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# Housing Services

Increasing choice, improving homes,  
well being and the environment

Delivering over 85% of the Housing  
Strategy 2008-2011 action plan

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# What do we do?

- Create and support sustainable communities
- Build better lives
- Support local priorities

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# How do we do it?

- Provide and enable affordable housing
- Contribute to stronger safer communities
- Improve health and well being
- Achieve high quality homes
- Promote environmental excellence

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# How are these delivered?

- Making best use of our own resources
- Partnership working
- Seeking innovative solutions
- Increasing choices and opportunity

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# Providing and enabling affordable housing

## Examples

- Ashford Borough Council's own stock
- Housing association homes, including access to shared ownership homes
- Improving access to private rented sector homes

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# Providing and enabling affordable housing

## How do we help?

- Building more council houses
- Regenerating neighbourhoods
- Creating mixed communities
- Improving existing council properties
- Making best use of the homes we own
- Ensuring high quality homes
- Improving quality and access to homes in the private rented sector

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# Stronger safer communities

## How do we help?

- Regenerating Communities
- Improving neighbourhoods
- Helping to reduce crime and the fear of crime



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# Stronger safer communities

## Examples

- Stanhope regeneration
- Bybrook improvements
- Areas plans for tenant-led projects
- Joint initiatives with the Community Safety Unit
- Joint fund domestic violence officer

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# Stronger safer communities

## Area Plans

- Improvements for local neighbourhoods decided by local communities
- 2009/10 seven projects agreed that including shared garden improvements, landscaping scheme, local notice boards

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# Stronger safer communities

## Operation Clean Sweep

- Organised by Ashford's Community Safety Unit to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- Improve public safety and smarten up the local neighbourhoods
- Involving a range of partners working in the borough

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# Improving health and well being

## How do we help?

- Supporting independent living
- Enabling people to remain in their homes
- Preventing homelessness



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# Improving health and well being

## Examples

- Sheltered housing schemes and bungalows
- Supported homes for vulnerable people
- Disabled adaptations to council and private homes
- Floating support service referrals
- Mortgage Rescue
- Private rented sector initiatives

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# Improving health and well being

## Supported living

- Housing's strong links with Social Services and other social housing providers enabled Michael to moved into a shared house for three people with learning disabilities



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# Improving health and well being

## Enabling people to remain in their homes

- Following a stroke, a disabled facilities grant helped fund adaptations so Mr W could return home to live with his family
- 60 disabled facilities grants worth £400,000 were provided in 2009/10 helping people to maintain a good quality of life in their own homes



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# Improving health and well being

## Preventing homelessness

- Deposit Bond scheme  
- offers people on low incomes access to a rental deposit
- Private rented sector leasing scheme  
- provides an alternative to Bed & Breakfast
- Private Accredited Lettings Scheme  
– the mark of decent, well managed private rented home

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# Improving health and well being

## Sanctuary Scheme

- Working with partners to enable people experiencing domestic violence to remain safe in their homes

## Includes...

- Improved and additional security measures
- Help and advice including how to take legal action

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# Improving health and well being

## Other initiatives

- Brookfield Court – supported move-on housing for young people
- Emergency bed spaces for 3 young people in partnership with Stonham
- Disabled adaptations in Council own homes - over 200 worth £120,000 carried out in 2009/10
- Homebridge scheme - providing recuperative care between leaving hospital and going home
- Improved Housing Options referral processes

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# Achieving high quality homes

## How do we help?

- Raising standards
- Robust design and construction policies
- Licensing houses in multiple occupation
- Private Accredited Lettings scheme

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# Achieving high quality homes

## Examples

- ABC's adopted Core Strategy has robust design and construction policies
- ABC has adopted the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment Building for Life Standards
- All major developments to incorporate sustainable design features to mitigate carbon emissions

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# Achieving high quality homes

## Examples

- Stanhope regeneration project will see 450 new homes and 332 refurbished homes
- 171 new affordable homes completed in 2009\10
- 100% council stock meets government decent homes standards
- Programme of kitchen and bathroom replacements for council homes

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# Achieving high quality homes

## New urban affordable homes

- Working with partners to enable innovative and award winning high quality new affordable homes
- Latitude Walk an iconic development offering 46 affordable homes in Ashford town centre

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# Achieving high quality homes

## New local needs rural homes

- Two local needs housing schemes win awards at the Ashford Building Design & Construction Awards, 2010
- Fortescue Place, Smeeth and Forge Meadows, Stone

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# Achieving high quality homes

## Licensing multiple occupation homes

- Required for most properties over two storeys with five or more occupants sharing bathrooms or kitchens
- Licence conditions help ensure standards are improved and maintained, providing decent well managed, safe, warm privately rented homes

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# Achieving high quality homes

In the private rented sector

## Private Accredited Lettings Scheme

- Encourages and supports landlords to attain high standards
- Properties are checked to ensure they meet Decent Homes standards

## Deposit Bond Scheme

- Private rented homes are inspected before tenants can move in

A white toy house with blue shutters and a set of keys. The house is a two-story model with a grey roof, a white door, and several windows with blue shutters. To the right of the house is a set of keys with a silver ring and two gold keys. The background is white with a red curved line at the top.

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# Promoting environmental excellence

## How do we help?

- Look to reducing the impact on the environment
- Make environmental improvements to local neighbourhoods
- Look for funding opportunities for environment projects
- Utilise the council's design and construction policies

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# Promoting environmental excellence

## Examples

- New affordable housing built to Homes and Communities Agency Code for Sustainable Homes
- New homes incorporate renewable energy and water efficiency features
- Council stock refurbishments include energy efficient boilers

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# Promoting environmental excellence

## Retro-fit project

- Two council owned properties in Appledore currently being renovated with a range of eco friendly and energy efficient features set to reduce energy use by 90%
- Resident, Serena welcomes the chance to be more environmentally friendly and reduce their bills
- External funding was secured for the project



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# Promoting environmental excellence

## Other initiatives

- Kennington and Bybrook 'Savings at Home' project - householders can sign up to receive advice on how to save energy
- Council homes - boiler and glazing programme plus carbon and water reduction targets
- Promotion of grants and energy efficiency in the private sector - making homes warmer and easier to heat



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# Partnership working

## Tenant engagement

- Involving residents in how their homes are managed
- Tenants Forum
- Seniors Forum
- Focus and monitoring groups
- Neighbourhood walkabouts
- Ashford 'Back Chat' – informal consultation through email, telephone and postal surveys

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# Partnership working

## Examples

- Housing Plus – delivering help and advice on housing, education, training, debt, benefits and more
- Kent HomeChoice - the county wide choice based lettings system housing helped to develop
- Joseph Hadlum Court - extra care housing scheme delivered in partnership with Kent County Council and Housing 21

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The National  
Skills Academy  
CONSTRUCTION

# Partnership working

## Examples

- Stanhope Construction Academy - joint venture with Denne Construction to support local training and employment
- Porchlight homelessness education programme - A joint initiative with nine Kent authorities to deliver homelessness education in schools

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# Partnership working

## Examples

- YMCA supported 'move-on' accommodation for young people
- Gateway Plus – working to provide a wide range of public and voluntary services under one roof in the heart of Ashford

A photograph of a large-scale construction site. The building's steel frame is visible, with multiple levels of orange safety railings. A banner with a colorful abstract design and the text 'MORGAN' is attached to the structure. In the foreground, there are white and blue site containers. The sky is clear and blue.

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# Partnership working

## Housing Plus

- Housing Plus takes a holistic approach offering choices and creating opportunities for local people with a housing need
- Working with partners including JobCentre Plus and Citizens Advice help is available through local Gateways
- Leah found settled accommodation for her and her family with assistance from the Housing Plus team

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# Using our own resources

- New build project – 78 homes for rent to be built on Housing land with £5.1m funding from HCA and prudent borrowing
- Private sector leasing scheme - providing an alternative to bed and breakfast currently providing homes 65 families
- HomeFinder service - helping people access the private rented sector

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# Using our own resources

- Benefits – working with Revenues and Benefits to ensure people receive their correct entitlements
- Assisted moves - helping older people to move to a smaller properties, releasing a larger home for re-letting
- Planned maintenance programme - keeping council owned property in good condition

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# Partners we work with

Ashford Borough Council Services  
Ashford's Future  
Communities and Local Government  
Community Safety Unit  
Contractors  
Developers  
Eastern and Coastal NHS Primary Care Trust  
Homes and Communities Agency  
Job Centre Plus  
Kent and Medway Social Care and NHS Partnership Trust  
Kent Benefits Partnership  
Kent County Council  
Private Sector Landlords  
Registered Providers of Social Housing  
Voluntary and Charitable Organisations

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# Housing Services

More than bricks and mortar

Building better lives

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