

Appendix 1

Private Sector Housing Strategy (2013-2018) Action Plan: Progress Report June 2013

Strategic Aim 1: Increase the supply of privately rented accommodation within the borough

Strategy action no	Overview & Scrutiny Rec	Action	Reasons	Measurable outcome	Responsible Officers	Target	June 2013 progress update
1.1	D J	Consider the contribution that the private rented sector can make to affordable housing models in the borough	To develop potential models to increase the level of good quality, well managed and affordable housing within the borough, including in the private rented sector	To develop potential models for delivery of affordable housing and new build private rented accommodation	Alison Pegg / Elaine Slowe	Apr-14	A report has been presented to June Cabinet for approval to take forward short- and long-term strategic models for affordable housing and which could include private rented housing development. Harrow is considering the option of procuring private rented units at LHA rates under planning policy as an alternative housing tenure where there is no opportunity to secure alternative affordable housing. Harrow is currently in the process of developing a grant scheme to enable Council tenants to move into the private sector. These proposals will be taken to Cabinet in June 2013 and, if approved, is scheduled for launch in September 2013.
1.2	C	Continue to increase the number of landlords using the Help2Let service	To increase the number of economically realistic properties that are available to homeless households and those threatened with homelessness	To increase the number of properties made available through Help2Let by 15%by target date	Jon Dalton, Bali Rai	Apr-14	We continue to market the Help2Let service. However it is difficult to attract enough landlords with properties in Harrow to meet demand and there is competition from other boroughs, which in some cases are offering substantial incentives to encourage landlords to let properties to them.
1.3	D J	Work with the Planning Department to explore how the Planning Policy Framework can be used to deliver market rental properties	To identify how the number of market rental properties in the borough can be increased	To increase supply of new-build private rented properties	Alison Pegg / Matthew Patterson / Peter Barron	Apr-14	See update for Action 1.1
1.4	C	Research and implement a package to incentivise buy to let in exchange for nomination rights (Buy2Lease under Help2Let brand)	To increase the supply of properties in the PRS to which Harrow Council can nominate households in housing need	Implementation of Buy2Lease scheme Up to 45 properties made available to Harrow council through the Buy2Lease scheme in 2013-2014	Jon Dalton	Apr-13 Apr-14	Research completed and scheme to launch on 1st April. Publicity is shortly due to be released.

Strategic Aim 2: Enable and enforce better housing conditions in the private sector

						June 2013 progress update
Strategy & Scrutiny action no	Overview Rec	Action	Reasons	Measurable outcome	Responsible Officers	Target
2.1	D F	Promote membership to the London Landlord Accreditation scheme through local forums	To improve property standards and promote professionalism within the PRS	Hold 3 London Landlord Accreditation Scheme training sessions per year	Jon Dalton, Bali Rai	Apr-14 Harrow will also make use of other opportunities to engage with existing and potential private sector landlords. This will include communication through monthly business newsletters and at events for small/medium enterprises. A press release on landlord accreditation is scheduled for July 2013.
2.2	E F	Review approach to delivering the Sustain Tenancy grant programme following budget-setting and explore options for new private sector initiatives	To utilise grant effectively to improve the condition of properties in the PRS in order to prevent homelessness	To review and implement new approach by target date.	Jon Dalton / Elaine Slowe	May-13 Capital bid for £200k for empty properties and private sector initiatives approved by Capital Forum in April. Of this, £130k has been authorised for immediate use for empty properties and Sustain Tenancy grants and £70k has been provisionally allocated to additional private sector initiatives. One Sustain Tenancy grant application has been received and is awaiting costing. Average grant in 2012-13 was £1330. Other private sector initiatives to be explored following initial discussions. To be finalised by end of July 2013.
2.3	B F	Finalise and implement a new Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy	To set out the approach for bringing property conditions up to HHSRS standard within the PRS, emphasising a co-operative approach with landlords wherever possible	Implementation of the Enforcement Policy by target date Monitor impact of Policy	Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel Mfum	Review Jun-2013 (subject to PRISM) A draft of the PSH Enforcement Policy has been completed but the implementation of the policy will be subject to the outcome of the current PRISM project for Community Safety Services. In the meantime, a generic Environmental Health Enforcement Policy is available for use by the service.
2.4	B F	Implementation of a new fee charging structure for environmental health enforcement action	To encourage landlords to bring their properties up to HHSRS standard	Completion of a pilot of new fee structure and review impact of this on availability of PRS properties.	Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel Mfum	Jun-13 The new fee structure was introduced in April 2013 and is ongoing. PSH Officers serve formal notices under relevant sections of the Housing Act 2004 when they come across Category 1 hazards and landlords will be charged if they fail to comply with a notice served. The fee structure is not a revenue-generation scheme and no fees have as yet been charged as landlords have complied with the notices.
2.5	E F	Promote awareness of tenants' rights and responsibilities in relation to their property standards	To ensure that residents in Harrow understand their rights and responsibilities, and what services the Council can offer to help private rented sector tenants encountering difficulties	Production of publicity material Deliver 10 tenant information sessions per year	Jon Dalton Shankar Sivashankar	Sep-13 Information sessions take place. Harrow uses "Harrow People" to advertise the service and HMO information. As part of the selective licensing research, consultation is likely through road shows.
2.6	B F	Review feasibility of additional options for improving property standards within the private sector, such as a licensing pilot and financial incentives, and make recommendations on the same	To ensure that a range of options is available to improve property conditions	Recommendations on appropriate actions and improvement of property standards across the Borough.	Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel Mfum	Review Jun-2013 (subject to PRISM) A temporary Project Officer has been employed to undertake research into the feasibility of selective licensing of private rented sector landlords. Recommendations are scheduled to be published to Licensing and General Purposes Committee in August 2013 and will consider Harrow's local context and findings from Newham Council, which implemented mandatory licensing for all private landlords in January 2013. Option appraisal is a standard technical information text that will appear in a Housing Act notice. It justifies type of notice to be served e.g. Improvement or Hazard Awareness. Option appraisals are completed for each formal Housing Act notice served by a PSH officer with a view to improve privately rented housing stock within Harrow, outlining the reasons the notice has been served and the options for landlords to improve the property standards.

2.7	F	Establish procedure to outline how instances of severe overcrowding in the private rented sector should be recorded and responded to on a case-by-case basis	To ensure that issues of overcrowding are identified and services are developed in response	Implementation of procedure by target date. Review approach to dealing with overcrowding, for example by offering alternative PRS accommodation.	Shankar Sivashankar	Review Jun-2013 (subject to PRISM)	No progress to report this quarter
2.8	A	Formalise a programme to inspect Bed & Breakfast accommodation ("Setting the Standard") and other emergency accommodation in Harrow	To ensure that minimum standards adopted across London are enabled and enforced in Harrow consistently	Implementation of programme and completion of all inspections by target date.	Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel Mfum, Jon Dalton	Jun-13	The Setting the Standard (STS-2) programme is a revised version of an existing pan-London standard which takes into account legislative changes, such as the 2004 Housing Act. STS-2 has been launched for B&Bs and procedures have been developed by the London Housing Partnership Task Group, however Harrow is yet to adopt STS-2 standards due to a lack of resources. B&Bs will continue to be inspected by PSH enforcement officers as the need arises, although no inspections have been required this year. Housing Services also inspect all properties prior to placing a household in emergency accommodation.
2.9	F	Working with partners, investigate options to incentivise landlord accreditation, where it is consistent with encouraging and developing the PRS in Harrow.	To attract landlords to work with Harrow to become accredited and improve property standards in the Borough as appropriate increasing the number of properties complying with the London Rental Standard.	Completion of a research report and action plan as appropriate	Jon Dalton, Nadeem Din	Dec-13	The council already works with landlords to have them accredited through the Help2Let Scheme. Work is yet to commence on researching into ways of attracting more landlords to comply with the London Rental Sector.
2.10	E F	Investigate how Harrow can promote the introduction of more stable and secure tenancies, using relationships with landlords, and produce recommendations as appropriate.	To ensure Harrow makes the best use of opportunities to enhance tenancy conditions for PRS tenants, such as through longer tenancies, more transparent rent increases and longer notice periods, in order to improve perceived and real security for tenants in the sector. To reach a balance between tenancy security and landlord flexibility.	The completion of a report outlining options for consideration, and implementation of actions as appropriate.	Nadeem Din, Jon Dalton	Apr-14	Research is yet to start into options and will include engagement with Landlords to assess their interest
2.11	B F	Continue work to license HMOs within the borough	To ensure that minimum standards for HMOs are consistently enabled and enforced in Harrow	Increase the number of HMOs licensed in the borough	Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel Mfum	Apr-13	Work on this is progressing. A Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) lead team has been formed and is proactively seeking HMOs. As at 16/04/2013, 335 HMOs were licenced in out of an estimated 1500 HMOs in the borough. This marks an improvement on recent performance; 187 HMOs were licensed in 2011 and 2012.
2.12	B F	Investigate the extent of a "beds in sheds" problem in Harrow and produce recommendations as appropriate	To ensure that households are protected from sub-standard private rented accommodation	Evaluation of the extent of the "beds in sheds" problem in Harrow and recommendations for future action, where appropriate.	Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel Mfum	Review Jun-2013 (subject to PRISM)	There is little evidence that beds in sheds are a significant problem for Harrow. Issues are reported to the PSH enforcement team for investigation as they arise. Further investigation of this issue will be part of the scope of the selective licensing feasibility study.

Strategic Aim 3: Bring empty properties back into use

						June 2013 progress update
Strategy action no	Overview & Scrutiny Rec	Action	Reasons	Measurable outcome	Responsible Officers	Target
3.1	C D H	Maximise the number of private sector empty properties brought back into use through support, advice and empty property grants	Bring empty properties back into use in order to better address housing need in the borough	Bring 45 empty private sector properties into use per annum.	Christine Scott, Elaine Slowe, Marie O'Shea, Jon Dalton, Bali Rai	Apr-14 6 empty properties have already been brought back into use in 2013/14. This exceeds the Housing Scorecard Q1 target of 5. 8 additional grants have been approved and a further 11 cases are in the pipeline for progression to approval. On target to meet annual target of 45 within budget.
3.2	C D H	Secure funding opportunities for empty homes grants, including by working in partnership with the West London Housing Partnership, and implement programmes as appropriate.	To bring empty properties back into use and increase the number of properties available to rent	Implement empty homes grant programmes	Elaine Slowe / Christine Scott	May-2013 Internal capital funding of £130k for empty properties has now been approved, as outlined in action 2.2 above. Two landlords have applied for the grant and have commenced repair work, and another four landlords have been referred by Help2Let. Their grant applications are being progressed. West London LAs are applying for funding from the GLA and the contract is currently being signed-off by partners. The contract is currently with Brent and them will be sent to Harrow for signature. Agreement is expected to be received in Harrow shortly. In the interim, West London directors have agreed to underwrite the scheme with previously unused funding and the Empty Properties Team is now actively looking for properties for the scheme. We are presently in negotiations with a landlord of a property which has been empty for over two years to bring back 7 units into use with 5 year nomination agreements to Help2Let. Bid under Mayor's Covenant for additional funding for empty properties has been submitted to GLA and Harrow is awaiting a response.
3.3	H	Monitor the impact of changes to council tax for long-term empty properties and present recommendations to Cabinet on the same	To ensure measures introduced to remove any incentives to owners in leaving properties empty are effective, and to consequently increase the supply of properties in the borough	Complete a review and make recommendations for improvement, if appropriate	Jon Dalton / Lynn Allaker	Dec-13 A review of the impact of the changes will start in September 2013 and is on target for completion in December 2013. Changes to council tax exemptions for empty properties were introduced in April 2013. Information was sent to all those residents affected by the changes to raise awareness of how the Council could assist to bring empty properties back into use. This included information about empty property grants and the Council's Help2Let service. Staff continue to promote these services when dealing with residents, and the changes have prompted some residents to proactively approach the council for assistance. Data provided by residents suggests that the council tax changes have led to a reduction in the number of empty properties in the borough, but this will need to be verified by council tax staff. The changes may also make empty properties more difficult to identify.
3.4	D F H	Identify long-term empty properties where enforcement action under the 2004 Housing Act may be required, and take action as appropriate	To ensure that properties are brought back into use where enabling measures are not successful	Identify 10 long-term empty properties and review whether enforcement action is appropriate	Elaine Slowe / Christine Scott	Dec-13 The most suitable properties for enforcement action by Compulsory Purchase Order have been identified in consultation with colleagues from Council Tax, Environmental Health and Planning departments, following advice from Legal. Preliminary work has commenced on developing procedures.

Strategic Aim 4: Meet the needs of vulnerable households living in the private sector

June 2013 progress update

Strategy action no	Overview & Scrutiny Rec	Action	Reasons	Measurable outcome	Responsible Officers	Target
4.1	E	Continue to monitor uptake and outcome of floating support services to vulnerable, older and disabled households to enable them to remain in their own homes	To ensure appropriate services are available and accessible to those who need them in order to remain independent	Produce an evaluation report of levels of uptake of support across PRS and the effectiveness of this support (through consultation), and making recommendations for improvement as appropriate.	Sandie Roberts / Tim Miller	Apr-14 The uptake of support across the PRS has been monitored since from April 13, and an evaluation report will be completed by the target date. Approximately 400 customers are receiving floating support at any one time and in 2012/13, 204 vulnerable people entered the service and started receiving Floating Support, with 19% of these living in the private rented sector at this time. Of those that were supported to remain in their accommodation, 88% achieved this. 90% of those supported to address mental health issues did so successfully. Supporting People is currently undertaking a review of all of its services to understand what provisions have the greatest impact on the customer. This is in order to deliver savings of 33% on current expenditure, whilst still continue to deliver effective services.
4.2		Evaluate the impact of Welfare Reform on vulnerable and disabled people in receipt of Local Housing Allowance and make recommendations for further action	To respond appropriately to the wider impacts of the welfare reforms on households, particularly those affected by the Shared Accommodation Rate and those who may be vulnerable or have a disability, and the potential impact on Discretionary Housing Payments	Implementation of actions to mitigate against the impact of LHA changes by target date	Jon Dalton, Jennifer Townsley	Jul-14 The Council is monitoring the impact of welfare reform on residents corporately and this has and will continue to feed into the private sector housing strategy action plan. The Recession Busting Group is working in partnership with other agencies, including the CAB, to monitor the impact of economic changes on Harrow's residents, and from April 2013 this will include the impact of the welfare reforms. This will be monitored quarterly. The Council has also formed a Benefit Cap Task Group with partners to assess the impact of the forthcoming cap on welfare benefits. Contact has so far been made with 281 affected claimants and extended interviews have been completed with over 150 claimants to offer information and advice. Since the interviews commenced, 45 households contacted have moved into employment, and are therefore now exempt from the cap. All affected claimants will be interviewed before the introduction of the cap in August 2013. Harrow is working in partnership to launch the HELP scheme to assist residents affected by the welfare reforms. This is planned to launch in late Summer. The Council also launched an Emergency Relief in April 2013 to assist residents on a pilot basis, with the results of this to be released after the end of the pilot in April 2014. A revised Discretionary Housing Payment policy has been consulted on and being considered by Cabinet in July 2013.
4.3	E	Continue to monitor performance of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant Programme and make recommendations for improvement as necessary	To ensure that the waiting times between OT referral and grant approval are minimised, thereby allowing vulnerable people the independence to remain in their own homes	Deliver DFG's within target time of 35 weeks. Evaluation of the performance of the DFG programme with recommendations for improvement as appropriate, by target date.	Mick Sheehy	Apr-13 This is reported to Improvement Board and monitored via the corporate scorecard. Performance is above target and average times to complete adaptation works for owner occupiers, RSL and private tenants was 18 weeks in 2012-13. Continuing to monitor service and consider possible improvements
4.4		Research options to promote private adaptation works and produce recommendations as appropriate for consideration by Cabinet	To broaden the scope of assistance available to vulnerable households who may require help in appointing contractors to carry out adaptations to their properties	Produce recommendations and action plan on private adaptation works by target date.	Mick Sheehy	Dec-13 The proposal to set the HIA up as a social enterprise has been put on hold. For legal reasons the council cannot offer this service, but this will be reviewed again in October.

4.5		Increase awareness of services available to vulnerable owner occupiers, such as the handyperson service and equity release scheme	To ensure uptake of appropriate services available to older and disabled people, thereby allowing vulnerable people the independence to remain in their own home	Develop and implement a communications plan by target date. Increase number of calls to the adaptation team by 15%.	Mick Sheehy	Apr-2013 Apr-2014	Council places quarterly advertisements in "Harrow People" to raise awareness of the services available to vulnerable owner occupiers, and places advertisements in other publications as appropriate (e.g. Council Tax information leaflet). Over the last financial year, this publicity has increased handyperson referrals by approximately 25%. Harrow will continue to raise awareness of services available to owner occupiers and will review how this can be done effectively within budget.
4.6	E	Complete an evaluation of good practice of floating support schemes introduced in other areas, and make recommendations for future contracts for Harrow	To ensure Harrow remains receptive to innovative models of support, giving vulnerable people the best opportunities to remain independent in their own homes	Completion of evaluation report and implementation of recommendations as appropriate.	Sandie Roberts / Tim Miller	Dec-13	The Supporting People team is currently reviewing all of its commissioned accomm based and floating support services. Any recommendations that come from the outcome of review will be reported back to steering group. The evaluation is due to be completed in July for implementation in September

Strategic Aim 5: Improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty

June 2013 progress update

Strategy action no	Overview & Scrutiny Rec	Action	Reasons	Measurable outcome	Responsible Officers	Target
5.1	F L	Continue to inspect HMO properties and provide energy efficiency advice to landlords as appropriate	To improve property standards in Borough	Develop appropriate literature to promote awareness of legislation and the services offered by Harrow Council.	Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel MFum	Apr-13 The HMO and PSH Officers provide face-to-face and telephone advice to landlords. A HMO booklet is also available and is in the process of being improved by the West London Regulatory Group, which is due for completion in Summer 2014. The webpage for PSH Enforcement on the Harrow website is currently under development by Harrow web team. The new website is due to be launched at the end of June, which has delayed progress against this action. HHSRS inspections are being carried out to improve energy efficiency of properties.
5.2	F L	Provide energy efficiency advice to PRS landlords	To advise landlords of: • legal requirement to provide and Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) to new tenants • Landlord Energy Saving Allowance to improve thermal efficiency of their properties • Requirement to meet minimum EPC target of E by 2018	Develop appropriate literature to promote awareness of legislation and the services offered by Harrow Council.	Andrew Baker, Jon Dalton	Apr-13 Development of the literature has been delayed because of other projects to improve energy efficiency that are currently on site (e.g. Harrow Housewarmers project, the external wall insulation project at Stiven Crescent - funded by DECC, and the Fuel Poverty Fund (also DECC funded). These projects are time-limited and will shortly finish. A draft of the proposed literature will be circulated by the end of June and developed over the summer with a view to launching the scheme in September.
5.3	F L	Adoption of minimum EPC standard for referrals to the PRS	To use the Council's "purchasing power" to drive the market to improve the energy rating of rented homes within the borough	Establish minimum EPC rating of F where sufficient PRS accommodation is available for households in housing need. Offer energy efficiency advice where allocations are made to 'G' rated properties. Establish minimum EPC rating of E	Andrew Baker, Shankar Sivashankar, Emmanuel MFum, Jon Dalton	Apr-15 Apr-18 Inspecting officers within PSH Enforcement Team have started collecting EPC documents on subject properties since April 2013. Current estimate for EPC collected currently stand at 17 in total as of 12th June 2013 but this figure will change over time. This action is planned to take place on schedule and will ensure that Harrow works with landlords to improve the energy efficiency of private rented sector properties.
5.4	B F	Provision of advice to tenants as to the statutory requirements that a landlord should meet when letting a property	To make tenants aware that landlords need to show them a current Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and a Gas Safety Certificate prior to letting. Soft furnishings should comply with 'Kite Mark' regulations.	Develop appropriate literature to promote awareness of tenants' rights and responsibility (e.g. via website, CAB and lettings agents). Deliver 10 tenant information sessions per year	Andrew Baker, Jon Dalton, Nadeem Din	Dec-14 Development of the literature has been delayed because of other projects to improve energy efficiency that are currently on site (e.g. Harrow Housewarmers project, the external wall insulation project at Stiven Crescent - funded by DECC, and the Fuel Poverty Fund (also DECC funded). These projects are time-limited and will shortly finish. A draft of the proposed literature will be circulated by the end of June and developed over the summer with a view to launching the scheme in September.
5.5	F L	Adopt a policy to use a reported Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of F or G in PRS as a trigger to provide assistance and advice to landlords. Where necessary, and where the tenant agrees, complete a full HHSRS inspection of a home to determine whether a	An EPC rating of F or G can be an indication that there is category one HHSRS hazard in the property relating to excess cold.	Publication of policy formalising inspections. If this leads to an increase in workload, review inspections. Publication of this trigger to tenants, landlords and letting agents	Shankar Sivashankar	Apr-13 (subject to PRISM) All properties inspected under the Housing Act 2004 are now required to supply Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). Properties that attract a category 1 hazard as a result of this will attract a Housing Act 2004 notice and will be required to improve the property.

5.6	F	Promote the Green Deal to owner occupiers, tenants and landlords in the PRS	Housing accounts for 66% of carbon emissions in Harrow. Reducing energy consumption in homes is therefore the single most effective measure needed to meet the carbon reduction targets in the Climate Change Act.	Establish a Green Deal provider as a partner to deliver the Green Deal in the borough and produce and implement a communication plan to publicise the Green Deal.	Andrew Baker	Jun-13	<p>The Green Deal is a very new initiative and the market is still developing. The project presents a significant opportunity for the borough to attract substantial inward investment into homes in the borough. The project also has the potential to deliver significant social benefits as well as reducing carbon emissions. The project team are working to ensure that these benefits are maximised and the local market developed as much as possible.</p> <p>Project to procure a GreenDeal/ECO provider for the borough is progressing. A supplier day for potential contractors is planned for 4 July. This will be used to develop the procurement strategy further. It is anticipated that Tenders will be returned in early September. Contract award is expected in October 2013.</p>
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Strategic Aim 6: Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships to support private sector housing

June 2013 progress update

Strategy action no	Overview & Scrutiny Rec	Action	Reasons	Measurable outcome	Responsible Officers	Target
6.1	F	Maintain clear strategic leadership for private sector housing within Harrow, supporting landlords to achieve improvements	To ensure effective joint working of all stakeholders who are involved in the improvement of private sector housing, and to ensure that the aims and objectives included within the Private Sector Housing Strategy are delivered	Quarterly meetings of the Private Sector Housing Strategy Steering Group	Alison Pegg, Jon Dalton, Shankar Sivashankar, Nadeem Din	Ongoing The Private Sector Housing Steering Group will continue to meet quarterly to track progress in delivering the objectives outlined in the strategy. The group will ensure that the action plan is reviewed so that it reflects current private sector issues. The group will make links with partners and stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of actions taken.
6.2		Continue to work sub regionally with the West London Housing Partnership	To achieve greater efficiencies working towards shared goals within the sub region, and to ensure good practice is shared effectively across partners.	Periodic meetings with the WLHP and development of common approaches, where appropriate. Best use of grant funding opportunities.	Nadeem Din	Ongoing Harrow meets with partners across West London on a quarterly basis in order to discuss private sector issues. Most recently, the partnership has worked together to submit a bid to the GLA to tackle empty properties (see 3.2). Formalise a programme to inspect Bed & Breakfast accommodation ("Setting the Standard") and other emergency accommodation in Harrow (see 2.8 above)
6.3	F G	Investigate opportunities to engage private sector tenants through offering advice and support services and produce recommendations for the same.	To ensure that tenants know how to exercise their rights the PRS within the borough	Focus-groups about specific issues. Communication with tenants about rights and responsibilities	Jon Dalton, Nadeem Din	Apr-2013 and ongoing to Apr- 2018 An initial meeting of a the Harrow Private Tenants' Forum was held in Summer 2012, however there was insufficient interest from private sector tenants to continue this Forum. Harrow facilitated an event to consult on the objectives of the private sector housing strategy in February 2013. Tenants emphasised the importance of engaging tenants through appropriate guidance and information, and the action plan was updated to reflect this. Harrow plans to feedback on progress against the strategy at the end of the financial year
6.4	E F	Review how tenant information sessions can further improve tenants' understanding of their rights and responsibilities and implement changes as appropriate	To ensure that tenants understand their rights and responsibilities from the beginning of a tenancy and to promote an informed dialogue between tenant and private rented sector landlords. To ensure tenants understand services offered by the Council.	Deliver 10 tenant information sessions per year Investigate feasibility of widening the audience to tenant information sessions	Jon Dalton / Marie O'Shea	Apr-14 We're planning to introduce HMO pre-tenancy information sessions.
6.5	D	Improve partnership working with private landlords within the borough	To improve the management and standards of PRS properties within the borough through landlord conferences and forums	Work with and offer advice and support to 100 more landlords per year	All members	Apr-14 The ECO/Green Deal (as described above) will be an important way of engaging with landlords and promoting partnership working within the borough.
6.6		Maintain working partnership with departments across the council and publicise any new initiatives to appropriate team	To ensure working is joined-up and that customers can obtain the best value from services	At least quarterly updates to relevant teams on initiatives	All members	Ongoing As above, the Private Sector Housing Steering Group meet quarterly to discuss progress against strategy objectives and to ensure that work is joined-up.

Equality Impact Assessment action plan

Strategy action no	Action	Reasons	Measurable outcome	Responsible Officers	Target/	Progress
Eq1	All	Expand collection and monitoring of equality data for enforcement actions and consider actions as appropriate	Robust monitoring system implemented and service is equally accessible to all groups.	Emmanuel Mfum	Apr-13	Inspection form for PSH have recently been amended by service manager as of March 2013 with a view to capture equality impact figures.
Eq2	All	Expand collection and monitoring of equality data for grants and adaptation work and review services as appropriate	Robust monitoring system implemented and service is equally accessible to all groups.	Mick Sheehy	Apr-14	This is ongoing and is part of the supporting people monthly returns
Eq3	All	Ensure equalities data is collected as part of the grant application process and review services as appropriate	Robust monitoring system implemented and service is equally accessible to all groups.	Elaine Slowe/ Christine Scott	Apr-14	Completed. Grant application form for landlords includes an equalities monitoring form. Information from completed forms is being compiled on ongoing basis
Eq4	All	Improve communication about the services that are available to tenants and residents in the private	More accessible services and more informed residents	Jon Dalton / Shankar Sivashankar	Review Apr- 2014	A draft of the proposed literature will be circulated by the end of June and developed over the summer with a view to launching the scheme in September.
Eq5	Age	Investigate and monitor the housing needs of those groups affected by welfare reform.	Potential barriers to housing overcome.	Jon Dalton / Jennifer Townesley	Jul-13	Welfare reform monitoring to be carried out quarterly although limited data is available for Housing Benefit caseload due to limitations of system to capture equalities data
Eq6	Age, Race	Introduction of affordable warmth measures will decrease the incidence of fuel poverty amongst vulnerable older households.	Potentially reduce the number of excess winter deaths	Andrew Baker	From Apr- 2013 and ongoing	Alternative funding needs to be identified to enable continuation of the Affordable warmth programme.
Eq7	Disability, age	Handyperson service and equity release products to be promoted by the Home Improvement Agency (only open to households in the older age group).	To enable older persons to live independently within their own home	Mick Sheehy	Review Apr- 2014	Regular advertisements in Harrow people has dramatically increased handyperson referrals, equity release being offered by caseworkers.
Eq8	Disability, age	Develop a private works service for those households who are assessed as being able to pay but not entitled to financial assistance	To enable older persons to live independently within their own home	Mick Sheehy	Apr- 2014 (propos als Dec- 2013)	The proposal to set the HIA up as a social enterprise has been put on hold, for legal reasons the council cannot offer this service, review again in October.