

HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN (2008) Theme – People / Choice

What are the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets 2008
<p>To tackle and minimise homelessness and the causes of homelessness in the borough</p>	<p>The key objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Co-ordinate and facilitate joint working of all agencies in the provision of a homeless service ◆ Preventing homelessness. ◆ Ensuring there is sufficient accommodation for the homeless. ◆ Ensuring support for the homeless or to prevent it. <p>This is being achieved within the Homelessness Strategy and major progress has occurred in the provision of services by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ better co-ordination ◆ development of a Web based directory ◆ adopting quality standards ◆ improving advice services ◆ increasing the supply of temporary accommodation ◆ successfully bidding for additional funding via Invest to Save process ◆ launching a Bond scheme ◆ doubling the level of support available to the homeless ◆ successful inspection of services in 2005 	<p>Mainstream funding</p> <p>Homelessness funding</p> <p>NRF</p> <p>Invest to Save</p>	<p>To develop and implement the new Homelessness Strategy 2008 - 2012</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Key project/reduction in street homelessness ◆ Appointment of a prevention officer. <p>Despite all this activity due to changes in the housing market, homelessness levels are still high.</p>		
<p>Ensuring older people have access to decent affordable homes and have the choice of remaining in their own home. Older people are particularly worried about</p>	<p>The Older Person's Housing Study has set the following objectives:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To enable people to stay in their own home ◆ To provide a choice of home for those who wish to move ◆ Co-ordination of agencies in the provision of housing support and advice 	<p>Mainstream monies</p> <p>Supporting People (SP) monies</p> <p>Other special programmes / bidding opportunities</p>	<p>To revise the older Housing Study's Action Plan for 2008/09</p>

What are the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets 2008
home security, safety and support			
	<p>This is being achieved by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Looking to make homes more suitable ◆ looking to extend the existing schemes developed by Care & Repair and Age Concern to help people maintain their home ◆ Via the Council's Housing Assistance Policy ◆ Via participation in the borough- wide Older Person's Innovation Forum to develop prevention strategies ◆ Targeting older people within Community Safety initiatives. ◆ Sheltered housing reviews of service ◆ Taking advantage of bidding opportunities eg POPPS. ◆ Looking to promote greater diversity in provision <p>Encouraging partnership links to help develop links with advice agencies to provide better housing information</p>		Reset targets and to implement
Ensure access to affordable homes	<p>Given the recent changes in the housing market, the Housing Needs Update 2005 and discussions within the Housing Partnership have shown that the borough now has a shortage of affordable housing. The key objective is to increase the supply of affordable housing and ensure the current supply is used efficiently.</p>	<p>Mainstream monies</p> <p>Homelessness monies</p> <p>Section 106 monies</p> <p>Housing</p>	<p>To continue to develop innovative ways of maximising access to affordable homes and embrace the government agenda of maximising access to housing to encourage mobility/economic development. To rev</p>

What are the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets 2008
		Corporation monies Private Sector	the Affordable Housing Strategy in light of the Housing & Regeneration Bill and the new housing needs information (due March 2008). To bid Housing Corporation funding
	Progress is being made by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Adoption of a choice based lettings system ◆ Measures to reduce voids within the socially rented stock 		
Ensuring Wigan's BME population have fair access to decent and affordable housing	<p>Our key objective is to ensure fair access for BME groups to decent and affordable housing.</p> <p>Our research has shown that Wigan's BME Community is relatively small and very diverse. They have similar levels of income as the rest of the population and are not geographically concentrated. In housing terms the only distinguishing feature is that a higher proportion is within the rented sector.</p> <p>Thus typical BME housing issues found within the region, of economic deprivation, overcrowding and geographic concentration within poorer housing areas are not present in Wigan.</p> <p>Key policy measures are therefore to ensure fair access to housing and services and to explore possible issues of isolation</p>	Mainstream monies	<p>To extend links with the network</p> <p>To work to achieve the Equality Standard the Council</p>
Ensuring asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants are appropriately housed and assimilated.	<p>Our key objective of housing and assimilating asylum seekers is implemented via the Policy Framework for asylum seekers. This has been successful at ensuring asylum seekers are appropriately dispersed and assimilated. However evidence now points to significant issues arising from refugees and economic</p>	Mainstream monies	<p>To work with the BIA to minimise housing issues for asylum seekers. To improve monitoring/intelligence</p> <p>To participate in wider Community Cohesion</p>

What are the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets 2008
	migrants.		
We know that significant gaps in provision occur within a number of vulnerable/ socially excluded groups	<p>The key objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to develop a full picture of the needs and gaps in housing services for various vulnerable / socially excluded groups • to use this knowledge to develop relevant housing and support services for these groups <p>Knowledge of both the need and service provision for vulnerable / socially excluded groups has developed considerably over the last couple of years</p> <p>Especially relevant has been the Needs Survey and the development of the Needs Analysis within the Supporting People Strategy</p>	<p>Mainstream monies</p> <p>Supporting People</p>	<p>To carry out the actions identified within the Supporting People Needs Analysis</p> <p>Action the needs analysis gypsy / travellers</p> <p>Funding bids in support of prioritised gaps in service</p>
	<p>From this analysis joint action plans within Supporting People exist for the following groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ex offenders • people with alcohol problems • people with drug problems • people with HIV • people with learning difficulties • people with mental health problems 		<p>To continue to develop Supporting People Needs Analysis and to extend scope to include all housing issues for vulnerable excluded groups</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people with physical disabilities • teenage parents • travellers • women at risk of domestic violence • young people at risk 		
To try to ensure people with disability receive the best possible adaptation service	<p>The key objectives are to provide an efficient adaptation service to that in greatest need and within the resources available.</p> <p>There has been a major increase in the demand for adaptations within Wigan and this has exceeded the resources available.</p>	<p>DFG allocation</p> <p>Mainstream monies</p>	<p>To implement the findings of the imminent Govt review of DFGs</p>

What are the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Target 2008
	Whilst additional funding has been obtained it has been necessary to prioritise applications for the agency service based on the level of need of the application.		To look to implement options of procurement effort to reduce costs

Theme – Quality Homes

What is the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets
			2008
Below quality standards within the council / RSL stock	<p>The key objective in this area is to ensure all social housing meets the decency standard by 2010.</p> <p>The programme to meet the decent homes standard is well established with additional monies secured via the ALMO route in 2002.</p> <p>It was devised in liaison with tenants and whilst its prime focus has been to meet the decent homes standard it has taken account of local deprivation factors, the need for environmental improvements and community safety issues. It has also taken advantage of improved procurement practices via partnering arrangements.</p>	<p>Additional £137 over 4 years.</p> <p>Ongoing WALH resources</p>	<p>To make progress to the decent homes target 2008/09</p> <p>To evaluate the programme against the result of the stock condition survey</p>
Below quality standards within the Private Sector Housing Stock.	<p>The key objective is to maximise the proportion of decent housing in the private sector and ensure we meet the government target of 70% of homes with a vulnerable person meeting the decency standard by 2010.</p>	<p>Mainstream allocations (£3M - £4M per annum)</p>	<p>To continue to improve conditions in private sector housing</p>
			<p>To reassess strategies current resources</p>
	<p>However, problems in the condition of properties remain within</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – private rented sector – specific localities – the oldest stock – vulnerable groups such as older people 		

What is the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets
			2008
Too many houses are cold, fuel poverty and excess winter deaths are a consequence.	<p>The main objective is to improve the energy efficiency across all tenures and targeting those with a SAP rating of less than 30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This is being achieved via:- Improvements in the energy efficiency of Council housing occurring within the stock investment programme. 	<p>Mainstream monies</p> <p>Energy efficiency monies</p>	To work closely with the Advice Centre to continue to develop initiatives on insulation/education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Improvements in the energy efficiency of private sector housing via the Council's RRO Policy. ◆ Signposting / targeting households in the private sector to gain help from Energy conservation grants / advice. ◆ Via improved training eg staff being energy advisers ◆ Via improved benefit advice work? <p>The Stock Condition Survey 2005 has confirmed the dramatic improvement in the energy efficiency of the stock over the last 5 years but warns of increasing fuel poverty as energy prices rise.</p>		
We need to fully understand our local housing market, its influences and how it interacts with surrounding areas.	<p>The key objective in this area is to ensure that Wigan's housing market is as balanced as possible and caters for the needs of all its residents.</p> <p>To achieve this we have:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ been fully involved in the national, regional and sub-regional housing context 	Mainstream monies	<p>To carry out a Housing Survey</p> <p>To participate in the Greater Strategic Housing Market Assessment Process</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ extended our knowledge of own housing markets and their inter-relationships both within and outside of the borough via research 		To undertake a townsh... review of the balance/s... local housing market

What is the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets
			2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ worked in a wider way with planners and economic development to maximise impact ◆ Developed broad intervention policies aimed at balancing the local market. 		
The borough still has relatively low house prices within the region and there is still the potential of market decline in certain local housing markets.	The key objective is to ensure that market decline in certain housing markets is prevented and indeed is reversed.	ALMO monies. Mainstream allocations. Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	To develop policies to balance local housing market. This will involve ensuring a balance within private sector and council estates / areas / council estates to restore the confidence in local housing market by encouraging completion of new development and investing in both the area and the area / security within vulnerable areas.
	<p>To achieve this we are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ looking to minimise the % of empty homes of all tenures via such measures as the Empty Homes Challenge Fund ◆ Investing in Council housing and ensuring that issues of community safety and environmental issues are dealt with. ◆ Implementing an Area Based initiative to tackle causes of decline within a Council housing area (Community Safety led) 		

What is the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets
			2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Implementing Protecting and maintaining older private sector housing by concentrating resources within 8 renewal areas incorporating visual, environmental and community safety initiatives eg block improvement, alley gating etc. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Working with private landlords in terms of an accreditation scheme / enforcement of standards ◆ Looking to discourage development that replicates existing local housing profile and encouraging development that extends housing choice within areas. ◆ Looking to intervene where housing is unlikely to have a viable future. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Intervening within housing to help reduce the levels of health inequality in the borough. 		
<p>The borough has a number of popular localised housing markets which don't provide the range of affordable property needed and where further development could undermine adjacent housing areas.</p>	<p>The key objective is to try to ensure that areas of strong demand provide the range of housing needed by their communities and to attempt to restrict development which could undermine adjacent housing areas.</p> <p>To achieve this we are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Looking to develop affordable housing in these areas ◆ Looking to influence the type of housing developed in these areas ◆ Ensuring that new development sites are not overly concentrated within popular areas. 		<p>Continue to look to better balance local housing by encouraging affordable housing in these areas</p>

What is the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets
			2008
<p>Ensuring communities participate in particular hard to reach groups</p> <p>Developing and maintaining partnerships to improve the quality of life particularly of those who are socially excluded or are in poverty.</p>	<p>Objective is to maximise participation within the housing process</p> <p>This objective is taken forward via</p> <p>WALH resident involvement on its Board, investment groups, residents' forum and estate inspections.</p> <p>Continued development of the Housing Partnership and forums for hard to reach groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Older People - Asylum seekers - Homelessness - Other vulnerable groups <p>Significant progress has been achieved in developing and maintaining partnerships within all the housing stakeholders.</p> <p>This has been especially true within homelessness and for vulnerable groups via the Supporting People Process</p>	<p>Theme – Quality Homes</p>	<p>Continue with WALH governance reforms and increasing tenant role</p> <p>Continue to drive forward development of strategies aimed at meeting the needs of vulnerable people.</p>
	<p>Progress has also occurred in developing close links with key related partnerships such as Community Safety and Health and with key departments such as Planning in the development of area based housing initiatives.</p>		
<p>Ensuring residents receive the best possible services.</p>	<p>Significant progress has been achieved in this area via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection (2 star) • BV Reviews • Self-assessment against CPA • Performance Monitoring of the ALMO • Chartermark status for both the 		<p>To continue to monitor satisfaction rating during</p>

What is the issue/ problem we need to address?	How will we deal with it (priorities / objectives)	Resources	Milestones / Targets
			2008
	<p>Council and WALH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Assurance systems for Housing strategy 		
Accountability telling people what we plan and how we perform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Housing Strategy published on the web – Progress reported half yearly. – Regular newsletters – WALH reports and tenant literature. 		To continue existing p
Ensure we have well skilled staff with the key competencies for delivering the best possible service.	Continuing to use Investors in People to systematically assess and develop staff.		
Ensure we maximise efficiency and improve procurement	Significant progress has been made in this area with the use of partnering contracts within WALH works Within private sector policies the use of combined loan/grant and in innovative policies such as the Empty Homes Challenge Fund show progress.	ALMO Monies Mainstream Moines	Efficiency and procure key aspects that will co be tackled within the V Business Plan and wit updating of the Homel Strategy etc

