
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Meeting of the Cabinet – 13th June, 2007

Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services

Housing Strategy 2007 - 2010

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is twofold. Firstly, to seek Cabinet approval for the new Housing Strategy 2007-2010 and its associated action plan. Secondly, to seek approval for the Housing Market Renewal Partnership proposals covering the Black Country and Telford Area (see Appendix A).

Background

2. The previous Housing Strategy produced in 2003/04 was rated as 'Fit For Purpose' by Government Office West Midlands. Many of the action plan targets have been completed and there is also a need to produce a new strategy as a result of the updated housing needs information that we have from the Dudley Borough Housing Needs and Demand Study 2005.

3. **Key Findings and how we will meet the housing needs:**

The Housing Needs and Demand Study indicated that 88% of households in the Borough were living in accommodation that was suitable for their housing needs.

These are some of the key housing needs and actions that we will be taking.
Further details can be found in the Housing Strategy Action Plan (see Appendix B).

- Affordability of housing is a major issue for newly forming households as 31% cannot afford to rent privately and 43% of households cannot afford to buy a property.

Our Response:

We will work with planners, economic regeneration agencies and local housing associations to provide as many affordable homes to rent, or low cost homeownership/shared ownership schemes as possible. This will include using Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to increase the provision of affordable housing on new housing development sites.

- There is a need to develop a more balanced housing market as Dudley has less social housing stock than all other Black Country authorities. It has the smallest private rented market and it has the highest number of owner occupiers.

Our Response:

We will work with the owners of empty properties to encourage them to consider renting out their properties and we will continue to encourage local housing associations to build more social rented housing within the Borough.

- Dudley's supply of small units, flats and terraced houses is extremely low compared to national averages.

Our Response:

We will encourage the provision of a wide range of housing types and tenures in order to encourage sustainable communities and increase people's housing options. This will include catering for smaller concealed households but also encouraging the provision of some high value/prestige housing to attract and retain higher income households within the Borough.

- We need to plan for a number of population changes including:
 - A predicted increase in Dudley's population of 1,500 people by 2021

Our Response:

We do not appear to be suffering from significant outward migration, unlike some neighbouring authorities, we will, however, monitor this situation and work with our neighbours to develop a sub-regional housing strategy.

- An increase in the elderly population within the Borough.

Our Response:

We will be developing five extra care housing schemes by 2015. We will also be providing telecare/preventative assistive technology equipment and adapting properties to enable older people to live independently, in homes of their choice.

- There will be an estimated 5,789 concealed households by 2007 (households who live with another household as they cannot access housing in their own right). 80% of these concealed households are grown up children (aged 16+) of the householder. There are also a number of smaller households that have formed as a result of relationship breakdowns.

Our Response:

We will be introducing a pilot Choice Based Lettings Scheme to improve the transparency of our council house waiting list, and carrying out a fundamental review of how we assess housing needs (reviewing the housing waiting list points scheme). We will be encouraging developers to build a mixture of housing types including properties that are suitable for smaller household types or people wishing to access the housing market in their own right for the first time. We will also be working with local housing associations to promote low cost home ownership/ shared ownership schemes as a housing option.

- We have also set ourselves targets in relation to producing a Supporting People and accommodation strategy that will address the needs of specific client groups who need accommodation with support in order to help them to

live independently. Client groups include people who have been homeless, people with drug and alcohol issues, gypsies and travellers and refugees.

4. This Strategy helps to meet the objectives and aspirations of Dudley's Community Strategy, primarily in relation to 'promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone' and 'safeguarding and improving the environment.'
5. The strategy will also be key to stating Dudley's housing needs and aspirations in relation to a sub-regional housing strategy that is proposed. By having an up to date strategy for the Borough we will be in the driving seat to influence the type of approaches and activities that will be included in the emerging sub-regional strategy.
6. The Strategy has been developed in conjunction with the corporate Housing Strategy Steering Group (see Appendix C for the membership list). It has also been widely consulted on using a range of consultation methods (see Appendix D for a list of consultees).
7. The strategy includes actions that will contribute to promoting Community Safety (Chapter 10 Increasing Community Respect), and highlights how investment in housing is contributing to creating sustainable environments (Chapter 3 Promoting Environmental Sustainability) and it has an overall emphasis on building sustainable communities through improving housing conditions and providing a wider range of housing options for people who wish to live in the Borough.
8. As part of the sub regional context for the evolving Black Country Study, the four Black Country authorities and Telford, who share a number of the sub region's housing issues, have been working together under the guidance of Birmingham University to put together a prospectus for a Housing Market Renewal Partnership to match other Market Renewal partnerships in the country such as Sandwell/ Birmingham and Stoke. (See Appendix A - Executive Summary of the Evolve Prospectus)
9. The prospectus has been drawn up to be the in depth bidding document for housing renewal within the Black Country as part of the work of the Black Country Consortium.
10. It has also provided a golden thread from the work of the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Housing Strategy through to Dudley's Housing Strategy.
11. Whilst Dudley is only one of five authorities involved in the document, it has been decided that the launch of the prospectus should take place in Dudley later in the summer given its pivotal position in the Black Country.
12. The Housing Strategy and full draft Prospectus for the Evolve Housing Market Renewal Partnership are available in the Members Room.

Finance

13. The strategy objectives will be delivered through a range funding streams as outlined within the 'Resources' section of the strategy. Funding opportunities will also be sought to meet un-met needs. This will include considering funding bids to

the Housing Corporation for the development of affordable social housing, and encouraging the use of Section 106 obligations (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) to ensure that housing developers are contributing to providing affordable housing within the Borough.

Law

14. The Council may do anything incidental to, conducive to or which facilitates the discharge of its functions under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972. This would include anything incidental to the Council's housing powers and duties under the various Housing Acts.

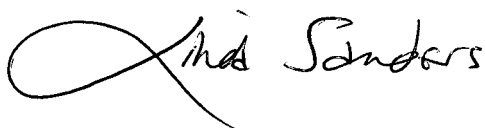
Equality Impact

15. A well developed and formulated Housing Strategy will have a positive impact on equality by enabling all people, regardless of race, disability or gender, to lead fulfilled and independent lives in homes of their choice in safe and active communities.

Recommendation

16. It is recommended that:-

- the Cabinet approve the Housing Strategy 2007 – 2010 and Housing Market Renewal Partnership Prospectus.
- the Cabinet authorises the Director of DACHS to carry out any actions related to the implementation of the Housing Strategy Action Plan and the development of the Housing Market Renewal Partnership.



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Linda Sanders

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List of Background Papers

<i>Housing Strategy 2007 – 2010</i>)	
<i>Draft Evolve Housing Market Renewal</i>)	Copies available in Members' Library
<i>Partnership Prospectus</i>)	

Attached items:

<i>Appendix A</i>	<i>Executive Summary – Draft Evolve Housing Prospectus</i>
<i>Appendix B</i>	<i>Housing Strategy Action Plan</i>
<i>Appendix C</i>	<i>Housing Strategy Steering Group Membership</i>
<i>Appendix D</i>	<i>Housing Strategy Consultees</i>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

This Prospectus is prepared by the evolve Housing Market Renewal Partnership. It represents a commitment by partners to address issues arising from the set of inter-related but different housing markets across the Black Country and Telford area. It supports the urban renaissance agenda that underpins the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Housing Strategy, as well as the priorities within the Black Country Study and the emerging City Region Development Plan.

The Prospectus sets out the evidence-based review of the primary drivers of market change in the Black Country and Telford. It outlines the current market outcome of these drivers and their future trajectory in the absence of future intervention.

The Prospectus provides the rationale behind proposed interventions that have been put forward by the evolve Partnership on a spatial and thematic basis. These actions are both immediate and longer-term in scope. We have developed an initial programme that will ensure that the key components are in place to deliver a long term programme which will address the need for housing market restructuring and deliver a revitalised housing offer that impacts on the physical, social and economic fabric in a variety of areas where housing stress is most acute. The key outcomes we are aiming to achieve are:

- A growing, balanced, diverse and cohesive population.
- A high quality, attractive environment that contributes toward urban renaissance and economic and population growth.
- A bigger, more modern and stronger economy, attractive to investors, that secures accelerating prosperity, which is shared by all.

This Prospectus will help guide regional agencies and the five local authorities in determining the housing and related investment priorities and programme for the area. These priorities have emerged from the evidence base, which has identified:

- The drivers affecting the market within identified sub-markets and neighbourhood clusters
- Specific areas where the market is malfunctioning and is likely to continue to do so in the absence of public intervention;
- Proposals for housing-led investments for each area together with a clear rationale for intervention and the resulting outcomes, integrated within the wider policy framework for the Black Country and Telford areas.

The Black Country and Telford Housing Market is a highly complex market in which some neighbourhoods, which were previously in decline, are now showing signs of stabilising, whereas others are still exhibiting signs of housing market stress.

A comprehensive analysis of the individual neighbourhoods and their future housing market trajectory has revealed a number of key issues, which if left to market forces will continue to impact upon the sub-region:

1. The Black Country is competing, to the extent that its housing offer is uncompetitive in terms of price in relation to dwelling type and environment, for a footloose section of the

population, especially professional and managerial group (AB) households. The sub-region has historically lost population, particularly in the Northern parts. Net migration of a disproportionate number of AB households to the conurbation's hinterland continues.

2. For some groups, the high price band of housing around the conurbation is an effective barrier, irrespective of aspirations. Growth of BME groups represents an important source of population and household growth for the Black Country and is also now gaining from international migration. However affordability problems and lack of housing choice in the inner core of the Black Country, suggest that housing supply issues in the inner cores will grow in importance over the next decade.
3. Whilst being a wider national phenomenon, growth in the private rented market is meeting a gap in the current market for those who are unwilling/unable to buy or access social rented accommodation. An active and increasing private rented market leads to many problems, not least, a substantially transient population, disinvestment in the fabric of properties and neighbourhoods, inflated prices and fragmented ownership – making comprehensive renewal difficult to implement.
4. Some of the major housing market weaknesses and problems are in the former large council estates and the inner core areas of the Northern parts of the Black Country. The dominance of council stock has been eroded by Right to Buy and clearance/new build activity. However this has left behind substantial areas of social housing in parts of Wolverhampton, Walsall and the heart of the Black Country, notably northern Tipton, Bilston and Wednesbury, which experienced population loss, marginal household growth, rising voids, a rising private rented sector and declining services. The future sustainability of this housing stock has critical strategic importance.
5. The decline of social housing stock has been reduced over the past ten years by the growth in smaller households. However unless the profile of current stock is adapted to the demands from smaller households, then the future trajectory will worsen.
6. The overheating of housing markets in parts of Telford, a consequence of excess demand over housing supply, has seen the most significant rise in house prices in the Black Country and Telford area. These house prices, coupled with the loss of large sections of social housing stock, have created major problems. As a result, South Telford has increasingly become a home of the 'young poor'.
7. The Black Country is competing as a place of residence for social classes AB with more affluent and aspirational housing markets in and around Birmingham and within the market towns. The new build market to the north and west of the Black Country and Telford area is increasingly providing for AB households. However, as employment growth increases there is a danger that higher income households will locate elsewhere, unless the supply of this stock increases.

Without intervention, it is likely that the Black Country and Telford housing market will continue to experience population loss, the private rented market will continue to grow, higher income groups will continue to move or locate outside of the area, whilst social housing estates will increasingly become polarised leading to highly fragmented and unsustainable housing market areas.

CAUSES OF HOUSING MARKET CHANGE – THE KEY DRIVERS

Historically, the economic shift from manufacturing has hit the Black Country hard and it has failed to attract knowledge-based sectors. The area also suffers from a weak urban form with fragmented residential settlements and urban centres, declining industrial areas and poor transport links. Affluence and changing aspirations have led to population suburbanisation and wider decentralisation of activity from the major conurbations. This process has left behind many

without the capacity to make choices about where they want to live. It has especially affected the more deprived, low-income areas with poor environments, poor quality housing and poor housing choice. Overall the effect has been a hollowing out of the inner cores where traditional industrial employment has also collapsed.

In the current market, the mass council estates of the past have been diluted through sale or clearance but the growth of private renting is starting to restore the inner core tenure pattern to that of the 1970s. At the same time new residential communities have developed following waves of post-war international migration. This period was market-driven, but to a large degree assisted by public policy, especially through the planning system and housing clearance programmes. However specific policy initiatives and activities have more recently been developed to stem the decline of particular neighbourhoods, although these programmes have, in the main, tended to benefit the south of the evolve area leaving the north still in need of major change.

The Millennium marked the end of a long wave of population loss. The next 20 years will be marked by renewed population growth in the inner cores based primarily on the growth of BME communities through indigenous household growth and further international migration, although also by the advent of city living with a degree of middle class (AB) population gain.

These powerful drivers raise a number of issues for policy makers and funding bodies within the sub-region. These issues include the need to:

- Stem the outflow from the Black Country of aspirational groups
- Adapt the existing profile of housing stock to accommodate changing household requirements and to ensure that new provision matches aspirations, whilst sustaining the affordable housing supply in the most vulnerable neighbourhoods
- Plan for the long-term future for major 1930s and early post-war council estates including the Telford New Town estates
- Address the management issues arising out of an increasing private rented sector
- Co-ordinate employment and housing strategies to ensure complementarity, and to deliver the priorities identified in the Black Country Study
- Address the major housing weaknesses evident in the northern parts of the Black Country and to reduce the impact from new housing developments in adjacent districts along the M54/M6 Toll corridor
- Deliver and phase sufficient land supply to accommodate increasing household demand.
- Have a housing policy that can help the Black Country to attract/retain higher proportions of social class ABs
- Accommodate the housing needs and aspirations of an expanding BME population and identify how and where this will be achieved
- Act on the implications of high household growth in Telford alongside low recent build rates leading to an overheated market and affordability problems
- Promote better housing design and quality within a green agenda

OUTCOMES OF HOUSING MARKET CHANGE – CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE TRAJECTORY

The drivers of change have created a housing market across the evolve area that can be grouped into a series of five typologies or sub-markets. These are Urban Telford and the four typologies (inner core, outer core, social periphery and private suburban) that correspond to the continuum from inner-city to suburban. In terms of house prices each has fared differently with the social periphery doing worst and Telford, the inner city and suburban areas doing best.

On the housing supply side, the Black Country Study (BCS) and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) have set ambitious growth targets. Despite the fact that the Black Country is now achieving 104% of RSS minimum targets, BCS and RSS targets cannot be met from the existing land supply unless 1600 hectares of employment land can be re-designated for housing use. Outside the evolve area, to the north and west of the Black Country, the supply of new housing if increased at the existing pace will create a series of displacement and adjacency issues that are likely to have a profound effect on the market within the evolve area.

Generally, on the demand side the evidence points to the importance of falling household sizes, growing populations of retired people, young BME groups and older BME groups with support needs, together with greater ethnic diversity and the need for a wider range of house types and sizes to meet both needs and aspirations.

Statistical modelling commissioned to examine the trajectory of the sub-region's housing markets indicates a demand for a further 42,650 to 48,600 additional homes by 2021. In the Black Country, the increase in demand is driven primarily by BME household growth whereas in Telford this represents only 25% of its projected increase.

The key issue from the modelling is that historic population decline in the inner core is reversed and this is largely due to indigenous BME household growth and international migration, although the impact of the city living new build market is also a factor.

In future years the inner core areas of Wolverhampton, Walsall and Sandwell are likely to be placed under increasing pressure as population and household growth outstrips housing capacity. Across the Black Country, BME communities are set to outgrow the existing 'footprints' of traditional areas of settlement and will increasingly be led to consider longer-range moves with possible implications for community cohesion in areas where the ethnic mix might change.

Meanwhile traditional areas of settlement are likely to attract BME groups from overcrowded areas elsewhere and as housing pressures in Birmingham's predominantly BME inner core neighbourhoods increase, it is likely that increasing numbers of BME households will relocate to the Black Country's eastern flank. As such it can be expected that the inner core areas of Sandwell and Walsall will become increasingly east facing.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Prospectus has been produced at a time when the Public Sector Policy Frameworks designed to achieve Urban Renaissance are being finalised at a National and Regional level. These regional and sub-regional objectives are set out within this chapter. They provide a clear exposition of the ambitions of the various public sector agencies charged with regenerating the Black County and Telford and re-affirm the importance of the Black Country Study, with its emphasis on four key centres and transport corridors, as the master document for its area of coverage.

At a national level the emergence of the new Communities England organisation which is bringing together the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships, the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Barker Report, new Housing Growth Points, the City Region debate and ongoing changes at the Department for Communities and Local Government are all likely to have a profound effect on the delivery of housing initiatives.

On a regional level the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, the Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy and, in particular for the work of evolve, the Black

Country Study, will all have a significant impact and relevance for the need to institute measures to tackle dysfunctional housing markets in the Black Country and Telford.

The evolve strategy has taken fully into account all of these strategic approaches and as such sits comfortably with them all.

PROPOSED RESPONSE AND ACTIONS

Evolve is proposing both spatial and thematic interventions.

Importantly, the programme proposed is only an initial programme. It identifies the investment needed to complete the market restructuring proposals for which activity is starting in 2007/08 as a result of RHB resources. The evolve programme will require the development of further interventions particularly across the Black Country and in line with the housing growth proposals and preferred land use plan as set out in the Black Country Study. This work will be undertaken by the evolve core team within a governance and delivery framework agreed with partners.

Area Interventions

There are specific neighbourhood interventions with five broad area frameworks that together form evolve's target area and which are consistent with the spatial priorities of the Black Country Study. These areas are shown in Figures A and B overleaf which highlight the concentration of problems in the north of the Black Country, but also Tipton/Central Dudley and South Telford.

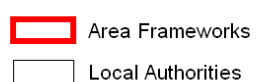
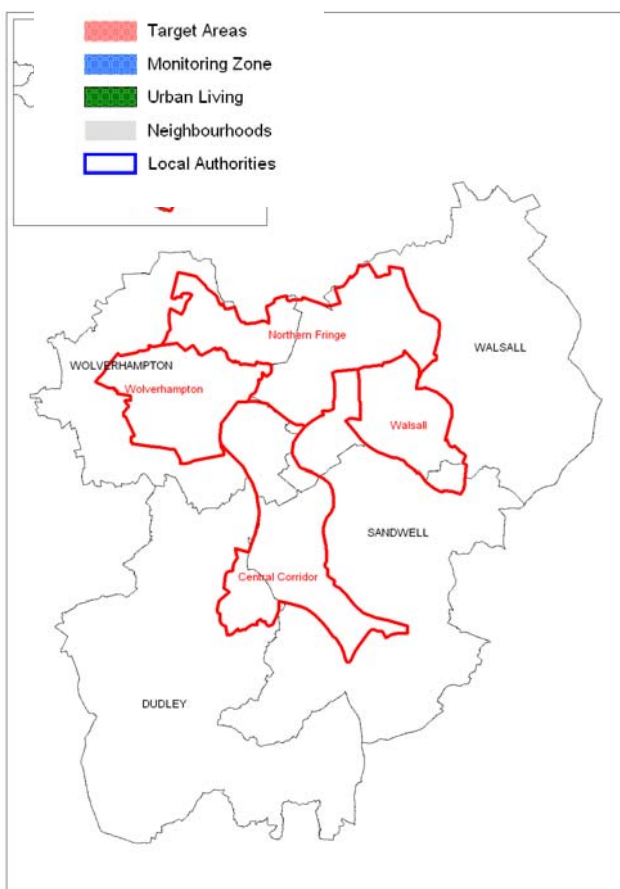
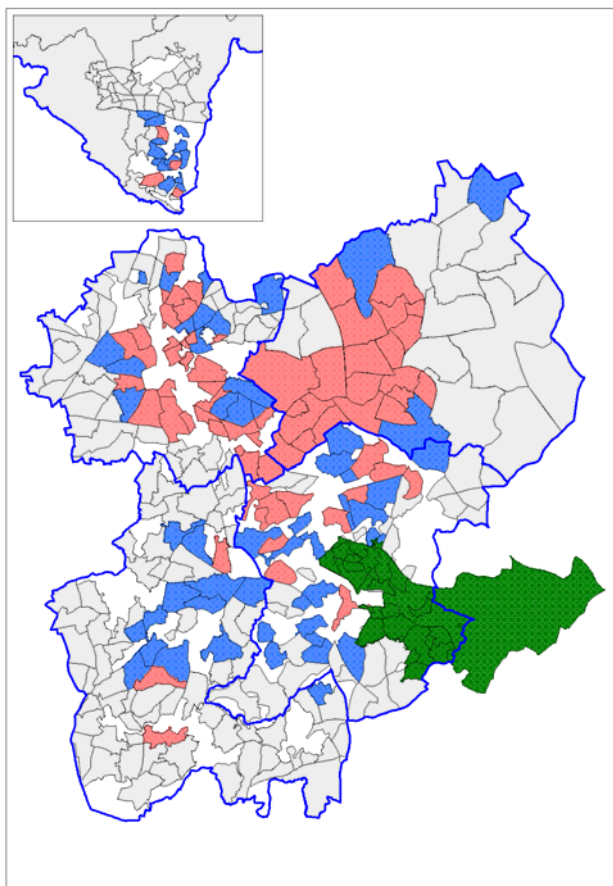


Fig. A: This shows the potential intervention area based on a mix of neighbourhoods targeted for action or at risk areas monitored for market change...	Fig. B: This shows the five area frameworks which integrate the bottom-up picture from Fig A within the spatial strategy of the BCS and other key regional frameworks. This takes account of needs and opportunity in housing and wider economic terms...
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Specific action will therefore be needed in:

Central Wolverhampton: city centre and inner core residential areas of Whitmore Reans, Heath Town, Park Village, Blakenhall and Penn Fields. Evidence of low value and obsolete housing located adjacent to significant commercial and employment opportunities arising from the city centre and developments along the Canal Quarter such as Low Level Station Site and Springfield Brewery.

Walsall Town Centre: Like Wolverhampton, poor housing alongside commercial and employment opportunities to be generated in Walsall Town Centre through the work of Walsall Urban Regeneration Company.

The Northern Corridor: encompasses the northern fringe estates in Walsall and Wolverhampton including the residential areas of Low Hill, Wednesfield, Bloxwich and Willenhall. Limited past regeneration is a factor in the mix of housing stress, higher vacancies, increased private renting and lower levels of Right to Buy. Here, housing improvement and tenure diversification need to be linked both with measures to reduce social exclusion and with employment opportunities arising in the adjacent town and city centres and along the M54 growth corridor.

Central Corridor: provides spatial linkages between the renewal of Wolverhampton City Centre, the regeneration of the Urban Living area and Birmingham City Centre. It therefore encompasses Bilston (Wolverhampton), Tipton and Oldbury (Sandwell) and areas around Dudley Town Centre such as Priory estate.

Telford: the restructuring of the South Telford estates of Sutton Hill, Brookside and Woodside can be linked into the renewal of Telford town centre and the development of the M54 corridor.

Thematic actions

The Prospectus has identified a series of policy-related actions needed to facilitate market restructuring:

- **Social Cohesion:** As a priority, a series of local social cohesion strategies, which can address the issues that may arise from the changes precipitated by the actions proposed in this Prospectus, needs to be developed across the south Black Country.
- **Affordable Housing Supply:** Firm plans need to be developed to ensure that genuinely mixed income communities are developed within the new build programme, and within some of the more socially excluded council estates if social segregation is to be reduced.
- **Competitiveness of the Urban Form:** The core of the Black Country needs to be prioritised for regeneration and restructuring for it to compete effectively with other areas.
- **A Development Plan for Changing Land Use:** the strategic corridors will need a development plan, which clearly sets out the sequencing of land release, the costs associated with it, the type of housing to be developed.

- Managing the Private Rented Sector: the challenges posed by the growing private rented sector need to be reflected in neighbourhood management processes and programmes.
- The link between Housing Strategy and Regional and Sub-Regional Policy Objectives: Local housing strategies need to be adjusted to take account of housing market drivers and to develop measures that will enable the regional and sub-regional policy objectives to be achieved.
- Top quality design and the green agenda: These should be key principles enshrined in all of the proposed interventions.

During research for the prospectus the need to develop a mechanism to improve regional working on the commissioning process for housing was identified. Further consultation with key stakeholders will be required if evolve's ideas around this are to be taken forward.

However, the commissioning mechanism suggested in the prospectus has the potential to improve organisational efficiency, economy and effectiveness whilst at the same time enhancing community cohesion and bringing coherence to housing programmes within the sub-region, thereby potentially improving the sustainability of its communities.

RESOURCES

The investment programme for the financial year 2007/08 requires a total of £11.045m HMR funding of which £9.515m is now potentially secured through RP&HB support of four of the submitted five area projects.

The overall financial programme for the financial years 2007/08 to 2015/16 inclusive requires a total of £154m potential HMR funding. The overall cost of this set of projects anticipates a total expenditure of £394m, comprising:

£196m of private investment;
£44m of non-HMR public funding; and
£154m of HMR funding.

HMR funding therefore represents 39% of the total investment. Private sector investment accounts for approximately 50% of the programme, but it is anticipated that leverage of private sector investment will increase in the future should the funding circumstances allow further elements of the evolve project to proceed and if the early elements of the project are successful.

OUTCOMES

The total programme demonstrates a significant investment in housing across all tenures. The outcomes include:

- Substantial investment in refurbishment of social housing;
- Substantial new build across tenures;
- Renovation of private sector housing (where specialist partners will be involved);
- Addressing issues of monolithic estates;
- Addressing issues of urban decline and the regeneration of communities, and;
- Increased access to housing for BME groups.

2007- 2010 HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Appendix B

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
Chapter 1						
Planning for population change						
Work with planners to help meet the UDP target to provide 5,639 new dwellings by 2011	An increase in the number and range of new dwellings available within the Borough	Planning Policy Manager /Head of Strategy	2011	Annual monitoring and review of targets and land availability (every August)	Existing resources. Additional funding may be obtained via planning obligations and other funding streams including Housing Corporation	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
Using Section 106 powers we will work with planners to build 1,160 affordable homes by 2012	Build 1,160 affordable homes	Planning Policy Manager /Head of Strategy	2012	Annual review and monitoring of targets and policies (every August)	Use of planning obligations (Section 106 powers) as well as other funding streams including Registered Social Landlords and the Housing Corporation	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
Provide 5 extra care housing developments for the elderly by 2015	Completion of 5 extra care housing schemes	Head of Strategy	2015	Identify strategic partner to develop schemes by July 2007 Develop scheme for planning	We are looking to private finance sources to deliver this objective	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
				approval and commence on site by December 2007		
DACHS will invest over £0.5million over the next two years to provide Preventative Assistive Technology to vulnerable householders, especially the elderly.	Helping people to maintain independent living	Assistant Director – Building Services	March 2009	Individual assessments completed on all people in receipt of Home Call services by end of 2009	Preventative Assistive Technology Funding	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will encourage local housing associations to provide larger properties (4 bedroom+) at affordable rents to meet the demand for larger properties that are available for social rent.	Increased housing options for larger households (including BME households)	Head of Strategy	Ongoing	This needs to be considered as part of the properties that are developed under Section 106 agreements	Housing Corporation Funding (to be confirmed)	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
Chapter 2 Greater integration with planning and strategically making better use of urban land (especially council owned land)						
Work with planners to establish a land strategy and assembly group	More strategic use of land	Head of Strategy	Autumn 2007	Group established and meeting regularly by Autumn 2007	Council General Fund	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
Chapter 3 Promoting environmental sustainability and the development of low/zero carbon homes						
We will spend £1.5m during the next 5 years to replace inefficient night storage heaters with gas fired central heating systems	Provision of more energy efficient heating in council owned homes for people who currently have night storage heaters	Assistant Director Building Services	2011/2012	Spend to annual expenditure profile	Housing Revenue Account	Safeguarding and improving the environment
During the redevelopment of the North Priory Estate we will encourage the use of products and building designs that will contribute to meeting low or zero carbon emissions to protect the environment	Residents of the newly developed estate being able to live in energy efficient homes, that meet their needs in a sustainable community, with more disposable income as a result of reduced fuel costs	Head of Strategy	To be confirmed	Oversee relocation of residents and clear site by December 2008 Produce developer's brief and procure a partner for regenerating the site by January 2008	Council General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Housing Corporation Funding (to be confirmed)	Safeguarding and improving the environment
We will develop a new fuel poverty/alternative energy sources strategy to promote the use of energy efficient sustainable products and sources.	Increased energy efficiency options for local residents and lower heating and lighting costs	Head of Strategy	2008/09	Strategy produced and implemented by June 2008 Promotion of Energy Efficiency through	Council General Fund and other contributors (to be confirmed)	Safeguarding and improving the environment

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
				campaigns and Community events Sept 2007		
We will carry out a stock condition survey during 2007/08 to determine the energy efficiency levels of the privately owned stock within the Borough and devise actions and objectives to help improve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption.	Completed Stock Condition Survey with baseline energy efficiency data	Head of Private Sector/Strategy Manager (Private Sector Housing)	December 2007	Survey company appointed May/June 2007 Survey completed autumn 2007 Mail shot to all vulnerable households to promote take-up of initiatives to tackle fuel poverty by December 2007	General Fund Direct Government funding via managing agents	Safeguarding and improving the environment
We will increase the energy efficiency rating (SAP) of council owned homes from 64 2006/07 by one point per year until 2010 (we are aiming for a maximum rating of 69 by 2010/11).	More energy efficient council owned rented homes	Assistant Director of Building Services	2010/11	Achieve: SAP 65 in 2007/08 SAP 66 in 2008/09 SAP 67 in 2009/10 SAP 69 in 2010/2011	Housing Revenue Account	Safeguarding and improving the environment

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
Chapter 4 Making homes decent - meeting Decent Homes standards (local authority and private sector)						
We will make all council owned social rented properties decent (meeting the Government's Decent Homes Standard) by 2010	Improving housing conditions by making homes decent in relation to the Government's decent homes standard	Assistant Director - Building Services	2010/2011	Meet milestones set out in Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Housing Revenue Account	Safeguarding and improving the environment
Chapter 5 Increasing the number of affordable homes and establishing pathways of choice to promote sustainable communities and balancing the local housing market						
We will promote shared ownership as a housing option by working with local housing associations	Greater awareness amongst residents about shared ownership housing options	Head of Strategy	March 2008	Promotion material and activities agreed with Dudley Housing Partnership by July 2007 Promotional activities to have commenced by September 2007	Council General Fund and resources provided by local housing associations	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will develop a process to assess if intervention is required	The emergence of more mixed tenure	Head of Strategy	Commenced 2006. End date to be	Redevelopment of the North Priory Estate	Housing Revenue Account, Council General Fund, Housing	Promoting a sense of well-being and

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
on estates to make them more sustainable for the future by considering whole or partial redevelopment	sustainable communities		confirmed pending progress	commenced 2006/07 Agree a process to identify estates for action in the future by March 2008 using experience gained from North Priory development	Corporation investment	good health for everyone
We will develop a range of measures that will encourage property owners to consider becoming private sector landlords	Increased housing options for people seeking to rent a home	Head of Private Sector	2008 – 2010	Property accreditation scheme developed and implemented by 2008 Landlord accreditation scheme developed and implemented by 2008	Council General Fund	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
Chapter 6 Connecting the housing strategy to economic and area regeneration						
We will ensure that housing needs are fully considered within plans that are developed to regenerate designated areas within the	Protocol (linked to the strategic land use group) to be developed and agreed to ensure that there	Head of Strategy	Summer 2008	Strategic land use group established by Autumn 2007 Protocol drafted by Spring 2008	Council General Fund	Safeguarding and improving the environment

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
Borough. This includes providing housing to attract and retain high earners within the Borough.	is increased integrated working between the Housing Strategy Division and economic regeneration agencies			Protocol implemented and in use by Summer 2008		
Implement Town Centre Action plans (Dudley, Brierley Hill, Halesowen and Stourbridge)	Improved Town Centre areas	Planning Policy Manager/ Economic regeneration	Ongoing	Dudley Plan approved December 2007 Brierley Hill Area Action Plan to be finalised by October 2009 Halesowen and Stourbridge Area Action Plans to be finalised by April 2011	Various funding streams	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone Safeguarding and improving the environment
Develop District and Local Centre Plans for Lye, Shell Corner, Cradley/Windmill Hill, Quarry Bank/Pensnett and Lye	Improved local areas	Planning Policy Manager/ Economic regeneration	Ongoing	Lye Plan finalised and in implementation phase April 2007 onwards Shell Corner,	Various funding streams will be considered	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone Safeguarding

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
				Cradley/Windmill Hill and Quarry Bank/Pensnett Plans finalised April 2007 and in implementation phase		and improving the environment
Chapter 7 Meeting specific housing needs						
We will seek to develop second stage group or cluster accommodation for people with alcohol issues who do not want to live in a hostel but are not ready for independent living.	Improved housing options for people recovering from alcohol misuse	Head of strategy	Dependant on Housing Corporation Funding Cycle	Funding and design secured Properties built and in-use	To be confirmed – subject to Housing Corporation bid	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will further develop access to housing and support for people with drugs issues	Improved housing options for people recovering from substance misuse	Head of Strategy and Strategy Manager (Housing and Supporting people)	2010/11	Complete needs analysis by March 2008 Improved access by March 2009	Within existing funding streams including Supporting People funding	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will examine our policies on rent arrears and re-housing and link these to engagement with money management and debt prevention services	Linking policies on rent areas to money management and debt services	Area Manager	2007/08	Policies reviewed and revised policies implemented	Housing Revenue Account and Citizens Advice Bureau staff time contributions	Creating a prosperous Borough

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
We will aim to increase the number of furnished lettings within the Borough by encouraging people to become private sector landlords providing furnished lettings.	Increased number of private sector furnished properties available for letting	Head of Private Sector Housing	2009/2010	<p>Collect baseline information on the number of furnished lettings by May 2008</p> <p>Discuss barriers to providing furnished accommodation by June- September 2008</p> <p>Develop and implement scheme (linked to landlord or property accreditation scheme) to encourage furnished lettings 2009/10</p>	Council General Fund and other appropriate funding sources	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will fundamentally review our lettings and nominations policy whilst introducing Choice Based Lettings	Replacement of the housing waiting list points scheme	Area Manager	2007/08	Review completed and Choice Based Letting Pilot evaluated by end of March 2008	Housing Revenue Account and Council General Fund	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
to make the best use of vacancies, give fair treatment to all						
We will develop a strategic approach to ensure that the remaining un met Supporting People priorities that have a requirement for new/additional housing are picked up through Dudley's investment submissions to the Regional Housing Board. We will do this by developing a supported housing strategy.	Increased integration in the approach taken to providing housing with support	Strategy Manager	September 2008	Review of unmet priorities and an assessment of housing provision required by March 2008 Strategy produced and implemented by September 2008	Within existing Council General Fund and Supporting People funding and possible Housing Corporation funding	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will monitor the number of properties let to Black and Minority Ethnic households (local authority and local housing associations) to ensure equality of access to social housing	Ensuring equality of access for BME service applicants	Area Manager	Annually (May/June)	Monitoring report completed by May/June of each year and any remedial action agreed and implemented	Housing Revenue Account and Housing Association resources	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
We will maintain or exceed 65% contractual occupancy for our Home Office contract to house asylum seekers within the Borough	Compliance with Home Office contract and creating sustainable communities	Asylum Seekers and Refugee Team Manager	Annually	Achieving a minimum 65% occupancy annually	Home Office Contract Funding	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will develop a policy for dealing with failed asylum seekers who have no recourse to public funds so that they do not have a negative impact on local communities.	Creating sustainable communities	Strategy Manager (Asylum Seekers and Refugees)	Dependent on Government policy lead	Policy agreed and in operation	To be agreed	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will encourage local refugees who live within council owned accommodation to participate in local tenants' forums, and tenants and residents association meetings.	Enhanced opportunities for refugees to contribute to creating sustainable communities	Strategy Manager (Asylum Seekers and Refugees)	July 2007	Refugees attending local meetings	Housing Revenue Account	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will monitor the impact of EU accession/migrant workers and develop	Creating sustainable communities	Strategy Manager (Asylum Seekers and Refugees)	March 2008	Local policies developed and implemented	Council General Fund	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
appropriate local policies to ensure that there is local community cohesion and communities are sustainable.						for everyone
We will establish the requirement for either a borough wide, or sub regional assessment, of the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers in the area	Increased knowledge and co-ordination of approaches to meeting the needs of travellers	Head of Private Sector/Strategy Manager (Private Sector Housing)	Sept 2008	<p>To establish requirement for borough wide or sub regional needs survey August 2007</p> <p>To develop partnership if required and secure funding to commission survey September 2007- April 08</p> <p>Develop specification for survey October 2007-April 2008</p>	To be confirmed	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
Explore the possibility of providing a play area on the Oak Lane site.	Provide a play area within Oak Lane Site	Head of Private Sector/Strategy Manager (Private Sector Housing)	July 2008	Outline proposal of scheme September 2007	100% Charitable Funding (to be confirmed)	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
Chapter 8 Introducing Choice Based Lettings (CBL) by 2010						
We will pilot a CBL scheme in Halesowen and Stourbridge by Autumn 2007.	Establishing if CBL contributes to creating sustainable communities	Area Manager/CBL Project Manager	Autumn 2007	Pilot CBL scheme in operation	Council General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
We will roll out of the CBL system by summer of 2008 (pending evaluation).	Creating more sustainable communities	Area Manager/CBL Project Manager	Summer 2008	CBL scheme pilot in operation	Council General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
Chapter 9 Reducing the number of empty homes in the private sector						
We will reduce the number of private sector empty properties in the borough from 1,881 to 1,580 by March 2010.	Reduction in the number of empty properties	Head of Private Sector/Strategy Manager (Private Sector Housing)	March 2010	Appoint Empty Property Officer October 2007 Produce Empty Property Strategy Action Plan March 2008	Council General Fund	Safeguarding and improving the environment
We will take appropriate action to deal with empty properties that are causing a nuisance (approximately 20 per year)	Reduction in the number of nuisance empty properties	Head of Private Sector/Strategy Manager (Private Sector Housing)	March 2008	Review effectiveness of Arson Taskforce referral process March 2008	Council General Fund	Making Dudley a safe and peaceful place to live

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
We will develop processes and service standards to assess, prioritise and take action on empty homes by March 2008	Service Standards in operation and monitored	Head of Private Sector/Strategy Manager (Private Sector Housing)	December 2008	Review Directorate Service Level Agreement with Legal Services October 2007 Implement revised service standards and processes by March 2008	Council General Fund	Safeguarding and improving the environment
Develop a protocol to ensure that we have a planned strategic approach to clearing housing sites that are scheduled for redevelopment to reduce the risk of arson and nuisance behaviour	Improved community safety	Head of Strategy/Head of Private Sector Housing	March 2008	Protocol agreed and in use March 2008	Council General Fund	Making Dudley a safe and peaceful place to live
Chapter 10 Increasing Community Respect						
Create a dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) unit.	Increased community safety	Head of Community Safety	April 2007	ASB Unit in operation	Council General Fund	Making Dudley a safe and peaceful place to live
Dudley Federation of Tenants and Residents	Facilitating a community event	Area Manager/DFTRA	May 2007	Conference held	Housing Revenue Account	Making Dudley a safe

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
Associations (DFTRA) will hold an event looking at issues of Respect, ASB and Hate Crime.	to discuss ASB issues					and peaceful place to live
Spend £250,000 on upgrading the street lighting on housing owned land	Increased feeling of community safety for tenants	Assistant Director – Building Services	2011/2012	Upgrades completed as per spending profile	Housing Revenue Account	Making Dudley a safe and peaceful place to live
Chapter 11						
Closer working between Dudley MBC and local housing associations						
Carry out a review of the membership and terms of reference of the Dudley Housing Partnership to ensure that it is operating to its maximum potential	Improved joint working between housing organisations within the Borough	Head of Strategy	September 2007	Review of membership completed by July 2007 Terms of reference reviewed and updated (if required) by September 2007	Council General Fund and Housing Association funding	Safeguarding and improving the environment
Consider including local housing associations in our choice based lettings scheme (subject to evaluation of pilot)	Creating more sustainable communities	Area Manager/CBL Project Manager/local housing associations	Post Summer 2008	CBL scheme pilot in operation and expanded to include housing association properties	Council General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Housing Association funding	Promoting a sense of well-being and good health for everyone
Set up a process to capture and exchange	Greater awareness of	Head of Strategy	March 2008	Review of data captured by July	Council General Fund, Housing Revenue	Promoting a sense of well-

Objective	Outcome to be achieved	Officer Responsible	Date to be completed by	Milestones	Resources/Funding	Links to Community Strategy
data with housing associations on households on the council waiting list who would like to know more about shared ownership housing options	shared ownership products for potential home buyers			2007 Exchange protocol agreed between Dudley MBC and participating housing associations by December 2007	Account and Housing Association Resources	being and good health for everyone

Appendix C

Housing Strategy Steering Group Membership

Ron Sims	Assistant Director of Housing Strategy and Private Sector Housing - DACHS
Andrew Leigh	Head of Service (Strategy and Development) - DACHS
Jo Forbes	Strategy Manager (Supporting People and Housing) - DACHS
Diane Channings	Assistant Director of Housing Management - DACHS
Ray Watson	Assistant Director of Resources - Directorate of Childrens Services
Chris Ballinger	Area Manager – Assessment -Directorate of Childrens Services
Sue McGavin	Head of Neighbourhood Management - Chief Executives
Peter Field	Acting Policy Manager – Urban Environment
Jean Brayshay	Head of Resources and Partnership – Urban Environment
Mohammed Farooq	Principal Lawyer – Law and Property
Dawn Hewitt	Head of Community Safety – Chief Executives
Andy Wright	Head of Strategic Research and Intelligence – Chief Executives
Liz Ralph	Benefits Manager - Finance
Martin Dando	Principal Planning Policy Officer – Urban Environment

Appendix D

The following people have been consulted during the development of this strategy:

Housing Strategy Steering Group

See Background Paper 2 for membership details. This group has met bi-monthly to contribute to and agree draft versions of the strategy.

Dudley MBC Consultation Database

The development of this strategy has been publicised on Dudley MBC's Consultation Database. Members of the public can access the database from the Council's website www.dudley.gov.uk. The consultation database provides people with details about consultation activities and who to contact if they would like to contribute.

Citizens Panel Consultation

During March/April 2007 the Citizens Panel (a sample of residents throughout the Dudley Borough whose demographic details have been chosen so that their responses will accurately reflect the views of the wider population of the Borough) were asked this consultation question:

Dudley Council is currently drafting a Housing Strategy for the Borough. Please look at the themes listed below and tick the THREE you think most important as priorities in the Council's Housing Strategy:

- Planning for population change (increase in the elderly population and more single person and smaller households)
- Making better use of urban land (land that has already been used for housing/factories)
- Developing homes that are more environmentally friendly (produce less impact on the environment)
- Helping to improve the standard of existing homes (private and rented)
- Increasing the number of affordable homes for people with low incomes/unable to get on the housing ladder
- Creating closer links between new housing and economic regeneration
- Meeting specific housing needs (including homeless people, black and minority ethnic community needs, asylum seekers and refugees and people who need support to live independently)
- Changing the way we allocate council houses to people (introducing choice based lettings)
- Encouraging people who own homes that are empty to make use of them
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- None of these – Please tell us what your priority is:

The outcome of the consultation indicated that the top four priorities (highest % responses) were:

Reducing anti-social behaviour in and around housing areas in the Borough	71
Increasing the number of affordable homes for people with Low incomes	49
Making better use of urban land	46

Internet consultation

Council officers, agencies that work in the Borough, Dudley Community Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership) local housing associations, the Housing Corporation, and Government Office West Midlands have been consulted via internet based surveys during February 2007.

Dudley Housing Partnership

The development of this strategy has been reported to, and contributions have been received from, the Dudley Housing partnership. The partnership is open to all housing associations (Registered Social Landlords) that own or manage properties within the Dudley Borough.

Dudley's Landlords' Forum

A sample of members of the forum were made aware of the development of the strategy and given the opportunity to contribute to its development via a direct mail out and short survey questionnaire to a sample of forum members during March 2007.

Directorate of Adult Community and Housing Services - Housing Management

The development of this strategy has been reported to, and contributions have been received from, the senior housing management team. As managers of almost 24,000 social rented homes in the Borough they have a key impact on local housing markets.

Strategic Housing and Environmental Partnership

This group has been sent copies of the draft strategy summary during March 2007 and invited to contribute/comment.

Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

A summary of the draft strategy and a short survey form were distributed at a consultation event on 28th March 2007.

Dudley Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations (DFTRA)

DFTRA were consulted on the draft strategy on 12th March 2007 at a DFTRA Committee Meeting. They were subsequently sent the draft by email for use in consulting their individual Tenants and Residents Associations.

The Homelessness Review Group

A summary of the draft strategy was emailed to group members during March 2007.

Area Panels

The Area Housing Panels were consulted on the draft strategy during April/May 2007.

Regional Housing Strategy Officers and Central Market Area (Central West) C3 Group

These two groups that represent the officers and agencies responsible for regional housing developments were consulted on the draft strategy during April 2007.