

## Appendix 1 – Implementation Action Plan 2008-2011

### Strategic Priority 1: Increasing the supply of homes

Aim: To maximise the availability of homes affordable to local people

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
1a Increase the supply of affordable rented and intermediate tenure homes	Proactive application of planning policy CS 12 to deliver 968 new affordable homes	Existing staff resources	April 2011	Housing Research and Development Manager and Development Control Managers
	Appraise and support appropriate preferred partner bids for Housing Corporation grant funding 2008/11 programme	Existing staff resources	As dictated by Housing Corporation timescales	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Achieve best use of Housing Corporation grant available:		March 2011	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 50% of intermediate tenure homes to be delivered without grant funding 2008/2011</li> <li>■ Monitor and ensure delivery of Housing Corporation grant-funded affordable housing development programme</li> </ul>	Housing Corporation grant, RSL, private sector developers	Constant monitoring during 2008/2011	Housing Research and Development Manager and RSLs
	Work with Planning to develop Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Existing staff resources, planning delivery grant	During 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager and Planning Policy Manager
	Review preferred RSL development partnership arrangements	Existing staff resources	During 2009	Housing Research and Development Manager
	'Right of First Refusal' - consider each opportunity to buy back council properties sold under Right to Buy since 2005	Existing staff resources plus HRA funding for 25% open market value of each property, 75% from central government	Quarterly review	Strategic Housing Initiatives Manager

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
1b Ensure the best use of existing homes	Review procedure for dealing with void council properties to increase efficiency on re-let times	Existing staff resources	September 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Launch a promotions campaign on the availability of financially assisted moves for council tenants. Monitor and review effectiveness.	Existing staff resources, works funded by HRA	Take up reviewed six monthly in March / September	Housing Operations Manager (Estates)
	Appraise options for an incentive scheme to assist tenants to purchase homes on the open market	Existing staff resources	September 2008	Strategic Housing Initiatives Manager
	Complete the development of a remodelling programme for council owned sheltered housing	Existing staff resources, works funded by HRA	March 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Older People) and Planned Maintenance Manager
	Develop and maintain an empty homes database	Additional member of staff (temporary contract) funded through PSL surplus (Private Sector Enabling Officer)	March 2009	Private Sector Housing Manager
	Develop and implement an empty homes strategy – including identification of resources and setting targets for returning empty homes back into use	Additional member of staff (temporary contract) funded through PSL surplus (Private Sector Enabling Officer)	March 2010	Private Sector Housing Manager
1c Assess the viability of all the options available to the council in order to ensure best use of resources	Review all council land holdings and assess suitability for housing provision	Existing staff resources	December 2008	Strategic Housing Initiatives Manager
	Assess the viability of Ashford Borough Council developing homes outside of the HRA	Existing staff resources	March 2011	Strategic Housing Initiatives Manager

## Priority 2: Developing sustainable communities

Aim: To ensure local communities are safe, inclusive, well located places where people want to live.

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
2a Improve the balance of the local housing market	Carry out sub-regional Housing Market Assessment with neighbouring local authorities	General Fund budget	April 2009	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Report on quarterly monitoring of local housing market conditions to local stakeholders and Members	Existing staff resources	Quarterly	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Negotiate with private developers and implement planning policy CS13	Existing staff resources	Ongoing - reviewed annually	Planning Policy Manager and Development Control Managers
2b Ensure both new and existing communities receive the support and resources needed to flourish together	Continue capacity building of Ashford Borough Tenant's Forum; including continued investment in training	Existing staff resources and HRA	Monthly at the Tenant's Forum meeting	Housing Operations Manager (Estates) and Ashford Borough Council Tenant's Forum
	Encourage wider tenant participation through formal and informal routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Repairs focus group</li> <li>■ 'Talk back' initiative</li> <li>■ Tenant's magazine</li> <li>■ Responses to feedback from tenants</li> </ul>	Existing staff resources and HRA	Ongoing - reviewed annually in September	Housing Operations Manager (Estates)

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead	
	Work with Ashford BME Integration Project to ensure proper access to services	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Housing Operations Manager (Estates)	
	Monitor the delivery of the Stanhope Private Finance Initiative project	Existing staff resources	Constant monitoring, quarterly review at Project Board meetings	Housing ICT Development Manager	
	Survey satisfaction of tenants and shared owners moving in to new RSL homes on scheme by scheme basis	Existing staff resources	After six months of each affordable scheme completion	Housing Research and Development Manager	
	Develop a programme of Area Plans, including application and prioritisation process	Existing staff resources, works funded from HRA	March 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Estates), Planned Maintenance Manager	
	Develop a system of 'local agreements' between residents and the council outlining what level of estate management service can be expected	Existing staff, works funded through HRA	September 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Estates), Planned Maintenance Manager	
	Analyse results of Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment to feed into South East regional plans	Existing staff resources	SE Plan deadline	Planning Policy Manager	
	Identify available, suitable land to provide additional sites for Gypsies and Travellers to address housing need	Existing staff resources	LDF identified timescales	Planning Policy Manager	
	Refurbish existing Gypsy and Traveller site at Chilmington	£432,000 (central government grant) and £108,000 Ashford Borough Council	September 2008	Ashford Borough Council Project Office	
2c	Increase feelings of community safety in urban and rural areas	Work with RSL development partners to achieve Secure by Design standards on all RSL led schemes	Existing staff resources, RSL	On completion of each RSL led scheme	Housing Research and Development Manager and RSL

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
	Promotion campaign to encourage take up of the additional security measures available to council tenants	Existing staff resources and works funded from HRA	September 2008	Planned Maintenance Manager
	Work in partnership with the Community Safety Unit under the direction of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to resolve incidents of anti-social behaviour, including hate crimes	Existing staff resources	Reviewed at weekly meetings	Housing Operations Manager (Estates)
	Continue provision of the Sanctuary scheme for people experiencing domestic violence	PSL surplus	Reviewed annually as part of Homelessness Strategy review	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
2d Ensure the housing and related needs of people in rural areas are assessed and addressed	Continue the Rural Local Needs Housing programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Work with parish councils and the Rural Housing Enabler to carry out 4 rural housing needs surveys annually</li> <li>■ Where housing need is identified work with the parish council to deliver affordable homes to address the need</li> <li>■ Review the 'Affordable Rural Local-Needs Housing Procedure'</li> </ul>	£6,300 pa, already identified general fund	Ongoing programme - Reviewed annually in March	Housing Research and Development Manager
		Existing staff resources, RSL finances, Housing Corporation grant	Within 5 years of need being identified	
		Existing staff resources	December 2007	
	Raise awareness of rural housing issues and the council's affordable rural housing development programme through the Ashford Parish Forum	Existing staff resources, promotional expenses funded through general fund	Annual event for parish councils in March	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Review Service Level Agreement held with AwCiRK for Rural Housing Enabling service	Existing staff resources	June 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager

### Priority 3: Supporting independence

Aim: To ensure all members of the community have access to the right levels of support to enable them to live independently whenever possible

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
3a Improve opportunities for independent living, in line with identified local need	Assess viability of providing additional intermediate care units/dementia care units at existing council owned sheltered housing schemes	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Housing Operations Manager (Older People)
	With RSL and NHS partners deliver 6 units of self-contained intensive supported housing for people with mental health problems	Housing Corporation grant, RSL finance, NHS revenue funding	September 2010	Housing Research and Development Manager
	With RSL and Social Services partners deliver 6 units of self contained supported housing for people with learning disabilities	Housing Corporation grant, RSL finance, KCC Social Services revenue funding	March 2011	Housing Research and Development Manager
	With RSL partners deliver 3 extra-care sheltered housing schemes on s106 sites in Ashford	Housing Corporation grant funding, RSL finances, private sector developers	March 2011	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Enable development of 36 units of extra-care sheltered housing via PFI round 4	PFI credits, Supporting People revenue funding	March 2011	KCC PFI Partnership
	Continue to support, monitor and review performance of the Ashford Home Improvement Agency (HIA)	Existing staff resources	Annual review in March	Private Sector Housing Manager
	As part of 2008 annual review of the HIA investigate alternative resources available to expand services	£18,000 pa	March 2008	Private Sector Housing Manager

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
	Review the provision of the pilot Handy Van scheme to council tenants and appraise options for its continuation	Existing staff resources, scheme funded by HRA	March 2009	Housing ICT Development Manager
	Review levels of Floating Support provision and seek to address any identified gaps through additional Supporting People funding	Existing staff resources, Supporting People revenue funded services	September 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager, Housing Operations Managers
	Work with voluntary sector partners to explore alternative funding streams to address gaps in the provision of housing related support to vulnerable adults	Existing staff resources	Ongoing to March 2011	Housing Research and Development Manager and specific Accommodation Fora
	Review Older Persons Housing Strategy and expand to include all vulnerable adults	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Ashford Housing, Care and Support Group
	Develop a set of design specifications to apply to new extra-care sheltered housing schemes	Existing staff resources	October 2007	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Ensure access for Ashford Borough Council tenants to East Kent Cyrenians service for young people with mental health problems	Voluntary sector funding	March 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Estates)
	Increase the availability of tenancy sustainment services to vulnerable council and RSL tenants by developing a Tenant's Support Service	PSL surplus	March 2009	Housing Operations Managers (Estates and Rent Arrears) and Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Work with Social Services and PCT to identify local housing need among people with learning disabilities	Existing staff resources, KCC resources	September 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
3b Further develop partnerships with key agencies and stakeholders to improve the delivery and coordination of housing related services to vulnerable people	Establish Young Persons Accommodation Forum and develop action plan	Existing staff resources	October 2007	Housing Research and Development and Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Establish Learning Disabilities Accommodation Forum as sub-group of Ashford Learning Disabilities District Partnership Group	Existing staff resources	November 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Continue to support the work of Ashford Mental Health Accommodation Forum	Existing staff resources	Ongoing - work of the group reviewed annually in March	Housing Research and Development Manager and Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Promote and monitor use of local joint protocols:			
	■ Intentionally Homeless Families Protocol	Existing staff resources	Quarterly monitoring review	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	■ Young Persons Homelessness Protocol	Existing staff resources	Quarterly monitoring review	Young Persons Accommodation Forum
	■ Mental Health Referrals Protocol	Existing staff resources	Quarterly monitoring review	Mental Health Accommodation Forum
Fully participate in preparing and delivering the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) action plan in East Kent	Existing staff resources and £1,000 annual administrative contribution	Annual review and monitoring	Housing Research and Development Manager	

## Priority 4: Ensuring homes of decent quality

Aim: To ensure that homes of all tenures in the district are developed and maintained to the highest possible standard

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
4a Maintain 100% of council owned homes at the Decent Homes Standard	Conduct independent verification surveys to review compliance with the Decent Homes Standard	HRA	Every three years, next survey due by March 2009	Planned Maintenance Manager
	Achieve Ashford Decent Homes Plus (all six criteria under the Decent Homes Standard 'reasonably modern facilities')	HRA	2013	Planned Maintenance Manager
4b Improve housing conditions in the private sector	HMO Licensing:	Existing staff resources	In line with requirements of each HMO licence	Private Sector Housing Manager
	■ Enforce conditions on those HMOs identified up to August 2007			
	■ Develop strategy for identifying further licensable HMOs, including target areas and prioritisation process	Existing staff resources	July 2008	Private Sector Housing Manager
	Review Private Sector Renewal Policy	Existing staff resources	Annually in March	Private Sector Housing Manager
	Develop and implement Private Sector Housing Strategy	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Private Sector Housing Manager
Promote House Proud scheme	Existing staff resources, promotional expenses through HIA	Ongoing - annual review of scheme take up	Private Sector Housing Manager and Home Improvement Agency (HIA)	
Renew robust evidence base through Private Sector Stock Conditions Survey	To be identified from general fund	During 2009/10	Private Sector Housing Manager	

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
	With KCC Social Services and HIA review Disabled Facilities Grant referral and decision making process; ensuring best use of available resources (staff & capital)	DFG funding = 60% central government/40% Ashford Borough Council (2007/08 = £320 000 plus additional £60 000 from PSL surplus and government grant)	July 2008	Private Sector Housing Manager
4c Improve energy efficiency and address fuel poverty across all tenures	Continue to support the work of Kent Energy Centre:			Private Sector Housing Manager
	Attendance at Kent Health and Affordable Warmth Strategy Group	Existing staff resources	Quarterly meetings	Private Sector Housing Manager
	Input into KHAWS review	Existing staff resources	Quarterly meeting	Private Sector Housing Manager
	Ensure thermal efficiency is considered in all assessments of housing need and ensure referrals to Kent Energy Centre where appropriate	Existing staff resources	Annual review of referrals to KEC	Private Sector Housing Manager
	Consider housing related recommendations of the Carbon Management Action Plan and identify those that can be taken forward	Existing staff resources	July 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager, Private Sector Housing Manager
	Launch Environmental Sustainability Programme for council owned homes – covering; energy & water conservation, 20% reduction in carbon emissions, recycling of waste	HRA	Annual review from 2008 (target date for programme is 2013)	Planned Maintenance Manager

	Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
4d	Ensure acceptable management standards in the private rented sector	Review current engagement with private sector landlords and identify ways to make improvements	Additional member of staff (temporary contract) funded through PSL surplus (Private Sector Enabling Officer)	March 2009	Private Sector Housing Manager
		Provide training for private sector landlords of HMOs on applying the conditions of their licences	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Private Sector Housing Manager
4e	Ensure all new affordable homes are developed to the highest possible design and quality standards	As part of the LDF develop an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Existing staff resources	During 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager and Planning Policy Manager
		All affordable homes, including non grant funded homes to meet either Housing Corporation Scheme Development Standards or Design and Quality Standards as applicable	RSL finances, Housing Corporation grant, private sector developers	Constant monitoring during 2008/2011	Housing Research and Development Manager
		60 % of all new affordable homes to meet Joseph Rowntree Lifetime Homes Standard by 2011	RSL finances, private sector developers	Constant monitoring during 2008/2011	Housing Research and Development Manager
		Work with selected RSL to deliver an exemplar zero carbon housing scheme in Ashford	RSL finances, HRA land asset, Housing Corporation grant	March 2010	Housing Research and Development Manager

## Priority 5: Providing accessible information on housing options

Aim: To ensure local people are aware of the housing options available to them and reduce homelessness

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
5a Improve the housing options available through the Choice Based Lettings scheme	Work with local letting agents and landlords to include private sector rented homes on Choice Based Lettings	Additional member of staff (temporary contract) funded through PSL surplus (Private Sector Enabling Officer)	September 2009	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Include intermediate tenure homes on Choice Based Lettings	Intermediate homes advertising paid for by RSLs	From September 2007	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Participate in the development of the sub-regional Choice Based Lettings scheme	Existing staff resources and £12,000 identified from general fund toward sub-regional scheme development	April 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
5b Improve the quality and range of housing options advice and assistance available	Update and expand range of leaflets/fact sheets covering housing options	Existing staff resources, printing costs from PSL surplus	September 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Raise awareness of the Housing Options service and housing issues among key local agencies through a joint training programme	Existing staff resources	Ongoing programme reviewed quarterly	Homelessness Strategy Working Group
	In conjunction with the multi-agency Ashford Domestic Violence Forum develop a training programme on housing options for people experiencing domestic violence	Existing staff resources	Ongoing - reviewed quarterly	Housing Operations Manager and Ashford Domestic Violence Forum

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
	Develop a communications plan to ensure all key stakeholders are always appropriately engaged in strategic housing and housing development issues	Existing staff resources, promotional expenses already identified from general fund	September 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager
5c Prevent and reduce homelessness	Complete Homelessness Review and produce revised Homelessness Strategy	Existing staff resources and consultant fees funded through PSL	June 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Review current arrangements for the provision of a mediation service	Existing staff resources, services funded through PSL surplus	March 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Undertake a risk assessment of current funding for the council's homelessness prevention and options services	Existing staff resources	March 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Further develop use of the 'prevention fund' scheme to prevent homelessness	Existing staff resources	September 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Strengthen work with landlords to prevent evictions	Existing staff resources	September 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
5d Enable the provision of suitable temporary accommodation for homeless households	Enable redevelopment of Ashford Women's Refuge to improve standards of accommodation	Housing Corporation grant, RSL finances	September 2008	Housing Research and Development Manager

Objective	Action	Resources	When by	Lead
	Evaluate Private Sector Leasing Scheme	Existing staff resources	September 2008	Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Consider opportunities for working with other Kent local authorities to produce efficiencies	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Housing Research and Development Manager
		Existing staff resources	March 2009	Housing Research and Development Manager
	Research the need for move-on accommodation from supported housing	Existing staff resources	September 2009	Housing Research and Development Manager and Housing Operations Manager (Options)
	Undertake an appraisal of suitable temporary accommodation options to provide an alternative to B&B	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Housing Options Manager
	Review existing accommodation based and floating support services for young people and develop proposals for a young person's 'housing pathway'	Existing staff resources	March 2009	Young Persons Accommodation Forum