

Housing Strategy 2005-2010

Reviewed December 2007-March 2008

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SECTION 1 ~ INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is a Housing Strategy and how does it Work?

The Local Government Act 2003 requires us to develop and regularly review a long-term plan for housing of all tenures across the District. A good Housing Strategy must therefore look ahead and understanding changes in population, society and the economy. The Strategy must fit with national, regional and local policies and plans, and with the needs and priorities of the community, partners and other key stakeholders involved with the delivery of housing and related services.

A number of new issues and priorities have emerged nationally, regionally and locally since we produced our last Housing Strategy in 2002. This Strategy provides an overview of these issues and sets out how we plan to respond to them over the next five years. Four priority areas for action have been identified with our partners and a range of actions and targets (detailed in the Action Plan set out in Appendix 1) have been established to ensure that the Strategy is implemented and monitored effectively and that resources are directed to meet the most pressing needs of the District. This strategy has been assessed and passed as 'Fit for Purpose' by Government Office for the South East (GOSE).

As the main driver for housing planning and service delivery, the Strategy is about much more than just bricks and mortar; it reflects the wider demographic, social and environmental components that are essential to create communities that are truly sustainable and to ensure that everyone has access to decent, affordable housing in decent surroundings.

1.2 Progress since our last Housing Strategy

In developing this Housing Strategy, as well as part of our preparation for Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) a Housing Quality Improvement Project (HQIP) was undertaken as part of the Council's Best Value Service Review Programme for 2003/2004. Approved by the Council's Cabinet in June 2003, the project investigated six main areas. These were:

- The Council's Housing Stock
- Affordable Housing
- Homelessness
- Housing Conditions in the Private Sector
- Empty Homes; and
- Design and Modern Methods of Construction.

The HQIP project provided impetus to develop a number of new housing related initiatives and service improvements including:

- Increased resources for Private Sector Housing; Production of a Housing Assistance Policy, Private Sector Housing and Empty Homes and Derelict Property Strategies, and the declaration of a Neighbourhood Renewal Area
- Appraisal of management and ownership options for the Council's housing stock
- Review of Registered Social Landlord (RSL) development partnership and specific targets agreed for the provision of new affordable housing in urban and rural areas
- Completion, adoption and implementation of a Homelessness Strategy
- Securing funding from the Homelessness Directorate to support the development of a Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme in partnership with Avenue Lettings
- Adopting a 'spend to save' approach to homelessness prevention including the establishment of a new Housing Options Team and development of a comprehensive rent deposit scheme.

Our approaches to homelessness and private sector housing in particular have fundamentally changed since our last housing strategy. The Council has also taken the decision, following a detailed options appraisal, to retain its housing stock in the knowledge that it can deliver and sustain for its tenants, a programme of investment that goes well beyond the minimum Decent Homes Standard. Other significant improvements in our landlord services relate to repairs and maintenance services, improving information and access for customers and tenant participation. In addition, the supply of affordable housing has been increased and a range of support services have been developed to assist more vulnerable members of the community to access and sustain appropriate accommodation.

More details of our recent achievements are shown in the section of the strategy covering our priorities (pages 20 to 32) and in Appendix 15. Performance against key housing related indicators is shown in Appendix 13.

1.3 A Picture of Shepway

Location and Links

Shepway District covers some 140 square miles on the channel coast of South East Kent. Its diverse natural geography encompasses chalk downland, a complex coastline and the distinctive lowland of the Romney Marsh. Some 75 miles from London, Shepway bestrides the vital transport artery of the M20 corridor with the Channel Tunnel and Lydd Airport providing gateways to and from continental Europe.

Shepway's Communities

The majority of Shepway's 96,800 residents are concentrated around the towns of Folkestone and Hythe, but there are also sizeable settlements at Hawkinge, Lydd and New Romney and along the coastal strip. Shepway has the third fastest growing population in Kent, which is predicted to grow to 107,100 by 2011, and to 123,500 by 2026. This increase is consistently driven by migration rather than natural change. The make up of households is changing as well with an increase of 4.7% in the number of single person households between 1991 and 2001. This also has an impact upon the average number of people per household, which is predicted to be 2.14 by 2011 compared to 2.29 in 2001.

A traditionally attractive area for retirement, the district has a more elderly population (26% of whom are aged 65 or over) compared with 18 per cent nationally and an average of 16 per cent for all Kent districts. The proportion of younger people is also increasing with 24% of the population currently aged under 20.

Making up just 2.71% of the local population, Black and ethnic minority people are under represented compared to regional and national averages. This compares to an average of more than 6 per cent for England (Census 2001). However, this represents a significant increase, having more than doubled over 10 years (1.1% ~ 1991 Census).

The Local Economy

Despite having fallen sharply in recent years, unemployment currently stands at 2.6%. This is the second highest in Kent, after Thanet and higher than both the national average (2.4%) and the average for Kent (1.9%) ~ (Office for National Statistics July 2005). Average wage levels are relatively low

reflecting a disproportionate dependence on jobs in the primary and public service sectors. Some 57.9% of the districts population have an annual household income of less than the national average (£23,000).

The Government has designated Shepway a Priority Area for economic regeneration (PAER) and a Tier 2/3 Assisted Area. The European Union classifies Shepway as an Interreg III area and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has defined the district as Priority Regeneration Area (PRA).

Deprivation

Shepway is ranked 131 of 345 local authorities in England on Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), with 1 being the most deprived. However, a most striking feature is the disparity in affluence and socio-economic circumstances within the district. The northern wards and parts of Hythe and Romney Marsh are generally more affluent and provide a good living environment. Overall, however, Shepway is the third most deprived district in Kent. The four former wards of Central and East Folkestone exhibit a particularly difficult range of social and economic problems and are amongst the most deprived 20% of wards nationally.

Family Health and Welfare

The former Folkestone Central ward is in the most deprived 5% of wards nationally and 49% of accommodation in this ward is in the private rented sector. Many families live in multi-occupied accommodation and child deprivation within the ward lies within the worst 6% nationally (IMD 2000). The district has above average numbers of people whose health is not good (9.4%) and with a limiting long-term-illness (15.5%) compared to averages in Kent of 8% and 13.3% respectively.

Crime

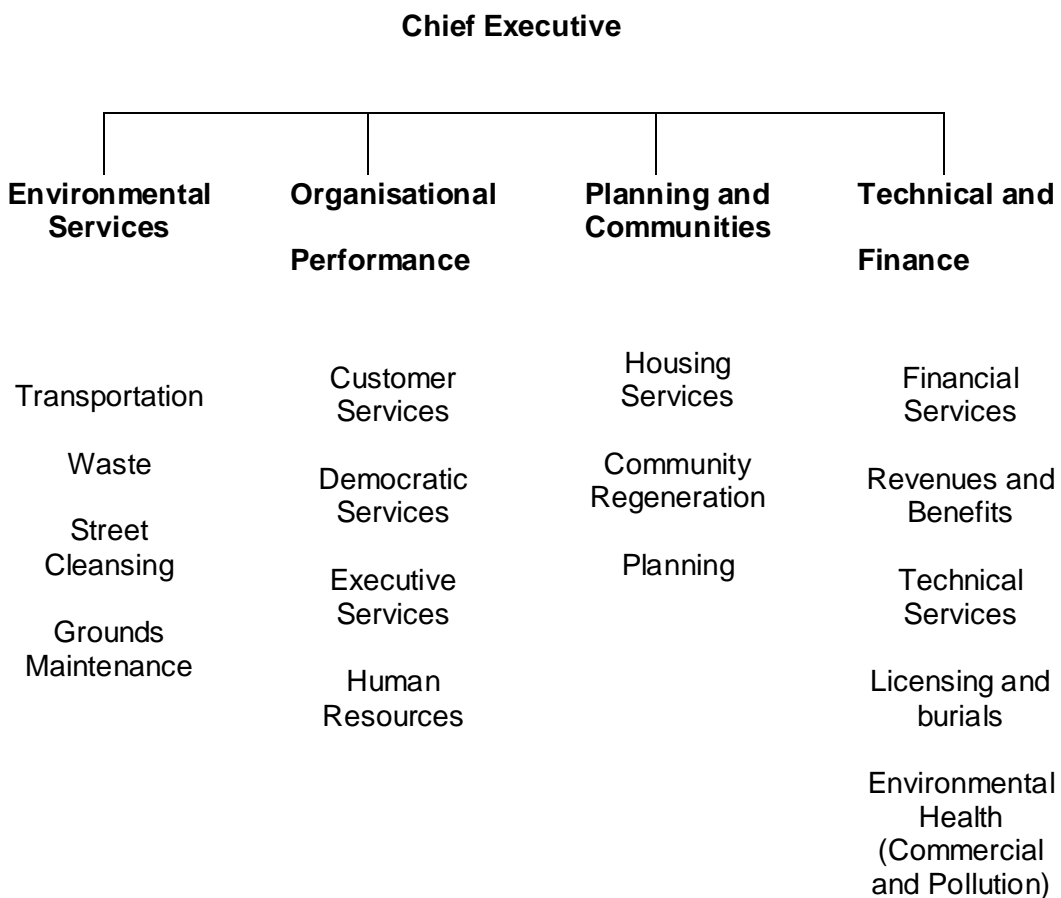
Shepway has a lower than average crime rate in comparison to Kent and nationally, however the majority of reported crimes are concentrated in a small number of wards; 53% of reported crime occurs in just six wards in Central/East Folkestone with the former Folkestone Central ward experiencing the highest levels (Shepway Crime and Disorder Strategy).

SECTION 2 ~ STRATEGIC HOUSING IN CONTEXT

2.1 The Corporate and Community Setting

Organisation, Management and Leadership

Shepway adopted a Cabinet style decision-making structure in 1999. One Executive member is now responsible for the whole Housing portfolio enabling strong leadership on housing issues and representation at Cabinet level. The council's Housing Services has primary responsibility for the operation of the landlord function, homelessness, housing need and housing advice services, as well as support services for vulnerable people in the community through supported housing and community alarms. A dedicated strategic housing policy development and enabling team was created in April 2005. Issues relating to private sector housing are dealt with by the council's Private Sector Housing team, which is part of Community Regeneration Services and sits within the same Directorate as Housing. The table below sets out the Council's corporate structure.



Corporate Vision: the Shepway Community Partnership

As shown in Appendix 5, the Housing Strategy is an integral part of the councils wider strategic framework.

The council has been instrumental in re-launching the Shepway LSP which, in 2006, was re-styled as the Shepway Community Partnership (SCP).

The success of the SCP has allowed Shepway to develop a genuine consensus view of the needs of the district, to collate partners' ambitions for addressing those needs and to set out a plan to deliver what is required. This consensus bridges private and public sector interests, reconciles the strategic objectives of the key public service plans (including the Kent Agreement) and embraces the voluntary and community sector.

The vision for the Shepway, which is at the heart of the SCP's Community Plan is:

Sharing in Success – a safe, smart and self-confident Shepway where everyone plays their part in a thriving, healthy and creative community.

Within this vision are four themes which closely reflect identified local concerns. And they provide the structure of an action plan by which the SCP is delivering the vision

Self Assurance and Reassurance - helping people feel safer in their communities more closely involved in making decisions that affect them.

Being Well and Staying Well - improving people's health and well being, easing access to health and social care and promoting healthier living.

Building Skills for Better Prospects – ensuring that Shepway's young people are equipped with right skills to take full advantage of the District's successful prospects.

Shaping a Brighter Shepway – improving people's surroundings and supporting a more prosperous economic outlook for the District.

The success of the SCP to date is acknowledged in the verdict of the 2007 IDeA Peer Review of the Partnership, ***“Shepway District has a well established and strongly committed LSP... in the process of setting out a bold, new and ambitious vision for the next generation...”***

Corporate Objectives

The council's strategic objectives and priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan are to work with the local community and key partners to:

- Improve the appearance of the district
- Improve service to customers and be a well-managed council
- Regenerate our communities
- Improve benefits performance
- Improve opportunities for sport, leisure and culture
- Strengthen the council's financial position

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

In 2004, the council was judged to be 'weak' following its CPA inspection. In summary, the CPA concluded that the council had no clear ambitions for the district; its priorities were divorced from any real understanding of the community's needs; it lacked focus, was poorly led and struggled to learn the lessons of its own mistakes.

In relation to housing services specifically, CPA was slightly less critical. It acknowledged an improvement in services for the homeless (admittedly from a low base) and commented that, ***'council Homes were in good order and tenants are satisfied with the services they receive'***. There were however, concerns about progress in developing clear plans to meet the Decent Homes Standard, about private sector housing improvement and the council's performance in its enabling role.

Inevitably however, the performance of the council in its housing role was bound to be undermined by the corporate weaknesses of the authority as a whole.

In the initial stages of its response to CPA, the council was advised and assisted by the work of an Improvement Board, involving both the Audit Commission and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). In early 2006 however, the Improvement Board concluded that the development of the Council's capacity was sufficiently far advanced and well embedded enough for the Board to be wound up.

Since then, the council has worked consistently to bolster its corporate strength and improve service performance. Its success in doing so is reflected in the overall assessment of the Audit Commission in its Annual Audit and Inspection Letter for 2007, ***“This year has shown a marked improvement from the position reported in our previous assessments. This reflects the clear commitment to improve the Council and represents a sustained effort.”***

The strength and self-confidence of the housing service has grown correspondingly. In May 2006 an Audit Commission inspection of the council's Landlord Services concluded that it was providing a fair service with promising prospects for improvement

In March 2008, the council's CPA was formally re-assessed. The council's self-assessment document is available at (insert link) and there is every confidence that re-assessment will demonstrate a dramatic improvement in its performance.

Important links

Other important links and strategies of particular relevance to the Housing Strategy include the Council's **Capital Strategy** and **Asset Management Plan** (both of which were assessed as “good” by Government Office for the South East in 2002), and the **Medium Term Financial Strategy**. In addition, The **Shepway District Local Plan 2001 – 2011** ~ sets out the Council's proposals for the future development of land in the District. The reviewed Local Plan was subject to a public inquiry in 2003 and will be formally adopted in 2005. Under the provisions of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Local Development Framework that will eventually supersede the local plan process is currently in development. The Local Plan can be viewed at our website www.shepway.gov.uk. For more information contact the Planning Policy Team~ contact details are in Appendix 2.

East Kent Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The council is part of the East Kent Local Strategic Partnership with Canterbury, Dover and Thanet councils and Kent County Council.

The rationale for this decision is to:

- Make better use of partners' time and resources by reducing the administrative burden on organisations.
- Provide a complementary voice at an East Kent level through a more influential partnership
- Continue to build on effective partnership working at East Kent level after April 2008 (when East Kent Partnership ceases) to provide a strategic focus for the area and effective prioritisation
- Take advantage of economies of scale and efficiencies
- Provide a more rationalised structure for LSP's, enabling the East Kent LSP to oversee the Local Delivery Plan element of Kent Agreement 2 for East Kent.

The purpose of the East Kent LSP is to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of the area, improving the quality of life for all. The Partnership includes partners from the public, private and the community/voluntary sectors.

The EK LSP is responsible for the development of an East Kent Sustainable Community Strategy identifying common issues and priorities. Some of the common issues where an East Kent LSP will add value include:

- Strengthening the currently fragile coastal communities
- Reducing isolation
- Changing Perception of East Kent
- Developing and promoting a common identity
- Enhancing Kent's position as a Gateway to and from the UK

Housing provision and housing conditions are seen as priority areas for action in tackling these issues.

Shepway Community Safety Partnership (SCSP)

Shepway has a well-established Community Safety Partnership, which, aims to build safer communities by addressing the key local factors, which drive crime and the public's fear of it. The key aims of the Partnership are:

- Tackling anti-social behaviour
- Promoting a feeling of safety in Shepway
- Increasing engagement in the community
- Reducing crime, in particular criminal damage, enviro crime, hate crime and identifying a geographical focus
- Dealing with substance misuse
- Dealing with prolific offending

Since December 2007, the SCSP has focused much of its effort to tackle anti-social behaviour, nuisance and everyday crime, through a Community Safety Unit (CSU) hosted by the Council. The CSU co-ordinates the work of the key public sector partners engaged in the SCSP and collates shared intelligence details.

Both the Council, as a social housing landlord and locally active RSL's are fully committed to and engaged with the CSU framework and operational arrangements.

The Shepway Crime and Disorder Strategy 2005 – 2008 is available on our website www.shepway.gov.uk. For more information contact the Crime Reduction Manager ~ contact details are in Appendix 2.

Key Strategic Themes:

The Council's key strategic aims relating specifically to housing can be summarised as working in partnership to:

- **Emphasize and strengthen the link between affordable housing and economic regeneration**
- **Work to break the unhealthy association between poor housing and social and economic deprivation**
- **Ensure that maximum advantage is made of planning powers to support housing provision**
- **Build our service quality, including the homes that we provide and the environment that they are in.**

2.2 Wider Priorities ~ National Housing Policy

Housing does not operate in isolation; it contributes to many parts of the social inclusion agenda. This Housing Strategy has been developed by the Council and its partners having regard to

national objectives and priorities, which reflect this wider context. These can be summarised under the four main themes shown in Table 1 below:

Theme	Government Policy
Access and Choice – To have sufficient homes in all tenures to meet current and future housing demand so as to improve access and increase choice.	Increasing Housing Supply Choice Based Lettings Homelessness Act 2002 Support for Empty Property Strategies Affordable Housing Provision through the Planning System
Decent Housing – To ensure homes across all tenures are maintained and managed to a good standard	Decent Homes Targets Stock Options Appraisal Tenant Participation Compacts Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order (2002) Housing Act 2004 Housing in Multi-Occupation Landlord Accreditation Housing, Health and Safety Rating System
Housing and Support – To ensure that people across all tenures have access to support so that they can live independently	Supporting People Safer Communities Fund Joint Service Frameworks for Older People Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's)
Sustainable Communities – To work with communities and others to improve social and economic well being and create safe and healthy towns and villages. environmental	Local Strategic Partnerships Community Planning and Strategies PPS3 ~ Delivering Sustainable Development PPG 3 ~ Housing PPS7 ~ Sustainable Development in Rural Areas Tackling Anti-social Behaviour Neighbourhood Renewal Affordable Warmth

Table 1: National Housing Policy Themes

The Governments Communities Plan - **Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (2003)** - sets out its vision for meeting the demand for new housing across the country. It includes proposals to ensure that housing needs are met within a sustainable framework and earmarked a significant increase in resources in the 2004 spending review to achieve this.

Priorities for the South East Region are set out in a daughter document to The Communities Plan - **Sustainable Communities in the South East**. This identifies key regional priorities as:

- Housing supply; building more homes to meet need and making better use of resources
- Affordable housing; making home ownership more affordable, developing more cost effective methods of construction and tackling homelessness
- Transport: improving roads and railways, tackling congestion and improving public transport both in terms of efficiency and safety.

Three priority growth areas are identified in the region including neighbouring Ashford and the Thames Gateway.

'**Sustainable Communities: Homes for All**' (2005) sets out a five year plan to offer everyone – owner occupiers, first time buyers, social housing tenants, key workers and those who rent privately – the opportunity of a decent home at a price they can afford. This is to be achieved by:

Offering people opportunity and choice – to own their own home, to meet their aspirations and to build up assets by:

- Assisting first time buyers to access the property market, provide new housing, and driving down building costs
- Offering Social Housing tenants the opportunity to buy a stake in their homes through a new 'Homebuy' scheme

Offering those who rent better quality homes and more choice about where they live by:

- Increasing the supply of social rented homes
- Expanding Choice Based Lettings, so tenants can choose where they live instead of having a home allocated to them
- Introducing moveUK - a new system that brings together information about homes and jobs
- Improving the quality and availability of accommodation in the private rented sector.

In addition, the document describes **a changing role for local authorities** in meeting local housing needs through:

- Ensuring a more strategic approach to planning and housing growth
- Providing new homes through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI)
- Helping first time buyers by making better use of vacant public land
- Investing the receipts from Homebuy in new or improved housing

Planning for Affordable Housing

Significant changes to both strategic planning and development control have been enacted through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill 2004. Of particular relevance to housing are the new **Local Development Framework** and **Policy Planning Statement 3 (PPS3)** which was published on 31 March 2007 and aims to provide a framework for Local Authorities to work with the private sector in delivering the right quality and mix of housing for local communities. In line with the PPS 3 requirements the Council is currently consulting on the Local Development Framework, which will replace the Local Plan. As part of this a sub-regional housing market has been commissioned. The Council is currently consulting on a new Supplementary Planning Document for affordable housing, which clearly sets out requirements to developers.

The **Housing Act 2004** introduced new measures to achieve decent homes targets and improved management standards in the private sector. The Act also provides for the payment of Social Housing Grant to organisations other than RSL's and makes changes to the Right to Buy provisions, including social landlords being given first refusal on property resale. It also introduces new measures to better meet the needs of gypsy and traveller communities.

Private Sector Housing

All of the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 have now come into force and impact significantly on private sector housing. The main changes are:

- The Housing Health and Safety Rating System, which replaces the Fitness Standard
- Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Empty Dwelling Management Orders
- The new tenancy deposit protection arrangements

Housing Green Paper

The Housing Green Paper was published in July 2007. The main proposals are set out below:

- Increased number of new homes to be built
- All new homes to be zero-carbon from 2016
- Five new eco-towns to be created
- 70, 000 new homes a year to be built by 2010/1 including 45, 000 social rented homes
- Financial rewards for Local Authorities who deliver high levels of housing
- Local Authorities who own large amounts of land will be able to form local development companies
- Actions to permit planning applications if Local Authorities do not identify sufficient land for development
- Increased shared equity support for first time buyers.

Homelessness and Vulnerable People

Of particular relevance to the social and health care agenda is the **Supporting People** programme which aims to assist people with housing related support needs to sustain independent community living and the **Homelessness Act 2002** which heralded the adoption of a more strategic approach to preventing homelessness; extended homeless duties; and brought changes to lettings of social

rented housing that facilitates applicants being offered greater choice. CLG's strategy for tackling homelessness and reducing the number of households living in temporary accommodation is set out in **Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes; Changing Lives (2005)**.

2.3 National Priorities ~ Regional Focus

The South East region is currently overseen by SEERA (South East England Regional Assembly), allied to which is the SEEDA (South East England Development Agency), an organisation established to promote economic growth in the region. Both the Assembly and SEEDA are component parts of the South East Regional Forum. This is aligned to the South East Regional Housing Board, which has developed a **Regional Housing Strategy 2006-2009** that sets out the key housing investment priorities for the region and a framework for resource allocation. These are:

- Providing additional affordable housing to address currently unmet and newly arising need (including key workers), 20% of which will be provided in the designated growth areas
- Making decent all social housing stock by 2010
- Improving the quality of private sector housing focusing on the worst locations, vulnerable households and households with children.

Resources will be allocated to areas of greatest need to support these priorities on following basis:

- 63% of available resources are to be allocated to provide affordable homes, the majority of which (55%) will be rented homes with the remainder targeted at low cost home ownership
- 9% of resources will be allocated to stock retaining authorities to assist in meeting Decent Homes targets, and
- 3% of the regions budget will be allocated to the 10 local authorities with the greatest number of unfit private sector dwellings, with resources are being targeted specifically at vulnerable households living in non-decent homes.

Shepway participated in the development of the Regional Housing Strategy including producing a detailed response to the Green Paper. The Council particularly welcomes proposals to improve housing conditions in both public and private sectors and the resources allocated for the provision of new affordable housing.

2.4 Sub-Regional Context

Shepway recognises that housing issues rarely begin or end at district boundaries and consequently we work increasingly more closely with neighbouring local authorities and other agencies on cross cutting issues. As well as providing opportunities to secure additional funding and use existing resources more efficiently, cross boundary partnerships and other forms of collaboration are seen as key to effective sub-regional strategic planning and to ensuring that resources are targeted where they will be most effective. The Council participated in a sub-regional housing market study conducted by SEERA, which feeds into the Regional Housing Strategy and will inform future resource allocation. The study, which also considered migration and travel-to-work patterns, places Shepway in an East Kent and Ashford market, which, to the north crosses over mainly into Dover and Canterbury, and to the west into Ashford and East Sussex. The common issues identified by the SEERA study support the development of further cross boundary partnerships. Indeed, the Council considers these to be crucial to ensure that developments such as growth in Ashford and the Thames Gateway, cross boundary housing markets, coastal regeneration and the high speed passenger rail link, benefit the whole of East Kent.

Agreement has been reached, through the Kent Housing Group, to commission future Housing Needs and Stock condition surveys on a sub-regional basis. We are also working with neighbouring authorities and partner Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) to develop a sub regional approach to Choice Based Lettings. Examples of other sub-regional partnerships include:

The Kent Local Area Agreement (LAA 2)~ An agreement between the County Council and the twelve Kent district Councils that supports KCC's Community Strategy ~ The Vision for Kent' ~ the LAA (KA1) included three directly housing related objectives. These were:

- Increasing the proportion of homes that meet or exceed the Decent Homes Standard in both public and private sectors
- Increasing the supply of affordable homes
- Increasing the number of people that are supported to continue living independently in their own homes.

LAA (KA2) is currently being developed to cover the period 2008-2011. It will include revised actions for housing.

The **Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing)** is a strategic partnership between health, housing and social care agencies across Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway, Swale and Thanet. Its main responsibilities are to promote inter-agency working; to identify links between the priorities of district housing authorities and those of partner health and social care agencies, and to ensure that Housing Strategies inform and are influenced by the work of the partners and other inter-agency plans. The Council's Housing Services Manager currently chairs the Board.

Kent Supporting People Partnership ~ The Supporting People Programme in the County is administered by Kent County Council in conjunction with a decision making Commissioning Body comprising Social Services, District Council, Probation and Health service representatives. The Council has worked closely with the Supporting People team in developing a comprehensive five-year Supporting People Strategy for Kent.

Shared Landlord Services Review

The Council has formed a partnership with other East Kent authorities to explore sharing services to provide economies of scale and improved efficiency. These services could include:

- A joint procurement network
- Data sharing
- Joint housing development

A final report for stage one of the project has been produced and stage two is progressing.

SECTION 3 ~ THE HOUSING MARKET IN SHEPWAY

At a national level, the housing market is influenced principally by economic policy. A complex interplay of various factors such as employment and cost of living influence the market at sub-regional and local levels. The south-east has seen rampant house price inflation in recent years. Although this rise is considered to be easing, it is likely that Shepway house prices will continue to rise. This is due to the influence of factors such as inward migration from more expensive areas, the increasingly attractive buy-to-let option and the anticipated high speed domestic rail link service. A range of sources are used to establish an understanding of the housing market and housing and support needs in the district. The executive summary of our latest Housing Needs Survey, commissioned in 2003, is shown in Appendix 8. Further information on need is drawn from a Common Housing Register ~ The Shepway Housing List ~ and specific rural housing needs are assessed through Parish surveys carried out in partnership with Kent Rural Community Council and the Rural Housing Trust. Information on stock condition is drawn principally from a private sector condition survey and a condition survey of the Council housing stock, both of which were carried out in 2002. In addition, an Urban Capacity Study, which assessed opportunities for new residential development was also commissioned in 2002.

3.1 Housing Supply, Tenure and Stock Condition

There were 47002 dwellings in Shepway as at 1 April 2007. As shown in Table 2 below, the local housing market is dominated by owner occupation, with both private rented and social rented sectors smaller than the average for England and Wales.

	Shepway	England and Wales
Home Owners	80%	69%
Social Rent	12%	19%
Private Rent	8%	12%

Table 2: Housing Market Tenure Make Up ~ Source; Housing Needs Survey 2003

Despite the delivery of some 245 new affordable homes through partnership with RSL's over the last five years, the social housing sector has reduced from 12.7% of the district housing stock in 1991. A key factor in this has been the loss of around 550 units through the Right to Buy over the same period. The Social Rented Sector amounted to 4923 homes as at 1 April 2007. Of these 1444 are owned by RSLs. The Council's own housing stock comprises just 3,520 dwellings, made up as shown in table 3 below.

	Bed-sit	One Bed	Two Bed	Three Bed	Four Bed	Four Bed +	TOTAL
Flats	171	751	411	5			1341
Maisonettes		1	107	34			142
Houses & bungalows		223	714	982	69	1	2004
Hostel	26		7				33
TOTALS	197	975	1242	1036	69	1	3520

Table 3: Council Housing Stock

The 2002 condition survey assessed the Council's housing stock as being 'in a reasonable state of repair' with a projected average works cost of £40,780 per unit over 30 years. Some 88% of the stock at least met the minimum Decent Homes Standard as at 1 April 2008.

When compared with population distribution there is proportionately more social rented Housing in Folkestone and Cheriton than the rural parts of the district. In addition, general needs housing losses through the Right to Buy means that the Council's housing stock is increasingly dominated by sheltered accommodation (accounting for almost 30% of homes). None of the stock is particularly difficult to let but demand is less strong for certain sheltered and semi-sheltered properties, particularly bed-sits.

Private Sector Housing

The age profile of the district's housing stock is a particularly important consideration since more than 40% of it was constructed before 1944. What is more, older buildings tend to be clustered both by geography and tenure. The 2002 Private Sector Condition Survey identified that 40 % of the pre-1919 dwellings are in the private rented sector (accounting for some 71% of the sector compared with 53% nationally) and the greatest majority of those are in Central and East Folkestone. 10% of properties were considered unfit, with the highest concentration of these (40%) in the former Folkestone Central ward. The survey estimated the cost of comprehensive repair of the private sector housing stock to be about £400 million. There were 1557 empty dwellings in the district at 1 April 2007 and of greatest concern are the 400 of these, which had been vacant for more than 6 months.

New Supply

New development in the district constrained by the lack of larger scale land releases due principally to areas at risk of flooding, landscape and biodiversity issues and a substantial MOD land holding. However, the Shepway District Local Plan allocates sufficient land supply for housing in line with the Kent Structure Plan (3,300 dwellings in the planning

period). Other clear housing objectives within the Plan that support this Strategy are to:

- Improve the existing housing stock to provide homes to meet present day needs, particularly for lower-cost accommodation and for small households

- Secure the provision of a range and effective mix of dwellings to meet a

variety of housing needs, including lower cost and social housing

Housing Demand and Tenure Preference

The profile of supply means that the majority of the districts future housing needs are likely, to continue to be met through the private sector, principally owner occupation. Chart 1 (below) clearly shows that this is in line with the tenure preferences of existing households seeking to move (Housing Needs Survey - 2003). The majority of respondents were seeking to move in the relatively short term with 67% of households wishing to move within 1-2 years, 11% within 2-3 years and 22% with a longer term need of 5 years.

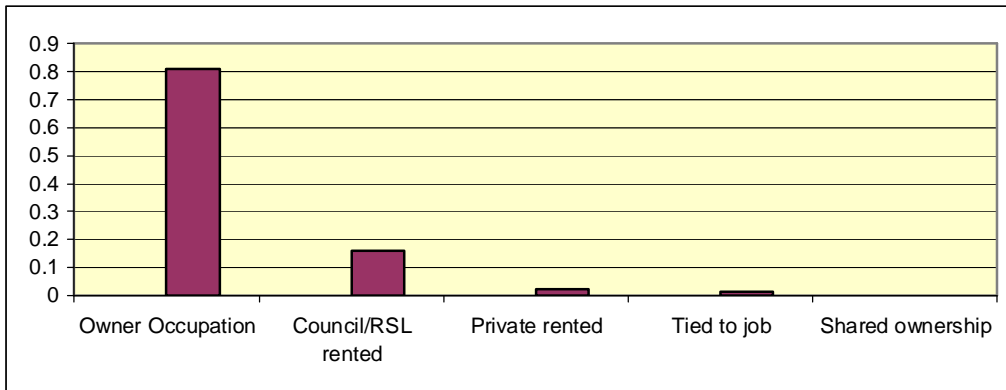


Chart 1: Housing Needs Survey; Preferred Tenure

However, issues of affordability will inevitably mean that a significant proportion of local people will be unable to access the home ownership market.

Housing Market Assessment

The Council is currently working with its neighbouring Authorities (Swale, Canterbury, Thanet and Dover) to undertake a Housing Market Assessment (HMA). The HMA will supersede the Housing Needs Study and give a clear picture of housing needs across East Kent enabling Local Authorities to plan and direct resources effectively.

Access and Choice

Increasing house prices have contributed to a situation where middle earning households, as well as those with the lowest incomes, are being increasingly priced out of the local housing market. For example, based on 95% mortgage and a 3x gross income lending ratio, an annual income of £41000 would be needed to buy a two bedroom terraced house in the cheapest wards of Folkestone.¹ The average price of a terraced house in the district is £174000, whilst a flat is around £141000. Prices in the district have risen by 7.2% over the last year.² it is worth noting that these prices are based on an average across the district and also that there is considerable variation in both house prices and rents. Areas such as Elham and Hythe are at the higher end of the market, whilst parts of east Folkestone are cheaper..

Affordability issues also affect access to the private rented sector; a 1 bed flat costs around £460 per calendar month and requires an annual income of £21 000. a 2 bed property costs around £530 per calendar month, requiring an annual income of around £26 000. To rent a 3 bed property at around £620 per month, an income of around £30 000 a year is needed.³ It must also be noted that the private rented sector provides only around 8% of homes in the district.

¹ Halifax data
² Land Registry data
³ Rent Service data

Summary of Emerging Themes

The Housing Needs Survey concludes that 2,627 households would like to move, but cannot afford to do so and that around 400 households (almost half of which are newly forming) plan to leave Shepway over the next five years because of a lack of affordable housing.

3.2 Affordable Housing Needs

Overall, the Housing Needs Survey predicts that 7240 additional affordable homes are needed to 2011. This equates to a net annual need of 905 homes as summarised in table 4 below.

Backlog of existing need (eliminated over 5 years)	116
Net new formation	337
Net increase in registered need	753
In-migrant need	28
Total annual need	1, 234
Less - Total supply from re-lets	329
Net annual outstanding need	905

Table 4: Annual Need and Supply

As at 1 April 2008 there were 2,213 applicants registered on the Shepway Housing List, of which the vast majority were new applicants (the remainder were existing tenants requiring a transfer). Total registered applications exceed annual social housing vacancies by a ratio of more than 5:1.

Charts 2 and 3 below clearly show that demand is greatest for one and two bedroomed homes in the urban parts of the district.

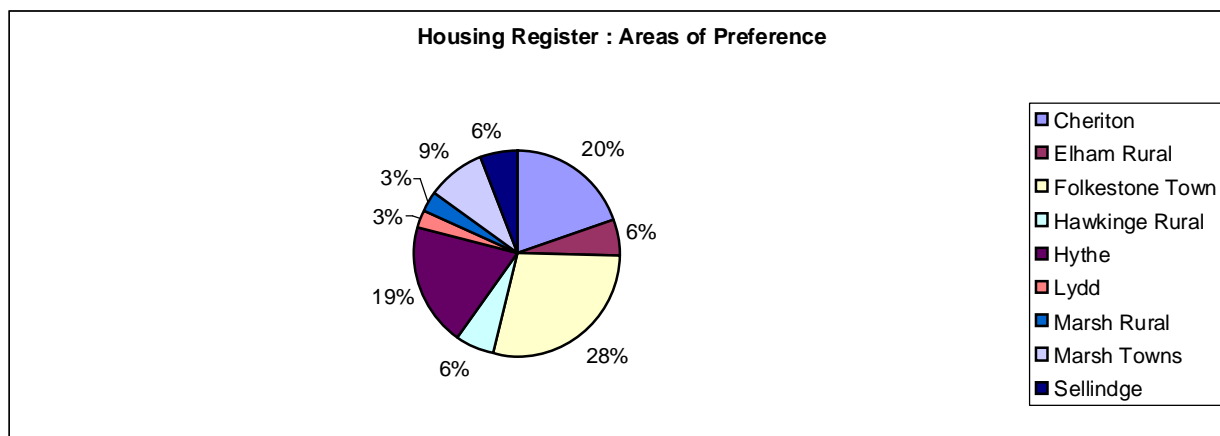


Chart 2: Housing Register ~ Applicants Areas of Preference

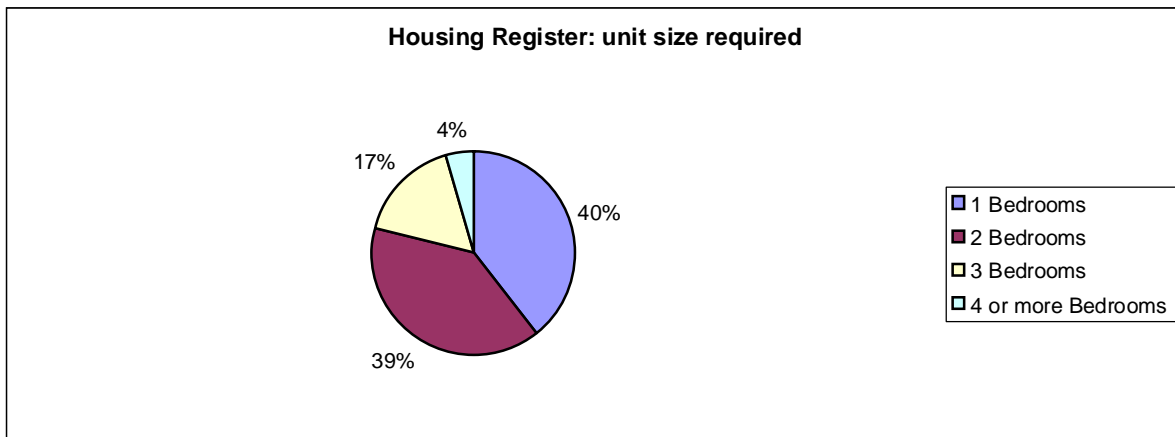


Chart 3: Housing Register ~ Unit Size Required

Concealed Households

The Housing Needs Survey identifies that only 12% of households wanting to move within the next five years are currently registered on the Shepway Housing List. Further, it identifies that there are around 2000 concealed households (living as part of another household) in Shepway, with 94.2% of these comprising children of the household who remain living with parents because they are unable to access their own accommodation. Some 28% of concealed households hoped to move within 1-2 years, whilst 34% saw their need as longer term (3-5 years). Table 5 below shows that although a relatively high proportion aspire to ownership, a significant proportion opted for private or Council/RSL rented accommodation. There was also interest in shared ownership housing.

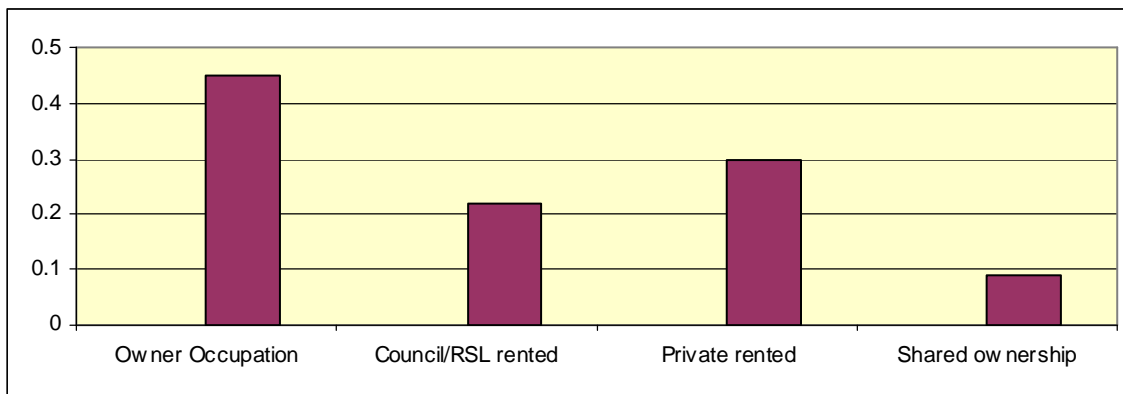


Table 5: Housing Needs Survey; Preferred Tenure (Concealed households)

The vast majority (90%) of concealed households also require one or two bedroom accommodation with a preference for flats or terraced houses.

Rural Housing Needs

Three local needs homes were completed in Sellindge in 2007. Needs have also been identified following surveys conducted in Elham and Swingfield and work is currently underway to provide homes in these areas which will be completed in the remaining period of this strategy. In rural areas of the District, rented flats and smaller properties are in short supply; whereas the recent parish survey conducted in Sellindge by Kent Rural Community Council identifies strong demand for properties of this tenure and size.

Summary of Emerging Themes

Whilst our Housing Needs Survey and the Housing Register show that housing needs and preferences vary across the District, both demonstrate a need for smaller affordable units to meet the needs of single people and couples, as well as larger general needs homes for rent. Housing for single people under retirement age, and couples without children is under-represented in the Council housing stock. RTB sales have contributed to a position

where there are peaks of demand for certain types of accommodation, particularly three and four-bedroom homes and properties suitable for people with mobility difficulties.

Homelessness

Partnership working and positive intervention were at the heart of Shepway's Homelessness Strategy 2003/2006. Published in July 2003, it set out a framework for the Council and its partners to tackle homelessness and its causes and to plan for, and provide a range of housing and support options. Successfully meeting the Government's target of not using bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children other than in an emergency, ahead of the 1 April 2004 deadline and the raft of preventative initiatives that have been introduced have also reversed the previous trend of year on year increases in homeless presentations and acceptances. This is shown in chart 4 below:

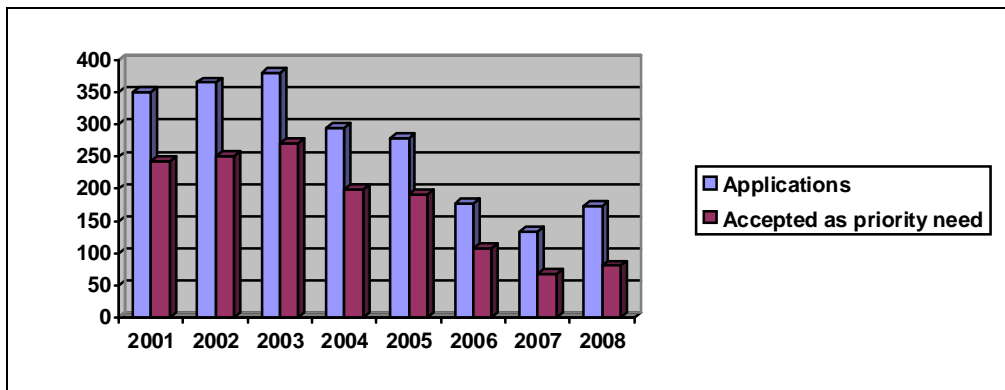


Chart 4: Homeless Applications and Acceptances 2001 – 2007 : Source CLG Live Tables

The Council is building on its good progress by working with East Kent partners to produce a sub-regional Homelessness Strategy, which will be completed by July 2008. For more information contact the Housing Strategy Manager (contact details are shown in Appendix 2)

The three main reasons for homelessness in Shepway are currently relationship breakdown; family or friends unwilling/unable to accommodate; and loss of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy. If house prices and rent levels continue to rise in the District, evictions from assured shorthold tenancies could increase, as landlords may wish to sell their properties. This will also make home ownership and private renting more unattainable. Any significant rise in interest rates could result in properties being repossessed. All of these factors will cause homelessness levels to increase.

Even if house prices and rent levels were to decrease significantly, leading to an increase in the supply of available accommodation, this would not necessarily prevent homelessness amongst young or vulnerable people, many of whom require additional support to access and sustain tenancies. Our Homelessness Strategy can be downloaded from our website: www.shepway.gov.uk

Contact the Housing Options Manager for more information about homelessness in Shepway ~ contact details shown in Appendix 2.

Rough Sleeping

People sleeping rough in Shepway represent a small group of the most vulnerable and excluded members of the community. The Council commissioned East Kent Cyrenians (now known as Porchlight) to undertake outreach work and update research conducted by Salvation Army Housing Association in 2002. Initial findings indicate an increase in the number of people who are actually street homeless, (as opposed to 'sofa surfers') and that this tends to be associated with a complex range of associated issues such as physical and mental ill health and substance/alcohol misuse.

The 2007 Rough Sleeper count completed in the district identified 1 person rough sleeping in the district.

Supported and Adapted Housing Needs

The Housing Needs Survey identifies that 23% (almost 10,000) of households in Shepway contain somebody with a special need. The largest group was those with a walking difficulty (some 5,010 households). 724 wheelchair users were identified, 7% of all households with a disability. Only 25% of wheelchair users (179) live in a home that has been adapted for a wheelchair. 583 dwellings have wheelchair adaptations, over 400 of which are no longer occupied by a household requiring this facility, suggesting a mismatch between houses adapted and those where wheelchair users live. 11% of all dwellings have been adapted for a disabled person. Around 26% of Council rented homes and 22% of Housing Association homes are adapted compared to just 13% in the owner occupied (no mortgage) sector. These are principally homes occupied by older people.

Supporting People needs and supply mapping in 2003 identified 1950 units of supported housing in Shepway (as shown in table 6 below) and illustrates gaps in provision for vulnerable young people, ex/offenders and frail older people.

SUPPORTED HOUSING PROVISION IN SHEPWAY	
SERVICE USER GROUP	UNITS OF HOUSING
Older people	1733
People with learning disabilities	135
People with a physical or sensory disability	10
People with mental health issues	44
People who have suffered domestic violence	7
People with substance/alcohol misuse issues	14
Ex/offenders	4
Young people who have recently left care	3

Table 6: Supported Housing Provision in Shepway

Sheltered and Extra Care Sheltered Housing for Older People

Both the Housing Register and the Housing Needs Survey highlight a significant need for sheltered units for older people over the next 5 years. The Housing Needs Survey suggests a requirement for 1,177 units of sheltered housing to meet the needs of 466 older person households currently living in the District and 711 households who may in-migrate to move closer to their family. 497 of these are currently in the affordable sector and 680 are in the private sector. Chart 5 below details the types of sheltered units required by older people over the next five years.

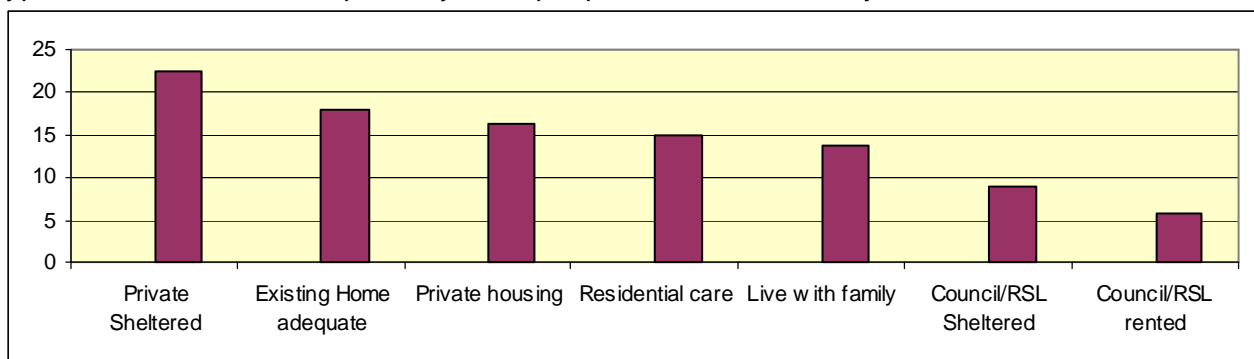


Chart 5: Housing Needs of Older People: Source Housing Needs Survey 2003

Some 468 social rented sheltered units are expected to be required to meet the needs of people wishing to move within the next five years. Some of this will be met by turnover within the existing

stock but there is a need to reassess the acceptability and appropriateness of the existing stock in calculating the scale of new delivery required. Research clearly shows that older people have rising aspirations and want to exercise greater choice in housing. Whilst much of the demand for sheltered housing arises from in-migration; the indigenous older population tend to prefer to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. At present many older people are supported at home through domiciliary care, home adaptations and housing related support. Sometimes there comes a point where this is no longer sustainable as homes are unsuited to further adaptation, or because it is difficult to provide the levels of care and support that an individual needs. Consequently, people move into a residential care because they or their relatives no longer feel they are safe at home. However, it has been estimated that as many as 25% of people placed in residential care could have been more appropriately accommodated in extra care housing if it was available. The Council is currently working in partnership to develop over 40 units of extra care sheltered housing for older people, which will be completed in 2009.

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods

The national strategy for housing in an ageing society (published in February 2008) sets out a commitment to ensure that older people have housing that supports healthy, active and independent living in welcoming communities. These include:

- Strengthened housing advice and information services, to include equity release
- New and improved rapid repair and adaptations services and measures to alleviate fuel poverty
- Making the Lifetime Homes standard mandatory for all new-build housing by 2011 and encouraging the development of Lifetime Neighbourhoods
- Ensuring that Planning Policy responds to the needs of an ageing population
- Ensuring that housing and health and care services are truly joined up
- Improving specialised housing and developing Good Practice

Mental Health Move-On Accommodation

The current East Kent Review and Redesign of Mental Health Inpatient Services (a four year programme to modernise mental health inpatient services across East Kent), has concluded that 35 units of intensive supported housing are needed across Kent for people with mental health issues. The Council is involved in this project and has worked with partners to identify suitable sites to meet the identified need for at least 6 units in Shepway district.

Valuing People

Valuing People was published as a White Paper in 2001 and sets out the Government's strategy to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities and their families and carers. The Council is working with the East and West Kent Joint Policy Planning Board to roll this process out.

3.3 Meeting the needs of minority groups

The Council recognises the diversity of its local community and the value which this brings to community life. It aims to provide each member of the community with fair and equal treatment and to make every effort to ensure that no service user receives less favourable treatment on grounds of any irrelevant consideration, including; age, disability, gender, marital status, nationality, race, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. The Council has achieved Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and is currently working towards Level 3. To confirm the Council's strong commitment to equality and diversity, a Diversity Policy has been adopted, which incorporates corporate race, disability and gender equality schemes. The Council has also revised its Black Minority, Ethnic Housing Strategy and Action Plan and Racial Harassment Policy and Procedures.

Shepway's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Community

The district's relatively small BME population means that random surveys and service monitoring do not give reliable results. Whilst developing this document we consulted with several groups and organisations that represent people of specific ethnic origin. However we realise that a more holistic approach is needed and we intend to investigate opportunities for partnership working with

neighbouring local authorities to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the issues affecting minority groups and the obstacles they face in meeting their housing needs. During the remaining period of this strategy, further consultation work will be completed to ensure that the needs of minority groups are fully reflected in this strategy.

Gypsies and Travellers

There are currently no authorised Gypsy/Traveller sites in the district. The Council conducts an annual count of Gypsy/Travellers Caravans, which is required by ODPM to inform national policy. It was also involved in developing the Kent Protocol which ensures a fair and sympathetic approach for dealing with unauthorised encampments. The Council has worked with East Kent partners to commission an Accommodation Assessment for Gypsies and Travellers. This is now complete and the needs analysis suggests that only two extra pitches are required in Shepway. The Assessment has been fed back to SEERA for their consideration.

Contact the Housing Strategy Manager for more information on diversity and the BME community, contact details are shown in Appendix 2.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-gendered Community

Shepway Community Safety Partnership (SCSP) in partnership with other East Kent CDRP's, has established a 24 hour helpline to confidentially discuss and report homophobic assaults or harrasment and other hate crimes. Trained operators give advice, support and local contacts. For more information contact the Crime Reduction Manager, contact details are shown in Appendix 2.

Teenage Parents

Table 7 below shows that Shepway has a significantly higher rate of teenage conceptions than the average for both Kent as a whole and England and Wales.

	No. of conceptions per 1000 by females aged 15-17
England & Wales	45 per 1000
Kent	43 per 1000
Shepway	52 per 1000

Table 7: Source: Shepway Primary Care Trust Health of the Population Report, March 2003

Teenage conception rates tend to be higher in deprived areas of the district and teenage parents are more likely to live in conditions of poverty and unemployment, a knock-on effect of a lack of education and childcare. A countywide Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board continues to meet , and all Local Housing Authorities are represented by the East and West Kent Joint Policy Planning Board.. The Partnership Board's work informs the Kent Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, which promotes a joined-up approach across all services. The Council has long recognised that housing and related support issues affecting teenage parents also have relevance to a wider range of issues for young people more generally. Responding to these needs, the Council works in partnership with SureStart Folkestone to provide a range of services to young parents and has facilitated the establishment of floating support services specifically for young people.

SECTION 4 ~ SETTING OUR PRIORITIES

4.1 Consulting our Partners and Stakeholders

The Council recognises that if it's housing strategy, indeed any of its key strategies are to mean anything, it must take account of the views of its critical stakeholders. Consequently, the framework for this Strategy and its aims and objectives were only identified and agreed after detailed consideration of key national, regional and local drivers and following comprehensive stakeholder involvement that is summarised in Appendix 3. A range of different consultation methods were used to optimise opportunities for contribution to the development of the Strategy. A full list of contributors is shown in Appendix 11. Opportunities for the wider community to provide feedback on the draft strategy were also made available through the Council's website.

Consultations conducted as part of our Housing Quality Improvement Project (HQIP), including face-to-face discussions, questionnaires and Focus Groups, were used to identify broad priority areas that formed the basis for our Housing Strategy consultations. Our priorities were also confirmed by our local partners during the Housing Strategy Review completed in late 2007.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were held to discuss specific priorities. Presentations were made to and separate discussions were also held with:

- Shepway Local Strategic Partnership
- Shepway Tenants and Leaseholders Group
- Kent County Council Social Services
- Age Concern.
- Shepway Housing Care and Support Group
- Shepway District Council Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

We also consulted with partners via the East Kent Joint Policy Planning Board (EKJPPB), Kent Supporting People Team and through the Shepway Compact, which represents voluntary and community groups in the district.

Housing Strategy Seminars

Representatives from nearly 40 different organisations and interest groups attended two of these events. These included a series of workshops giving everyone the opportunity to contribute to discussions on the broad priority areas that we had identified. These were;

- Homelessness
- Affordable Housing
- Supporting People
- Regeneration and Urban Renaissance
- Raising the standard of the Council housing stock
- Private Sector Housing
- Empty Homes

Delegates identified issues of highest concern to assist in identifying our priorities. Some 94.5% of delegates agreed with the Strategy’s broad objectives.

Following the consultation events a specific list of objectives and targets was developed for each of our main priorities. These were distributed to all delegates and other stakeholders, together with a brief questionnaire, for their comments. Full details of the results of the consultation survey are shown in Appendix 4 and Table 8 (below) gives examples of some of the priorities that grew from our consultations, with a reference to the Action Plan target that will seek to address them.

Issue	Action Plan Reference	Action Point
Provide more help for vulnerable young people	25	Increase services for vulnerable young people.
Develop more affordable housing	14	Provision of new affordable housing.
Tackle empty homes	3	Implement Empty Homes Strategy
Reassess sheltered housing for older people	24	Produce Older Persons Delivery Strategy with partners

Table 8: Key Issues highlighted through consultation and Action Plan Links

SECTION 5 ~ KEY ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

Drawing upon key national, regional and local drivers and the critical views of partners and other stakeholders we have identified four key priorities. These are set out in table 9 below, in order of strategic importance. The reasons for the relative priority ranking of each priority area are set out in

Appendix 3A. However, as identified by stakeholders at the consultation events, there are significant areas of overlap between the priorities and each one is critical to the economic and social well being of the district. Our key housing priorities are:

	KEY HOUSING PRIORITIES
Priority 1	Regeneration and Urban Renaissance
Priority 2	Our Housing Stock and Decent Homes
Priority 3	Affordable Housing
Priority 4	Homelessness and Supported Housing

Table 9: Key Housing Priorities

The next section of the strategy considers each of the priority areas in more detail including:

1. The policy objectives to be achieved.
2. Why it has been identified as a priority?
3. Options analysis.
4. What are we doing now?
5. Recent achievements
6. Key tasks
7. What will happen if we do not deliver the priority?

Priority 1: REGENERATION AND URBAN RENAISSANCE

POLICY OBJECTIVES

To take the initiative in a sustained, energetic and radical campaign, aimed at:

- **Repairing the disintegrating fabric of private housing in parts of the district.**
- **Pressing home the fight against intolerable housing conditions wherever they occur**
- **Embracing imaginative new approaches to private sector renewal which tap into the latent power of local partnerships and which are geared to lever in private funding**

Why is it a Priority?

The Council is committed to a programme of action aimed at tackling deprivation and poverty, and improving economic performance, the quality of the built environment and other areas of “well-being”. Almost 75% of private sector housing in Shepway is in satisfactory condition, but there is a significant residue of property characterised by disrepair, unfitness and neglect. Generally, these conditions reflect the age of the property and the concentration of older properties in those areas where inherent economic strength and confidence are most seriously eroded. These factors generate a pernicious pattern of decay in the residential fabric of certain parts of the district which have a serious impact upon both individual and societal well being. As part of a wider commitment to tackle deprivation and poverty in the district, the Council is undertaking several initiatives such as the Guildhall North Neighbourhood Renewal Area and the Hawkinge Neighbourhood Management Area, and it is important that we link housing issues to this wider context. Regeneration and urban renaissance are key priorities, not only for Shepway district, but also for the Government and the whole south east region.

National Context	Regional/Sub-Regional Context	Local Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal 2001 • Housing Act 2004 • Home Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) • Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order • Communities Plan • Settled Homes; Changing Lives • Homelessness Act 2002 • Housing Corporation National Investment Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South East Regional Housing Strategy • South East Social Inclusion Strategy • Kent Supporting People Strategy • Housing Corporation South East Regional Investment Policy • Kent Affordable Warmth Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2002 • Community Strategy • Homelessness Strategy • Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy • Supporting People Locality Plan • GNNRA Action Plan • Hawkinge Neighbourhood Management Partnership

Table 10: National and Regional and Local Context ~ Priority 1

Options Analysis

The options considered to promote regeneration within the district are set out in the table below.

Options Considered	Opportunities	Risks	Status ✓ = Agreed × = Rejected ? = Considered	Action Plan Reference
Continue the Neighbourhood Renewal Area in Guildhall North, Folkestone	Coincides with planned regeneration activity, Housing Act 2004 and HHSRS	Will shift housing resources from other parts of the district	✓	1,2, 3, 5,6,7
Continue housing assistance loans scheme and consider equity release scheme	The current level of available resources will improve a greater number of homes. Will coincide with Lifetime Homes White Paper	Community consultation required	✓	4,5
Extensive use of CPO powers to bring empty homes back into use	Could be helpful with some individual problematic properties	Resources unavailable to progress this option.	?	3
Continue to foster links between the role of the Private Sector Housing Service and the Housing Options Team.	Will enable resources to be more effectively targeted to the most vulnerable households in the district.	None identified	✓	5, 21,22
Consider range of options for implementing the Kent Affordable warmth project.	Will enable resources to be more effectively targeted to the most vulnerable households in the district	Not all resources identified	✓	9
Neighbourhood Management	Will ensure that available resources are targeted at high needs areas.	Not all resources identified	✓	2,8

Table 11: Options Analysis ~ Priority 1

Private Sector Housing Strategy

The Council's Private Sector Housing Strategy was adopted in 2005. The priorities for action are listed below:

- Reduce the number of unfit properties in the private sector
- Bring empty homes back into use
- Improve the provision of affordable and good quality accommodation
- Target housing assistance in the private sector to vulnerable households in areas of greatest need
- Reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty and increase the number of households living in well-insulated homes with affordable heating

A summary of the Private Sector Housing Strategy can be seen at Appendix 10. For more information contact Private Sector Housing Manager~ contact details are shown in Appendix 2.

Empty Homes and Derelict Property Strategy and Housing Assistance Policy

The Council adopted an Empty Homes and Derelict Property Strategy and a new Housing Assistance Policy in 2003. These fundamental components of our Housing Strategy can be downloaded from our website www.shepway.gov.uk for more information contact the Empty Homes Officer ~ contact details are shown in Appendix 2.

Hawkinge Neighbourhood Management Partnership

Following selection under the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP) programme in 2003, a dedicated area based team has been established in Hawkinge, a significant growth area within the District. The team seeks to co-ordinate solutions to specific problems, such as crime, poor health, low skills unemployment, low education attainment, housing and environment issues. For more information on the Partnership contact the Hawkinge Neighbourhood Manager ~ contact details are shown in Appendix 2. The initiative will be extended to cover the East Folkestone area during 2008/09.

Neighbourhood Renewal Area

Whilst areas of deprivation exist outside of central Folkestone, the District Council and its partners are targeting limited resources to an area of greatest need through declaration of a Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA). Declared in March 2004, the Guildhall North Neighbourhood Renewal Area, (GNNRA) includes a large part of the residential area of Harvey Central Ward, the most deprived ward in the district. The aims of the six-year programme are;

- To improve housing conditions within Guildhall North
- To improve the general amenities within the area which combine social and environmental improvements
- To engender pride of the residents in the area towards their community and encourage participation in its future
- To encourage employment opportunities
- To encourage corporate working within the Council towards a common goal for the GNNRA

The full GNNRA Action Plan is set out in Appendix 6. For more information visit our website www.shepway.gov.uk or contact the Neighbourhood Renewal Officer ~ contact details are shown in Appendix 2.

Brownfield Development

In addition to carrying out environmental improvements in the Neighbourhood Renewal Area, the Council will be exploring the potential for improving the environment and providing affordable housing on contaminated or brownfield sites through SEEDA's Brownfield Land Action Trust (BLAT) programme and Brownfield Sites Initiative. In particular, a large brownfield site in Ship Street, Folkestone has the potential to provide a mixed housing development and enhance the local area.

Our Action Plan, shown in Appendix 1 sets out how we will work in partnership over the lifetime of this strategy to regenerate our district by tackling private sector housing issues.

What will happen if we do not regenerate our district?

- The Council will fail to meet its commitment to the local community to tackle deprivation and poverty
- The environment of the District enjoyed by residents and visitors will deteriorate
- We will not unlock the potential of empty and derelict properties and vacant sites
- We will risk the health, social inclusion and quality of life of our community.

PRIORITY 2: OUR HOUSING STOCK AND DECENT HOMES

POLICY OBJECTIVES

To give a clear lead in offering a comprehensive housing service that is:

- Driven by tenants' views and aspirations
- Demonstrably efficient and effective
- At the forefront of the Council's commitment to ensure fair and equal access to public services

Why is it a priority?

The Government has set a target for all Council and Housing Association owned stock to meet a minimum decent homes standard by 2010 and required all stock holding authorities to undertake an appraisal of the options to achieve this by July 2005. In accordance with the wishes of a significant majority of tenants, the Council decided to retain its housing stock in April 2005. This decision was taken in the knowledge that it could provide and sustain for its tenants, a programme of stock investment well above that required to achieve the minimum Decent Homes Standard.

National Context	Regional/Sub-Regional Context	Local Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Green Paper Communities Plan Housing Corporation National Investment Policy Housing Act 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South East Regional Housing Strategy Housing Corporation South East Regional Investment Policy Kent Supporting People Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stock Options Appraisal HRA Business Plan Community Strategy Supporting People Locality Plan

Table 13: National/Regional and Local Context ~ Priority 2

Options Analysis

Options considered for the delivery of the strategic objectives linked to priority 2 are set out in the table below.

Options Considered	Opportunities	Risks	Status ✓ = Agreed × = Rejected ? = Considered	Action Plan Reference
Complete Housing Options Appraisal and consider how best to meet the decent homes standard	HRA Business Plan completed and stock retention is able to deliver decent homes	Need to revisit this in future years as financial position, standards and tenant aspirations may change.	✓	12,13,14
Use the options appraisal process to consider problematic or unpopular council owned dwellings	Model developed. Options include refurbishment or demolition.	Not all resources identified.	?	12,13,14
Develop a Shepway standard as part of the options appraisal process in partnership with tenants	Tenants able to define the standard of accommodation they want the council to provide.	Lack of resources available to meet tenant aspirations.	✓	12,13,14

Table 14: Options Analysis ~ Priority 2

Performance as a Landlord

The Council has a strong track record as a housing management organisation. Most tenants are satisfied with their accommodation and feel that their rent is good value for money. The HRA is financially sound, the stock is in good condition, void turn around is swift, and the relationship with tenants is generally good. The executive summary of the latest STATUS Tenants Survey is shown in Appendix 9 of this document.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan

Set within the context of the Housing Strategy, the purpose of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan is to set out a financially sustainable business framework specifically for the management and improvement of the Council's own housing stock. This includes defining the Council's purpose or mission as a social housing landlord, objectives and standards for the service, and strategies to achieve these. The HRA Business Plan has been reviewed and updated following the Stock Options Appraisal and has been assessed and passed as 'Fit for Purpose' by Government Office for the South East (GOSE). The HRA Business Plan sets out eight key objectives for the Council's landlord service, which were established in partnership with our tenants. These are shown at Appendix 7. For more information contact the Housing Services Manager ~ contact details can be found in Appendix 2.

Key Objectives of the Stock Options Appraisal Process

- To identify the investment needs of our housing stock to meet the Decent Homes Standard
- To understand our tenants' aspirations for improvements to their homes and the housing service
- To identify the resources available to the Council for investment in tenants' homes and for providing new affordable housing in the District
- To consider the different options available to the Council to meet its objectives
- To improve the level of involvement of tenants in the housing services and provide more effective communication with the people who live in the homes we manage

As part of the stock options appraisal, four potential levels of stock investment were developed reflecting known stock investment needs and tenants improvement properties. These range from a minimal programme necessary to meet the government's decent homes standard and maintain the stock in a viable condition, rising to a full improvement programme incorporating accelerated renewals of tenants' priority improvements. We are also committed to involving tenants in shaping and improving our service through the Resident Involvement Plan. (available on the council's website www.shepway.gov.uk)

Seeking sustainable solutions

Cost projections for each investment scenario indicate that the Council has a viable stock retention option that can deliver and sustain for its tenants, a programme of works that goes well beyond the minimum Decent Homes Standard. However, we recognise that a decent home is much more than this and the local Shepway Homes Standard that has been developed and agreed with tenants also includes works that meet wider environmental investment and regeneration objectives and priorities, and the promotion of independence. These works also have high priority with residents and contribute towards the Council's wider priorities. Economic inactivity, poverty and social exclusion lie at the heart of Shepway's most disadvantaged communities and there is a pressing need to ensure that, wherever possible housing activity is delivered alongside social, economic and environmental initiatives to ensure that it is sustainable.

Our Action Plan, shown in Appendix 1, sets out how we will work in partnership over the life of the Strategy to meet our objectives for the Council Housing Stock.

What will happen if we do not invest in our housing stock?

- We will fail to meet Government's Decent Homes targets.
- The health, safety and well being of local residents will be jeopardised.
- We will fail to meet the needs and aspirations of local residents.
- The Council's wider regeneration and sustainability objectives will be adversely affected.

PRIORITY 3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

POLICY OBJECTIVES

To make best use of all available resources, including finance, land, planning powers, regeneration and partnership working, to secure a range of affordable housing opportunities giving effective support to wider corporate and community objectives.

Why is it a Priority?

The provision of affordable housing is a Government priority and is of crucial importance at both a regional and a local level. Research undertaken to prepare this Strategy identifies a significant imbalance between housing need and supply and this priority will also help the Council to meet its statutory duty towards the homeless, balance the housing market and improve the social and economic well being of the area. Over the last five years, house prices in the area have risen by around 125% (Land Registry data); this means that middle, as well as low -income households are increasingly priced out of the local housing market. Private rents in the district are such that people on low incomes or who are benefit-dependent are unable to access the private rented sector without assistance. Therefore many people in the district will be unable to access affordable housing that meets their needs unless the Council and it's partners positively intervene at all levels and across all tenures.

National Context	Regional/Sub-Regional Context	Local Context
• Communities Plan	• South East Regional Housing	• Community Strategy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Green Paper • Housing Act 2004 • Barker Review • PPG 3 • PPS 3 • PPS 7 • Choice Based Lettings • Housing Corporation National Investment Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy • South East Social Inclusion Strategy • Kent Supporting People Strategy • PCT Local Delivery Framework • Housing Corporation South East Investment Policy • Kent and Medway Structure Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Strategic Partnership • Homelessness Strategy • Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan • Shepway District Local Plan/ Local Development Framework • Supporting People Locality Plan
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Table 16: National, Regional and Local Context ~ Priority 3

Options Analysis

Options considered for maximising the supply of affordable housing in the district are set out in the table below.

Options Considered	Opportunities	Risks	Status ✓ = Agreed × = Rejected ? = Considered	Action Plan Reference
Consider new partnerships with RSLs and other affordable housing providers to increase available resources.	New funding arrangements, including social housing grant to developers and longer term business planning.	Uncertainty about quality of delivery or management.	?	14,16, 17, 18
Continue to work with draft Supplementary Planning Document as part of LDF process	Will maximise the level of private developer contributions received for affordable housing. More certainty for developers.	Contributions to other community benefits and site costs can impact on the level of available resources	✓	14, 16,
Continue to use private sector renewal resources and private sector leasing to bring empty homes back into use.	Will provide resources for investment in the housing renewal area.	Renewal resources are limited.	✓	1, 3, 14
Consider options for converting space above shops into residential accommodation.	Will ensure that the best use is made of this currently underused resource.	Limited information available on the extent of suitable unused non-residential space over shops.	?	3,14
Continue to work with East Kent partners on sub-regional Housing Market Assessment	More cost effective. Would provide regional information on needs, including better travel to work data.	Councils across the region are currently working to different timescales.	✓	18, 19, 20

Table 17: Options Analysis ~ Priority 3

Balancing the Housing Market

The provision of new housing has a critical role to play in meeting the housing needs of the district. It is therefore crucial to ensure that the right type of housing is provided in the right place. A clear need exists for affordable housing to rent, however we want to ensure that a diverse range of housing options are provided to meet community needs. For example, some people may only require assistance to remain in their own home or to enter the housing market through low cost home ownership initiatives such as shared ownership. We aim to achieve this by 'balancing the housing market' which involves identifying areas of under-supply and need and positively intervening to remedy them at all levels and across all tenures. The Council is committed to its housing enabling role; housing, strategic planning and development control departments are working closely together within the same directorate.

Working in Partnership with Planning

During the last 2 years the partnership between housing and planning has strengthened considerably. The two functions now work together closely within the same directorate, to maximise opportunities for social housing development and to ensure that schemes are well designed and deliverable. Planning Officers have received training from one of our partner Housing Associations and Development Control staff together with representatives from Regeneration and Local Plans are represented at our regular Housing Development Partnership meetings. We are also working corporately to produce Supplementary Planning Guidance to ensure that all developers are fully aware of our expectations regarding the provision of affordable housing.

Partnership Working with RSLs: Shepway Housing Development Partnership

A key aspect of the Council's enabling strategy is its partnership work with RSL's. The relationship with RSL's who either own or wish to develop stock in the district, has been proactively developed over a number of years to ensure common approaches to allocations and nomination rights, sustainable lettings plans, high management standards and common approaches to tenant participation. In its enabling role the Council works principally with five preferred RSL partners and the Housing Corporation to develop affordable housing to meet a range of needs.

The Partnership was reviewed in October 2004 using criteria agreed with the Housing Corporation to ensure that maximum commitment and value for money is achieved and that all new RSL development is sustainable in environmental and social economic terms. The Council works in partnership as part of the East Kent Triangle and is a member of the RSL Forum. The Partnership will next be reviewed in 2009.

Our preferred RSL partners are;

- Southern Housing Group
- Hyde Housing Association
- Town and Country Housing Group
- Orbit Housing Association
- The Rural Housing Trust

Proactive and flexible use of our enabling powers and resources has enabled one of our partner housing associations to develop 29 units of affordable housing at Enbrook Valley, Folkestone. Having purchased the site the Council sold this on to our RSL partner at a reduced rate. The RSL was then able to secure Housing Corporation funding enabling them to develop the site for affordable and key worker housing.

Delivering New Affordable Housing

We will continue to work proactively with our preferred partner RSLs, effectively and innovatively utilising all available resources to maximum impact and gain so as to increase affordable housing provision. However, with a substantial proportion of available funding being targeted at the regions designated growth areas, the majority of Shepway's future affordable housing is likely to be delivered through the planning system by private developers in partnership with RSL's. The Housing Corporation has recently changed the way in which funding bids for affordable housing are submitted; replacing a 2 year bid round with a system that allows for in year bidding. However potential schemes must be robust and have planning consent before a bid can be submitted.

Our future enabling activity will therefore focus upon:

- Highlighting the acute housing needs of the District (the Regional Housing Strategy refers specifically to the needs of coastal towns) to secure continued ADP funding.
 - Pro-actively seeking out development opportunities and bringing them to the attention of our RSL partners.
 - Ensure that our partner RSLs meet agreed targets for affordable housing provision.
 - Robustly defend our planning policy and strengthen the way in which we obtain affordable housing through the Development Control process.
 - Consider the introduction Empty Property Grants in return for nomination rights.
 - Work in partnership with Moat Housing Association (Zone Agents for the Government's Keyworker Living Scheme) to further research the need for Keyworker housing and how best to meet it.
 - Look to exploit private sector and cross boundary opportunities that address local housing needs
- For more information on the Shepway Housing Development Partnership and the Council's enabling role, contact the Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer; contact details are shown in Appendix 2.

Our Action Plan, shown in Appendix 1, sets out how we will work in partnership over the life of the Strategy to provide more affordable housing to meet local needs.

What will happen if we do not provide more affordable housing?

- Many households will be unable to access housing at a price they can afford
- People on low and middle incomes will have less choice concerning where they live
- We will risk causing poverty, which will adversely affect the health, social inclusion and quality of life of our community.

PRIORITY 4: HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTED HOUSING

POLICY OBJECTIVES

To take care that the progress which the District makes towards boosting a diversified and successful local economy, is matched by well co-ordinated and targeted support for those vulnerable groups who are most likely to be excluded from that success.

Why is it a priority?

The key housing groups that this strategy supports are those in need of affordable housing (which priority 3 is concerned with). Homelessness is the most acute manifestation of housing need and although great strides have been made in tackling homelessness in Shepway over the last two years, homeless presentations and acceptances are still relatively high. Vulnerable people are more likely to need assistance to access and sustain settled accommodation. The Supporting People programme is key to this strategy, not only because of the important funding streams that it provides but also because it underpins both the Council’s priorities and those of its partners - most notably Health and Social Services. Bed-blocking in local hospitals and nursing/care homes; falls strategies; hospital admissions and drug and alcohol abuse are a few examples of key issues that have a cross-agency impact.

National Context	Regional/Sub-Regional Context	Local Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government target-no families with children in B&B by 1 April 2004 • ODPM -improving standards for homeless households placed in temporary accommodation (May 2003) • Homelessness Act 2002 • Social Exclusion Unit • ‘Valuing People’-Learning Disability White Paper • Housing Corporation National Investment Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •South East Regional Housing Strategy •South East Social Inclusion Strategy •Kent Supporting People Strategy •East Kent JPPB Action Plan •Housing Corporation South East Regional Investment Policy •East Kent Review and Redesign of inpatient services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Strategy • Community Strategy • Supporting People Locality Plan • Single Agency Assessment Process • PCT Local Delivery Plan • KCC Social Services ~ Shepway District Business Plan

Table 20: National, Regional and Local Context ~ Priority 4

Options Analysis

The options considered to support the delivery of this priority are set out in the table below.

Options Considered	Opportunities	Risks	Status ✓ = Agreed × = Rejected ? = Considered	Action Plan Reference
Consider options for providing an independent family mediation service in partnership with	Will help to reduce the level of homelessness amongst young people that results from family relationship breakdown.	Uncertainty regarding longer-term resource availability	✓	25,

neighbouring authorities.				
Extend the range of accommodation and support choices for vulnerable people either through new build or existing social or private sector stock.	Will ensure that a wide range of needs are met and the possibility of tenancy breakdown and homelessness are minimised.	Uncertainty re availability of Supporting People revenue resources	✓	21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27,
Consider alternative capital funding sources for providing supported accommodation.	Will enable further identified need to be met in the district.	Potential shortfall of Supporting People revenue funding.	✓	25, 27,
Continue to work towards implementing a Choice Based Lettings Scheme by 2010.	Will provide all people in housing need with greater housing choice. Potential for cross-boundary working.	Not all resources identified.	✓	19,31
Explore options to ensure that the Government's 2010 target to halve the number of households in temporary accommodation is met.	Will ensure that more households are housed in accommodation that is appropriate to their needs.	Not all resources identified.	✓	21,22

Table 21: Options Analysis ~ Priority 4

Homelessness

Over the last 4 years the Council has taken a fundamental step change in relation to homelessness with emphasis shifted from crisis driven intervention to a preventative approach that focuses upon tenancy sustainment where appropriate. Our Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, sets out targets for a wide range of initiatives to prevent and reduce homelessness in the District. Some of our key achievements are listed below:

- We have increased staff resources in our Housing Advice and Homelessness teams incorporating a Housing Options approach to help people access good quality affordable accommodation in the private rented sector.
- Between 2005 and 2008 we prevented 381 households from becoming homeless.
- We have established a Local Private Sector Leasing Scheme, in partnership with Avenue Lettings.
- We have introduced floating support services to help vulnerable people maintain their tenancies
- We have produced a Directory of Services for people who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness
- We have changed the 'areas of choice' rule for re-housing and have reviewed our allocations policy to provide greater choice for housing applicants.
- We have established a youth homelessness forum and
- Homelessness Officers have visited local schools to raise awareness of homelessness.

In recognition of our progress, we were awarded an extra £80,000 funding per year for the next three years funding from the Government's Communities and Local Government Department. However, we realise that although the situation has improved considerably, we must continue to develop initiatives that prevent homelessness and reduce the number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation. From our consultations whilst developing the Strategy, we have identified key priorities, which will help to ensure that our Homeless Strategy is implemented and supported. The East Kent Homelessness Strategy can be downloaded from our website: www.shepway.gov.uk. For more information about homelessness in Shepway, contact the Housing Options Manager ~ contact details shown in Appendix 2.

Sheltered and Extra Care Sheltered Housing for Older People

To address the needs of older people highlighted through this strategy we will work in partnership with social and health care agencies to develop an older persons delivery strategy that addresses current needs and future growth in older and frail households, across all tenures and their related care and support needs. This will encompass:

- Assessment and prioritisation of the need for support services and adaptation requirements to keep people in their own homes.
- Re-assessing the role of existing sheltered housing stock in meeting today's housing needs and preferences.
- Developing 'extra care' sheltered accommodation for the frail older population, through a Kent-wide PFI project.
- Working with the East and West Kent Joint Policy Planning Board to meet the objectives of the Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods White Paper

Other Supported Housing Needs

Although we have identified a need to provide housing for older people, we will not neglect other vulnerable groups and will work, with our partners, to develop services to meet these priorities. In recent years we have responded to need by:

- Developing Jubilee House - 7 units of supported housing for people with complex and profound disabilities in partnership with Hyde Housing Association and KCC Social Services.
- Providing 7 new affordable homes for people with learning disabilities, due to be completed in 2009 as part of the Kent PFI housing initiative.
- Developing a new Women's Refuge providing 7 units of supported accommodation for victims of domestic violence, in partnership with Hyde Housing Association.
- Developing Trinity Gardens - 5 units of supported housing for people with learning disabilities, in partnership with Golden Lane Housing Association and KCC Social Services.
- Developing Shepherd House - 11 units of supported housing for recovering substance misusers, in partnership with Salvation Army Housing Association and Crime Reduction Initiative.
- Developing Rosamund Court - 11 units of housing some of which include wheelchair adaptations and three of which are specifically for vulnerable young people, in partnership with Southern Housing Group and Rainer Kent Triple Key.
- Working with East Kent partners as part of the Re-design of In-patient Services, to provide 6 units of mental health move-on accommodation
- Introducing floating support services across a range of vulnerable groups, in partnership with a range of providers across the spectrum of needs.

Supporting People needs mapping has identified shortages in supported housing for vulnerable groups and the Council will work with partners to meet this need. This will include:

- Working to provide services to the homeless and potentially homeless people, particularly vulnerable young people.
- Working in partnership to develop services that assist in reducing crime and the fear of crime in the District.
- Working in partnership to develop support services that will help to free up bed-spaces in local hospitals and promote independent living.

However, we must ensure that revenue funding is available to support these schemes and it will only be possible to progress if the Supporting People resources allow sufficient funding for continued growth, led by needs.

Our Action Plan, shown in Appendix 1, sets out how we will work in partnership to tackle homelessness and support vulnerable people in the District over the lifetime of this strategy.

What will happen if we do not reduce homelessness and provide more supported housing and support services for vulnerable people?

- We will risk the health, safety, education, life prospects and social inclusion of our community

- Care services will be more expensive and less effective if they are delivered in an unsuitable environment.
- Vulnerable people will not be able to live safely and independently in our community.
- There will be increased and unnecessary admissions into hospitals and residential care.

SECTION 6 ~ DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES: RESOURCING THE STRATEGY

We must harness resources from a variety of different sources, public and private, both existing and new, if we are to tackle the most pressing housing problems in the district. This section of the strategy considers the resources available to the Council and its partners which have been allocated to meet the identified priorities. Resource information is based on actual spend in 2004/05, approved budgets for 2005/06 and budget predictions for the remaining period of this strategy. Finally we consider the likely impact of any changes in the level of available resources.

PRIORITY 1: REGENERATION/URBAN RENAISSANCE

The South East Regional Assembly (Regional Housing Board) distributes the majority of the available resources for improving the condition of private sector homes. Our resources will be invested in a range of initiatives to facilitate the regeneration of private sector housing across the district. Resources will be targeted to assist vulnerable households living in the areas of greatest need, as identified by the private sector stock condition survey. This includes resources being specifically targeted at the Guildhall Street North Neighbourhood Renewal area.

Table 23 below details the key sources of resources available for regeneration within the district.

Priority 1 – Available Resources 2005-2010

Available Resources	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Private Sector Housing Resources	1,260,000	2,128,000	1,498,000	1,558,000	1,916,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	455,000	410,000	410,000	600,000	600,000
Total Resources	1,784,000	2,538,000	1,908,000	2,158,000	2,516,000

Table 23: Regeneration Resources 2005-2010

During the course of this strategy we will explore further options for funding private sector housing improvements through East Kent Partnership.

PRIORITY 2: OUR STOCK AND DECENT HOMES

The Council is committed to providing a comprehensive, customer focused housing service. Continued investment in its housing stock will ensure that the Government's 2010 'Decent Home' standard is fully reached. The 2008 stock options appraisal has shown that we can exceed the required standard by 2010 through stock retention. However, ongoing planning is required to ensure that the necessary investment can be maintained in the longer term and other funding options will need to be explored to achieve this. The key resources for investing in and improving in the council's housing stock are set out in the table below.

Available Resources	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Stock Improvements Decent Homes Work	2,990,000	570,000	700,000	466,000	2,778,000
Non Decent Homes Work	1,200,000	2,054,000	2,098,000	2,144,000	32,000
Disabled Adaptations	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Environmental Works	252,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total Resources	3,542,000	2,824,000	2,998,000	2,810,000	3,010,000

Table 24: Decent Homes Resources 2004-2010

PRIORITY 3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The supply of owner occupied homes will mainly be met by private sector developers. The Shepway Local Plan provides for 1700 additional new homes in the period 2011. The majority of these will be

market housing. Substantial investment is required in the form of affordable housing contributions by private sector developers and grant funding from the Regional Housing Board if the increasing demand for affordable housing across the district is to be met.

The table below sets out the predicted resources that will be available to fund affordable housing over the period 2005 -2010. Predicted developer contributions are based upon actual sites in the pipeline that will be achieved through section 106 planning agreements. It is also assumed that Housing Corporation funding through the Regional Housing Board and RSL partner resources will increase by 2.5% during each year of this strategy.

The council itself will continue to make capital contributions to fund new affordable homes. This will be funded through private developer contributions received by the council and through the provision of land resources. A substantial PFI investment has been secured in partnership with Kent County Council for 2007/08.

Available Resources	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Private Developer Contributions	325,000	333,125	341,453	349,989	358,739
Housing Corporation Grant Funding	858,128	879,581	879,581	901,571	901,571
RSL Capital Resources	343,251	351,832	351,832	360,628	360,628
Council Capital Resources	0	0	0	108,000	108,000
Council and other private land	0	50,0000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Private Finance Initiative	0	0	2,000,000	0	0
Total Funding	1,526,379	1,614,538	3,622,866	1,770,188	1,778,938

Table 25: Affordable Housing Programme Resources 2005-2010

We will prioritise the use of social housing grant funding to support difficult to develop schemes such as rural housing projects, supported housing, homes specifically for people with disabilities, and difficult to develop sites such as brownfield sites with contamination issues.

We have assumed that private developer contributions will also increase by 2.5%. However, the actual level of private developer contributions received, will be determined by the level of housing market activity in the district.

PRIORITY 4: HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTED HOUSING

The Council and its partners will use a range of resources to deal with homelessness and meet the needs of vulnerable people in the district. We will continue to target resources to assist people with support needs to live independently in their homes. The main funding sources for this priority are set out in the table below.

Funding Source	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Supporting People Funding for the District	257,600	257,600	257,600	257,600	257,600
Homelessness Grant Funding	60,000	60,000	60,000	80,000	80,000
Shepway DC Homelessness Funding	260,040	260,000	260,000	260,000	260,000
Floating Support Funding	251,000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RESOURCES	828,640	577,600	577,600	597,600	597,600

Table 26: Homelessness and Supported Housing Resources 2005-2010

Risks and Uncertainty - Future Resources

Any increase or decrease in the level of resources highlighted in this section, will impact on our ability to deliver against our strategic aims. For example:

- The new high-speed rail link is anticipated to come into operation in December 2009 and will have a significant impact on land and property prices in the district. It is likely that house prices will rise, making it even more difficult for people to access the property market. A rise in land values will make it more difficult for our RSL partners to make affordable housing schemes financially viable.

- Alternatively, any slow down in the housing market and the level of private developer activity in the district will reduce the number of affordable homes we are able to deliver through planning gains
- Our programme of initiatives for enhancing the sustainability of local communities is reliant on a range of funding, including external funding
- Levels of capital funding are likely to reduce due to reductions in the level of supported borrowing available to the council and the level of right to buy receipts
- The introduction of partnering arrangements between the Housing Corporation and RSLs has introduced more uncertainty into the bidding process and reduced our ability to influence affordable housing development in the district.
- Any increase or reduction in the level of resources for the district through the Housing Corporation approved development programme will also affect our ability to deliver grant funded new homes – grant funding is particularly important for the provision of new supported housing schemes
- The local land supply is further vital element in determining the output of the affordable housing programme - if land sites fail to come forward for both private developers and our RSL partners, affordable housing outputs will drop
- Our affordable housing programme is also reliant on the ability of our RSL partners to secure private finance to bridge any funding gaps
- The predicted reduction in supported housing resources during the life of this strategy will impact on the level of services we are able to provide for local people with support needs.
- Homelessness grant funding is subject to an annual submission to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

SECTION 7 ~ MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE QUALITY

The ongoing review of our performance toward our strategic aims and targets is an essential part of our Housing Strategy process. To ensure that this is possible we have, together with our partners developed the robust and challenging Action Plan that is shown at Appendix 1.

The multi-agency Housing Strategy Steering Group will meet annually to review ongoing performance and review and update the Action Plan. Further details on the role of the Group and how feedback from local stakeholders is considered can be found in Appendix 14.

The Council's corporate service planning and performance management processes will be used to monitor housing related actions in all of it's strategies and plans. We will also review our performance against the Government's new National Indicators, which will be incorporated into the Housing Service Plan and individual team member performance Action Plans. Details of our recent performance and future BVPI targets are set out in Appendix 13.

Details of our key actions and achievements and the resources allocated toward these projects during 2006/06 to 2007/08 are set out in this strategy are summarised in the Action Plan at Appendix 1.

Further monitoring of our performance and service quality is carried out through regular tenant and wider community surveys. Details of the survey responses and how we intend to use the information to improve our services are fed back to the monthly meetings of the Shepway Tenant and Leaseholders Group, to all tenant households via the Coast and Countryside magazine and to the wider community via the Shepway Plan ~ the Council's Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). Further information on the Shepway Plan can be found on the council's website www.shepway.gov.uk.

APPENDIX 1: ACTION PLAN 2005 – 2010

PRIORITY 1: REGENERATION/URBAN RENAISSANCE						
NO	ACTION	TARGET	PERFORMANCE TO DATE	RESOURCES	STRATEGIC LINKS	LEAD OFFICER
1	Effective use of private sector renewal resources to improve the private sector housing stock through an area focus	At least 100 private sector homes improved each year as a result of council action during the course of this Strategy.	Neighbourhood Renewal Area declared March 2004 in central Folkestone. 100 private sector homes improved in each year of this strategy to date as a result of direct action by the council and its partners agencies	Existing staff resources. Funding identifies from General Fund. £6.6 million worth of funding to be committed during the course of this Strategy	Regeneration Strategy Community Strategy Empty Homes Strategy Housing Assistance Policy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager
2	Implement an effective neighbourhood management strategy in high needs areas of the district	Consider option for implementing neighbourhood management areas in other high need communities within the district.	Initiative to be extended to the East Folkestone area during 208/09	Action is dependent of the continuation of grant funding from central government.	Regeneration Strategy Community Strategy Crime Reduction Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager, Neighbourhood Manager
3	Reduce the level of long-term empty private sector homes in the district, using renewal resources, private sector leasing and other available resources.	Number of long-term empties reduced by 2.5% during each year of this strategy.	On target; Strategy adopted by Cabinet in March 2004 Empty Homes Officer in post, working in partnership with KCC's 'No Use Empty' initiative. - 142 properties brought back into use (58 in 2005/06, 34 in 2006/07 and 50 in 2007/08)	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Regional Housing Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager
4	Continue to implement Decent Homes Loans (formerly known as 'Renovation Loans') through revised Housing Assistance Policy.	At least 25 loans made to householders during each year during the course of this strategy	Target exceeded; 31 Loans made in 2005/06, 41 Loans made in 2006/07 Performance data for 2007/08 awaited	Existing staff resources no additional funding required	Regional Housing Strategy Private Sector Housing Strategy Community Strategy Empty Homes Strategy Supporting People Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager

5	Reduce the number of vulnerable people in non-decent private sector homes.	At least 50 vulnerable households helped each year through the council's Housing Assistance Policies during the course of this strategy.	On target: 49 vulnerable households assisted in 2005/06 and 60 vulnerable households assisted in 2006/07. Performance data for 2007/08 awaited	Existing staff resources, no new revenue expenditure	Regional Housing Strategy Private Sector Housing Strategy Community Strategy Empty Homes Strategy Supporting People Strategy Homeless Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager
6	Increase investment to improve poor condition private sector housing in Neighbourhood Renewal Area	Double the level of capital resources spent on housing assistance in the NRA by 2006/07 – based on the 2004/05 levels of expenditure.	Very limited voluntary uptake to date despite intensive publicity. New tools to assist properties converted to flats have failed to produce more interest or uptake of funds available. £12,000 in Loans committed on 2 properties in NRA in 2006/7. Performance data 2007/08 awaited.	Existing staff resources since declaration of NRA in 2004. Part of capital expenditure from Regional Housing Board and SDC's own capital resources.	Regional Housing Strategy Private Sector Housing Strategy Community Strategy Supporting People Strategy Homeless Strategy Regeneration Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager
7	Identify investment for environmental improvements in Neighbourhood Renewal Area	Invest £700,000 annually in environmental improvements in Neighbourhood Renewal Area	Ongoing; budget allocated for 2006/07 and 2007/08	Investment identified 2004/05 Budget and will be 'carried over' into forthcoming Medium Term Financial Plan for 2005/06 and following financial years	Regional Housing Strategy Private Sector Housing strategy Regeneration Strategy Community Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager

8	Invest in Hawkinge Neighbourhood Management Area	Identify annual investment	Ongoing Investment made 2005/06 and 2006/07 and identified for 2007/08. 2007/08 performance data awaited.	Investment identified 2004/05 Budget and was be 'carried over' into forthcoming Medium Term Financial Plan for 2005/06. 2006/07 and 2007/08. Performance data for 2007/08 awaited.	Regeneration Strategy Community Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager
9	Install energy efficient heating systems in properties occupied by vulnerable households via the Coldbusters scheme	60 properties to have systems installed by April 2006	Target achieved in 2005/6. On line to achieve revised targets within revised Housing Assistance Policy for 2007/8. 2007/08 performance data awaited.	Existing staff resources, externally funded	Regional Housing Strategy Private Sector Housing Strategy Community Strategy Supporting People Strategy Kent Affordable Warmth Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager
10						
11	Review current service provision for HMO's and produce a risk-based strategy as part of the Private Sector Housing Strategy.	Private Sector Housing Strategy to be implemented by April 2006	Strategy approved by Committee October 2005. Implementation ongoing	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Regional Housing Strategy Private Sector Housing Strategy Community Strategy	Community Regeneration Manager/Private Sector Housing Manager

PRIORITY 2: OUR STOCK AND DECECENT HOMES						
No	ACTION	TARGET	PERFORMANCE TO DATE	RESOURCES	STRATEGIC LINKS	LEAD OFFICER
12	Implement the Resident Involvement Plan	Plan fully implemented by 2010	All actions required by 2008, fully implemented	Resourced from current budgets	Resident Involvement Plan HRA Business Plan	Housing Services Manager
13	Achieve the 2010 Decent Homes Standard	Standard fully achieved	88% of council homes achieved the standard as at 1 April 2008	Resourced from current budgets	Resident Involvement Plan HRA Business Plan	Housing Services Manager
14	Explore the opportunities for joint working with other Kent local authority landlords	All opportunities explored	Stage 1 feasibility report completed.	Resourced from current budgets	Resident Involvement Plan HRA Business Plan	Housing Services Manager
PRIORITY 3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING						
No	ACTION	TARGET	PERFORMANCE TO DATE	RESOURCES	STRATEGIC LINKS	LEAD OFFICER
15	Provision of New Affordable Housing	180 new affordable homes to be developed during the life of the Shepway Plan 2006/07 to 2008/09	Target amended in line with Shepway Plan. 100+ new affordable homes currently onsite. 39 new affordable homes completed in 2007/08.	£10.7 worth of Housing Corporation, private sector and council funding to be invested in new affordable homes 2005-2010	Regional Housing Strategy Homeless Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
16	Provision of new affordable housing to meet the needs of rural communities.	At least 2 rural local needs schemes to be provided in the district during the course of this Strategy	Ongoing Action 1 scheme completed during 2004/05, 1 scheme completed Jul 2007. 2 Further schemes in the pipeline anticipated to complete in 2008/09 and 2009/10.	Funding to be provided through Housing Corporation Grant Funding.	Regional Housing Strategy Homeless Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
17	Publish Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance.	To be published by end of 2007	Consultation Document approved by Cabinet Oct 2007. Final draft to be considered by cabinet July 2008.	Existing staff resources, no extra funding required	Regional Housing Strategy Homeless Strategy Community Strategy Local Plan	Planning Manager/Planning Policy Manager

18	Review Housing Development Partnership to ensure maximum commitment to the delivery of affordable housing in the District	Review to be completed by 31 March 2010	Target amended in line with East Kent Triangle partners	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Regional Housing Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
19	Commission an update of housing needs and stock condition assessments in partnership with other Kent district councils through Kent Housing Group.	Assessments to be Completed by March 2009	On target. Work with EK partner LAs ongoing to produce sub-regional Housing Market Assessment supersedes Housing Needs Survey. Agreement to conduct Private Sector Stock Condition Survey	Existing staff resources. Funding identified from General Fund	Regional Housing Strategy Community Strategy Shepway Plan Homelessness Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager/ Community Regeneration Manager
20	With partner RSL's and other Kent Authorities, introduce Choice Based Lettings	Establish Partnership 2005 CBL operational by 2010	On target. CLG funding obtained and partnership in place. Implementation by end of 2009.	Existing staff resources. ODPM funding required. Match funding from general Fund and HRA identified.	Regional Housing Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
21	Participate in sub-regional Housing Market Assessment with South East Regional Housing Board and East Kent partners	Assessment to be completed by the end of 2008	On target. Work on HMA ongoing	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Regional Housing Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager

PRIORITY 4: HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTED HOUSING

No	ACTION	TARGET	PERFORMANCE TO DATE	RESOURCES	STRATEGIC LINKS	LEAD OFFICER
22	Review and monitor the Homeless Strategy with partners and produce an annual update	31 July 2008	Ongoing; work underway with EKT partners to produce sub-regional strategy – to be considered by Cabinet in July 2008.	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Regional Housing Strategy Homeless Strategy Community Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager

23	Develop a plan to reduce the number of homeless households living in Temporary Accommodation	Reduce to a maximum of 72, the number of households living in temporary accommodation by 2010	No of households in temporary accommodation has decreased by 26%, from 144 at the end of 2005/06 to 107 at the end of 2006/07	Existing staff resources. Additional funding need to be quantified on development of plan	Regional Housing Strategy Homeless Strategy Community Strategy	Director: Housing and Community Services
24	Determine the nature and extent of rough sleeping in the District	At least one rough ODPM accredited rough sleeper count to be completed in the district each year.	Counts carried out in 2005 and 2006 and 2007.	To be resourced by ODPM Homelessness Grant Funding.	Regional Housing Strategy Homeless Strategy Community Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
25	Increase services for vulnerable young people	Areas for new services to be identified by the end of 2007 by the council in partnership with the Supporting People Team.	New Action. Services being reviewed as part of the EKT Homelessness Strategy and local partners.	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Homeless Strategy Supporting People Strategy Community Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
26	Fully participate in preparing and delivering the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) Action Plan in East Kent.	Annual Action Plan produced and monitored. Action Planning day scheduled for Nov 2007	Ongoing initiative. Partnership in place.	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Homeless Strategy Supporting People Strategy Community Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
27	Work with partners to supply 40 units of extra-care sheltered housing and 6 units of supported housing for people with learning disabilities through the Kent PFI	Scheme to be completed by December 2009.	On Target. Funding through Government PFI Credits in place. Scheme on site	Existing staff resources Capital costs identified from RSL budget	Homeless Strategy Supporting People Strategy Community Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager

IMPORTANT LINKS/ISSUES: EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND REDUCING CRIME						
No	ACTION	TARGET	PERFORMANCE TO DATE	RESOURCES	STRATEGIC LINKS	LEAD OFFICER
28	Ensure that the Council are meeting Section 17 (Crime and Disorder Act 1998) obligation when procuring affordable housing (Secured by Design principles)	All new build affordable housing completed to meet SBD principles by 2009	New Action. Progress to be monitored annually. No historic performance data available.	Existing staff resources, no additional funding required	Crime Reduction Strategy Shepway Plan Regional Housing Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
29	Through Crime Support Units, reduce anti-social behaviour on estates.	100% of all incidents annually to be resolved by the CSU with support from Tenancy Sustainment Officer.	New Action. Progress to be monitored annually. Tenancy Sustainment Officer (new post) in place. 2007/08 performance data awaited.	Existing staff resources, externally funded	Crime Reduction Strategy Community Strategy Shepway Plan	Community Regeneration Manager/ Housing Services Manager
30	Continue to use Language Line and provide publications / leaflets in Braille, large print, audio-tape and languages other than English	All publications/leaflets to be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and language other than English on request during the course of this strategy	Service in place	Existing staff resources	Comprehensive Equality Policy Race Equality Scheme Customer Care Strategy	Director: Housing and Community Services
31	Continue the ongoing process of equalities impact assessments to ensure that the council's housing policies and procedures address the needs of all section of the local community.	Review completed by December 2007	Ongoing Action. Progress to be monitored annually. The Council has set up a corporate Diversity Group with representatives from all Directorates, which will co-ordinate this. Initial Impact Assessments completed for all main service area policies Sept 2007 – follow assessments to be completed Summer 2008.	Existing staff resources	Comprehensive Equality Policy Race Equality Scheme Customer Care Strategy	Chief Executive

32	Continue regular training on equality issues for frontline staff	All staff to receive Equalities training – to be refreshed at least once every three years	Ongoing action. All existing staff have received equalities training. All new staff receive training within three months of joining the service.	Existing staff resources, programme in place	Comprehensive Equality Policy Race Equality Scheme Customer Care Strategy	Director: People and Performance/Learning and Development Advisor
33	In partnership with other Kent authorities, research the housing and support requirements of gypsies and travellers and develop a strategy to meet identified needs.	Develop programme and identify funding by December 2005. Complete research by April 2006.	Assessment completed; Needs information reported to SEERA in Oct 2007. Outcome awaited and will be incorporated into Housing Strategy when available	Consultancy support £3,000.	South East Regional Housing Strategy Housing Act 2004 Comprehensive Equality Policy Race Equality Scheme Customer Care Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager
34	Review BME Housing Strategy and Action Plan in light of new CRE Code of Practice for Housing	Research to be completed by December 2005 Revised Strategy in place by April 2006	Complete: reported to Cabinet in November 2005. Annual Diversity Report Reported to Cabinet.	Existing staff resources	Comprehensive Equality Policy Race Equality Scheme Customer Care Strategy	Housing Services Manager/Housing Strategy Manager

APPENDIX 2: HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

Below is a list of contacts for all of the Council Officers listed in the Strategy and Action Plan.

NAME	POSTAL ADDRESS	TELEPHONE AND EMAIL	KEY RESPONSIBILITIES
Keith Cane <i>Corporate Director: Planning and Communities</i>	Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY	(01303) 853750 keith.cane@shepway.gov.uk	Overall responsibility for all aspects of housing, planning, regeneration and community services in the district
Iain Cobby <i>Empty Homes Officer</i>	Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY	(01303) 853549 iain.cobby@shepway.gov.uk	Bringing back into use empty and vacant properties in the district
Barbara Bradley <i>Hawkinge Neighbourhood Manager</i>	Hawkinge Community Centre, Heron Forstal Avenue, Hawkinge CT18 7BP	(01303)858663 barbara.bradley@shepway.gov.uk	Neighbourhood Management , including the Hawkinge Partnership
Adrian Hammond <i>Housing Strategy Manager</i>	Shepway Housing Centre, 3-5 Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone CT20 2SQ	(01303) 853747 adrian.hammond@shepway.gov.uk	Housing and homelessness strategy and policy, affordable housing development, housing needs and tenant participation and involvement.
Beverley Jackson <i>Housing Options Manager</i>	Shepway Housing Centre, 3-5 Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone CT20 2SQ	(01303) 853772 beverley.jackson@shepway.gov.uk	Housing advice, housing options homelessness prevention and all operational aspects of the homelessness service.
Mike MacDonald <i>Neighbourhood Renewal Officer</i>	Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY	(01303) 853433 mike.macdonald@shepway.gov.uk	Guildhall North Neighbourhood Renewal Area
Colin Wood <i>Private Sector Housing Manager</i>	Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY	(01303) 853261 colin.wood@shepway.gov.uk	Private Sector Housing
Stephen Courts <i>Environmental Health Officer</i>	Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY	(01303) 853295 Stephen.courts@shepway.gov.uk	All issues relating to Environmental Health

<p>Bob Porter</p> <p><i>Housing Services Manager</i></p>	<p>Shepway Housing Centre, 3-5 Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone CT20 2SQ</p>	<p>(01303) 853732</p> <p>bob.porter@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>All issues relating to Housing Strategy and Policy, all issues relating to the Council's housing stock, housing allocations and homelessness, and all aspects of housing related customer services</p>
<p>Wendy Head</p> <p><i>Corporate Director: People and Performance</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853308</p> <p>wendy.head@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Overall responsibility for the Shepway Plan, the Community Strategy and the SLP, Corporate Equality Policy and Racial Equality Scheme. Tenants Survey, Community Survey</p>
<p>Kathryn Beldon</p> <p><i>Corporate Director: Finance and Technical</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853477</p> <p>Kathryn.beldon@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Overall responsibility for all aspects of the Council's finances, Internal Audit, Business Efficiency, technical and environment</p>
<p>Dave Shore</p> <p><i>Community Regeneration Manager</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853459</p> <p>dave.shore@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>All issues relating to regeneration, private sector housing, the Neighbourhood Renewal Area and Neighbourhood Management.</p>
<p>Foronda Smith</p> <p><i>Housing Manager</i></p>	<p>Shepway Housing Centre, 3-5 Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone CT20 2SQ</p>	<p>(01303) 853719</p> <p>Foronda.smith@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>All issues relating to the management and maintenance of the Council Housing Stock.</p>
<p>Shaun Taylor</p> <p><i>Anti-Social Behaviour Investigator</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 852298</p> <p>shaun.taylor@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>All issues concerned with anti-social behaviour in the district</p>
<p>Claire Thomas</p> <p><i>Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer</i></p>	<p>Shepway Housing Centre, 3-5 Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone CT20 2SQ</p>	<p>(01303) 853789</p> <p>claire.thomas@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Housing and homelessness strategy and policy and affordable housing development</p>
<p>Mark Aplin</p> <p><i>Planning Policy Officer</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853343</p> <p>mark.aplin@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Strategic planning including Shepway District Local Plan and the Local Development Framework</p>

<p>Caron Watson <i>Operations Manager (Revenues and Benefits)</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853218 caron.watson@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Responsible for all aspects of Housing Benefits</p>
<p>Leigh Hall <i>Group Accountant</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853231 leigh.hall@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>All issues concerned with housing finance</p>
<p>Jyotsna Leney <i>Crime Reduction Manager</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853460 Jyotsna.Leney@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Shepway Community Safety Partnership, Community Safety Unit. All issues concerned with crime reduction in the district. Crime Reduction Partnership</p>
<p>Jason Wust <i>Policy and Performance Officer</i></p>	<p>Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY</p>	<p>(01303) 853254 jason.wust@shepway.gov.uk</p>	<p>Performance related issues, the Shepway Plan, tenants Survey and Community Survey</p>

APPENDIX 3 ~ INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY IN SETTING OUR PRIORITIES

In the Housing Strategy we have detailed how we consulted with our partners and stakeholders. This, in addition to survey work carried out during the preparation of the Community Strategy and also during the duration of the Housing Quality Improvement Project, helped us to identify our priorities. In developing this strategy, the community's overall priorities and those of national, regional and local importance, have been refined to form our housing priorities. A summary of how we worked towards this is set out below:

LOCAL PRIORITIES	Priority 1	Crime Against People and Property
	Priority 2	Unemployment / Poverty
	Priority 3	Water Pollution / Conservation
	Priority 4	Transport Issues
	Priority 5	Land Use and Development
	Priority 6	Housing
	Priority 7	Nature Conservation
	Priority 8	Health/Sense of Well-being
	Priority 9	Land Pollution
	Priority 10	Waste Reduction / Composting / Reuse / Recycle
	Priority 11	Skills and Education
	Priority 12	Economy
	Priority 13	Recreation / Amenities
	Priority 14	Air Pollution
	Priority 15	Noise Issues
	Priority 16	Regeneration
	Priority 17	Access to Information / Council Decisions
	Priority 18	Community Spirit
	Priority 19	Heritage / Culture
	Priority 20	Energy / Conservation

These Community priorities were refined into the Council's Corporate Priorities, shown below;

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	Priority 1	Making Shepway Cleaner, Greener and Safer
	Priority 2	Improving Housing
	Priority 3	Regenerating our District

As part of the work carried out during the Housing Quality Improvement Project, broad priority areas for housing services had been identified. Consultation with key partners and stakeholders further refined these into the Community's Priorities shown below

COMMUNITY HOUSING PRIORITIES	Priority 1	Prevent Homelessness
	Priority 2	Help more vulnerable people
	Priority 3	Tackle unfit and empty properties
	Priority 4	Improve access to the private sector
	Priority 5	Provide more affordable housing

Following further consultations with key partners and stakeholders and the residents of the district, the following areas were identified as key priorities for our housing strategy

HOUSING STRATEGY PRIORITIES	Priority 1	Regeneration and Urban Renaissance
	Priority 2	The Council's Stock and Decent Homes
	Priority 3	Affordable Housing
	Priority 4	Homelessness and Supported Housing

For more information about the Housing Strategy consultations and development process, contact the Housing Strategy Team, contact details are shown in Appendix 2.

APPENDIX 3A ~ RANKING OUR PRIORITIES

Relative Priority	Evidence	Relevance to Corporate Priorities	Relevance to National, Regional, and Sub-regional Priorities
<p>Priority 1 ~ Regeneration and Urban Renaissance</p>	<p>Almost 75% of private sector housing in Shepway is in satisfactory condition, but there is a significant residue of property characterised by disrepair, unfitnes and neglect. The quality of life for many of Shepway's residents can be improved by raising the standard of the private sector housing stock, particularly the concentration of older properties in Central and East Folkestone. Our first priority is therefore to improve private sector housing standards including overall condition, energy efficiency and neighbourhood renewal.</p>	<p>The Council is committed to a programme of action aimed at tackling deprivation and poverty, and improving economic performance, the quality of the built environment and other areas of "well-being". The central strand of the Council's recovery plan focuses on a fundamental regeneration of the District. Improving poor housing conditions also supports each of the Councils key corporate priorities ~ Regeneration, Clean Green and Safe, and Housing</p>	<p>Providing decent homes for all in decent surroundings ~ The importance of private sector renewal is emphasised within the Governments current five year plan ~ Sustainable Communities ~ Homes for All (1995); the South East Regional Housing Strategy; and the Kent Local Area Agreement 2005 – 2008. The second public sector agreement (PSA) places particular emphasis on making best use of the available housing stock, in particular through bringing empty homes back in to use.</p>
<p>Priority 2 ~ Our Housing Stock and Decent Homes</p>	<p>The Council is the major social landlord in the district and the effective management of this major asset is fundamental to the delivery of this strategy. Ambitious targets have been set for developing the housing service to meet the aspirations and expectations of our customers. Whilst acknowledging that 'Council Homes were in good order and tenants are satisfied with the services they receive', there were concerns in the 2004 Comprehensive Performance Assessment about progress in developing clear plans to meet the Decent Homes Standard. More than 25% of the stock failed to meet the minimum Decent Homes Standard as at 1 April 2005. This is why improving the quality of our own housing stock and our housing services, is our second priority.</p>	<p>Bringing all of its own housing stock up to at least the minimum Decent Homes Standard is a key aim within the Councils strategic Housing priority. The 2005 options appraisal concluded that the Council could retain its stock and deliver and sustain for its tenants a programme of stock investment significantly above the minimum decent homes standard. A key factor in this decision was that a significant majority of tenants wished to remain with the Council. The Council is committed to providing comprehensive, high quality housing services that are driven by customers views and aspirations, demonstrably efficient and effective, and at the forefront of the Councils commitment to ensure everyone's fair and equal access to public services.</p>	<p>The need to invest in existing affordable housing stock and to ensure that all of it is made Decent by 2010 is a priority within Sustainable Communities ~ Homes for All (1995) and the South East Regional Housing Strategy.</p>

<p>Priority 3 ~ Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Increasing the supply of affordable housing is our third priority because demand far exceeds supply. In addition, affordability issues mean that a growing number of people are increasingly priced out of the local housing market.</p>	<p>The Council recognises the significant challenge it faces in providing sufficient good quality accessible housing to meet local needs. It therefore seeks to ensure best use is made of the existing housing stock and to provide, through its Local Plan, 400 new affordable homes to 2011 by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing the provision of a range and effective mix of dwellings to met a variety of housing needs, including lower cost and social housing, and • Recognising the need for rural exception sites to meet the housing needs of village communities. 	<p>The provision of more affordable homes in urban and rural locations and promoting choice are key priority within the Governments current five year plan ~ Sustainable Communities ~ Homes for All (1995); the South East Regional Housing Strategy; and the Kent Local Area Agreement 2005 - 2008</p>
<p>Priority 4 ~ Homelessness and Supported Housing</p>	<p>The main reasons for homelessness in Shepway are relationship breakdown resulting in friends and family being no longer able to accommodate, and loss of assured shorthold tenancies. The Council recognises that homelessness is compounded by a lack of good quality affordable housing. In addition, accommodation based and floating support services play a critical role in enabling people to sustain tenancies and thereby reducing the incidence of homelessness. Significant recent progress has been made in both homeless prevention and providing supported accommodation and floating support services. This is why homelessness and supported housing are our fourth priority.</p>	<p>Homelessness has gained increasing corporate priority in Shepway in recent years as a result of increases in both the number of homeless households and the cost of meeting this need. This has been reflected in a fundamental change in approach which focuses upon preventative work, advice and support for those facing homelessness.</p> <p>The Council also recognises that settled homes are about much more than just bricks and mortar, and with above average numbers of vulnerable people ~ for example due to age or disability ~ assisting people to live independently in the community by adapting properties, providing support services and supported accommodation are priorities, not only for the Council, but for its key strategic partners.</p>	<p>The South East Regional Housing Strategy recognises the need for effective homeless prevention work to reduce the pressures on existing affordable housing. It also recognises the need for additional housing and support services for all vulnerable groups. At a sub-regional level the needs of vulnerable groups are addressed through; The Kent Supporting People Strategy 2005 ~ 2010; East Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) Action Plan; East Kent Review and Redesign of Mental Health Inpatient Services; Kent Housing Strategy for People with a Learning Disability; Housing Needs Analysis; Substance Misusers in Kent and Medway (2004-05); Kent YOS Accommodation Strategy 2005-2007; Kent Probation Area Accommodation Strategy (January 2004)</p>

APPENDIX 4: HOUSING STRATEGY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Partner and Stakeholder Consultation Seminars

94.5% of delegates agreed with the Strategy's objectives. A selection of delegate responses is shown below.

Question 1: Are there any objectives that you think we have missed out?

- Yes, mixing of housing types with affordable/social housing and private sector and more affluent development.
- Further development of the Private Sector involvement.
- Employment within area.
- Housing should support the economic development/sustain the community, not be a standalone service.
- No, but the targets for affordability (No.5 P.9) appear to be very modest. Rural target could be 6 units in two parishes each year.
- There is nothing about extra care sheltered housing to support increasing numbers of elderly people.
- Yes - Settlement Boundaries within villages and the needs of those local people.
- None, I feel it is a comprehensive document.
- Length of support scheme as tenancy is for life. Service users are worried about the length of the support provided.
- Provision of good information to inform/communicate users and wider community.
- Homes for life?
- Young people, vulnerable parents.
- In the Action Plans in the pack there is no plan mentioning young people.
- Needs distinction between urban and rural.

Question 2: How could your organisation contribute to the development and implementation of the Housing Strategy?

- The Town Council is not a housing authority, however, it should comment on Strategies as they emerge.
- With more guidance.
- Links with Dover DC, Thanet DC on coastal housing matters.
- Empty homes strategy.
- On going training.
- By consultation.
- Private landlords have a huge role to play in provision of affordable housing and we would be happy for our organisation to contrive to be involved.
- Training.
- I feel there are many innovative solutions that could be achieved within partnership working.
- More RSL and council meetings to discuss the HS and the way forward together.
- Through supporting people to enable people to sustain their tenancy and live independent lifestyles.
- Provide accurate views of the rural community.
- Floating Support Services can support people with needs to maintain tenancies in the private sector.
- Multi agency approach using RSL wherever possible.
- By working with officer, looking at funding/joint funding.
- By this type of consultation input.
- By representing the views of young people and to set up a forum with young people giving their views and needs direct to the council.
- Links with young people and information relating to this group.
- SDC is the responsible authority.

General Comments

- Priorities need to be interlinked
- Priorities should all have equal status; each topic impacts the others, e.g. not making affordable homes available can generate homelessness.

- The implications of prioritisation are not clear; are those lower in order of importance to be given less attention?

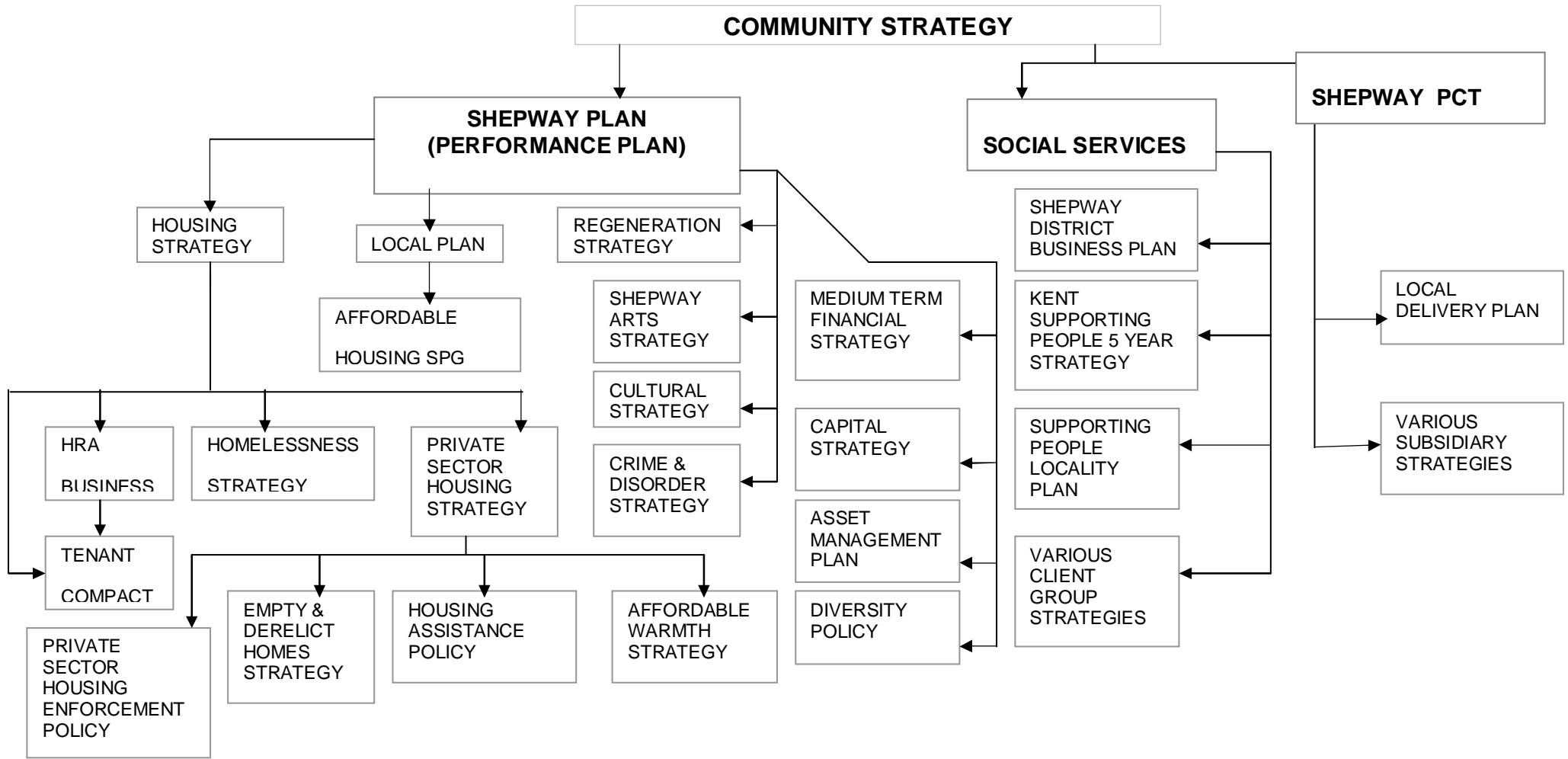
Residents of the District

100% of respondents agreed with the Strategy's objectives. A selection of comments is shown below.

- Renovation of existing properties should be a priority.
- In support of strategy to provide more affordable housing. Also need more sheltered housing for disabled people.
- Strategy gives common sense proposals.
- Most interested in attention to empty properties, feel these should be used to house homeless people.
- Reduction of empty and derelict property is paramount. Helping older people to remain in their homes is a desirable goal, providing it does not create financial difficulty for them.
- 100% Council Tax should be charged on 2nd homes to stop people buying up smaller properties.
- Set up a "Foster Family" scheme to accommodate homeless young people. Stop inventing new "support" systems and consolidate / amalgamate / integrate / incorporate what is already in place.
- Disappointed to see no mention of accommodation and support for Special Needs teenagers and adults, enabling them a degree of supported independent living apart from families.
- Feel right priorities have been addressed.
- Lack of decent rental properties.
- Strategy very positive.
- SDC's 3.4% housing association rentals against national average of 11.9% needs addressing. More sheltered accommodation should be provided for elderly people, so larger family sized homes can be released to families.
- Feel not enough emphasis has been placed to accommodate single young people.
- Whilst impressed, have concern about funding the strategy. Detailed assessment needs relating to people with learning disabilities, those leaving parental homes, residential homes or for older handicapped people must be addressed.
- More council houses needed but no land available.
- Suggest imposing council tax on empty tenanted properties after three months unless landlords can prove property being genuinely marketed. More co-operation between private landlords and council regarding anti-social behaviour.
- There is an obvious need for more affordable houses. Very little is said about rural settings. There is a desperate need for nursing homes. What about low energy housing - does the council promote energy efficiency housing? Right to Buy - is Council able to re-invest money from sales into new housing?
- How will affordable housing work for young couples or single people on minimum wages, which is above I income support or other benefits?
- What form does affordable housing take i.e. is it part ownership, housing association, council housing or other?
- What effect has intake of immigrants had on figures - will strategy mean they will take priority?
- Priority should be given to nursing homes and private rest homes and assistance should be given to keep them open.
- Could moves be made for compulsory purchase of derelict houses?
- Realistic building numbers must be set in future partnerships.
- Has full implication of varying immigrant influx been taken into account?
- Support end of B&B for families with Children. Target of 2010 as date for decent homes seem far off.
- Tackling anti-social behaviour is paramount to avoid vandalism against property, and people.
- No "quick fix" possible with regards to implementing strategy.
- Empty homes and derelict property strategy is key.
- Important that any refurbished/new homes are near local amenities and public transport.
- Overriding constraint is funding. Is the strategy funded by the Government or local rates? Pleased that B & B accommodation is set to become a thing of the past.
- Price of council houses should reflect market value and if applied, may discourage tenants from buying. Frail or disabled people should have purpose built accommodation available, to free up council houses.

- Are there sufficient funds and if not, will it be funded from houses previously sold. End "Right to Buy" and replace with a scheme that gives people a chance to buy affordable houses but not actually sell council property.
- Convert older buildings, which are too large to house one family, into affordable rental accommodation.

APPENDIX 5: LOCAL PLANS AND STRATEGIES: HOW THEY FIT TOGETHER



APPENDIX 6: GUILDHALL NORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREA ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan has been produced to help improve the local environment, social and economic wellbeing of Guildhall North. It aims to enhance the positive characteristics of Guildhall North, help support a more sustainable community and continue the involvement of the local community in decision-making.

HOUSING		
OBJECTIVE 1: TO IMPROVE HOUSING CONDITIONS WITHIN GUILDHALL NORTH		
Actions	Description	Status
1.1 Bring all existing empty/derelict homes back into use within the area	Implementation of the Action Plan contained in the Empty Property Strategy	Empty Homes Officer pursuing owners to bring empty properties back into use
1.2 To make 120 dwellings 'fit' (or to the new HHRS)	1. Street-by-street survey of all accommodation 2. Robust enforcement of housing standards	In partnership with Shepway Care and Repair, a free home maintenance survey is being offered to tenants and owner-occupiers through publicity and house-to-house visits.
1.3 Encourage home owners to maintain their homes	Provide advice and information on property maintenance and financial assistance Provide a free 'MOT' house condition survey Provide advice on energy efficient measures and financial assistance	
1.4 To achieve a year on year decrease in the number of vulnerable people living in non-decent homes	Target financial assistance to vulnerable people using the Housing Assistance Policy	
LOCAL ENVIRONMENT		
OBJECTIVE 2: TO IMPROVE THE GENERAL AMENITIES WITHIN THE AREA WHICH COMBINE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS		
Actions	Description	Status
2.1 Develop traffic calming measures	Introduce 20mph speed restrictions Alter road/pathways to aid reducing speed	A comprehensive review is underway on proposals to introduce an integrated residents on-street parking scheme with traffic calming/street and pathway improvements to be implemented in 2006/07
2.2 Improve car parking	Develop 'residents only' on-street parking scheme Investigate the possibility of reducing 'yellow-line' areas to provide additional parking	
2.3 Improve road and pathways 2.4 Stone steps between Darby Road/Foord Road	Repair roads/pathways Renew street name plates Repair steps to make safe Clear rubbish from adjacent land Improve lighting	
2.5 Improve pedestrian/cycling access	Carry out a feasibility study on improving access across Shellons Street to the town centre	To be carried out in 2005/06
2.6 Provide children's play area	Incorporate a children's play area within the Shellons Street feasibility study	

2.7 Investigate and introduce measures to reduce the incidence of crime	Improve street lighting and lighting to the Guildhall Street tunnel Extend CCTV coverage to include the commercial areas Additional Police Community Support Officer Consider 'Alley Gate' scheme for Ingles Lane	Street lighting currently being improved To be carried out in 2005/06 Bid for funding for PCSO 2005/06 Alleygate scheme being implemented
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COMMUNITY		
OBJECTIVE 3: TO ENGENDER PRIDE OF THE RESIDENTS IN THE AREA TOWARDS THEIR COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN ITS FUTURE		
Actions	Description	Status
3.1 Set up a residents support group	Support group to include residents, ideally one from each street, ward councillors, Christ Church School's Head teacher, Community Officer, Neighbourhood Renewal Team	Residents group formed that meets monthly. Consisting of 26 residents, 2 ward councillors, 2 town councillors, county councillor, head teacher, Police Community Support Officer
3.2 Area office	Establish a community advice centre within the area to provide informal advice and information	Community Advice Centre being established
3.3 Area newspaper	Set up and publish an area newspaper to be delivered quarterly to every resident	Second edition just published, next issue due in the winter
3.4 Neighbourhood Watch scheme	Encourage expansion of the existing Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	Residents keen to set up at least 2 schemes
3.5 Dog fouling	Monitor incidents of dog fouling Target Dig Warden patrols Provide advice and information	Residents being urged to report dog fouling so dog warden can target problem areas Information being provided to dog owners
3.6 Street/garden litter	Monitor refuse collection service Provide advice and information on use of wheelie bins and use of refuse collection service	Site visits held with Street Scene to highlight problems. Community consultation on collection service imminent
EMPLOYMENT		
OBJECTIVE 4: TO ENCOURAGE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES		
Actions	Description	Status
4.1 To improve job and training opportunities	To provide advice and information on training and job opportunities through home visits and the advice centre	Discussions to take place with the Job Centre on the use of the advice centre and the news magazine
4.2 To set up a home maintenance team	The Home Maintenance Team will initially work within the area and will provide 'on the job' training	Discussions ongoing with Shepway Care & Repair to find additional funding sources for the scheme

CORPORATE APPROACH		
OBJECTIVE 5: TO ENCOURAGE CORPORATE WORKING WITHIN THE COUNCIL TOWARDS A COMMON GOAL FOR THE GUILDHALL NORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREA		
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Status</i>
5.1 Corporate Group	Set up a group of officers to co-ordinate the implementation of the Action Plan	Corporate Officer Group set up to co-ordinate projects across Council departments

For more information on the Guildhall North Neighbourhood Renewal Area, contact the Neighbourhood Renewal Officer; contact details are shown in Appendix 2, or visit our website www.shepway.gov.uk

Appendix 7: HRA Business Plan and Landlord Service Objectives

We aim to fulfil the mission statement for our service;

Working in partnership and communicating with our customers to develop quality services and improve performance, by:

Giving a clear lead in offering a comprehensive, quality housing service that is;

- Driven by customers views and aspirations
- Demonstrably efficient and effective
- Open to models of management beyond the local authority's stewardship
- At the forefront of the Council's commitment to ensure everyone's fair and equal access to public services

These are reflected in our key objectives for the landlord service:

HRA Business Plan Objectives	
1	Providing best value housing management and maintenance services
2	Maintain and improve council housing in order to ensure it is safe, physically sound and meets the DHS as a minimum
3	Making best use of the available housing stock to meet local housing needs
4	Consult, inform and include tenants and leaseholders in the management of housing services and wider community development
5	Protect and enhance tenants homes, reducing crime and the fear of crime
6	Providing affordable housing and tackle financial exclusion amongst tenants and leaseholders
7	Adapt Council housing and provide services to meet special needs
8	Provide energy efficient and sustainable housing

For more information on the HRA Business Plan and all aspects of the Council's landlord function, contact the Head of Housing Services Manager, contact details are shown in Appendix 2. Or visit our website www.shepway.gov.uk

Appendix 8: Housing Needs Survey ~ Executive Summary

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Government guidance on housing and planning has emphasised the requirement for local authorities to assess housing need, create complementary strategies to address it and to co-ordinate effort in a corporate approach to their strategic and enabling role.

In October 2002 Shepway District Council commissioned DCA to undertake a district-wide Housing Needs Assessment and projection of housing need as the basic building block in informing housing, planning and care strategies for the future.

1.2 The assessment process has been conducted to ensure that it is rigorous and able to withstand scrutiny, as outlined in Circular 6/98 and in the Revision of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 issued in March 2000. The key objectives of the study were to:

- Assess the level of need for affordable housing in the district until 2011;
- Identify the need for various types of housing tenure in the district until 2011;
- Inform the Council's housing strategy;
- Give detailed and up to date analysis of need at a local level to inform and
- Support affordable housing negotiations associated with planning applications.

1.3 The final report will:

- Support future housing strategy to meet the criteria set out by the ODPM in its Good Practice Guidance and HIP Guidance and to prioritise investment decisions;
- Inform the Council's affordable housing policies in the Local Plan and assist in target setting for site development briefs and for negotiation in accordance with Circular 6/98 and PPG3;
- Enhance the Council's facilitating and brokering role in building effective partnerships.

1.4 This Executive Summary brings together the inter-related housing and planning issues identified in the separate elements of the research to assess their impact and implications for future housing and planning strategy. The key findings are summarised along with conclusions and recommendations for action.

2.0 Survey Response

2.1 7,900 questionnaires were sent to respondents in the week commencing 6th January 2003.

2.2 The final overall response of 35.1% was very good with 2,774 questionnaires returned, more than double the 1,250 minimum level recommended in the ODPM Guidance.

2.3 The District was divided into 14 sub-areas for analysis. The highest response level was achieved in Stone Street with 43.4%; Lympne and Stanford also achieved a response above 40%; 7 other areas achieved responses between 35% and 40%; St Mary in the Marsh, Swingfield and Acrise all achieved responses above 30%. The remaining two areas, Folkestone and Lydd, achieved responses of 28.6 and 28.5% respectively.

2.4 6.4% of all resident households in Shepway took part in the survey.

3.0 Shepway Housing Market

3.1 The annual rate of house price inflation in the Halifax Index in the South East Region at 31st December 2002 was 25.8%, slightly below the UK average of 26.4%.

3.2 The Land Registry data for average price for all dwellings in Shepway during the year was around £134,588.

3.3 The largest volume of sales in the Shepway district was for detached houses (28.9%) selling at an average price of £201,459. Terraced houses average £101,956 and are 27.7% of sales. Semi-

detached houses average £135,706 and make up 23.4% of sales. Flats / maisonettes account for 20.0% of sales with an average price of £81,786. We, therefore, assess flats and maisonettes to be the main access property for first time buyers.

3.4 The survey data shows that 399 households plan to leave Shepway because of a lack of affordable housing, 183 of which are new forming households. There are also 2,627 households who said they wished to move but could not do so because they could not afford to move.

3.5 Incomes of £22,000 to £24,000 are needed to buy a one bedroom flat in Folkestone. Two bedroom terraces require incomes ranging from £27,000 in Folkestone, the cheapest location, to £30,000 in New Romney and £31,000 in Hawkinge and Paddlesworth.

3.6 Mortgage interest rates are at their lowest level for over 40 years and people who cannot enter the market under these circumstances may never be able to do so, short of some collapse in the market or a significant change in their income level. Further house price increases above wage inflation in 2003 would make access to market housing more difficult to achieve and would impact on households with marginal incomes significantly.

3.7 Similar cost variation applies in the private rented sector across Shepway. Based on rent at 25% of gross income a one bed flat in Folkestone requires £13,500 per annum, £17,500 in Hythe and £19,000 in New Romney. The cost of a 2 bed flat would need an income of £14,500 in Folkestone, rising to £22,500 in New Romney. A terraced house would require an income of £20,000 in Folkestone.

3.8 Access to home ownership is beyond the reach of around 85% of the concealed households identified in the DCA survey on any realistic assessment of availability of suitable properties. Additionally, the private rented sector makes only a limited contribution to access to affordable housing and this almost certainly underlies the problem of concealment that exists in the District.

4.0 Current Housing in Shepway

4.1 Some 40% of households in Shepway are owner-occupiers with a mortgage; 41% own their homes outright - a total of 81% in owner occupation. 9% are in Council rented accommodation, 8% rent privately and fewer than 3% are in HA rented homes.

4.2 Nearly 21% of households live in detached houses and 21% are in semi-detached, around 20% live in terraced houses. 18% live in flats / maisonettes and 18% in bungalows.

4.3 Some 90% of households say that their accommodation is adequate for their needs. 10% (4,156 implied) say that it is inadequate. The largest single issue for those reporting a problem which could be resolved in-situ, was that the dwelling needed repairs / improvements (86%). Of those requiring a move, 64% (2,184 implied) mentioned that the dwelling was too small.

4.4 Single adult households make up 26% of all households in Shepway, less than the 1991 Census figure for the UK average (31%). Couples constitute 70% of Shepway households compared to 60% for the UK as a whole. The incidence of single parent households (3%) was below the UK average (9%).

4.5 Under-occupation affects 15% of all households in Shepway and over-occupation affects only around 2%.

4.6 Around 74% of social rents were below £60 per week; 92% below £70 per week. Of owner-occupiers with a mortgage, 9% pay less than £250 per month; only 2% pay in excess of £1,000 per month.

4.7 Incomes in the district are slightly above average in comparison to national figures. 26% of households based on the sample had incomes below £10,000, below the corresponding UK figure

(28%). The total proportion in the district earning below the approximate national average household income of £23,000 per annum was 57.9%, below that for the UK as a whole of 62.6%.

4.8 27% or so of households were in receipt of financial support (11,711 implied), of whom 49% (5,724 implied) were in receipt of Housing Benefit.

5.0 Future Housing Requirements

5.1 Access to the market is clearly dependent on availability, a factor that is particularly critical for low-income households who can only enter the market in any numbers where there is an adequate supply of affordable dwellings.

5.2 15% or so of all households (6,520 implied) are currently seeking to move or will do so in the next five years. This implies an average of around 3.0% per annum, which is far lower than other DCA surveys (average 5.0%).

5.3 Around 2,560 households plan to leave Shepway in the next five years, of which 1,388 are existing households and 1,173 are concealed households. The single most common reason given by existing households moving outside the District was family reasons. In the case of concealed households moving, choices were focused, as might be expected for a younger group, mainly on better employment and education facilities.

5.4 Lack of affordable housing was an issue for both existing and concealed households and had broadly the same rating in each group (16%) totaling almost 400 households.

5.5 2,953 existing households and 1,758 new households will be moving or forming within the district in the next five years.

5.6 Key Findings of existing households wishing to move within Shepway:

32% intend to do so within one year;

34% require detached accommodation; 23% require semi-detached;

20% require a bungalow and 8% require terraced accommodation. The demand for flats / maisonettes was only 4%;

10% (292 implied) express interest in supported accommodation;

68% require two or three bedrooms;

Some 81% would prefer owner occupation and around 14% indicated a

Preference for Council rented, less than 3% indicating a preference for Housing Association rented accommodation.

5.7 Key Findings of Concealed households wishing to move within Shepway:

- Around 92% of concealment relates to children of the existing household. The data suggests that 63% of concealment related to adults, between 20 to 29 years of age, a further 7% are over the age of 30;

- 61% would prefer owner occupation, 13% indicated a preference for Council rented accommodation, and 12% a preference for HA rented accommodation and 10% expressed an interest in private rented accommodation;

-56% require a flat / maisonette, 19% require semi-detached and 16% require terraced accommodation;

-51% of new households say they need one bedroom and 40% two bedrooms.

-Need levels for three bedrooms is only 9%.

5.8 Only 8% (168 implied) of all new concealed / households moving were registered on a housing waiting list, all of these being on the Shepway District Council list:

-Some 65% could afford a weekly rent of up to £60, 77% no more than £70;

-63% could not afford a mortgage of more than £300 per month;

-Some 83% of immediately forming households have incomes below £20,000 per annum; 16% have household incomes at or above the UK average of £23,000.

6.0 Supported and Adapted Housing

6.1 23% of households in Shepway contain somebody with a special need, suggesting some 9,996 households.

6.2 The largest group affected by a special need was those with a walking difficulty affecting 51% of all those with a disability in the area.

6.3 724 wheelchair users were identified, 7% of all households with a disability. Only 25% of wheelchair users (179) live in a home that has been adapted for a wheelchair.

6.4 583 dwellings have wheelchair adaptations, over 400 of which are no longer occupied by a household requiring this facility, suggesting a mismatch between houses adapted and those where wheelchair users live.

6.5 11% of all dwellings have been adapted for a disabled person. Around 26% of Council rented homes and 22% of Housing Association homes were adapted compared to just 13% in the owner occupied (no mortgage) sector, principally occupied by older people.

6.6 In terms of the nature of adaptations 48% have handrails / grab rails adaptations, 44% have access to their property adaptations and 40% have a ground floor toilet. 37% have bathroom adaptations, and 27% have a stairlift / vertical lift.

6.7 There will be future provision requirements to address the changing needs from 'care in the community' policies, but at this stage we believe that these are likely to be specific small developments of supported units.

6.8 It is however, important to recognise that some 5,010 households have someone with a walking problem and 69% of wheelchair users do not live in an adapted dwelling. These are matters, which should principally be dealt with by Part M of the Building Regulations.

7.0 Population Growth and Household Formation

7.1 The 2001 Census data shows that the population of Shepway is currently 96,241 people 3,760 less than forecast at this point. This data has only just been produced and will not be reflected in population model projections for some time. We would not however expect the following trends within age bands, taken from the existing Population and Housing Model, which are outlined below, to alter in any significant way.

7.2 The forecasts to 2011 are based on the assumptions outlined in paragraphs 8.2.1 to 8.2.4 regarding mortality, fertility and migration etc, and are contained in population projections for Shepway for the period 1996-2011 provided by Kent County Council and used in the Structure Plan 3rd Review (VII).

7.3 The population is projected to increase by 4,400 people, 4.5% over the 15 years to 2011.

7.4 The 0-19 population increases in numbers overall but decreases over the period from 2006 to 2011 (500: 2.0%).

7.5 The 20-29 age group shows a fall in population overall, with numbers reducing by 1,700: 12.5%. This fall occurs up to 2006 but there is an increase (1,100: 10.2%) for the remaining forecast period. As this age range comprises new households forming this will have implications for future affordable housing need both in the short and longer term.

7.6 The 30-44 age group, which is the main economically active group shows an overall decline, with a significant fall between 2001 and 2011 (approximately 2,000 less people in the area).

7.7 The most significant change occurs in the numbers of people aged between 45 and 64. An overall increase of 4,600 people is seen with numbers of individuals growing steadily up to 2011. Between 1996 and 2006, there is forecasted to be 3,400 more people in the area (17.3%).

7.8 There is also a growth in numbers in the over 65 age group overall of around 1,300, the main rise occurring between 2006 and 2011 (1,000: 5.0%).

7.9 The "older" retirement group, those 80 and over grows by almost 14%, 800 more people by 2011. This group represents 6,700 people in total who are much more likely to have care and support needs which should now be assessed in detail.

8.0 Affordable Housing Need and Supply

8.1 The annual scale of need and supply of affordable housing is summarised below from the detailed assessment model in Section 9.

Annual Need and Supply

Backlog of existing need (eliminated over 5 years)	116
Net new formation	337
Net increase in registered need	753
In-migrant need	28
Total annual need	1, 234
Total supply from re-lets	<u>329</u>
Net annual outstanding need	<u>905</u>

8.2 The total affordable housing need annually is for 1,234 units. Re-lets of the existing social stock average 329 units and is the major means of addressing the scale of need identified. However, social stock lettings have reduced consistently each year for the last 5 years and re-lets are likely to continue to reduce as Right to Buy sales increase and the size of the Local Authority Stock reduces.

8.3 After allowing for this level of supply, there will still be an annual affordable housing shortfall of 905 units, which projected over the year, period to 2011 is a total of 7,240 units. It is not expected to be able to achieve this scale of supply in this timescale. This level of need is 15 times the number of units likely to be able to be delivered from acquisitions, new delivery or conversions, currently planned at around 60 units p.a. in the Housing Strategy for the next two years only, resulting in growing levels of unmet need each year.

8.4 Around 400 households, existing and concealed households intend to leave Shepway because of a lack of affordable housing over the next five years and they are not included in our needs assessment calculation.

8.5 The survey provides valuable data on the needs and preferences of concealed households who intend to form and wish to remain in the district.

8.6 94% of concealed households are young people wishing to set up their own household who are children of Shepway residents. However, not all concealed households represent a household in need of subsidized affordable housing.

9.0 House Type Preferences / Supply

9.1 The House Price Survey revealed that any household with an income below £22,000 to £31,000 per annum, depending on location within the district, would struggle financially to buy

the smallest, acceptable quality units in the local housing market. Around 84% of new households forming in the next year have incomes below £23,000 restricting access to one-bedroom flats only. Incomes in excess of £24,000 are needed to purchase two bedroom flats and in Folkestone, the cheapest location, £27,000 to buy a terraced house.

- 9.2 Table 1-2 reflects the differing levels of existing supply against demand from new households and the impact in actual sales levels created by stock availability and turnover.
- 9.3 Both preference and need for flats at 42.4% and 62.9% respectively are much higher than the stock level of 23.1% reflecting the impact of changing household formation and preferences. New forming households show a level of interest in terraced housing, closer to the stock supply of 23.2% and much lower than for flats. Sales of terraces are higher because they are the stock type to which there is greatest supply of lower cost housing.

Dwelling type Demand/Stock Supply/Market Sales

	Demand		2002 Stock Supply %	Sales
	New household need	New household preference %		All Buyers %
Terraces	27.0	26.5	23.2	27.7
Flats	62.9	42.4	23.1	20.0

- 9.4 All site briefs and regeneration projects should promote a range of housing types, but ensure that future demand for unit types which are under represented in the stock are met, in line with the principles in the PPG3 issued in March 2000.

10.0 Affordable Rented Accommodation

- 10.1 The local relationship between house prices and incomes is such that around 85% of new forming households are unable to purchase in their own right. The impact of Right to Buy creates a decline in the availability of rented stock and the largest proportion of additional affordable units are required as rented properties, both for new forming households and existing families.

11.0 Low Cost Market Housing

- 11.1 Only 33.9% of concealed households express either need or preference for owner occupation but generally around three quarters of new households have incomes inadequate to be able to purchase. The sustained period of high house price inflation, however, has impacted on new forming households' ability to buy, some of whom could have done so two years ago.
- 11.2 There is almost no specific preference for Shared Ownership units from either new forming or existing households.
- 12.0 Market Rent
- 12.1 Around 300 existing and new households each year express interest in private rental. Initiatives to deliver discounted market rent could well assist households unable to afford full market costs, which are high.

12.2 In addition to the scale of affordable housing to meet general households' requirements, there are specific needs, which should also be addressed. These are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

13.0 Sheltered Housing

13.1 In total the data suggests a combined requirement for 1,177 units of sheltered accommodation from older people currently living in the District (466 households) and those who may in-migrate to be beside their family (711 households). 497 are in the affordable sector and 680 in the private sector.

13.2 Some of this requirement will be addressed by flow of the existing sheltered stock, but acceptability of existing stock to meet today's standards will need to be assessed in calculating the scale of new delivery.

13.3 The significantly higher level of elderly accommodation for people moving into the District is common to other DCA surveys. Generally the forecast is being made by their children who assist in the moving process. Conversely the indigenous older population prefer to continue in the area/surroundings they know and within their own home as long as possible.

14.0 Supported Housing

14.1 The Survey identifies a need for 82 units of independent supported accommodation, 67 units with a visiting support worker, and 15 with a live in carer.

15.0 Recommendations

15.1 DCA make the following recommendations for the Council to consider in future housing and planning strategies:

15.2 Housing Strategy

- In its enabling role support delivery agencies to provide a mix of types but mainly small units, flats and terraced houses, to meet the needs of single adults and couples and address the shortages in the stock;
- Develop a comprehensive older person's delivery strategy to address the current and future growth in elderly and frail elderly households across all tenures, and their related care and support needs to:
 - Assess and prioritise the need for support services and adaptation required to keep people in their own home;
 - re-assess existing sheltered stock in meeting today's housing standards and preferences;
 - develop 'extra care' accommodation for the frail elderly population.
- Consider adopting Lifetime Homes standards for new housing.

15.3 Disabled Households

- Continue to promote disabled adaptations in order to improve the ratio of suitably adapted properties for disabled people;
- Develop a register of adapted property and disabled people needing adapted accommodation in order to facilitate better matching.

15.4 Planning Strategy

15.5 Affordable Housing Targets

- Negotiate with prospective developers towards achieving up to 35% subsidized affordable homes from the total of all suitable sites coming forward for planning consent over the period of the Local Plan. Each site will need to be assessed individually, targets being subject to wider planning, economic priority, regeneration and sustainability considerations.

- This will require a flexible approach to individual site negotiations, taking account of the very limited number of sites which will have 100% affordable housing and sites which may be unsuitable mainly due to the character of the area or the range of available services.

15.6 **Site Thresholds**

- The threshold level in Circular 6/98 is set at 25 units or 1 hectare but the lack of units achieved on sites above this level would have a severe impact on delivery of affordable housing if this level was to be applied.
- The annual scale of affordable need is almost fifteen times more than that able to be delivered from new units over recent years and justifies an exceptional case for lower thresholds. In all areas across the District we believe that the significant level of need identified is unlikely to be met even at the lower threshold of 15 units. We therefore recommend that, subject to a land availability assessment, consideration should be given to the adoption of 15 units or half a hectare as the threshold for affordable housing negotiation in the larger settlements.

For further information, contact the Housing Strategy Team. Contact details are shown in

Appendix 2.

APPENDIX 9: RESULTS OF THE 2006 TENANTS STATUS SURVEY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Key findings are as follows:

The following shows the satisfaction levels for 2006/07 compared with the 2000/01 and 2003/04 Shepway results

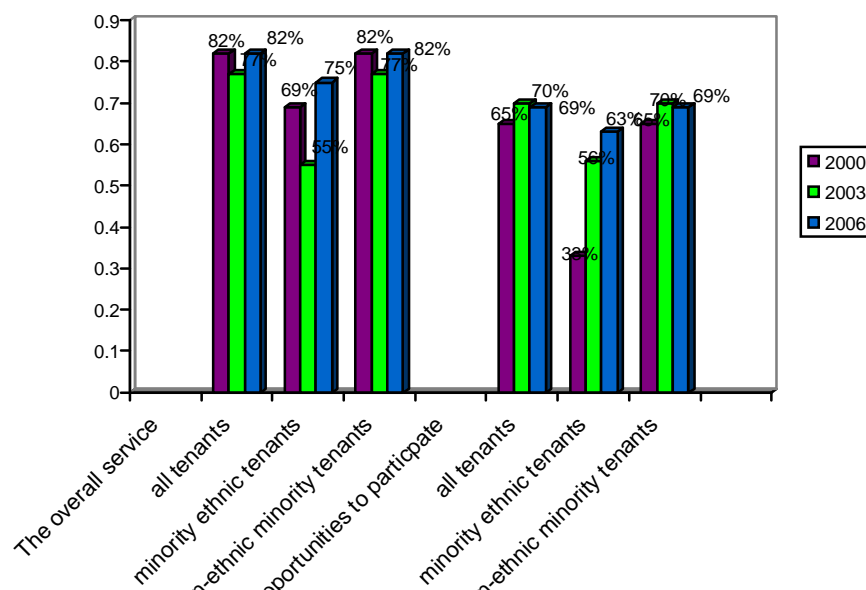
Satisfaction with:	<u>2000/01</u>	<u>2003/04</u>	<u>2006/07</u>
The overall service from your landlord:			
All tenants	82%	77%	82%
Ethnic minority tenants	69%	55%	75%
Non-ethnic minority tenants	82%	77%	82%

Opportunities for participation in

management and decision making:

All tenants	65%	70%	69%
Ethnic minority tenants	33%	56%	63%
Non-ethnic minority tenants	65%	70%	69%

Tenant satisfaction with overall service and opportunities to participate
% of respondents very satisfied/satisfied with:



The BVPI results show a positive improvement against both overall satisfaction and opportunities to participate in management, in particular from minority ethnic tenants.

For more information, contact the Policy and Performance Officer, contact details shown in Appendix 2.

APPENDIX 10 ~ Private Sector Housing Strategy:

Aims and Objectives

Action 1: Reduce the number of unfit properties in the private sector	
Targets	How we will work to achieve this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1.2% of unfit properties to be made fit each year until 2008 • Develop services to assist owners of unfit properties to carry out repairs and improvements without direct local authority financial assistance • All owners of property requiring assistance to be given a list of building contractors accredited by Shepway Care and Repair by April 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice to homeowners on carrying out repairs and obtaining finance • Minor Works Grants (outside the NRA area) targeted to unfit homes • Renovation Loans to owner-occupiers to address unfitness • Enforcement action against owners, landlords and owner-occupiers, in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy
Action 2: Bring empty homes back into use	
Targets	How we will work to achieve this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring 28 empty properties back into use each year until 2008 • Produce an information pack to assist owners to develop their empty properties and release income potential by August 2005 • Submit a bid for additional resources from PSA2 funding via KCC and CLG during 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental and technical advice to owners on carrying out necessary repairs and conversions • Assist owners in leasing good quality properties through the Local Leasing Scheme with Avenue Lettings and through the Housing Options Team • Enforcement Action, where appropriate, against owners and managers who fail to co-operate, in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy <p>Seek to develop partnerships to encourage the regeneration of empty properties</p>
Action 3: Improve the provision of affordable and good quality accommodation	
Targets	How we will work to achieve this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service reviewed and risk-based strategy developed by April 2006 ▪ All complaints about dangerous conditions from residents of HMO's responded to within target time of 48 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review current service provision for HMO's ▪ Develop a risk-based HMO service within available resources ▪ Respond to complaints concerning dangerous conditions made to Environmental Health by occupants of HMO's <p>Research the feasibility of introducing a Landlord Accreditation Scheme for Shepway District</p>
Action 4: Target private sector housing assistance to vulnerable households in a Neighbourhood Renewal Area	
Targets	How we will work to achieve this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct a survey to assess the condition of all properties in the NRA by September 2006 ▪ Respond to complaints concerning housing conditions within target time of 48 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Declare Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA) ▪ Give priority to Renovation Loans and Minor Works Grants to vulnerable households within the NRA in accordance with the Housing Assistance Policy ▪ Concentrate encouragement and enforcement activity on improving poor quality and poorly managed private rented accommodation in the NRA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take enforcement action (in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy), against owners to ensure that vulnerable households are protected from unsafe or unsatisfactory conditions.
Action 5: Maximise energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and combat the effects of climate change	
Targets	How we will work to achieve this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum 400 Kent Energy Centre survey/referral forms to be completed by Shepway residents until 2008 ▪ Structured targeted marketing towards a minimum of 1200 properties identified as fuel rich, to encourage take-up of government and privately funded discount schemes to improve energy efficiency in 2005 ▪ Install energy efficient heating and insulation in 60 properties occupied by vulnerable households via the Coldbusters Scheme by April 2006 ▪ Install energy efficient measures to meet the Decent Homes Standard in 80% of properties improved by a Renovation Loan ▪ 100% of improvements made by grant or loan to include (where appropriate) installation of energy efficient condensing boilers ▪ Deliver targeted information on grant and discount schemes for energy efficiency measures to 700 households within the NRA area ▪ Include information on the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures with all Planning and Building Control pre-application packages by September 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with agencies offering grants and discounts for energy conservation measures to maximise take-up ▪ Include insulation measures in works included in Renovation Loans and Minor Works Grants wherever possible ▪ Promote the Kent Energy Centre advice service to local residents as a one-stop-shop for information on energy measures and grants ▪ Raise the issue of energy efficiency through the Local Strategic Partnership ▪ Organise awareness raising events with the Kent Energy Centre ▪ Encourage housing development which makes full use of renewable energy techniques

For further information on the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy, contact the Private Sector Housing Manager, contact details are shown on Appendix 2.

APPENDIX11: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affordable Housing	Housing that is subsidised to provide homes at lower cost than would be possible without the subsidy, for rent or sale to meet the needs of people who otherwise would not be able to afford housing.
ADP	Approved Development Programme. RSLs' new developments approved and receiving grant from the Housing Corporation.
ALMO	Arms Length Management Organisation. A situation where an organisation is established to manage Council, housing stock. The properties remain Council owned and tenants retain secure tenancies. This can provide opportunities for extra funds
BCA	Basic Credit Approval. The amount of money the Government allows the Council to borrow for projects, which will be of lasting benefit. This borrowing is part of the Housing Investment Programme.
BV	Best Value. A measure used by the government to determine whether a Council is performing satisfactorily and to measure improvement.
BME	Black, Minority, Ethnic
Capital Programme	The Council's plan on how it will spend money on capital projects during the current and future years.
Capital Receipts	Money received from sale of assets, mostly Council house sales through the Right to Buy scheme.
Capital Resources	The amounts of money available to finance the capital programme. They include such things as credit approval, revenue contributions and a percentage of capital receipts.
CLG	Communities and Local Government The Central Government department responsible for the work of local authorities
Community Care Plan	A document produced by Social Services setting out strategies for implementing Care in the Community policies.
Community Strategy	A document produced in partnership, which promotes the social, environmental and economic well-being of the district. It outlines future priorities and sets out a series of action plans with targets.
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment. A process that enables the government to assess the quality of an individual Council's performance across all services.
DFG	Disabled Facilities Grant. A grant given to a person with disabilities towards the cost of improvement, adaptation or providing facilities to make his/her home more suitable for him/her to live in.
Empty Homes and Derelict Properties Strategy	This document sets out how the Council will work to bring empty homes and derelict properties back into use
Enabling Role	The Council's role to assist and encourage other agencies to meet identified housing needs.
Floating Support	Support services for vulnerable people to help them maintain a tenancy.
Fuel Poverty	Where a household spends 10% or more of its income on the provision of heat to ensure reasonable living standards.
General Fund	Income and expenditure, which relates to all services, excluding the provision and management of the Council's housing stock.
GOSE	Government Office for the South East. The local office of the ODPM and responsible for developing the Regional Housing Strategy
HImP	Health Improvement Programme. A three-year strategic plan, produced by the Health Authority in partnership with all stakeholders, aimed at improving the health and well being of the population. Now replaced by the Local Service Delivery Plan
HOT	Housing Options Team. A team of officers from Homelessness and Housing Benefits that help people threatened with homelessness to access good quality rented housing in the private sector
HMO	House in Multiple Occupation. Houses that contain more than one separate household.

Housing Corporation	A body set up by the Government, which provides assistance, regulation and control of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). It also allocates funds for the development of new affordable housing
HIP	Housing Investment Programme. The Council's annual programme of major and planned housing works. Sometimes referred to as 'the housing capital programme'. The money to pay for these works comes from borrowing, capital receipts, contributions from rents and Council tax.
Housing Needs Survey	A comprehensive area study to identify all forms of housing need, especially for affordable housing.
Housing Strategy Steering Group	Multi-agency group chaired by the council to monitor progress toward the actions set out in the Strategic Action Plan.
HRA	Housing Revenue Account. Rent payment made by tenants and paid into the HRA. The money is used to pay for day-to-day repairs on Council homes, management costs and other housing projects that directly benefit tenants.
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency for local government, an independent body that advises local government on Best Value and performance
JPPB	Joint Policy Planning Board, which represents all local authorities, social services and health to prioritise, monitor and review the provision of supported housing
KCC	Kent County Council
KMSHA	Kent & Medway Strategic Health Authority. Formerly the East and West Kent Health Authorities, Kent & Medway Strategic Health Authority does not directly provide health services, but manages the NHS locally by working closely with local primary care trusts (PCTs) and NHS Trusts. It is responsible for encouraging helpful networking across health, social care and other agencies, for ensuring high and consistent standards of treatment and care of patients and for achieving health improvements in the population as a whole.
LDF	Local Development Framework. The Government's replacement for the Local Plan.
Local Plan	A document produced by the Council following public consultation and a public inquiry, which sets out a framework and policies for the control of development in the District and identifies land for specific uses.
LASHG	Local Authority Social Housing Grant. This was funding for social housing development, initiated by local authorities but paid by the Housing Corporation. The scheme ended on 1 April 2003
PFI	Private Finance Initiative. This is a Government Scheme that large-scale refurbishment and new build projects can be funded through.
Planned Maintenance	Programme of works on Council owned properties that are planned ahead based on property condition.
PPG3	Planning Policy Guidance. This is guidance issued by the Secretary of State detailing National Planning Policy within existing legislation. PPG3 is the guidance that is most relevant to housing.
PCT	Primary Care Trust. The part of the Health Authority responsible for primary care and general practitioners.
Priority Need	Under the homelessness legislation, the Council has a greater duty to people accepted as being in priority need. This includes people with dependent children and people who are vulnerable.
RSL's	Registered Social Landlords are independent non-profit making housing associations aiming to provide affordable homes for people in housing need. (Also known as Housing Associations.)
Renovation Grants	A grant awarded by the Council to help people improve or repair their property, including adaptations for disabled persons and specific works for older occupiers wishing to stay in their own homes.
RTB	Right to Buy. A scheme that allows secure tenants to buy their homes with a discount.

Section 106 Agreement	A section of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which enables agreements, sometimes complex, to be reached between Landowners/developers and local authorities, usually enabling the provision of social facilities or affordable housing.
SLSP	Shepway Local Strategic Partnership is the group that leads on the development and delivery of the Community Strategy. See pages 3-4 'The Corporate Context'
SEEDA	South East of England Development Agency. This organisation leads on promoting sustainable economic development of an area
SEERA	South East of England Regional Assembly. This comprises members nominated by local authorities, community organisations and voluntary groups and is the representative voice of the region, with the aim of promoting the southeast both in Britain and Europe.
SERHB	The South East Regional Housing Board was set up to develop and implement the Regional Housing Strategy which sets out the priorities for the region and an action plan to deliver them. Under the main Board are a Forum and four sub-groups to examine specific issues such as transport.
Sheltered Housing	Homes for vulnerable people, usually with a Scheme Manager on site or on call to offer help and support.
SAA	Single Agency Assessment. In line with national policy, the SAA process ensures that all of an individual's health, housing and social care support needs are detailed on one form at the initial point of contact, for example when applying for housing.
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget. A scheme run by Central Government where the Council can bid for resources to regenerate areas suffering from social and economic deprivation.
SHG	Social Housing Grant. A grant provided directly to RSLs to meet a proportion of the costs of new housing provision.
Special Needs	People with special housing needs including older people, those with physical or learning disabilities, mental ill health or people who are vulnerable for other reasons.
SAP	Standard Assessment Procedure. The Government's home energy rating system, measured on a scale of 1 to 100. The higher the rating figure, the more energy efficient the house.
SHI	Starter Home Initiative. Government funded initiative to help 'key workers' to secure affordable housing as first time buyers.
SCA	Supplementary Credit Approval. Additional borrowing granted by the Government to the Council above the Basic Credit Approval for a specific scheme.
Supporting People Programme	A government initiative to help vulnerable people to maintain a tenancy, operating housing related support services from a single funding stream.
SureStart	A government initiative to support and empower parents and young families
TCI	Total Cost Indicator. A measure used by the Housing Corporation to assess whether a potential housing scheme will provide value for money. TCI covers the total sum of building a property.
Void Properties	An empty property for which there is no current tenancy.
Vulnerable People	The following people are considered to be vulnerable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Older people / young people leaving care - Single homeless people and rough sleepers - People with mental health issues - People with a physical or sensory disability / or a learning disability - Survivors of domestic violence - People who misuse substances (drugs or alcohol) / ex-offenders - Black and minority ethnic groups - People with AIDS or who are HIV positive - Refugees who have been granted leave to remain

APPENDIX 12: HOUSING STRATEGY PARTNERS

The Housing Strategy has been produced in collaboration with a wide range of partners, agencies and organisations as well as the residents of Shepway, all of whom we would like to express our thanks to. We would also like to thank Government Office for the South East for their help and guidance in developing this document. Our partners are listed below:

- Age Concern
- Andrew Beggs and Associates
- All Town and Parish Councils of Shepway District
- All Shepway District Council Directors and elected Council Members
- All neighbouring Local Authorities
- Avenue Lettings
- Breaking the Cycle
- Café IT
- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- Community Action in South Kent Partnership (CASK)
- Connexions, Folkestone
- Co-operative Development Society
- Craegmoor Healthcare
- Crowbridge Housing Association
- Council for Voluntary Service
- Downland Housing Group
- East Kent Health Authority
- East Kent Joint Policy Planning Board (Housing)
- East Kent NHS and Social Care Partnership
- Government Office for the South-East
- Hanover Housing Association
- HM Prison, Canterbury
- Housing 21
- Hyde Housing Association
- Jenners Group
- Kent County Constabulary
- Kent County Council
- Kent Energy Centre
- Kent Probation Service
- Kent Rural Community Council (now called Action with Communities in Rural Kent)
- Migrant Helpline
- Migrant Support Network
- Moat Housing Group
- North British Housing Association
- Orbit Housing Association
- Rainer Kent Triple Key
- Rethink
- Routes to Resettlement
- Rural Housing Trust
- Salvation Army Housing Association
- Sanctuary Housing Association
- Shelter
- Shepway Local Strategic Partnership (SLSP)
- Shepway Primary Care Trust (PCT)
- Shepway Tenants and Leaseholders Group
- Smith-Woolley and Perry

- Southern Housing Group
- Southern Private Landlords' Association
- Stonham Housing Association
- Supporting People Team
- SureStart, Folkestone
- The Asian Society
- The Carr-Gomm Society
- The Housing Corporation
- The residents of Shepway
- Town and Country Housing Group

**APPENDIX 13 ~ Best Value Performance Indicators
(2007/08 final data awaited)**

Housing Performance Indicators		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 Apr-June	2007/08 Apr-Sep	2007/08 Apr-Dec	2007/08 Apr-Mar	Priorities			
Ref	Description									SDC	CPA		
BV63	Energy efficiency -average SAP rating of council dwellings	64.5 ↑	65.5 ↑	66.5 ↑	67.76 ↑	67.81	68%				✓		
BV64	Empty private sector dwellings re-occupied through council action	21 ↑	29 ↑	58 ↑	34 ↓	12	29			✓			
BV66a	Proportion of rent collected	97.6% ↑	97.6% ↔	98.2% ↑	98.4% ↑	n/a	n/a			✓	✓		
BV66b	% of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of rent arrears	New	N/a	4.3%	3.5%	4.2%	4%						
BV66c	% of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served	New	29.5%	32% ↓	15.2% ↑	15.2%	11.7%						
BV66d	% of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	New	10%	0.4% ↑	0% ↑	0%	0.08%						
BV74	Council tenant satisfaction with overall service for:					Next survey due 2009				✓			
	a) All tenants	77% ↓	77% ↓	77% ↓	82% ↑								
	b) Black and minority ethnic tenants	55% ↓	55% ↓	55% ↓	65% ↑								
	c) Non-black and minority ethnic tenants	77% ↓	77% ↓	77% ↓	82% ↑								
BV75	Council tenant satisfaction with participation in management for:					Next survey due in 2009				✓			
	a) All tenants	70% ↑	70% ↑	70% ↑	69% ↔								

	b) Black and minority ethnic tenants	56% ↑	56% ↑	56% ↑	56 % ↔						
	c) Non-black and minority ethnic tenants	70% ↑	70% ↑	70% ↑	69 % ↔						
BV164	Does the authority follow the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice?	Yes ↔	Yes ↔	Yes ↔	Yes ↔	Yes	Yes				✓
BV183i	Average length of stay in Bed and Breakfast for vulnerable households (weeks)	7.7 ↑	9.6 ↓	6 ↑	2.9 ↑	2	2				✓
BV183ii	Average length of stay in Hostels for vulnerable households (weeks)	37.5 ↓	32 ↑	29 ↑	12.4 ↑	12	12				✓
BV184a	Proportion of authority homes which were non-decent at 1/4/04	38% ↑	31% ↑	20.5% ↑	15.02% ↑	22.75%	19.58%			✓	✓
BV184b	% change in proportion of non-decent authority homes during the year	6% ↓	30% ↑	28.4% ↓	27.36% ↓	Annual figure					
BV185	% of responsive repairs for which the authority made and kept an appointment	98.4% ↑	99.8% ↑	99.3% ↓	99.1% ↓	99%	98%				✓
BV202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within Shepway	New	Less than 10	1 ↑	1 ↔	Annual figure					
BV203	% change in average number of vulnerable families placed in temporary accommodation	New	5.97%	25% ↓	- ↑	Annual figure					
BV212	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing	20 days	33 days ↓	28 days ↑	25 days ↑	40.6 days	34.7 days				✓
BV213	Number of homelessness cases prevented	New	49	176 ↑	205 ↑	44	97				
BV214	% of homeless families previously accepted as homeless within the last two years	New	6.5%	13% ↓	1% ↑	Annual figure					

APPENDIX 14 ~ The Housing Strategy Steering Group

The Council is required to produce a comprehensive Housing Strategy Statement for the District, every 3-5 years. The Strategy sets out the Council's proposals for tackling housing and related need in the district over the five-year period 2005-2010. This strategy has been updated and work on a new strategy will begin in 2009.

Ongoing review is an essential part of the Strategy Process, to ensure that strategic objectives and targets are met and that the overall Strategy remains relevant and responsive to local needs. The Housing Strategy Steering Group is responsible for this review.

The Group is made up of representatives from the following agencies:

- Council Officers from all Directorates
- The local voluntary sector
- Private Developers
- Shepway Social Services
- Shepway Primary Health Care Trust
- An RSL representative from the Shepway development forum
- The Cabinet Member responsible for the Housing Portfolio

The main role of the Housing Strategy Steering Group is:

- To consider and further develop the main themes and priorities put forward by the wider community consultation.
- To agree and set the strategic aims and objectives of the strategy.
- To inform the process of resource allocation within the strategy
- To develop the strategic action plan
- To review the strategy and progress toward the strategic aims and objectives on an ongoing basis.
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The Annual Monitoring Meeting

The HSPMG will meet in October of each year to monitor performance during the previous twelve months. Shepway District Council Housing Strategy Team chairs the meeting.

Further details on the role of the Housing Strategy Steering Group are available from the Housing Strategy Team on 01303 853747.

