford to undertake repairs and maintenance using their own resources they will be encouraged to do so. Home owners should wherever possible utilise equity in their property before making any calls on public funds.
- 1.5 The Council will, however, provide a 'safety net' to assist the vulnerable and poorer home owners who are not in a position to help themselves, with essential repairs or adaptations, in cases which accord with the Council's priorities set out in the Housing Strategy and this policy.
- 1.6 The Council in partnership with the Anchor Staying Put Agency, will assist elderly and vulnerable owners who are eligible for assistance in preparing application and specifications, obtaining estimates, etc. The Council will also provide general advice on home maintenance.
- 1.7 The Council aims to make the best use of the limited funds available to improve the quality of housing in the Borough.

2. **LOAN FINANCE**

- 2.1 Most home owners in the South East Region of the country have considerable equity in their homes and can be expected to borrow money to pay for housing works themselves.
- 2.2 The Council will work with other local authorities and bodies to secure private finance and to facilitate affordable borrowing. The Council will also scrutinise new loan products and schemes as they become available, but will not provide detailed advice within the terms the Financial Services Act.
- 2.3 Home owners will be directed to independent financial advisors and existing commercial lending organisations in appropriate circumstances.
- 2.4 In some cases loan finance is inappropriate, for instance where there is insufficient equity in a property or where the amount required is too small to justify arranging a secured loan. When the Council is satisfied loan finance is not available and subject to conditions, the Council will make available the following forms of assistance.

3. **RENOVATION ASSISTANCE**

- 3.1 Renovation Assistance may be approved for works required to make a property fit for habitation, repayable on disposal of the property (see paragraph 3.12 below).
- 3.2 Applications will be determined by the Assistant Director (Health and Housing Services) and will be targeted to the worst cases of unfit housing in the Borough where there is a demonstrable risk to health and safety.
- 3.3 Assistance will be considered in respect of vulnerable owner/occupiers and tenants with a repairing obligation across the whole of the Borough in accordance with an equity assessment, priority points system and a means test.
- 3.4 All applicants will be means tested using the method in DTLR Circular 03/2002 and subsequent amendments.
- 3.5 Applicants must have owned and occupied a dwelling for at least 3 years prior to an application. This occupancy condition may be waived in respect of properties which have been empty for at least 12 months.
- 3.6 Assistance will be available for dwellings including self contained flats where the points system is applied to the dwelling, but not to the common parts or other areas of the building, and not for mobile homes.
- 3.7 The equity in the property must be less than the cost of the eligible works plus £20,000 for an application to be considered for financial assistance or the applicant must provide satisfactory evidence that they are unable to fund the works through loan or other financial options.
- 3.8 Renovation Assistance will pay for works required to make a property fit for habitation. A schedule of works will be prepared which will include all works to ensure a property is made fit and should require no additional works (other than maintenance and decoration) for the next ten years.

3.9 Wherever possible and feasible the schedule will include the following energy efficiency works:

- ◆ Loft insulation up to 10"
- ◆ Cavity wall insulation
- ◆ Insulation of water tanks and pipes

3.10 Where the applicant is eligible for a Warm Front Grant or other Government funded insulation grant, this source of funding will be fully explored before utilising Council resources.

3.11 The normal maximum Renovation Assistance will be £10,000. The total amount of assistance per dwelling will not exceed £10,000 over a ten year period, other than in exceptional circumstances.

3.12 All Renovation Assistance will be registered as a local land charge and must be repaid when there is a change of ownership, in accordance with criteria as set out in this policy.

4. **REPAIR ASSISTANCE**

4.1 Where a property is marginally unfit but does not reach the priority points level for RENOVATION ASSISTANCE or is not unfit but is in substantial disrepair and is likely to become unfit within 5 years an applicant will be considered for REPAIR ASSISTANCE provided they are in receipt of a means tested benefit (i.e. income support, housing benefit, income based jobseeker's allowance or working tax credit). REPAIR ASSISTANCE is intended to deal with the most serious items of disrepair. It will be repayable on disposal of the property (see paragraph 4.4 below).

4.2 The 3 year occupancy pre-qualifying period will normally apply but may be waived in cases where the property has been empty for more than 12 months.

4.3 The normal maximum Repair Assistance will be £5,000. Grant Officers will prioritise works if not all of the eligible works can be funded. The total amount of Repair Assistance per dwelling will normally not exceed £5,000 over a five year period.

4.4 All Repair Assistance will be registered as a local land charge and must be repaid when there is a change of ownership, in accordance with criteria specified in this policy.

4.5 Wherever possible and feasible, the schedule will include the following energy efficiency works:

- ◆ Loft insulation up to 10"
- ◆ Cavity wall insulation
- ◆ Insulation of water tanks and pipes

4.6 Where an applicant is eligible for a Warm Front Grant or other Government funded insulation grant, this source of funding will be fully explored before utilising Council resources

5. **STAYING PUT GRANTS**

- 5.1 Staying Put Grants will be available to persons over 65 years of age and in receipt of a means tested benefit (income support, housing benefit, council tax benefit or disability working allowance).
- 5.2 Staying Put Grants are for minor repairs, improvements or adaptations considered necessary to ensure that an elderly person can stay put in their own homes and live independently for as long as they wish. Examples of eligible works include:-
- ◆ Minor roof and gutter repairs to make a property wind and weather-tight
 - ◆ Replacement of windows which are beyond economic repair – decayed, rotted or in an advanced state of disrepair.
 - ◆ The provision of heating in a main living room or bedroom where there is no existing provision.
 - ◆ Replacement of obsolete boilers
 - ◆ Basic security measures (e.g. fitting window locks to the ground floor or more effective locks to front/rear entrance doors, etc)
- 5.3 Staying Put Grants will be offered up to a maximum of £2,000 and will be available to home owners and tenants. The total amount of Staying Put Grant paid per dwelling will not normally exceed £4,000 over a five year period. Applicants must have occupied the dwelling for at least one year prior to application. In the case of tenanted dwellings, only work for which the landlord is not responsible will be eligible.

6. **ENERGY EFFICIENCY GRANTS**

- 6.1 In order to tackle fuel poverty in Worthing and to improve the energy efficiency of residential premises, energy efficiency grants will be available during a three year single regeneration budget project. The project is jointly funded by SEEBOARD Energy and The Worthing Community Partnership.
- 6.2 The grants are available throughout the Borough to persons over 60 whose main income is the state pension. Priority is given to those applicants living in Heene, Selden and Central Wards, in accordance with deprivation indices.
- 6.3 Grants are up to a maximum of £1,000 and eligible works are:
- ◆ Loft insulation up to 10”
 - ◆ Cavity wall insulation
 - ◆ Insulation of water tanks and pipes
- 6.4 Where an application is eligible for Warm Front Grant, or other Government funded insulation grant this source of funding will be fully explored before utilising Council resources for energy measures.

7. **HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) GRANT**

- 7.1 A grant is available during a 3 year single regeneration budget project to improve town centre houses in multiple occupation. The project is jointly funded by the Worthing Community Partnership.
- 7.2 Landlords of town centre HMOs containing more than six bedsits may apply for grant funding to improve the ratio of shared facilities (baths, showers, basin, toilets) in the premises and to improve security and energy efficiency.
- 7.3 The project results from joint working with Sussex Police, Worthing Community Partnership, West Sussex Energy Efficiency Advice Centre and Anchor 'Staying Put' Worthing.
- 7.4 Grant assistance up to 66% of the total cost of eligible works will be considered in appropriate cases, normally a maximum of £10,000 per grant.

8. **ASSISTANCE OUTSIDE NORMAL POLICY**

- 8.1 Assistance outside the policies set out in paragraphs 3 to 7 above will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Assistant Director (Health and Housing Services).
- 8.2 Although they will not be allocated a high priority, the following types of application may be considered subject to the necessary funding being available.
- 8.3 **EMPTY PROPERTY GRANTS.** Up to 50% of the cost of eligible works to a maximum of £8,000 may be considered for properties in serious disrepair or unfit and empty for a minimum of 12 months.
- 8.4 On completion of the works, the property must be in a good lettable condition and the property must be subject to nomination rights by the Council for a period of not less than 5 years.
- 8.5 Grants are not normally repayable unless the grant conditions are broken, including breaches of the letting contract. Empty Property Grants will be registered as a local land charge and the grant conditions will remain in force for a period of 5 years following completion of the work.
- 8.6. **HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) AND COMMON PARTS GRANT.** Grants are not normally available for HMOs or common parts within HMOs with the exception of the single regeneration budget project grants outlined in paragraph 7 of this policy.
- 8.7 **DISCRETIONARY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG'S).** The Council will provide mandatory DFGs in accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 but will not normally provide discretionary DFGs.
- 8.8 Disabled persons enquiring about assistance for works outside the scope of mandatory DFGs will be referred to W.S.C.C. Social Services Department, who may have obligations under The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

8.9 RELOCATION ASSISTANCE. If a home owner is eligible for financial assistance under this policy but their existing home is unsuitable and relocation offers a better alternative then financial assistance of up to £5,000 may be available towards the costs of moving.

8.10 Relocation assistance would be registered as a local land charge and repayable upon completion of the move.

9. **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

9.1 This policy will come into effect on 18 July 2003 or as soon after this date as the required notifications and advertisements have been completed. The policy will be subject to ongoing monitoring and will be reviewed after 12 months from the commencement date, unless there is some event, consideration or legislation change that necessitates an earlier review.

9.2 Any significant changes to the policy will be publicised in accordance with the Housing Renewal Guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

9.3 The Council will consider any grant application in accordance with the previous policy, provided it is complete by no later than 18 July 2003. Any grant application that is not complete by 18 July 2003 will be refused and the applicant advised in accordance with this policy.

APPENDIX E

Who contributed to this Strategy

Thanks to the following organisations and umbrella groups who took part in discussions throughout 2003/2004 in the development of this Strategy:

Ability Housing Association
Adur and Worthing RSL Management Forum
Adur, Arun and Worthing Interagency Housing Forum
Adur, Arun and Worthing Supported Housing Forum
Adur, Arun and Worthing teaching Primary Care Trust
Adur District Council
Arun District Council
Chichester Diocesan Housing Association
David Couttie Associates
Downland Group
Government Office for the South East
Hanover Housing Association
Housing Corporation
Michael Howard Associates
Raglan Housing Association
Servite Houses
Sheltered Housing providers in Worthing
Southern Housing Group
Supported Housing providers in Worthing
Sussex Probation
West Sussex Health and Social Care Trust
West Sussex Social & Caring Services
West Sussex Supporting People team
Worthing and Southlands Hospital Trust
Worthing Churches Homeless Projects
Worthing Homelessness Forum
Worthing Citizens Advice Bureau
Worthing CVS
Worthing Homes
Worthing Local Planning Group
Worthing Together

APPENDIX F

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