

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL REFRESHED HOUSING STRATEGY 2012-14

Introduction

This is not a new housing strategy, but a refreshed version of the Housing Strategy 2009-14 which was adopted in September 2009. Mid way into the strategy is a good time to review progress and revise the action plan.

The overall purpose of this refreshed Housing Strategy is to:

- Provide an update on progress to the 2009 Housing Strategy
- Refresh our action plans
- Take account of significant policy changes at national, regional and district level
- Respond to changes in the housing market
- Provide a bridging document until the development of a new strategy for 2014 and beyond.

The objectives in the refreshed Strategy remain the same:

1. Increase the supply of affordable housing
2. Prevent homelessness
3. Improve the quality and sustainability of housing
4. Promote independence and inclusion
5. Provide efficient and customer focused housing services.

Delivering in partnership

The challenges faced by the District cannot be solved by Mid Sussex District Council alone. The Action Plan attached to this document sets out how the priorities will be delivered with our partners from the private, statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

Monitoring and review

Delivery of the Housing Strategy Action Plan and the key performance indicator targets will be closely monitored, with progress published annually which will be made available on the Council's website.

Contacts

If you would like to know more about the services covered in this strategy or would like to discuss any of the issues raised, please contact:

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Context

The next section provides an assessment of housing need and housing markets in Mid Sussex and how these have changed since the adoption of the original strategy in 2009. It also looks at changes to the policy demands on housing, particularly the radical changes introduced by the Coalition Government.

The Housing Market

Since the adoption of the Housing Strategy, sustained difficult economic conditions continue to have a detrimental effect on the housing market. The overall picture is one of some falls in house prices, but of a continued lack of access to affordable homes. This is compounded by the need for larger deposits and stricter lending criteria set by mortgage lenders, particularly affecting first time buyers. This means that in North West Sussex, savings in excess of £20,000 and an annual household income of over £55,000 are likely to be required to get on to the property ladder. Nationally the average age for a first time buyer is now 37. A recent report by the National Housing Federation points to a continued longer term trend of reduced owner occupation. All of these trends put further demand on the private rented sector, reflected in increased rents. It also means a continued need for the provision of new affordable housing.

Demand and Supply of Affordable Homes

The table below shows the numbers on the housing register in Mid Sussex over the past two years, a breakdown of the sizes of homes needed and the numbers of properties that became available through re-lets and new affordable housing. The last column is the ratio of lettings against numbers on the register averaged over the two years.

	Numbers on Register		Lettings		Ratio
	2009/10	2010/11	2009/10	2010/11	2009-11
One bedroom	1,545	1,363	186	133	9.1
Two bedroom	880	910	151	86	7.6
Three bedroom	521	510	55	46	10.2
Four and five bedroom	89	104	6	1	27.6
Sheltered/retirement	411	278	100	85	3.7
Total	3,449	3,165	498	351	7.8

Evidence from the last two years shows a particular lack of supply against demand for four and five bedroom properties. The new affordable housing in the District amounted to 157 in 2009/10 and 85 in 2010/11, which is reflected in the greater number of lettings in 2009/10. Choice-Based Lettings was introduced in April 2010, which required everyone to re-register leading to an initial reduction in numbers. The latest figure for the numbers on the Housing Register at 1 December 2011 shows an increase to 4,020.

Homelessness

The figures below show a mixed picture, with the number of households being accepted as homeless and the numbers placed in temporary accommodation increasing

	09/10	10/11	ytd Sep 11
Homelessness preventions	343	274	112
Homelessness acceptances	32	46	21
Numbers assisted to access the private sector	91	78	53
Total in temporary accommodation at end of year	25	27	34

Reasons given by people seeking Housing Advice from the Council

Looking at the reasons given by people for seeking housing advice from the Council, there has been a big increase in the numbers losing their rented accommodation, which could be a sign that the lack of access to the private rented sector for applicants in receipt of housing benefit is starting to take effect. Mortgage arrears are also a growing concern, although this is not reflected in the levels of acceptances.

	09/10	10/11	ytd Sep 11
Unable to remain with parent, relative or friend	339	350	161
Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	156	128	48
Violent breakdown of relationship with partner	88	78	27
Other violence or intimidation	29	21	14
Mortgage arrears	90	140	78
Rent arrears	121	105	51
Other reasons for loss of rented/tied housing	289	342	169
Discharged from institution	27	30	9
Other	265	169	80
Total number seeking housing advice	1,404	1,363	637

Reasons for homelessness where full housing duty accepted

	09/10	10/11	ytd Sep 11
Unable to remain with parent, relative or friend	6	20	6
Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	1	3	3
Violent breakdown of relationship with partner	14	8	2
Other violence or intimidation	2	1	2
Mortgage arrears	0	0	0
Rent arrears	1	1	1
Other reason for loss of rented/tied accommodation	5	5	6
Discharged from institution	0	4	1
Other	3	4	0
Total number of households accepted	32	46	21

Policy Context

The next section provides a summary of the key changes in policy context at national, regional and local level that need to be addressed in this refreshed Housing Strategy.

National Policy Drivers

The coalition government has radically changed the policy demands on housing. The most important in the context of this refreshed Housing Strategy come from the implications of the Localism Act, "Laying the Foundations- A Housing Strategy for England" and the overall context of measures to reduce government expenditure. The reforms are intended to make the provision of social housing more flexible and targeted at those who need it most, with a greater emphasis on decisions based on local housing needs and circumstances. There is also a wish to shift the public's perception of social housing to it being a springboard into work and self-sufficiency.

The specific aspects of the National Agenda with implications for our Housing Strategy are:

- Changes to the planning framework, with the abolition of top down regional targets and a move towards neighbourhood planning, with incentives to promote new development where it is needed locally;
- A new funding and tenancy model for the provision of affordable housing;
- The requirement for each council to prepare a Tenancy Strategy;
- Links to welfare reform and its implication for housing need.

Changes to the Planning Framework and production of a District Plan

The Planning Policy Team is leading on the production of a District Plan, with the aim of adoption spring 2013. The Council currently has to meet the housing requirements of the South East Plan to deliver 855 dwellings per annum for the period to 2026. The Localism Act will see the South East Plan and these targets revoked early 2012, with incentives for facilitating new housing development through the New Homes Bonus. The District Plan will provide the framework for planning in the District to 2031 and include, as part of its evidence base, an assessment of the housing growth required in Mid Sussex, together with a review of the Council's affordable housing policies. In order to balance the need for affordable housing with the need for infrastructure to support development, the Consultation Draft District Plan suggests maintaining the requirement for 30% of new housing to be affordable, but removes the existing threshold of 15 units so that all new residential homes will contribute to affordable housing.

A New Funding and Tenancy Model for the provision of affordable housing

From April 2011, the levels of grant available from the Homes and Communities Agency were drastically reduced to be replaced by a new funding model for the provision of affordable housing, based on affordable rents. The new affordable rent tenure has its rent set at a maximum of 80% of local market rents, compared to traditional social rents which are at about 50% of open market rents. It is intended that Registered Providers will be able to continue to deliver more affordable housing through increased rental streams. They are able to charge affordable rents both on a proportion of their existing re-lets and on new build. The Government is also introducing the ability for housing associations and councils to offer fixed term tenancies for a specified period of time, as opposed to traditional "lifetime tenancies". Providers will generally be required to offer fixed term tenancies for at least 5 years for new tenancies. Existing tenants will be allowed to maintain their current tenancies.

Tenancy Strategies

The Localism Act requires local authorities to publish a tenancy strategy by the end of 2012. This will describe the high level objectives that registered providers should have "regard to". The Strategy is required to be developed in a way that considers the Council's allocation policy and homelessness strategy, and in consultation with the registered providers operating in the area. Tenancy policies are required to be published by registered providers, setting out their approach to fixed term tenancies and affordable rents.

Registered Providers who are developing new affordable housing using grant from the Homes and Communities Agency have agreed their 4 year development programmes with the Homes and Communities Agency based upon a financial consideration of rent levels and tenures. This will be a major influence on their tenancy policies. The Council will work collaboratively with Registered Providers in developing our Tenancy Strategy, with the overall aim of meeting housing need in the District while ensuring that Mid Sussex is an attractive proposition for Registered Providers to invest in new affordable housing. It will also be important that clear information is provided to applicants before they take up a tenancy, and ensuring appropriate mechanisms are put in place to support residents who may be struggling to manage their tenancy and who could, therefore, be at risk of having their fixed term tenancy ended.

Welfare reform and its implications for housing need

The government is introducing a range of proposals designed to reform welfare benefits in order to provide work incentives, simplify the benefits system and make it easier to administer. Taken together with the move to affordable rents and flexible tenancies they are likely to have significant implications for the level of housing need in the District. The welfare reforms most relevant to housing organisations relate to Housing Benefit, the new Universal Credit and fixed upper limits on benefits payable. These include:

- A reduction in the level of Local Housing Allowance from 1 April 2011. The levels of benefit have been reduced to the 30th percentile of local marker rents from the previous 50th percentile level.
- From January 2012 the Local Housing Allowance shared room rate for people under 25 will be extended to people under 35. This is likely to mean that people of this age who are benefit dependent will be unable to afford private self-contained accommodation.

- From 2013, limits will be placed on the Housing Benefit for working age households in under-occupied social rented housing. This is designed to encourage them to downsize, releasing larger properties for those who need them.
- The phasing in of the Universal Credit over the period 2013-17, with caps set on the overall levels of benefit received, will particularly impact on larger families.
- Future increases in Local Housing Allowance will be linked to movements in the consumer price index, rather than actual rents, which is likely to result in Local Housing Allowance lagging well behind actual rents.

Other changes in the Regulatory Framework

Inspection Regime

There have been major changes to the inspection regime, which have implications both for the Council and the Registered Providers in the District. The demise of the Audit Commission means that the Council's Strategic Housing Services will no longer be subject to future inspection and Registered Providers are to be subject to a system of tenant involvement to monitor and scrutinise the performance of housing management. For example, Affinity Sutton has set up Regional Scrutiny Panels, and the Cabinet Member for Health and Community is a member of that Panel.

Changes in the regional framework

Following the Localism Act and the eventual removal of the top down housing targets set out in the South East Plan, there has been a change in the regional framework for planning further housing delivery. There is a continued emphasis on working within the context of the Gatwick Diamond, with regard to economic development and housing. We are also working with Horsham and Crawley at the North West Sussex level, building on the collaboration undertaken to agree the Local Investment Plan and the updating of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Strategic Links

It is important that this refreshed Housing Strategy is seen in the context of the Council's higher level priorities, especially those set out in the Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008-18 and the Council's Corporate Plan. The priorities in the Sustainable Communities Strategy remain, with the Housing Strategy most closely aligned to "protecting and enhancing the environment", recognising the contribution of housing to managing the causes and impacts of climate change; "cohesive and safe communities", providing support to vulnerable people to encourage independent living; Economic Vitality, "the provision of housing and infrastructure requirements to meet the range of local needs."

The Council's Corporate Plan retains the three themes of Better Environment, Better Lives and Better Services. The priorities under Better Lives are most relevant to the Housing Strategy, especially Opportunities and Quality of Life for All.

Conclusions from the Contextual Analysis

To sum up, the main challenges and opportunities from these changes that need to be addressed in our refreshed Housing Strategy Action Plan are as follows:

- Responding to the new planning framework and the replacement of top down housing targets with neighbourhood planning and incentives through the New Homes Bonus.
- Responding to the new funding system for affordable housing that works locally in the context of the new affordable rent model.
- Developing a Tenancy Strategy, with the overall aim of meeting a range of housing needs in the District while ensuring that Mid Sussex is an attractive proposition for investment in new affordable housing.
- Communicating with tenants and people on the Housing Register to provide clear and accessible information about the new housing offer, which is much more complex under the new affordable housing system.
- Preventing homelessness by working with the private rented sector to ensure continued access at reduced levels of Local Housing Allowance
- Having the capacity to deal with potentially more people presenting themselves as homeless and a greater demand for temporary accommodation.
- Helping larger families dependent upon benefits who are potentially priced out of the private rented sector to ensure they can continue to access affordable housing.
- Providing young people with information that would help them to access privately rented shared housing.
- Helping people who are under-occupying social housing to downsize and free up larger family accommodation - this is making best use of existing stock and helping people who may lose benefit from 2013.
- Encouraging access to shared ownership schemes, including the new Firstbuy product for first time buyers.

Action Plan and Performance Indicator Targets

An Action Plan is provided at the end of this document, which includes a column of resource implications. There is also a table of performance indicator targets relevant to each objective.

Consultation

The refreshed Housing Strategy has been informed by a consultation event held on 9 November- “Responding to a Changing Housing World”, which sought to set out the new context for housing in Mid Sussex and identify the way forward. This was attended by representatives from Registered Providers and other partner organisations with workshop topics covering the delivery of affordable housing, the development of a Tenancy Strategy for Mid Sussex, preventing homelessness and proposed changes to our housing allocation scheme.

The next section of this document, reviews progress against the actions set out in the 2009 Housing Strategy, identifies the context changes that we are facing and the new actions to be completed.

Strategic Objective 1. Increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Addressing the shortage of affordable housing in the district is a primary aim of the strategy. Despite some recent readjustments to house prices, we still have to address the longer term issues in the housing market, particularly the shortage of affordable housing. This includes both new build and making best use of the existing stock.

Achievements 2009-11

- Provided 400 new affordable homes over the last three years, exceeding our Local Area Agreement target of 324.
- Produced the Consultation Draft District Plan.
- Introduced a scheme to tackle under occupation in social housing to free up larger family sized accommodation through the “Does your Home Fit You” campaign. 9 under-occupiers have been assisted to move through the scheme in the period June 2010 to April 2011.
- Worked to provide more affordable housing in rural areas, with 76 delivered in the last two years.

Progress with the District Plan

A Consultation Draft District Plan has been produced which is out to public consultation until mid-January 2012. Part of its evidence base is a Local Housing Assessment that identifies at a local level, potential housing requirements related to future demographic, economic and labour market change. District Councillors agreed that the Consultation Draft District Plan be prepared on the basis of a housing number of 530 homes per annum based on the findings of the Local Housing Assessment. The Proposed Submission District Plan will be considered by Council in June 2012, with the aim of formal adoption by spring 2013.

Achieving affordable housing of the right size and tenure for Mid Sussex

The Consultation Draft District Plan includes a proposed affordable housing policy, which will require 30% affordable housing on all residential sites, as opposed to our current policy where 30% is provided on sites of 15+ units. This will increase the delivery of affordable housing and ensure that it is provided on smaller sites and settlements and will also help meet the need for rural affordable housing. On developments of 1-3 dwellings, and in other circumstances where on-site provision is not practicable, a commuted payment equivalent to 30% towards the provision of affordable housing off-site will be required. It will also be important to ensure affordable housing of the right size and tenure. The draft affordable housing policy will include a requirement for a mix for new affordable housing of, generally, 75% social or affordable rent and 25% intermediate tenure, usually shared ownership. It will also be a priority to ensure that additional 4 bed new affordable housing continues to be provided to meet the needs of larger families.

Enabling the delivery of more new affordable housing in the new planning and funding regime

Enabling the provision of affordable housing has become more challenging with the reductions in Homes and Communities Agency grant, no grant on s106 sites and the new affordable rent/flexible tenancy funding model. We are working with our Registered Provider development partners to ensure the continued delivery of new affordable housing in Mid Sussex. We have also been working with the Homes and Communities Agency and the neighbouring North West Sussex councils of Horsham and Crawley to develop a Local Investment Plan. This identifies sites for affordable housing that are likely to come forward and highlights the key priorities for housing investment over the short to medium term, enabling investment to be planned more strategically around housing market areas rather than on individual local authority areas. Our target is to deliver 71 new affordable homes next year. Subject to the outcome of the Local Government Resource Review, we will look to allocate additional funds from the New Homes Bonus next year for the provision of more affordable housing. We have undertaken a viability study to ensure an appropriate balance between the need for affordable housing and other infrastructure, whilst not deterring

development. We are also working with developers and our Local Economic Partnership colleagues to identify stalled sites that might benefit from the Government's new Growth Fund.

Developing a Tenancy Strategy

We are developing a Tenancy Strategy to guide the Registered Providers that we work with. This sets out guidance on issues such as flexible tenure, affordability, conversion of stock and procedures at the end of a tenancy. This is all within the context of meeting housing need in Mid Sussex, together with our Housing and Homelessness Strategies and the Allocation Scheme.

Rural Affordable Housing

The lack of rural affordable housing in the District remains a major issue. We are working with Horsham District Council to develop a Joint Rural Affordable Housing Partnership Plan to share expertise and common partnerships to deliver more rural affordable housing. The two authorities are working with Action in Rural Sussex and Parish Councils to undertake rural housing needs surveys and development is directed towards those areas which have the greatest housing need and sustainable locations. To date new rural affordable housing has been developed through the use of allocated and windfall sites and the use of rural exception sites where there is a requirement to provide 100% affordable housing. We have delivered a Rural Exception Site this year in Crawley Down, which will provide 25 new affordable homes, 19 social rented and the remainder shared ownership. There is a further scheme in the pipeline at Ashurst Wood, which has planning permission and will deliver 12 affordable homes. We are working with other parish councils and Action in Rural Sussex to explore the possibility of developing further Rural Exception Sites and will also be promoting Community Land Trusts. Our target for rural affordable housing is to provide 20 per year. We are working with rural parishes to encourage them to address the need for affordable housing as part of the development of their neighbourhood plans.

Making the best use of existing stock

Under-occupation schemes

Progress has also been made in tackling under-occupation in social housing across the District through the "Does your Home fit you" campaign. Under-occupiers tend to be older people and the scheme has been run with Affinity Sutton and Age UK. It has targeted under-occupying Affinity Sutton tenants to move and free up badly needed family size accommodation. It also promoted help to move for older people, working with Age UK, who provide a support service called "Your home- your choice". We are hoping to continue to provide this service working in partnership with Age UK, Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council. 79 applicants are currently on the Common Housing Register in Band A because they are under-occupying social housing and want to downsize. However, since CBL was introduced, only 21 such applicants have been rehoused, including those assisted by the "Does your Home fit you" campaign. Some of these tenants have been unable to move because the current allocations scheme does not give them sufficient priority for ground floor or lift-access accommodation if they choose to move to smaller accommodation. We are planning to change our allocation scheme to address this issue.

Bringing empty homes back into use.

We have worked to develop a database of long term empty properties in the District and a list of potential purchasers of such properties who are interested in renovating them back to occupation. Letters have been sent to the owners of empty properties pointing out the financial and social cost of keeping them empty and the options available for them to let, sell or renovate their properties. This has also assisted in improving the accuracy of Council Tax records for the number of long term empty properties in the District, which has reduced from 478 in October 2010 to 285 in October 2011. We intend to continue to actively engage with the owners of empty properties and will also consider making use of our powers to implement works in default where an owner has failed to comply with enforcement action requirements. If owners fail to reimburse the Council for the costs involved, we can obtain an order for sale as a last resort to ensure the properties are sold and returned to use by their new owners.

Summary of the main actions in the new Action Plan

- Ensure new homes are delivered in the right places in a planned way through the new District Plan.
- Enable the delivery of more new affordable housing in the new planning and funding regime
- Provide rural affordable housing through the Joint Rural Affordable Housing Partnership Plan and provision of further Rural Exception Sites.
- Develop a Tenancy Strategy in line with the requirements of the Localism Act.
- Achieve affordable housing of the right size and tenure for Mid Sussex.
- Tackle under-occupation by the continuation of the Does your Home fit scheme and revised allocations scheme.
- Implement further measures to reduce the number of empty homes in the District.

Strategic Objective 2. Prevent Homelessness

Achievements 2009-11

- Prevented homelessness in 617 cases over the last two years.
- Reduced the numbers in temporary accommodation, in line with the Government 5 year target of a 50% reduction by the end of 2010. The target was for a reduction from 55 in 2004 to 27 by the end of 2010.
- Helped 169 households to access the private rented sector over the last two years.
- We have placed greater emphasis upon debt advice services and assistance to those in danger of losing their homes. This has included the Court Desk service, Mortgage Rescue Scheme and providing additional funding for the CAB to provide more debt advice services.
- Since April 2011, 16 and 17 year olds who become homeless in the District have been referred to a new Countywide youth homelessness prevention service funded by Supporting People, which provides mediation, emergency accommodation and longer-term housing support.

The Council adopted a new Homelessness Strategy in June 2008 for the period 2008-13, with the overall aim of preventing homelessness. The main points were included in the Housing Strategy in recognition of the close links between tackling affordability, meeting housing needs and preventing homelessness. There was further emphasis upon dealing with the potential consequences of the financial downturn, for example in promoting debt advice, court advocacy and mortgage rescue schemes for those facing repossession.

The main actions that we identified were to:

- Maintain reductions in the number of households accepted as homeless.
- Maximise access to private sector rented accommodation.
- Reduce homelessness amongst vulnerable groups, especially young people, women suffering domestic violence and ex-offenders.
- Improve standards in the provision of temporary accommodation.

Maintain reductions in the number of households accepted as homeless

The numbers of homelessness acceptances and use of temporary accommodation has been maintained at comparatively low levels, despite the recession, collapse of the housing market and difficult economic conditions. With the changes to Housing Benefit and a continued difficult housing market it is not expected that the long term trends of reducing numbers accepted as homeless will be maintained. This situation is expected to be exacerbated as further reductions in housing benefit are introduced, affecting existing private sector tenants. We have continued the approach to homelessness prevention through the provision of housing advice. There has been an increase in the number of people seeking Housing Advice due to mortgage arrears. We have placed greater emphasis upon debt advice services and assistance to those in danger of losing their homes. This has included the Court Desk service, Mortgage Rescue Scheme and the Council providing additional funding for the CAB to provide more debt advice services.

Maximise access to private rented sector accommodation

Given the comments above about the implications of the reductions in Local Housing Allowance and the availability of private rented sector accommodation, initiatives such as the use of the Deposit Guarantee and Rent in Advance Schemes will be even more important in ensuring that those in housing need can access private sector tenancies. Our overall target is to assist 76 households per annum to access the private rented sector. The use of Discretionary Housing payments will also be important in retaining access to accommodation for people on benefit. We will be working through the Landlords Forum to promote the private rented sector generally and their willingness to take people on benefits.

Reducing homelessness amongst vulnerable groups

Young people were recognised in the Housing Strategy as being particularly at risk of homelessness. An important recent development is the creation by West Sussex County Council of a countywide service for homeless 16 and 17 year olds, underpinned by a protocol with District and Borough Councils. This commenced in early 2011, providing a youth homelessness service including, mediation, emergency accommodation and longer-term housing support. We will be reviewing the effectiveness of the scheme

with our partners. A Smart Moves interactive education resource has been developed by the Mid Sussex Youth Homelessness Forum designed to advise on the issues to be considered when planning to leave home so as to avoid homelessness. The possibility of the West Sussex service rolling this out to further schools is being explored. We are also actively participating in the review of the Supporting People funded homelessness services to ensure appropriate support to prevent homelessness amongst vulnerable groups.

There are particular concerns about the implications of the extension of the shared accommodation Local Housing Allowance rate to single people up to the age of 35 from January 2012, particularly for vulnerable groups. This is likely to mean that many people aged 25-34 living in self-contained accommodation will have a shortfall between the amount of benefit paid and their rent. There are some groups who will be exempted from these benefit reductions, including those who have previously lived in and received resettlement support from hostels for homeless people, domestic violence refuges or drug rehabilitation hostels. Also those who have left prison with housing arranged under MAPPA, those who are severely disabled and live with a non-dependent, or those who are entitled to an extra bedroom for a non-resident carer. There are limited numbers of houses in multiple-occupation in the District to accommodate more single people sharing.

New arrangements are in place for monitoring the number of rough sleepers nationally, with each council required to give an estimate of the numbers in their area on a single night during October and November. The figures have been established through contact with relevant partner organisations to monitor the numbers, working with organisations such as the Town and Parish Councils, Shelter, the Police and the Open House at Crawley. The figure for October/November submitted by Mid Sussex was 5. We are ensuring that organisations that we work with are aware of what to do if they come across a rough sleeper and are working with other councils in East and West Sussex to co-ordinate the available support following DCLG countywide funding held by Eastbourne Borough Council for this purpose.

Improve standards in the provision of temporary accommodation

The increase in the numbers approaching the Council as homeless has led to more households needing to be placed in temporary accommodation. This puts a strain on the temporary accommodation available and also is expensive for the Council. We are planning, through an arrangement with Affinity Sutton, to make use of some of their general needs housing on an ad hoc basis as temporary accommodation. This will provide better quality temporary accommodation and will help contain the Council's costs. It will also provide more accommodation within Mid Sussex so that homeless people are closer to their support, schooling and employment, making it more likely that they can find long-term housing solutions. We are also seeking to ensure that those we place into temporary accommodation do not stay there too long and receive the support that they need, especially in avoiding repeat homelessness and in helping them to find permanent accommodation. Examples of such assistance includes floating support provided through the Signpost service and assisted bidding for affordable homes. The Council is putting additional money into the temporary accommodation budget for next year in the expectation that more people will be presenting themselves as homeless. We hope also to explore the possibility with Affinity Sutton, of providing at least one unit of temporary accommodation for people needing disabled access.

The Localism Act 2011 will allow the Council to discharge its full housing duty to homeless households by securing a tenancy with a private landlord for a minimum fixed term of 12 months. It is hoped that this extension of existing powers will reduce the pressure on providing temporary accommodation. However, whether this proves to be the case will depend on the availability of suitable private tenancies and landlords willing to let them to homeless households.

Summary of the main actions in the new Action Plan

- Contain increases in the numbers of homeless acceptances through homelessness prevention measures.
- Maximise access to private rented sector accommodation.
- Address homelessness amongst vulnerable groups, particularly young people and rough sleepers.
- Make flexible provision for temporary accommodation, to meet increased demand from the anticipated increase in the numbers presenting themselves as homeless.

Strategic Objective 3. Improve the quality and sustainability of housing

Achievements 2009-11

- All new affordable homes provided in the District over the last two years have been built to level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- We have adopted a Minimum Space Standards Supplementary Planning Document, which is informing the design of new developments.
- We are delivering our Affordable Warmth Strategy, including the promotion of Warm Front Grants. In the period 2008-2011 4,074 cavity walls and 3,319 lofts were insulated. Over 100 Green Doctor visits have been completed.
- Licensed 8 high risk houses in multiple-occupation in Mid Sussex, to ensure that they are properly managed and meet health and safety standards.

Improvements to the quality of the District's housing stock can have a beneficial effect on a household's health and well-being, particularly in relation to energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty. In terms of new housing, it is important that all housing continues to be developed to high sustainability, design and accessibility standards.

The main actions that we identified were to:

- Improve the condition of private sector stock through the implementation of the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy.
- Improve the condition of Housing Association stock in Mid Sussex.
- Improve energy efficiency across tenure of new homes and existing stock.
- Tackle fuel poverty through the Affordable Warmth Strategy.
- Improve standards in houses in multiple-occupation.
- Ensure that new housing is developed to high standards

Improving Energy Efficiency in the Private Sector and Tackling Fuel Poverty

The most up to date figures for fuel poverty (2009) indicate that 10.9% (5,942) households in Mid Sussex are in fuel poverty. Recent rises in energy prices and reductions in real income have increased the numbers at risk of suffering fuel poverty making energy efficiency in housing even more important. We are continuing to implement the measures in our Affordable Warmth Strategy, including the provision of advice to residents and expansion of the successful "green doctor" home energy visitor service. This is in conjunction with the Health and Wellbeing Service which the Council provides on behalf of NHS West Sussex and the County Council. Tackling fuel poverty is one of the health and Well Being Service's priorities. We will also be looking to promote and deliver new national schemes such as the Green Deal. This will allow energy companies to offer energy efficiency measures to householders and then recoup payments through their energy bills. This will mean that the consumers face no upfront installation costs, enjoy the benefits of warmer homes and cheaper fuel bills, and only make the payments while they stay at the property. The new scheme is due to be launched late in 2012, with Local Authorities able to be designated as Green Deal providers.

Our Housing Standards Team will be continuing to exercise their enforcement and advice/advocacy role in encouraging owner occupiers and private sector landlords to provide well maintained, decent properties. Many of the private sector properties in the District that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard, fail because of excess cold.

Improving Housing Association Stock in Mid Sussex

Housing Associations in England were required to meet the Decent Homes Standard for their stock by the end of 2010. The largest registered provider in Mid Sussex is Affinity Sutton who are working on the implementation of their FutureFit project designed to show how the retrofitting of different types of social housing can be achieved to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty. The pilot has included

properties in Hassocks and East Grinstead. This is seen as a preparation for large scale retrofit in the future, linking to the Green Deal. Progress has been made with the Wilmington Way development in Haywards Heath which was highlighted in the 2009 Housing Strategy. This is a major redevelopment project to provide high quality replacement new housing in an area of social deprivation in a development which was incapable of being brought up to Decent Homes Standard. It will achieve level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes and is due to be completed in three phases with a mix of tenures, with the first phase completed in 2012.

Ensuring that new housing is developed to high standards

Housing Services works closely with the Council's Planning Services teams and the urban designer; the Homes and Communities Agency and our Registered Provider partners to ensure that new affordable housing meets high standards of design and layout. Bids for grant funding are only supported where a scheme meets or exceeds the appropriate design and quality standards. All new Homes and Communities Agency approved affordable housing continues to have to meet at least Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes and we also encourage building to Lifetime Homes standards. 20 properties were built to Lifetime Homes standards in 2010/11. The Government's new Housing Strategy for England sets out a commitment to Zero Carbon Homes by 2016, but overall wants to see a localist approach to shaping the design of new homes and neighbourhoods. We will consider updating supplementary planning documents related to sustainability, design and affordable housing in due course.

Improving Standards in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

HMOs provide a small but valuable source of housing for some Mid Sussex tenants and play an important part in meeting local housing demand. The Council recognises that this form of accommodation is more likely to be occupied by hard to reach vulnerable people and that properties are at greater risk of dangers like fire hazards. The need for HMOs is likely to increase, given the extension of the Local Housing Allowance shared room rate to people under 35 from January 2012. This will increase the number of benefit dependent people unable to afford private sector self-contained accommodation. We will continue to conduct a proactive HMO inspection programme and look to license further premises as appropriate.

Summary of the main actions in the new Action Plan

- Promotion of affordable warmth initiatives in the District through the Green Deal and other energy efficiency schemes.
- Ensuring that new housing is developed to high standards, including consideration of updating supplementary planning documents related to sustainability, design and affordable housing.
- Take further licensing action to improve standards of Houses in Multiple Occupation in the District.

Strategic Objective 4. Promote independence and inclusion

This priority seeks to ensure that local communities are safe, inclusive, well-located places where people want to live and work and are enabled to live independently.

Achievements 2009-11

- Used our Disabled Facilities Grants programme to promote independent living. 222 grants were awarded over the last two years with a value of £1,470,607.
- 10 wheelchair accessible new affordable homes have been provided over the last two years
- We have developed a Gypsy and Traveller Strategy working with partner organisations and reported on areas of progress. These have included an improved Gypsy and Traveller section on our website and grants through the Healthy Mid Sussex Partnership for schemes to improve the health and well-being of Gypsies and Travellers.

The main actions that we identified were to:

- Promote independent living through the Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme.
- Increase the number of vulnerable people assisted to live independently in Mid Sussex via the provision of housing related support.
- Develop new accommodation schemes for people with learning difficulties and additional wheelchair units.
- Deliver the Older Persons Strategy and encourage building to Lifetime Homes Standards.
- Make appropriate provision for gypsies and travellers
- Address worklessness and financial inclusion by encouraging RSLs to provide employment, education and training advice.
- Achieve further improvement to community safety and inclusion particularly through working with Housing Associations

Disabled Facilities Grants

The demand for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) continues to grow. DFGs are designed to promote independent living and enable disabled people and parents with disabled children to adapt their homes to meet their needs. We are currently delivering over 100 of such grants per year. Our budget for 2011-12 was £700,000 and was increased in-year to £800,000 to help meet demand. £342,000 of this cost is met from Government grant. Subject to the outcome of the Local Government Resource Review, we will look to use some of the New Homes Bonus to clear the backlog of Disabled Facilities Grant applications so that disabled people can have the necessary adaptations done in a timely manner. We have also streamlined the way that the adaptations are provided and as a consequence it has been decided that grants can be delivered effectively without a Home Improvement Agency. Alternatives to DFGs as a means of promoting independent living are being explored, including working with Occupational Therapists to find other options such as moving to alternative accommodation that already has adaptations and moving to new wheelchair accessible affordable housing.

Independent Living and Housing Choices for Vulnerable People

An important development in the provision of independent living and housing choices for vulnerable people, has been the outcome of the strategic review of Supporting People services by West Sussex County Council. This has resulted in a move away from accommodation based support, which may only benefit a limited number of people in a particular tenure, to floating or outreach support, which can be made available to individuals in any tenure. We are working with the County Council and Registered Providers to plan for the new arrangements. The majority of Supporting People funded services will be re-commissioned in 2012/13 to reflect these arrangements.

Additional accommodation for vulnerable groups

We are working with providers to review their sheltered/retirement properties which are not fit for purpose for the future because they are not accessible to people with limited mobility or those who are wheelchair users, or because they provide studio accommodation which is not popular. We are encouraging the provision of new housing for older people which is attractive, flexible and fully wheelchair accessible and which provides both 1 and 2 bed units. Such accommodation will be fit for the future as people's needs change and will enable their care and support needs to be met at home. The first example of this will be at the Brow in Burgess Hill provided by Affinity Sutton as part of a new McCarthy and Stone development. We are also looking to provide more wheelchair accessible affordable units as part of general housing schemes. Such units are advertised early under Choice-Based Lettings so that the occupiers can have input to the final design and adaptations provided.

We will continue to provide vulnerable people with advice and assistance on their housing options, working with the providers of housing support. This includes using opportunities such as the annual Life Show for the over 50's to promote the options available. Supported housing vacancies will be allocated to those in the greatest housing need who will benefit from the support provided, generally through multi-agency panels that ensure effective use of these resources for those in need.

Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

Gypsies and Travellers are one of the vulnerable groups to be highlighted in the Strategy. Progress has been made in this area through the adoption of a Gypsy and Traveller Strategy and Action Plan working through a Steering Group of partner organisations. The Coalition Government initially withdrew the grant available for site provision and improvement of sites, to be replaced with incentives to councils to provide more authorised sites where they are needed through the New Homes Bonus Scheme. The revocation of the South East Plan and the associated regional identification of pitch requirements, means that provision for Gypsies and Travellers will need to be reviewed. There is a new housing development proposed in the area of Fairplace Hill in Burgess Hill and we are working with the developers, County Council, the Homes and Communities Agency and Saxon Weald on the re-provision of the Traveller site.

Achieving further improvements to community and inclusion, particularly working with housing associations

The Council will continue to encourage partnership working with its housing association and other partners in community projects in the District, particularly in areas of deprivation. Much of this work continues to be co-ordinated through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, involving community projects and working to combat Anti-Social Behaviour. Examples of on-going community projects include the Motiv 8 programme designed to provide constructive activities for young people in the holidays. The Council is also leading on new initiatives designed to deal with families in the District needing intensive support, including the appointment of a Family Intervention Co-ordinator.

Summary of the main actions in the new Action Plan

- Deliver a minimum of 100 Disabled Facilities Grants annually
- Provide additional accommodation for vulnerable groups, including the delivery of further wheelchair accessible new affordable housing units
- Introduce a new floating support model for the provision of independent living in sheltered and extra care accommodation working with West Sussex County Council and Registered Providers.
- Include a policy in the District Plan which supports the provision of new and extended facilities for gypsies and travellers in appropriate locations.
- Work with developers and County Council for the re-provision of the Fairplace Traveller Site in Burgess Hill.
- Achieve further improvements to community safety and inclusion.

Strategic Objective 5. Provide efficient and customer focused housing services

Improved customer services, enhanced community engagement and improvements to efficiency are all key corporate priorities, which need to continue to be reflected in the further development of housing services.

Achievements 2009-11

- Introduced Choice-Based Letting (CBL) for the allocation of social housing in April 2010. So far 26,758 bids have been made and 501 new tenancies allocated through CBL.
- Reviewed our housing allocation scheme prior to the introduction of CBL.
- Conducted satisfaction surveys of shared ownership residents and disabled people who have been rehoused.
- Held annual meetings of the Landlords Forum and assisted private sector landlords to find tenants.
- Held an Affordable Housing workshop for Members and conducted a Tour of the District for Planning/Affordable Housing sites.
- Completed a benchmarking exercise of our housing services against other West Sussex councils.

The main actions that we identified were to:

- Introduce Choice-Based Lettings by joining the Sussex Homemove Scheme.
- Improve user and stakeholder involvement in the development of services.
- Assist private landlords with help and advice and help them to find tenants.
- Maintain member engagement in the delivery of affordable housing
- Use benchmarking and partnership working to improve efficiency.

Choice-Based Letting and further review of the Allocations Scheme

Choice-Based Letting was successfully introduced in April 2010. Special arrangements have been made to ensure that vulnerable people are able to participate in CBL, including use of printed free sheets, assisted bidding and assistance with re-registration for older people provided by an arrangement with Age UK. Multi-agency panels continue to be used for the allocation of Extra Care accommodation and supported housing. We are further reviewing our allocation scheme in the light of experience of CBL and who has been successful in gaining accommodation. The review has included a comprehensive consultation exercise, involving those currently on the Housing Register; Registered Providers and other partner organisations; and the general public. We are proposing to make a number of changes to the scheme, including giving a greater priority to existing older tenants who are under-occupying and want to move to smaller accommodation with ground floor or lift access. This will help to free up much needed family homes. Everyone on the Common Housing Register will have their priority reassessed, following agreement of the revised scheme and its commencement from April 2012.

We will also continue to make use of Local Lettings Plans for particular areas of Mid Sussex to ensure that communities are as balanced as possible. These include new developments where a local connection is required, perhaps specifying that a proportion of lettings should go to people in employment or making a contribution to the District. The Localism Act allows councils to locally introduce categories of applicant who they decide should not qualify for social housing in their area, perhaps because of home ownership, a history of anti-social behaviour, or lack of local connection to their District. We will keep our allocations scheme under review, in the light of experience of its operation and any issues that arise from the new affordable rents and flexible tenancies that some housing providers are introducing.

Communicating the changes to tenancies and the new housing offer

The Council will be looking to establish a Tenancy Strategy that provides a coherent set of principles for the social landlords that operate in Mid Sussex. There is potential for confusion for applicants in housing need who are faced with different tenancy terms, rent levels and conversion of re-lets depending on who is the landlord. It will be important that clear and accessible information is provided to all stakeholders, particularly those in housing need, of the changes in what providers are offering in terms of type of tenancy and rents. We are working to clearly communicate these changes to people on the Common Housing Register and existing tenants, in close liaison with Affinity Sutton and other Sussex Homemove partners.

We have undertaken initial consultation on the key principles of our Tenancy Strategy and will undertake further consultation with Registered Providers.

Supporting the Private Rented Sector

The Council is keen to develop and maintain a good relationship with private landlords in order to support the role of the private sector in meeting the housing needs of the district. We hold an Annual Meeting of the Landlords Forum, working with the National Landlords Association, to support private sector landlords and exchange information. The last meeting of the Landlords Forum took place in March 2011 and included presentations on the implications of the Housing Benefit changes for private landlords and the Green Deal. The Forum is also an opportunity to educate landlords on standards requirements in the private rented sector, for example licensing of HMO's, the housing health and safety ratings system and fire safety. Supporting private sector landlords will be even more important in the current housing environment and we plan to hold further meetings of the Forum and extend the information available to them through our website.

Benchmarking and Partnership Working to Improve Efficiency

Recent examples of partnership working have included the development of the Rural Partnership with Horsham District Council and the sharing of our Housing Policy and Performance Officer for a year with Crawley Borough Council to progress work on each council's Housing and Tenancy Strategies. There is also on-going collaborative working with Horsham and Crawley to agree the Local Investment Plan for North West Sussex with the Homes and Communities Agency. We are currently undertaking a review of the way that we administer the Rent Deposit Scheme, with a view to improving our processes.

Summary of the main actions in the new Action Plan

- Introduce a revised Allocation Scheme and reassess the housing priority of everyone on the Common Housing Register.
- Disseminate information on new affordable rents and flexible tenancies to people on the Housing Register.
- Support the private rented sector in Mid Sussex through the Landlord Forum and operation of the Rent in Advance and Deposit Guarantee Scheme.
- Review and streamline processes used in Housing Services.

Performance Indicator Table:

PI No	Details	09/10 actual	10/11 actual	11/12 target	12/13 target	13/14 target
Objective 1: Increase the supply of affordable housing						
EF062	Net additional homes provided	353	178	530*	530*	530*
CS002	Total number of affordable homes delivered	157	85	123	71	tbc
MSPI 96	Number of affordable units developed in rural areas	39	37	20	20	20
Local PI	To develop a minimum of 2 four bed units per year.	10	5	2	2	2
Objective 2: Preventing homelessness						
MSPI 121	Number of households accepted as homeless	32	46	<72	<72	<72
MSPI 139	Number of households where homelessness prevented	343	274	350	350	350
EF010	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	25	27	40	60	60
Local PI	Number of households helped to access private rented sector.	91	79	76	76	76
Objective 3: Improve the quality and sustainability of housing						
No current performance indicators for this objective.						
Objective 4: Promote independence and inclusion						
Local PI	Number of Disabled Facilities Grants per year	118	104	100	100	100
Local PI	Develop a minimum of 2 wheelchair accessible affordable homes per year.	4	6	2	2	2
Objective 5 Provide efficient and customer focused housing services						
Local PI	% of homelessness decisions made within 33 days.	67%	70%	75%	75%	75%

*as set out in the Consultation Draft District Plan 2011.

Refreshed Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012-14

	Action	Milestones/measures of success	Strategic links	Lead Officer(s)	Other agencies involved	Resource Implications
Objective 1: Increase the supply of Affordable Housing Performance Indicators: EF062 Net additional homes provided CS002 Total number of affordable homes delivered MSPI 96 Affordable units developed in rural areas Local PI Number of four+ bed affordable units per year			<i>NB:- For detailed targets for each Performance Indicator, see separate table at end of the list of objectives</i>			
1	Deliver homes by making more land available for housing through the new District Plan.	District Plan Proposed Submission by September 2012 and adoption spring 2013. Deliver housing requirement set by District Plan (Consultation Draft proposes 530 additional homes per year).	Mid Sussex District Plan Local Housing Assessment & Viability Assessment	Louise Gibbons	Developers Town and Parish Councils	Existing resources
2	Enable the delivery of more new affordable housing in the new planning and funding regime	Delivery of 71 new affordable homes in 2012/13. Adopt new affordable housing policies in the District Plan spring 2013 requiring 30% affordable housing with a nil threshold.	Mid Sussex District Plan	Emma Shuttleworth Louise Gibbons	Registered Providers Developers Homes and Communities Agency	Commuted sums, £358k. £720k from New Homes Bonus
3.	Develop a Tenancy Strategy in line with the requirements of the Localism Act.	Tenancy Strategy adopted by June 2012 following consultation with Registered Providers. Review Tenancy Strategy at least every 5 years.	Localism Act	Lynne Standing	Registered Providers	Existing resources

	Action	Milestones/measures of success	Strategic links	Lead Officer(s)	Other agencies involved	Resource Implications
4.	Provide rural affordable housing through the Joint Rural Affordable Housing Partnership Plan and provision of further Rural Exception Sites.	<p>Include Rural Affordable Housing and Exception Site Policy in District Plan for adoption by spring 2013.</p> <p>Deliver 20 rural affordable homes per year.</p> <p>Complete further parish housing needs surveys- target 2 per year and support the development of Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>Launch the Joint Rural Affordable Housing Partnership Plan with Horsham District Council by March 2012.</p>	Mid Sussex District Plan	<p>Louise Gibbons</p> <p>Emma Shuttleworth</p> <p>Emma Shuttleworth</p> <p>Emma Shuttleworth</p>	<p>Action in Rural Sussex Parish councils</p> <p>Horsham District Council</p>	<p>Existing resources</p> <p>Commuted sums. New Homes Bonus</p>
5	Achieve affordable housing of the right size and tenure	<p>Deliver affordable housing mix for new build of 75% social or affordable rent and 25 % intermediate tenure via District Plan (for adoption spring 2013)</p> <p>Deliver at least 2 new 4 bed affordable houses per annum</p>	District Plan	Emma Shuttleworth	<p>Homes and Communities Agency</p> <p>Moat as Zone Agent</p> <p>Registered Providers</p> <p>Developers</p>	Existing resources
6	Make best use of the existing housing stock by tackling under-occupation.	<p>Monitor success of changes in the Allocations Scheme in addressing under- occupation by Oct 2012</p> <p>Review the effectiveness of the Tenancy Strategy in tackling under-occupation.</p>	<p>Older Persons Housing Strategy</p> <p>Tenancy Strategy</p>	<p>Emma Shuttleworth</p> <p>Lynne Standing</p>	Age UK and Registered Providers	Existing resources
7.	Bring long term empty homes back into use.	Implementation of Empty Homes Strategy with use of works in default/other enforcement mechanisms where appropriate	Empty Homes Strategy	Carol Tomkins	Private sector owners Sussex Empty Homes Forum	£20k allocated recyclable budget

	Action	Milestones/measures of success	Strategic links	Lead Officer(s)	Other agencies involved	Resource Implications
Objective 2: Prevent Homelessness Performance Indicators: MSPI 121 Number of households accepted as homeless MSPI 139 Number of cases where homelessness prevented NI 156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation at end of year Local PI Number of households helped to access the private rented sector.			<i>NB:- For detailed targets for each Performance Indicator, see separate table at end of the list of objectives. A new Homelessness Strategy was adopted in June 2008.</i>			
8	Contain increase in the numbers accepted as homeless through homelessness prevention measures.	Keep acceptances below 72 per year. Homelessness prevented in 350 cases per year.	Homelessness Strategy	Julian Till	CAB Shelter Signpost	Existing resources
9	Maximise access to private sector rented accommodation.	Min 76 households per year assisted to access private rented sector.	Homelessness Strategy	Julian Till	Private sector landlords	DHP annual grant
10	Reduce homelessness amongst vulnerable groups, especially young people and rough sleepers.	Young people- contribute to the review of the operation of the West Sussex youth homelessness service. Annual count of rough sleepers in December. Improved arrangements for dealing with rough sleepers Input into the West Sussex Supporting People Review of Homelessness Services to complete by March 2012.	Homelessness Strategy	Julian Till	CBBs Group RSLs Signpost Youth Homelessness Action Group. Social Services. Connexions	Existing resources DCLG countywide funding
11	Temporary accommodation- improving quantity and quality in response to more people presenting themselves as homeless.	Extend use of Affinity Sutton temporary accommodation to contain use of guest house and B&B accommodation. Keep the numbers of households in temporary accommodation down to 60 or below. Explore the provision of disabled access temporary accommodation by March 2013.	Homelessness Strategy Housing Needs Impact Assessment	Julian Till	Affinity Sutton Registered Providers	Existing Resources Additional budget for 2012/13

	Action	Milestones/measures of success	Strategic links	Lead Officer(s)	Other agencies involved	Resource Implications
Objective 3: Improve the quality and sustainability of housing						
Performance Indicators: No relevant current performance indicators for this objective.						
12	Tackle fuel poverty through the Affordable Warmth Strategy.	Expand the green doctor Home Energy visitor service in conjunction with the Health and Wellbeing Service. Implement the Green Deal from October 2012.	Government and MSDC Affordable Warmth Strategy	Celia Austin	Other West Sussex Council	To be confirmed
13	Improve standards in houses in multiple occupation.	Identify and licence additional high risk HMOs. Promotion of good landlord standards through local media and annual Landlords Forum meetings- March.	Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy	Yvonne Leddy	Private Sector Landlords	Existing resources
14	Ensure that new housing is developed to high standards.	All new affordable housing to meet sustainability code level 3. Maximise the amount of social housing that is built to lifetime homes standards. Consider updating supplementary planning documents relating to sustainability, design and affordable housing.	District Plan Policy	Emma Shuttleworth Louise Gibbons	RSL Development Partners Homes and Communities Agency	Existing resources

	Action	Milestones/measures of success	Strategic links	Lead Officer(s)	Other agencies involved	Resource Implications
Objective 4: Promote independence and inclusion						
Performance Indicators: Local PI Number of disabled adaptations through Disabled Facilities Grants Local PI Number of wheelchair accessible affordable units per year				<i>NB:- For detailed targets for each Performance Indicator, see separate table at end of the list of objectives</i>		
15	Promote independent living through the Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme.	Deliver at least a further 100 disabled adaptations per year under the Disabled Facilities Grants Scheme.	West Sussex Supporting People	Yvonne Leddy	West Sussex Adult Services	£750K total + £250K from New Homes Bonus (subject to outcome of Local Govt Resource Review)
16	Make provision for vulnerable people, and specifically develop additional affordable wheelchair units	For adoption by spring 2013, requirement in District Plan for new housing to include provision for older people and vulnerable groups in new developments where appropriate. Deliver minimum of 2 wheelchair affordable units per year.	District Plan West Sussex Supporting People Impact Assessment Action Plan	Louise Gibbons Emma Shuttleworth	West Sussex Adult Services Registered Providers	WSCC and Homes and Communities Agency funding
17	Work with WSCC Supporting People and joint commissioning team and providers to provide for the housing support required for vulnerable Mid Sussex residents.	Implement new floating support model in 2013 for sheltered and extra care accommodation working with the County Council and Registered Providers. Attendance at Life Show to publicise housing services for older people	Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society District Plan	Emma Shuttleworth	West Sussex Adult Services Registered Providers	Existing resources
18	Make appropriate provision for gypsies and travellers	Include a Gypsy and Traveller accommodation policy in the District Plan for adoption by spring 2013. Replace existing poor quality site at Fairplace Hill, Burgess Hill with a new site by 2015.	District Plan Gypsy and Traveller Strategy	Louise Gibbons/ Lynne Standing	WSCC Saxon Weald Friends, Families and Travellers.	Homes and Communities Agency funding required £400k

	Action	Milestones/measures of success	Strategic links	Lead Officer(s)	Other agencies involved	Resource Implications
19	Continue to improve community safety and counter anti-social behaviour working with registered providers.	Implement CDRP schemes such as the appointment of a Family Intervention Co-ordinator.	Health and Well-Being Community Safety Plan	Ioni Sullivan	Affinity Sutton, Sussex Police, WSCC	Existing resources
Objective 5: Efficient and customer focused housing services						
Performance Indicators: Local PI % of homelessness decisions made in 33 working days			<i>NB:- For detailed targets for each Performance Indicator, see separate table at end of the list of objectives</i>			
20	Review and update the Housing Allocation Scheme.	Implement new Allocation Scheme and publish by April 2012. Reassess the housing priority of everyone on the Common Housing Register by April 2012. Further review of the operation of the scheme after one year of operation- April 2013.	Localism Act	Julian Till	Affinity Sutton CHR partners	Existing resources
21	Disseminate information on new affordable rents and flexible tenancies to people on the register.	Information campaign to commence from February 2012.	Localism Act	Julian Till	Affinity Sutton	Existing resources
22	Support the private rented sector in Mid Sussex through the Landlord Forum and operation of the Rent in Advance and Deposit Guarantee Scheme	Hold Annual Landlords Forum-March each year 100% landlords who attend the Landlords Forum find it helpful. Help a minimum of 76 households per annum secure private sector homes.	Homelessness Strategy	Emma Shuttleworth/Julian Till Julian Till	Private sector landlords National Federation of Residential Landlords	Existing resources
23	Review and streamline processes used in Housing Services.	Undertake a review of the Rent in Advance and Deposit Guarantee Scheme.	Corporate Plan	Julian Till		Existing resources

Glossary of terms used

Action in Rural Sussex

A charitable organisation whose role is to identify problems and to respond to the needs of rural communities – providing practical help and helping and helping villages in Sussex remain vibrant living and working places.

Affordable housing

Housing provided with a subsidy to enable the sale or rent price to be lower than the prevailing market prices or rents in the locality, and where mechanisms exist to ensure that the housing remains affordable for those who cannot access market housing.

Affordable rent

Rent charged at up to 80% market rents introduced by the coalition government to increase funding for affordable housing.

Choice-Based Lettings (CBL)

A scheme whereby people can bid for (express and interest in) specific vacant social housing properties in Mid Sussex that are advertised on a fortnightly basis. The successful bidder is considered to be in the highest housing need according to the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme.

Commuted sum

A sum of money paid by a developer in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing, to enable affordable housing to be provided elsewhere in the District.

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

Mandatory grants given by housing authorities to provide and improve adaptation services to disabled people enabling them to continue to stay in their own homes.

Fixed Term Tenancy

Applies to tenancies offered for a specific period of time rather than traditional "lifetime tenancies".

Flexible Tenancy

Fixed term tenancy with a built in review period.

Homes and Communities Agency

The government agency which funds and regulates Registered Social Landlords in England, among other development duties.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

Dwellings that are occupied by three or more persons who form two or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet. An HMO must have a license if it has three or more storeys and occupied by five or more persons who form more than one household.

Housing Association

Independent not for profit organisation providing affordable housing.

Lifetime Homes Standard

A standard for building new homes that seeks to enable "general needs" housing to provide, either from the outset or through simple and cost-effective adaptation, design solutions that meet the existing and changing needs of diverse households. A Lifetime

Home will meet the requirements of a wide range of households, including families with push chairs as well as some wheelchair users.

New Homes Bonus

A scheme introduced by the coalition government to provide incentives for councils to facilitate new housing development. The Government provides councils with match funding for six years equal to the additional council tax raised for new homes and empty properties brought back into use, with an additional amount for affordable homes.

Rent Deposit Scheme (RDS)

A scheme that aims to help those in housing need to access and maintain accommodation in the private rented sector by providing a financial guarantee to landlords to cover the deposit and/or rent in advance subject to meeting the scheme's criteria.

Registered Provider

A provider of social housing registered with the Tenant Services Authority and with Homes and Communities Agency investor partner status.

Section 106 (S106) Affordable Housing Agreement

Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, allows for legally binding agreements between landowners/developers and local authorities, e.g. for affordable housing or other required infrastructure to be provided through the development of a site.

Shared Ownership

A form of low cost home ownership in which a household buys a portion of the property (usually between 25% and 75%) and pays rent to a housing association on the remainder. Most shared owners have an option to purchase further shares in the property at a later date.

Supporting People

A Government sponsored programme for bringing together the funding and rationalising in a strategic way all housing related support services. It is managed on a countywide basis through partnership arrangements with West Sussex County Council and all of the district and borough housing authorities in the county, health services and probation.

Tenancy Policy

A document that is required to be published by Registered Providers setting out their approach to fixed term tenancies, affordable rents and tenancy management.

Tenancy Strategy

A document that local authorities are required to produce under the Localism Act, setting out guidance for Registered Providers on issues such as flexible tenure, affordability, conversion of stock and procedures at the end of a tenancy.