

Cabinet Report 19th July 2007

Draft Housing Strategy 2007-2012

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Foreword – To follow

Introduction

What is the housing strategy?

The Housing Strategy is our five year plan for investment and service development across all types of housing in Harrow. It provides our analysis of housing conditions in Harrow and the way in which we pursue strategies to deliver our objectives.

The strategy examines:

- The Council's corporate vision for housing in Harrow
- The influence of national, regional and sub-regional priorities on our priorities
- Stock condition across all tenures
- Housing needs
- Housing supply and demand
- Housing priorities and the challenges we face in addressing these
- Gaps in provision
- The involvement of residents, partner agencies and stakeholders in developing our housing objectives and the priorities for action
- Partnership working with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), the private sector and other agencies

We include a plan to deliver the necessary actions arising from the strategy

Major housing concerns in Harrow:

The Borough faces major housing challenges to ensure that its residents are well housed and the more vulnerable supported. Our particular concerns are to:

- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Make best use of existing stock
- Improve the condition of the housing stock in all tenures
- Provide for needs identified in the Supporting People strategy, Homelessness strategy and Older Persons review
- Satisfy the needs of BME residents
- Improve neighbourhoods and quality of life in Harrow
- Make better use of resources and deliver value for money services
- Increase consultation, participation and communication with residents and service users

Core housing objectives

In consultation with Harrow residents and housing stakeholders, and by examining the challenges shown above, we have identified five priority objectives for housing. These are:

- Meeting the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people
- Continue to tackle homelessness and high demand, while reducing temporary accommodation
- Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life
- Increasing the supply of affordable housing
- Delivering quality services

About Harrow

Harrow is an outer London borough lying about ten miles north-west of central London. It covers an area of approximately 50 square kilometers, a little less than 20 square miles.

It is part of the West London sub-region, along with the local authorities of Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hillingdon and Hounslow. The London Borough of Barnet borders the eastern part of Harrow and Hertfordshire is to the north. The District Councils of Three Rivers and Hertsmere also border Harrow.

Harrow is well served by excellent transport links to London and to the rest of the UK. There are national rail, London Underground and extensive bus networks connecting it to London. As well as national rail, Harrow is linked to the rest of the UK by road via the M1 and the M25.

Harrow Town Centre is Harrow's main shopping and office location and is ranked among the top 10 retail centres in London.

Harrow is one of London's most attractive suburban areas and is primarily a dormitory residential suburban area. Compared with other outer London boroughs Harrow has a relatively small area of land and number of buildings devoted to employment and industrial activity.

More than a quarter of the Borough (over 1 300 hectares) is open space and much of this is designated 'green belt'.

Harrow is an attractive place to live. Its popularity as a residential suburb, with limited scope for development, is a major factor in the affordability issues faced by residents.

Key population and household statistics

The main features of our population and households are described below. We highlight significant features which impact on our housing strategy

- Our resident population is 214,000¹
- Of the 83,582 dwellings in Harrow 6% are council properties, 4.4% are housing association and 89% are privately owned. Approximately 12% of these households are rented privately. The levels of home ownership are much higher than the national average (72%) which puts extra pressure on the availability and affordability of rented stock
- We have one of the largest and most diverse ethnic minority populations of any local authority in England & Wales. 52% of our residents were of ethnic minority in 2004- the eighth highest proportion in England & Wales² The needs of ethnic minority residents, therefore, must feature highly in our strategy
- In 2001 Harrow had the highest level of religious diversity of any local authority in England & Wales³ We celebrate what our community has in common and take pride in our diversity and way in which different faiths live together

¹ ONS 2005 Mid-Year Estimates

² ONS Mid-2004 Population Estimates by Ethnic Group [experimental]).

³(2001 Census

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- By 2011 Harrow's population could increase to at least 218,900, which represents a growth of 4.2% in the ten-year period 2001-2011. Growth from 2001 to 2005 was 1.9%⁴.
- The unconstrained projections show that Harrow's population could reach at least 230,700 by 2026, over 16,000 higher than the current population⁵.
- The population of the 25-44 age group has been increasing steadily since 2001 and this growth is expected to continue over the next six to seven years, showing an increase of at least 9% from 2001 to 2013.
- Projections show a steady growth in the size of 45-64 age group from 2001 to 2011 - from 2006 to 2026 growth could be at least 13%⁶
- The size of the population of the 65+ age group is expected to increase very gradually over the next 10 year period, then increase at a higher rate. From 2006 to 2016 growth could be as high as 4%, but 7% from 2016 to 2026⁷. This gradual growth allows us to plan for services
- Since 2001 the population of the 75+ age group has been fairly static, but growth from 2006 to 2026 is expected to be at a higher rate and as high as 13%⁸. The needs of this age-group will feature highly in our plans for the next 20 years.
- In mid-2001 there were 79,565 households in Harrow. Projections show that in 2006 there were expected to be between 81,800 - 82,800 households. In five years time this figure could increase to between 84,700 – 86,200 households. By 2026 the projections show between 88,300 and 93,500 households⁹.
- 27.7% of all households in 2006 were expected to be one-person households, slightly above the 2001 level of 26.2% (the lowest level in London). In 2011 this proportion is projected to increase to around 29.4% and to 35.2% by 2026¹⁰. We will need to plan for the changing demographic profile when influencing housing supply.

Economic activity

The popular perception of Harrow is of a prosperous, green and leafy suburb. Many areas are. But, looking at Harrow Council's Vitality Profiles it is readily apparent there are areas of significant poverty, deprivation and acute housing need. Mostly these are in the southwest and south-central parts of the borough.

Households with children, and those with older people, have lower incomes than other households and feature in deprivation indices. A parallel high scoring index of deprivation is that of "barriers to housing and services". This index is described as a "basket" of indicators including distances to health facilities, shops, schools and obstacles to homeowners improving their own properties.

In contrast to the deprivation findings, Harrow has a strong economic base. It has:

- An employment sector which is diverse in sector, size and type of work
- Successful new businesses which thrive

⁴ (GLA 2006 Round of Demographic Projections - RLP Low)

⁵ (GLA 2006 Round of Demographic Projections - RLP High)

⁶ (GLA 2006 Round of Demographic Projections - RLP High & Low)

⁷ (GLA 2006 Round of Demographic Projections - RLP High & Low)

⁸ (GLA 2006 Round of Demographic Projections - RLP High & Low)

⁹ GLA 2006 Round of Demographic Projections - RLP High & Low)

¹⁰ (GLA 2006 Round of Demographic Projections - RLP High & Low)

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- A well qualified population with an improving level of skills and qualifications
- High average household earnings
- Excellent transport links to other places of work

Employment profile

- Harrow has a workforce of circa 63 .000
- About 30% of these work in 'small to medium enterprises' (SMEs)
- 49% of employed residents work in managerial and 'professional' jobs
 - this figure is growing less quickly than neighbouring boroughs, which may indicate a higher starting point
- Unemployment is less than 3%
- 62% of Harrow workers are employed outside the borough, in particular those in managerial/professional jobs
- Harrow's employment is concentrated in three sectors:
 - Distribution/hotels/restaurants – c25%
 - Banking and finance – c26%
 - Public administration, education and health – c27%

Strategic context

The five core objectives in our strategy are based on a robust assessment of the housing need in Harrow, alongside other influences that shape our strategy.

Corporate priorities

A Sustainable Community Plan for Harrow 2006-2020, and the Corporate Plan 2007-2010 set out Harrow's corporate vision. The Council's vision is

'to be recognised as one of the best London Councils by 2012 in a borough that is cosmopolitan, confident and cohesive'

Specific aspirations support the vision. With the support of staff and partners, the Council will:

- Satisfy our customers
- Ensure people feel safe and secure
- Transform our living and working environment
- Protect our Green Belt and Harrow heritage
- Listen to and care for people who need our help
- Value, empower and involve young people
- Promote vibrant cultural and leisure opportunities
- Provide high achieving schools at the centre of community services
- Encourage, promote and retain business
- Sustain a diverse and cohesive community which lives in harmony
- Deliver value for money

These are our priorities to achieve these aspirations:

- Increase our level of customer satisfaction
- Work with our partners to reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Improve the performance of our environmental services and promote recycling
- Promote policies that retain Harrow's suburban character
- Improve care for adults and children who most need our help
- Expand participation opportunities for Harrow's young people
- Increase opportunities for participation in sport and culture
- Continuous improvement in schools to make education in Harrow even better
- Regenerate the town centre, improve district centres and promote new businesses
- Build on our existing strong and cohesive communities
- Improve the way we work and provide value for money

Linking Housing Strategy priorities to corporate priorities

We have worked with elected members and partners to develop a programme of activity within housing to support the administration's priorities.

Corporate priorities	Housing priorities
Increase levels of customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving customer care, quality and accessibility of service • Achieving excellence • Licensing HMOs • Achieving Decent Homes • Improving responsive repairs service for Council tenants • Delivering Access Harrow
Work with our partners to reduce crime and the fear of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling anti-social behaviour • Better use of under utilised space • Secured by Design incorporated into schemes • Maximising use of minor estate improvement budget with resident input • Bringing empty homes back into use
Improve the performance of our environmental services and promote recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing CO2 emissions • Increasing recycling and resident awareness of environment issues
Promote policies that retain Harrow's suburban character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making best use of existing housing and housing owned land • Using planning policies and design criteria for new building and regeneration
Improve care for adults and children who most need our help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Sanctuary Project • Increasing the take-up of adaptations • Increasing housing support for vulnerable adults • Improving older persons' support • Developing a supported lodging scheme for 16-17 year olds
Expand participation opportunities for Harrow's young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering resident to have a greater say in the management of their home and communities
Increase opportunities for participation in sports and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving play areas on estates • Increasing use of community centres
Continuous improvement in schools to make education in Harrow even better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a range of affordable housing
Regenerate the town centre, improve district centres and promote new businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Finders Fee • Developing affordable intermediate housing
Build on our existing strong and cohesive communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing affordable housing supply

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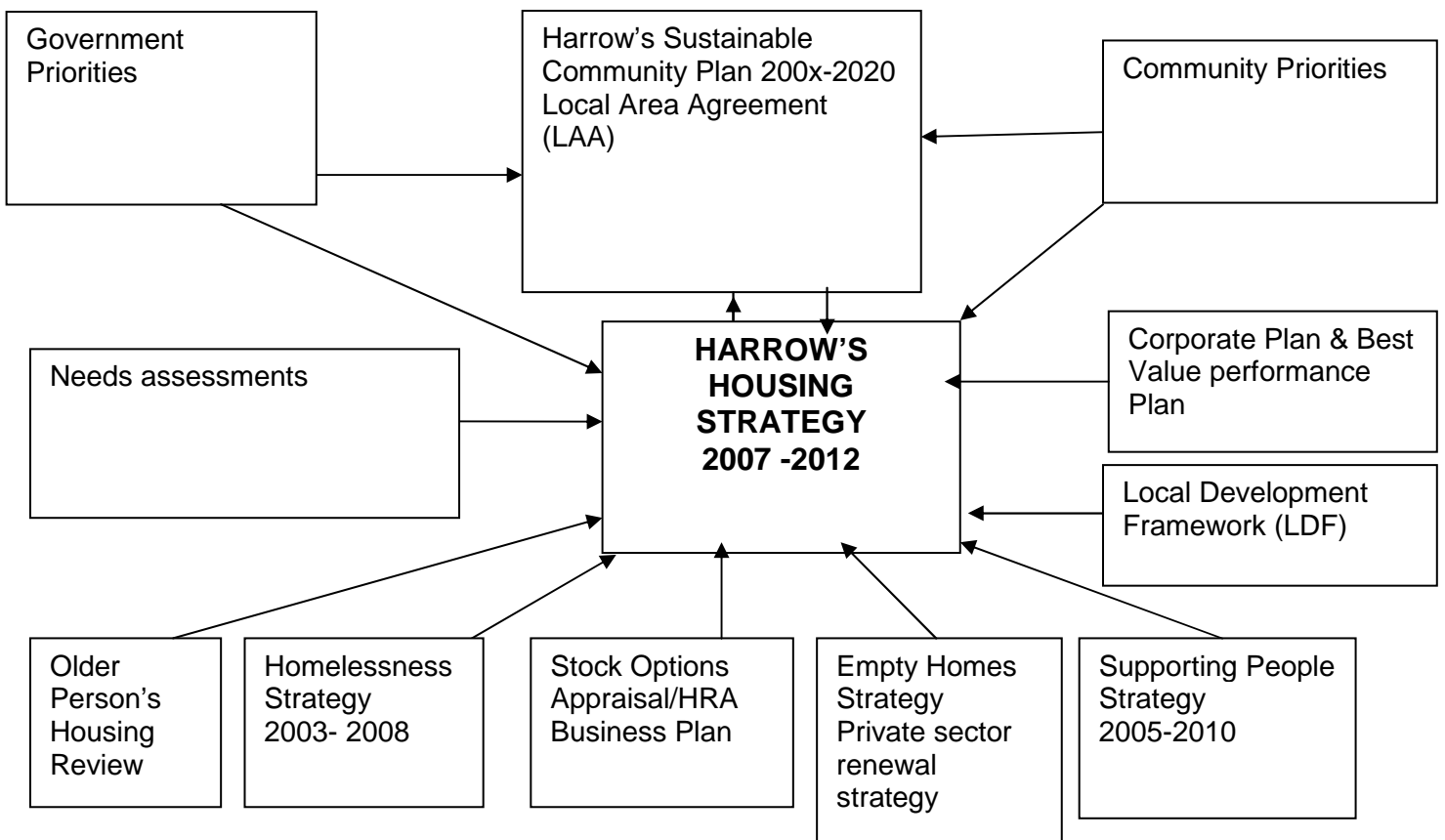
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging with BME communities on housing issues• Increasing density and long term sustainability• Options appraisals for Mill Farm and Grange Farm estates• Improving the physical and social environment of Harrow.• Developing employment opportunities for residents
Improve the way we work and provide value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopting an Empty Property Strategy• Undertaking a Census of Temporary Accommodation• Increasing resident influence over service and budgets (Right to Manage)• Enhancing performance monitoring• Improving effective use of assets and resources

Implementing the Housing Strategy is an important vehicle for delivery of Council corporate priorities. The chart below demonstrates how the Housing Strategy fits into the corporate framework:



This strategy also underpins and supports a number of departmental and borough-wide strategies, as illustrated in the following table:

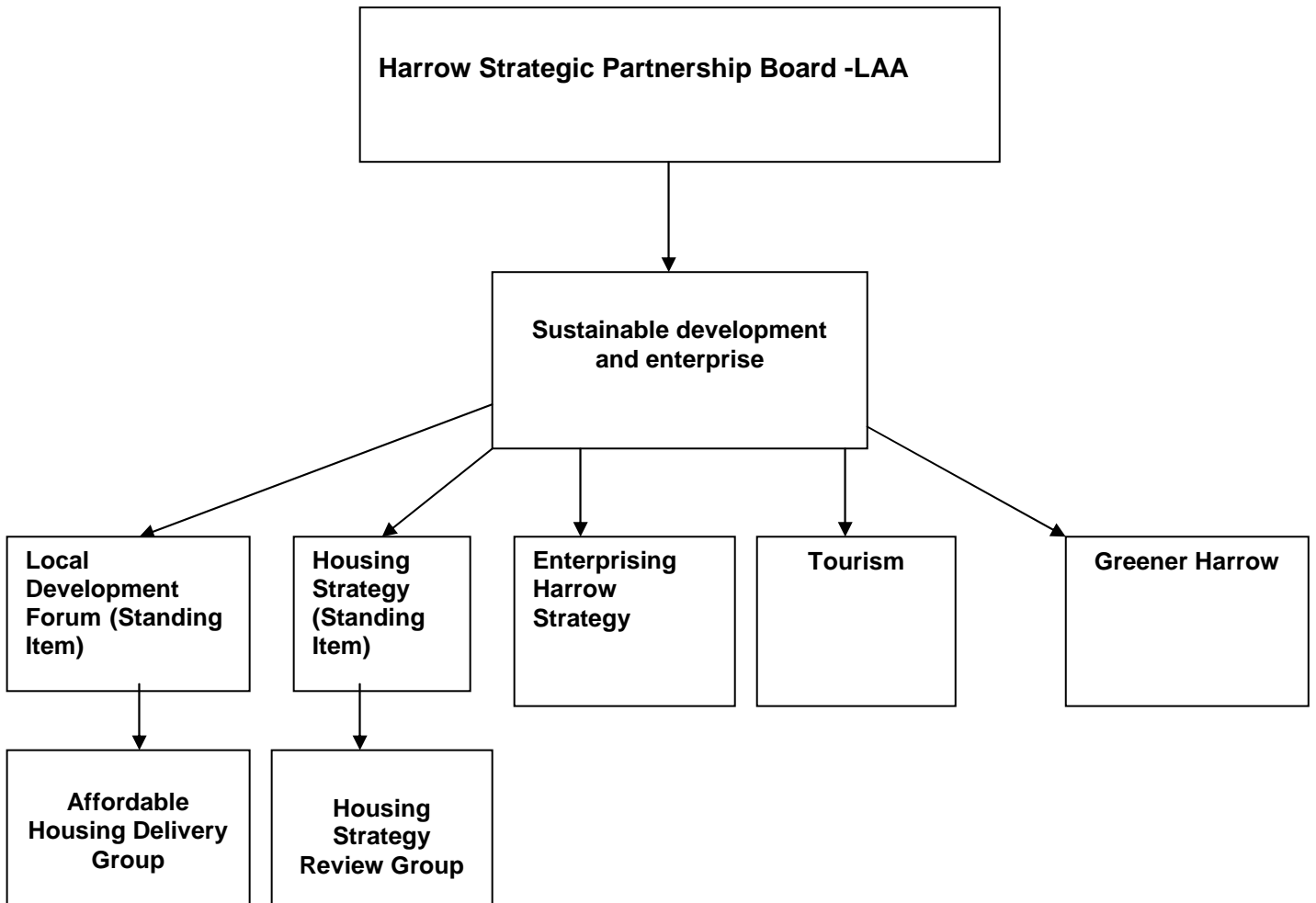
Strategic context



A corporate Housing Strategy Officer Group has developed the Housing Strategy and their strategic expertise influenced objectives and priorities. This includes representatives from all housing service areas, corporate policy, planning, repairs, environmental services, private sector housing enforcement and community safety, community cohesion and supporting people.

A Housing Strategy Review Group, chaired by the Director for Adult and Housing Services, will provide a co-ordinated approach to reviewing strategy actions, monitoring progress in delivering objectives and service development. This group, comprising heads of service areas, will maintain corporate and cross-departmental responsibility for the strategy. It will also have representatives from the voluntary sector, Harrow Council for Racial Equality (HCRE), the portfolio holder for housing, Registered Social Landlords (RSL) and the Safer Neighbourhood Team. It will feed into and report to Harrow Strategic Partnership, the body responsible for Local Area Agreements. The next chart shows the relationship.

The Housing Strategy Review Group will feed in the Harrow Strategic Partnership in the following way:



National, regional and sub-regional priorities

This strategy has been developed in the context of national, regional and sub-regional housing policy. While Harrow’s own housing strategy is aimed at tackling those issues that are distinctive to the communities in Harrow, it also supports national and regional strategies.

National

In 2003 the government set out its overall vision for housing policy in the Sustainable Communities Plan. The primary focus is on achieving balanced and sustainable communities. Since then, the government has added other policies and objectives. Harrow’s housing strategy reflects the priorities identified by government.

Regional priorities

The London Housing Board had responsibility for investment decisions and set out its London Housing Strategy (2005 - 2016) in ‘Capital Homes’. Since September 2006 the Greater London Authority (GLA) has held the Housing Investment Pot for Greater London and the government proposes to legislate to give the GLA responsibility for a London-wide Housing Strategy. The Mayor anticipated the formal changes by publishing ‘Towards the Mayor’s Housing Strategy’ in November 2006.

The new strategy will inform strategic investment in affordable housing provision and seek to influence the direction of Local Housing Strategies adopted by the boroughs. The Mayor’s draft strategy proposals may bring a change of emphasis for the delivery of housing strategies within London:

- More new homes rather than subsidising purchase of existing homes
- Investment in development areas (e.g. East London) rather than shared across boroughs to support strategic development and provide cost efficiencies
- Reducing expenditure on open market Homebuy
- Promotion of intermediate market renting
- New powers to tackle climate change

The table below illustrates how our core objectives reflect the main national and regional priorities. It includes some examples of how we are delivering these.

Harrow Housing Strategy core objectives	National priorities	Regional Priorities London Housing Strategy 2005/Mayor’s Housing Strategy plans	Delivery in Harrow
Meeting the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people	Supporting People	Support and include vulnerable people and BME groups within sustainable communities	BME housing strategy since 2002, quarterly BME housing reference group meetings Supporting People delivery
	Rent control and convergence		Implement rent policies
	Assess gypsy and traveller accommodation needs and develop policies		Gypsy and traveller accommodation strategy
	Older people strategy		Harrow Adapt and Repair; reconfiguring services

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Continue to tackle homelessness and high demand while reducing temporary accommodation	Tackle and prevent homelessness, bed and breakfast use for short-term emergency accommodation only; reduce number of households for whom Council have a duty to house	Reduce homelessness and use of inappropriate temporary accommodation	Effective prevention tools – mediation, Sanctuary project; Housing Options
	Halve use of temporary accommodation between Dec 2005 and Mar 2010		West London private sector lettings initiative; temporary to permanent scheme
Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life	Decent Homes by 2010 for social housing; tenants' compact; extension of choice in lettings and greater tenant involvement	Housing investment and regeneration; improve quality of local environment; pan-London choice-based letting; enhancements to thermal comfort requirements	Locata Progress towards Decent Homes
		Help vulnerable, low-income households to have Decent Homes; modernise the private rented sector; modernise the private sector	
	Respect standard for Housing Management		Anti-social behaviour policies
	Planning policies for mixed neighbourhoods		Planning policies and S106 agreements to deliver mixed tenure developments
	Community Cohesion	Support wider social and economic priorities of the GLA	Community cohesion plan
Increase the supply of affordable housing	Build more affordable housing that has a low impact on the environment and climate change in mixed tenure communities	Produce new homes rather than subsidise purchase of existing ones; zero-carbon housing developments	Local development framework to deliver planning guidance on affordable housing; housing market assessment; adopt new standards for zero-carbon emissions for new housing developments by 2016
	Increase the level of home ownership; develop new intermediate market models to increase access by key workers and low income groups		Homebuy, key worker and sub-market renting
To make better use of resources to deliver quality services	Best Value; Corporate Performance Assessment;		Beacon Council for homelessness 2003; expertise shared with other authorities through secondment of officers to CLG

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	Options for the future ownership and management of Council housing		VFM work Fundamental Service Review programme
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Sub-regional working

Harrow is a member of the West London Partnership where the public, private and voluntary sectors come together to promote the economic, social and environmental interests of West London.

Harrow provides strategic co-ordination for the housing strategy of the partnership (Building Communities, 2003) delivered by the seven boroughs of:

- Brent
- Ealing
- Hammersmith & Fulham
- Harrow
- Hillingdon
- Hounslow
- Kensington and Chelsea

The aim is to:

- Set a strategic framework for housing services across West London
- Support bids for housing investment in West London
- Provide a platform for joint working

The Housing Strategy action plan has two over-arching objectives:

- To increase the supply of housing – to ensure that there is sufficient housing to meet expected growth in population and employment, and to ensure that households who cannot afford to buy on the open market in West London can continue to live here
- To create sustainable communities – to ensure that housing services play a full part in promoting the well-being of communities and support community cohesion objectives

Each borough takes a lead in a specific area. The table below shows this and the substantial achievements of joint working.

Borough lead	Delivery 2006/7 and future plans
Brent	Affordable Housing Housing Corporation 2-year allocation for 1847 general needs rented and 267 supported housing . 1034 general needs rented and 14 supported housing started in year one. 1590 intermediate/ LCHO Target homes with 3 or more beds 35%, achieved 27.6% Housing Investment Guide to be launched at July 07 development conference
Ealing	Choice and Allocations Locata choice-based lettings operated by all apart from Kensington and Chelsea Common allocations policy 10% of re-lets to cross borough applicants Implementing cross-borough transfer register On-line registration across the sub-region Information sharing protocol with RSLs for vulnerable applicants Under and overcrowding mapping 41 Deconversions and extensions for larger households planned of which 29 in hand or completed
Hammersmith and Fulham	Strategy and research Joint-commissioning of gypsy and traveller accommodation needs assessment

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	Consideration of joint Housing Market Assessment
Harrow	Homelessness Temporary to permanent scheme funded Homeless employment link scheme started Housing options DVD produced in 16 languages 'Notify' system arrangements made Domestic violence reciprocal arrangements made Mystery shopping carried out West London Direct Lettings scheme starting June 2006 Benchmarking to be carried out for homelessness reviews Research reporting on households helped into private sector housing
Hillingdon	Supporting People Accreditation scheme for service providers Common approach to service evaluation Joint model for assessing value for money Jointly commissioning floating support services for single people
Hounslow	Private sector Progress on empty homes, warm zones, private sector Decent Homes, equity release Progressing management orders for empty homes
Kensington and Chelsea	Housing Management Common housing management standards produced Co-ordinating performance monitoring for ASB, specialist cleaning, tenant engagement

Consultation and partnership working

Consultation

We held a strategy consultation conference in May 2007. Over 110 residents, councillors and representatives from partner agencies came together to help shape our strategy. Delegates included:

Resident groups including Independent Tenant Advisors
 Harrow Federation of Tenants and Residents' Associations (HFTRA)
 Private Landlord Forum
 Partnership for Older People
 Council members
 Council staff cross departmental and varying levels
 Local and regional voluntary organisation
 Harrow PCT
 West London Mental Health NHS Trust
 Housing associations including Warden Housing Association, Apna Ghar Housing Association, Harrow Churches Housing Association, Paddington Churches Housing Association, John Grooms Housing Association

We held independently facilitated workshops to test the objectives and reactions to them.

We circulated the outcomes of the conference to over 6000 people. We gave presentations to the Tenants and Leaseholder Consultative Forum(TLCF), Scrutiny Panel and Harrow Strategic Partnership

We distributed the draft strategy and placed it on our website for ongoing consultation with a questionnaire provided for feedback.

We had constructive and encouraging feedback and there is broad agreement with our priorities. Some concerns and our response to them are shown in the table below.

Concerns?	Our response
How well do we reach customers	Improving accessibility to services added as a priority – Access Harrow is a corporate priority Corporate programme to improve service specific consultation
More sustainable housing provision	A priority for increasing affordable housing supply
How will the strategy encourage/influence RSLs to build larger homes	Include in increasing affordable housing supply
ASB/vulnerable people - how is this to be addressed in strategy	Include specific measures for this objective in chapter on meeting the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people. ASB covered in the strategy and HRA Business Plan
'Increasing housing supply' was considered too vague as an objective. Conference attendees emphasised that increasing <i>affordable</i> housing supply should be a key objective	Objective revised to increasing affordable housing
Partnerships and multi-agency work recognised as key in provision for the vulnerable, to ensure needs-based, joined-up services	Include specific measures for this objective in chapter on meeting the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people.
Provide services and support: that help ill people stay in the community; for victims of domestic violence; for those with specific physical needs	Sanctuary Scheme, to assist all victims of Domestic Violence is prioritised within the homelessness objective; adapted housing and telecare services to support independence
Create more central community buildings: the Beacon Centre is working	Have making best use of our resources as an objective in delivering quality services; review of community buildings

well for Rayners Lane.	taking place
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Partnership working

The government White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities, 2006, heralds new roles for local authorities. It envisages local government as a strategic leader and place-shaper. The new framework brings together local partners to focus on the needs of citizens and communities.

Partners in the Sustainable Communities Strategy

Harrow embraces the new approach and is working in partnership to prepare the Local Area Agreements arising from our Sustainable Community Strategy. Our partners are:

Harrow Council	Harrow in Business
Harrow Police	Harrow Primary Care Trust
Kodak Limited	Metropolitan Police Authority
North West London Chamber of Commerce	Further Education Colleges
University of Westminster	Voluntary Sector Representatives

We are committed to working in partnership at all levels to achieve our strategic housing objectives. The partners who assist us in delivering our five core housing objectives are:

Housing Objective	Partners
Meeting the needs & aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers • Voluntary sector agencies and faith communities • PCT • Multi-Agency Forum and Third Party Reporting
Continue to tackle homelessness and high demand, while reducing temporary accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West London partners
Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime reduction team • Safer Neighbourhoods Team (Police) • Community safety and environment service • Corporate Policy Team • Community Cohesion Management Group • Harrow Adapt and Repair (HART) • Adult services • RSLs and private developers • TLCF and Tenants and Residents Associations • Tenants and Leaseholders
Increasing supply of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planners • Private developers • RSLs • Private landlords and investors • West London partners
Make better use of resources to deliver quality services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources • Finance • TLCF and Harrow Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations

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Working with our partners and the local community is essential to deliver the strategies and services which improve the quality of life in Harrow. We are committed to working in partnership with other agencies and organisations to deliver excellent homes and services to our residents.

Our housing association partners and the stock numbers of larger partners

Acton Housing Association 490 homes
Paddington Churches (Genesis Housing Group) – 412 homes
Warden Housing Association (Home Group) – 1128 homes
Others – 1809 homes in total (March 2007)
ASRA Housing Association
Chiltern Hundreds Housing Association (Paradigm Housing Group)
Dominion Housing Group
Harrow Churches Housing Association
Inquilab Housing Association
John Grooms Housing Association
Metropolitan Housing Trust
Stadium Housing Association

Some of the major initiatives secured through partnership working, and our future plans to increase the supply of affordable housing include:

- The transfer of the Rayners Lane Estate to Home Group. Almost 75% of residents voted “Yes”. Complete regeneration of the estate is now underway. There is some demolition and new build, including some housing for sale, as well as other initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life, particularly for young people, on the estate. In the new Community Centre there are local labour initiatives and training, for example in IT
- Private developers and RSLs are working in partnership. In 2006, at Grant Road the Council sold land to Dominion Housing Group. They partnered Barratts to develop a multi tenure small estate of new homes in Wealdstone town centre including some much needed large family homes for rent. The Council invested the receipts in relocating the Library into a newly refurbished town centre site which is now a hub for many different activities including a youth club and Healthy Living café.
- West London partners have agreed a process for ensuring all new affordable housing development in the West region is available to those in most housing need
- Private landlords and property owners. The Council holds regular private landlord forums to advise on legislative changes, promotion of new initiatives and provide additional information to inform policy decisions. Working in partnership with private landlords through the Councils direct lettings scheme is integral to the Councils homelessness prevention strategy.

Partnership working with other London Boroughs and our neighbouring Councils

We described our relationship with the other six West London Boroughs earlier and the achievements of working together. This joint working has achieved significant resources from the Housing Corporation for investment in new affordable housing and better services for those in need of housing.

We also referred to the way our housing objectives accord with those of the GLA and London Councils. We also look outward to Councils in adjoining Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford.

Partnership working for vulnerable people

Partnership working between Housing, Social Care, Health, Probation, other statutory agencies and the third sector is crucial to the delivery of services and support for vulnerable people.

There are already strong partnership links established through the Supporting People provider forum and Core Strategy group as well as the older people's partnership board and its stakeholder groups, the Learning Disability partnership board and the Harrow Substance Misuse Joint commissioning board. These will continue to grow. The creation of a new directorate combining Adult Social Care and Housing Services will ensure that these synergies are developed further and used to their best advantage.

Partnership working for resident services

We work with partners to improve the quality of life of Council housing residents. With the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, we have:

- Support from Ealing Mediation Service who now take our referrals
- Finalised an Anti-Social Behaviour Protocol between the Council, Police and other agencies that explains procedures sets out clearly the expectations that the ASB Unit has of its partners)

With the Crime Reduction Unit, we have:

- Established 13 trained Hate Crime Third Party Reporting sites in the community
- Plans for a high-profile publicity campaign across the borough to encourage people to report hate crimes
- Prepared a Victim Support Pack for victims of race and faith crimes
- Provide a Freephone multi-lingual helpline

We have worked closely with Brent Housing Partnership, a local high-performing ALMO to redesign our procedures for delivering services.

Partnership working with Kier

The Council has set up the Harrow Integrated Property Services Partnership Project (HIPSP) project to improve radically both responsive and planned works to housing and all corporate property, including schools. Kier Group has been appointed and the contract starts in July 2007. This five-year, £125m contract is intended to deliver on-time and to budget major capital works. This year Kier will start a three-year programme to meet the Decent Homes requirements for Council Housing. It will provide a greater customer focus and a more effective service. Cost savings of about £1.5m per year are anticipated.

Stock condition analysis

Stock condition assessments provide the data to inform our strategies for meeting the Decent Homes energy efficiency targets. Headline figures are shown below.

Type	Condition 2006/7	Energy efficiency (SAP rating)
Private sector stock (89%) 71954 homes	34% non Decent 4% unfit 19% disrepair	5% of Private sector stock have a SAP rating of less than 30
Council stock (6%) 5100 rented homes 1100 leasehold	47% non Decent 15% unfit Not applicable	64 (SAP rating)

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Housing association stock (5%) 3829 homes of which: (i) Acton HA (ii) PCHA (iii) Warden	(i) 0% (ii) 0% (iii) 46%	
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Private sector assessment

The private sector survey gathered information on family composition, income levels, tenure and ethnicity. This enables us to target those most in need. The highest levels of unfitnes are in Greenhill, Marlborough, Roxbourne and Wealdstone; the lowest levels in Canons, Hatch End, Pinner and Stanmore Park. Unfitness levels are below those for London and nationally.

Our priorities for private sector improvement, examined in more detail later, are to:

- Make non-decent homes decent by 2010 or earlier
- Improve thermal comfort (minimum SAP rating of 30)
- Assist vulnerable households on a low income bring their home up to the Decent Homes standard where needed
- Assist people over 60 and disabled people obtain equity loans from the Home Improvement Trust where appropriate and affordable through the Houseproud scheme
- Bring empty properties back into use at reasonable cost
- Provide financial assistance for key workers to bring housing up to standard
- Use information sharing forums and enforcement action to improve housing standards in the private rented sector including compulsory purchase order powers where needed

Council housing assessment

The top priority is to meet the Decent Homes target by 2010. Council housing data is updated annually using Codeman and a percentage of the stock resurveyed each year. All sheltered housing was surveyed in during 2006/7. Consultants are also reviewing the Mill Farm stock data as part of a wider review. Our programmes for meeting and maintaining Decent Homes are set out in the HRA Business Plan.

Housing Association assessment

A large proportion of the non-decent homes owned by the Home group are on the Rayners Lane estate, which is in the midst of regeneration. The full regeneration programme will not complete until 2014. The remaining non-decent properties in the RSL sector are fairly small will be dealt with either by refurbishment or sale.

Analysis of housing need

West London Sub-region

Housing need in west London reflects the economic growth that characterises the area. There is high demand for skilled workers, high house prices and increasing pressure on the transport structure. West London has the highest rate of single person households in London and this is expected to grow. The GLA research projects that population and employment is likely to grow at a much faster rate than housing capacity predicting a shortfall of 35,000 by 2016.

This growth and existing high levels of home ownership means that there is a major and growing shortfall in affordable housing. In 2002, the equity gap between average incomes and average house prices was in excess of £180,000. There is also an affordability gap in meeting private sector rents.

West London also has a lower level of social housing than most others parts of London. With high land values, limited site availability and the current rate of completion demand far outstrips current and projected supply of social housing. Many households are priced out of the housing market leading to more homelessness and limited prospects for meeting housing needs. There is a growing crisis in affordability which will have an adverse impact on the prosperity of the Borough and its ability to offer an attractive, cohesive place to live.

Housing need In Harrow

Our 2007 Housing Needs Survey gives an updated picture of the need for affordable housing. It indicates that we have a backlog of 2247 potential households per year. A potential household being

New households

While our population is set to grow by 4.2% (4900 more people) by 2011, the GLA projects that there will be 4300 more households from 2007 to 2016. (2005 Interim round of GLA demographic projections)

Existing household need

The survey indicates that 9964 (12.1%) of the Borough households live in unsuitable housing. The most common causes are overcrowding, then housing mobility or health problems. The breakdown is:

- Mobility/health (33.5%)
- Disrepair/Unfitness (14.1%)
- Difficulty maintaining home (11.5%)
- Overcrowded (35.6%)
- Accommodation too expensive (26.8%)
- End of tenancy (12.1%)
- Sharing facilities (9.2%)
- Harassment (18.2%)
- Lacking bathroom/WC (13.4%)

(Note that categories do not add up to 100% as it is possible for a household to fall into more than one category)

Of the above, 2475 (25%) can have their needs met without having to move. Of this group, those most affected are:

- Social housing renters (26.4%)
- Owner occupiers with a mortgage (9.2% housing)
- 2 adults and two children (15.9%) and
- Lone parents (20.3%)

Overcrowding and under-occupancy

Overcrowding is a particular problem among single parent families and larger families (see chart below) many of whom are ethnic minority families.

Overcrowding and under-occupation					
Number of bedrooms required	Number of bedrooms in home				TOTAL
	1	2	3	4+	
1 bedroom	8,705	10,652	16,305	4,347	40,009
2 bedrooms	639	6,394	13,066	5,319	25,418
3 bedrooms	95	947	6,936	5,023	13,001
4+ bedrooms	28	261	1,191	2,342	3,822
TOTAL	9,467	18,254	37,498	17,031	82,250

KEY:  Overcrowded households  Under-occupied households

Source: Harrow Housing Needs Assessment – 2006

At the same time 33% of properties in the Borough are under-occupied.

Housing support for vulnerable people

The 2007 survey showed that 17.2% of households (14,154) in the Borough house one person with support needs. Most of these people 9183 (11.2% of all households) have a physical disability and 4787 (5.8%) are frail and elderly. Of particular concern is the fact that 5387(24.9%) of single person households have a support need, making them especially vulnerable as they have no live-in carer. The majority of people with support needs live in council or housing association property.

The Supporting People strategy 2005- 2010 aims to take a needs based approach to funding and arranging housing support for vulnerable people. Together with other stakeholders, agencies, social services, probation and providers it has analysed the main client groups and key strategic gaps that need to be addressed. 1,650 people currently receive Supporting People funded services, and the key challenges are identified in the table below:

Priority	Actions
Priority 1. Establishing a legacy for SP services	Establishing a legacy for SP services in Harrow after 2008 that will 'survive' the likely demise of ring-fenced funding and the CLG's lack of commitment to a new funding formula. One way this will be done is by working

	towards embedding SP funding in the LAA
Priority 2 supporting the new shape of social care services	Shape the SP services so that they support the new shape of social care services while not losing the focus on prevention services examples may include establishing single gateways for accessing all SP services where eligibility criteria are used to allow equality of access to services on the basis of need.
Priority 3. Develop a local Procurement policy	Develop a local Procurement policy that addresses the post steady state contract phase of the programme and the need to go out to tender for contracts according to procurement rules.
Priority 4. Commission new services	Commission new services in line with the commissioning priorities outlined in 5.2 to address gaps in provision.
Priority 5. Reconfigure Older People's housing support	Reconfigure Older People's housing support particularly within the LA sheltered housing stock as well as within RSL provision as part of the implementation of the Older Persons Housing review and our Supporting people grant conditions, to deliver a range of provision that has clear eligibility criteria and needs assessment.
Priority 6. Continue to develop Needs mapping	Continue to develop Needs mapping in order to set future commissioning priorities and Work out a reasonable formula for what the appropriate split should be between Accommodation based and floating support services.
Priority 7. Ensure that BME and other diverse groups needs are met through existing provision	Ensure that BME and other diverse groups needs are met through existing provision
Priority 8. Align the plan with the other commissioning and procurement functions	Align the plan with the other commissioning and procurement functions within The Corporate, Adult Social Care and Housing directorate and West London where possible.

Further detail about how these priorities will be addressed is available in the SP Annual Plan ([web link](#))

Homelessness

The 2007 survey shows that 1123 homeless households account for 30% of the backlog of existing needs and 47% (calculation from HNS 2007) of the gross overall affordable housing requirement. Our housing need and advice records show the number of homelessness applications has grown steady from 1662 in 2005/2006 to 1738 in 2006/2007. The most common reasons for homelessness are parents, other relatives and friends no longer willing to accommodate, violence/breakdown of relation with partner, termination of assured tenancy. We do not currently have a rough sleepers problem.

The government set targets for local authorities to reduce to zero the number of families in bed and breakfast. The Council met these targets. The government has also set targets for reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation by 50%. In parallel with other London Boroughs, the Council faces considerable challenge in meeting this target, despite its excellent record in homelessness prevention and advice. Due to the reduction in temporary accommodation, and the rise in acceptances, the Council has also started to use Bed and Breakfast again. Current statistics show that there are 947 households in temporary accommodation and 28 in Bed and Breakfast (March 2007). At the same time the proportion of new lettings going to homeless applications has risen from 59% to 62% in the last three years (2004/5 to 2006/07), due to Government targets set for 2010. A new, detailed Homelessness Strategy will be produced and ready for publishing in March 2008 and will set out clear targets to prevent homelessness as well as provide for people falling homeless.

Housing Affordability

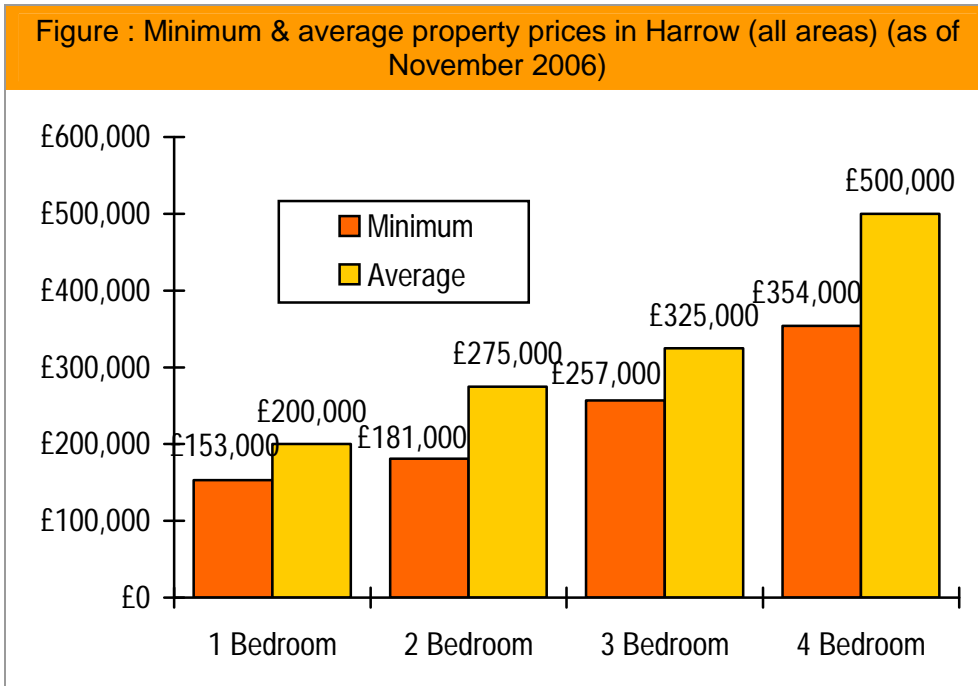
The 2007 survey gives an assessment of property prices and rents by size in Harrow. Prices range from an average of £191,000 for a one-bedroom home to £461,000 for a four-bedroom, compared to £76,500 for a one bedroom home and £209,000 for a four bedroom in 2000 (An increase of 149% and 120% respectively). Rents range from £196 to £340 per week. Average gross household income is £41,622 with wide variations by tenure:

Table :Financial information by tenure			
Tenure	Average annual gross household income	Average savings	Average equity
Owner-occupied (no mortgage)	£35,725	£36,995	£304,141
Owner-occupied (with mortgage)	£56,066	£15,838	£194,330
Council	£11,639	£752	
RSL	£13,002	£557	
Private rented	£30,500	£5,428	
AVERAGE	£41,622	£20,013	£241,513

Source: Harrow Housing Needs Assessment – 2006

Table : Minimum prices and rents in Harrow (for selected areas)				
Property size	Minimum sale	Average sale	Minimum rent	Average rent
1 bedroom	£146,000	£191,000	£160	£196
2 bedrooms	£174,000	£265,000	£182	£219
3 bedrooms	£243,000	£308,000	£226	£265
4 bedrooms	£326,000	£461,000	£284	£340

Source: Survey of Estate and Lettings Agents (2006)



Source: Survey of Estate and Lettings Agents (2006)

At £250,000 Harrow's median house price is much higher than that of England (£160,000), almost 10 percent higher than the London (£230,000) and Redbridge (£230,000) median, and marginally higher than all the West London comparators. Since 1996 the median house price has increased by 194 per cent in Harrow placing it neatly in the middle of the comparator areas with Redbridge (210.8 per cent), Hounslow (199.7 per cent) and Slough (205.2 per cent) having risen faster and Ealing (186.6 per cent), West London (191.6 per cent), London (191.1 per cent), England (171.2 per cent) lagging behind.

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Based on data from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation the average house price in Harrow is equivalent to 4.9 times average household income. Factoring in average income has the effect of reducing the gap between the house price in Harrow and England (4.1x), and shows Hounslow (5.0x) and West London (5.0x) as less affordable than Harrow.

Measured using Communities and Local Government house price data and Paycheck average household income data for London, with a house price to income ratio of 6.9, Harrow is less affordable than Redbridge (6.7), Hounslow (6.6) and London (6.6), equal to that of Ealing and more affordable to buy in than West London overall.

Affordability is a problem for local residents. The housing needs survey estimates that 20,326 households are unable to afford either a mortgage or market rent.

Table:Affordability and tenure			
Tenure	Affordability		% of h'holds unable to afford
	Unable to afford market housing	Number of h'holds	
Owner-occupied (no mortgage)	768	27,318	2.8%
Owner-occupied (with mortgage)	4,211	36,260	11.6%
Council	4,907	5,052	97.1%
RSL	3,339	3,411	97.9%
Private rented	7,101	10,209	69.6%
TOTAL	20,326	82,250	24.7%

Source: Harrow Housing Needs Assessment – 2006

Shortfall in affordable housing

The Housing Needs survey predicts the total shortfall or surplus of housing, using a Broader Housing Market model analysis. The figures are shown in the table below. The methodology suggests a significant shortfall of affordable housing of all sizes of accommodation, most notably two and three bedroom homes. The demand for larger units of affordable housing reflects the inability of market housing to cater for lower income larger households.

The data shows an overall surplus in the owner-occupied sector. The main surplus is for three and one bedroom homes whereas shortfalls exist for two and four or more bedroom homes.

The model indicates that there is a large surplus in the private rented sector. In this sector all dwelling sizes show a surplus, since many households view this sector as an undesirable long term solution while the supply of private rented housing is likely to be large due to the temporary nature of the tenure.

Total shortfall or (surplus)					
Tenure	Size requirement				TOTAL
	1 bedro m	2 bedro ms	3 bedro ms	4+ bedro ms	
Owner-occupation	-397	520	-859	128	-608
Affordable housing	293	1,302	830	400	2,824
Private rented	-456	-873	-367	-121	-1,816

TOTAL	-560	948	-396	407	400
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Source: Harrow Housing Needs Assessment – 2006

Meeting housing need

There are currently a total of over 84,187 homes within the Borough of which 4419 have been newly provided in last 10 years, mostly in the private sector. 89% of the borough's housing is within the private sector and the proportion of social housing has declined rapidly since the 1980s primarily through the right to buy sales. Based on the assumptions in this strategy we can project forward changes in the mix of housing by sector:

Resolving demand and supply

Analysis of local housing need and in particular the demand for affordable housing has been identified as a core objective in Harrow and is covered in detail in chapter on increasing housing.

BME housing strategy

The Council's BME Housing Strategy 2004 -2007 is an integral part of the Council's Housing Strategy. The Council is committed to providing equal and inclusive services which respect and empowerment BME residents and their communities.

The BME strategy examined the nature of BME communities and their housing needs. In common with other Councils it found that:

Black and Asian households are more likely to be homeless or overcrowded and needing larger homes, Young people are particularly at risk of homelessness due to the high cost of private sector housing. BME households are more likely to be registered for social housing than white households.

The Council is working with a number of partners to meet housing needs of its diverse communities. These include five BME housing associations, which cater for the needs of particular communities.

Against the action plan set in the BME Housing Strategy the following progress include:

- Housing induction programme established for BME community groups.
- Sub Regional BME homelessness conference planned.
- BME Housing reference group set up
- Older persons Housing review that focussed on the Housing needs of older people from BME communities
- Staff complete diversity e-learning package as part of induction programme.
- List of employees as informal interpreters developed January 2005.
- Housing staff sit in on the Multi Agency Forum, which address faith, cultural and race issues within Harrow
- The Housing department is one of the numerous rate hate crime reporting centres within the borough
- Review of translation of key housing documents completed and gaps identified
- Translation registered established for tenants who request documents, newsletters and correspondence in their requested language
- Continued ethnicity monitoring of low cost home ownership
- Strategy target: 200 units owned/ managed by BME RSLs in Harrow by March 2006, as at 31/3/04 147 units owned/managed by BME RSLs, as at 31/3/05 7 out of 29 social rent units at Daltry House, Railway Approach, Wealdstone managed by BME RSL

Through the Housing Strategy we will continue to address the needs of our BME communities

Specific groups

Somali community.

Research into the needs of the Somali community, prepared in 2007, shows that despite being by far the largest refugee community in Harrow¹¹, numbering between 7000 and 9000, the Somali community is the most, disadvantaged, deprived and isolated community in the Borough. The study found that the majority of the Somali community members have settled in Harrow during the past 10 years. The Somali community is relatively new compared to other established black, minority and ethnic communities in the Borough. It is still dealing with settlement problems.

Gypsy and travellers accommodation

West London boroughs are participating in the London wide Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment currently being undertaken by Fordham's Research Ltd. A draft report is expected in the autumn of 2007.

The final report will evidence the pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers in each borough, to enable both planning and housing departments to develop a strategic approach to need.

¹¹ Research Development & statistics Directorate, Home Office, 2005.; Harrow refugee profile by RLTA, 2004.

Resources for housing

There are significant investment needs in our own council stock that have to be balanced against the severe shortage of affordable housing in the borough. The challenge is to get the right balance. There are a number of ways we attract resources into the Borough and use these to meet our housing needs. The primary sources are;

- Resources allocated to the West London Housing Partnership
- Supporting People funding - £3.5m per year
- Housing Revenue Account funding for Council housing
- General Fund Account funding based on housing's share of the Council's Annual Capital Guidelines
- Housing Corporation Social Housing Grant
- Funds allocated for specific purposes, e.g. youth homelessness

Approaches to maximise the value of investment in Harrow include:

- Use of planning policies
- Sale of land at less than market value to housing associations to stretch the value of Housing Corporation funding
- Cross-subsidy regeneration schemes relying on the inherent value of land to generate subsidy to fund new housing and community infrastructure, combining public assets and private sector financing.

Council housing

The investment needs of the Council's housing stock and our approach to tackling them are set out in the HRA Business Plan.

The tables below set out the capital resources available and from 2005/2006 to 2009/2010 and our proposed programme of capital investment.

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**Table: Resources for housing
HOUSING SERVICES**

	2005-06 Actual	2006-07 Actual	2007-08 Budget	2008-09 Budget	2009-10 Budget
REVENUE EXPENDITURE					
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)					
Service Expenditure					
Responsive & planned maintenance	6,070	4,769	4,668	4,568	4,468
Supervision & Management	6,321	6,128	6,453	6,553	6,655
Negative HRA Subsidy	3,734	4,658	5,030	5,114	5,614
Cost of Capital	5,293	5,353	5,338	5,768	6,152
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outturn	0	0	1,000	1,500	1,500
Total Expenditure	21,418	20,908	22,489	23,503	24,389
Resources					
Rent Income	-20,321	-20,256	-19,979	-20,913	-21,889
Service and Facilities Charges	-486	-436	-1,709	-1,806	-1,909
Non dwelling income	-757	-659	-912	-912	-912
Other Income	-107	-226	-108	-108	-108
Total Income	-21,671	-21,577	-22,708	-23,739	-24,818
Surplus/Deficit	-253	-669	-219	-236	-429
Balance Bfwd	-4,940	-5,193	-5,193	-5,412	-5,648
Balance cfwd	-5,193	-5,862	-5,412	-5,648	-6,077
OTHER HOUSING EXPENDITURE					
Housing General Fund	5,704	3,253	3,433	3,433	3,433
TOTAL HOUSING REVENUE EXPENDITURE	27,122	24,161	25,922	26,936	27,822

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
HRA Capital Programme					
Decent homes	7,585	7,242	11,800	12,000	10,000
Adaptations to Council Homes	625	646	500	500	500
HRA Capital Programme	8,210	7,888	12,300	12,500	10,500
<i>Financed by</i>					
Major repairs allowance	3,591	3,533	3,597	3,662	3,728
Capital receipts	656	500	500	500	500
Revenue contribution to capital outlay	0	0	1,000	1,500	1,500
Supported/Unsupported Borrowing	3,963	3,855	7,203	6,838	4,772
Total HRA Financing	8,210	7,888	12,300	12,500	10,500
		0			
Housing General Fund Capital Programme					
Affordable Warmth	264	264	225	225	225
Vernon Lodge landlord's works	5	5	80		
Disabled Facilities Grants	538	538	838	838	838
Empty Property Grants	84	84	100	100	100
Heating Harrow Greener Scheme			225	225	225
Private Sector Housing (Renovation Grants)	1,063	1,063	1,100	1,100	1,100
Warmfront Top Up Fund			30	30	30
Affordable Social Housing	287	256			
Extensions/Deconversions			100		

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Cedars Hall - New Build			1,120	280	
Housing General Fund Capital Programme	2,241	2,210	3,818	2,798	2,518
<i>Financed by</i>					
<i>Disabled Facilities Grants</i>	423	773	503	503	503
<i>Private Sector Housing (Renovation Grants)</i>			1,100	1,100	1,100
<i>Sub Regional Empty Homes funding</i>					
<i>Sub Regional Extensions funding</i>			100		
<i>Housing Corporation NAHP funding</i>					
<i>Borrowing</i>	1,818	1,437	2,115	1,195	915
<i>Total General Fund Financing</i>	2,241	2,210	3,818	2,798	2,518
TOTAL HOUSING CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	10,451	10,420	16,118	15,298	13,018

Evaluation of options for delivery of the strategy

In considering options for the delivery of housing and housing related services the Council has taken into account:

- The exercise of its responsibilities within existing statutory frameworks such as planning regulations, financial requirement etc
- Procurement strategy
- Asset management strategy
- Asset management plan
- Value for money issues
- Locally and centrally determined service requirements
- Capacity, availability and track record of service providers to meet identified needs

The Council faces considerable challenges in delivering its desired strategy. The last CPA assessment highlighted some of these, as shown below.

“Affordable Housing

The Housing Strategy 2002-2007 intended to increase the availability of affordable homes for local people. It outlined how the Council would encourage new homes via the planning system, engage the private sector in re-using existing private sector property, and make better use of social stock to free up existing affordable housing for those in need.

To date the Council had not delivered its desired ratio of new affordable to other homes, nor met its targets to provide larger, 4 bed+ properties. However improvements are now being seen with 10 new homes completed in 2006/7 and a further 59 in the pipeline.

There has been progress on more shared ownership schemes to address key worker shortages with 165 new intermediate homes completed 2004-7 of which 91 were sold to key workers. More affordable homes have been completed this year and use of brownfield redevelopment is good”

Homelessness

The Council is providing good quality information on housing options to support those looking for homes and our homelessness service performs well overall. There is a continual shortage of affordable housing and an increase in demand. There are now extra pressures due to the reduction in temporary accommodation, increase in homeless acceptances and the need for extra performance monitoring. As a result we have had to restart using Bed and Breakfast.

Council Housing

The Council has made slow progress towards achieving the Decent Homes, following a tenant vote to keep the Council as landlord rather than transfer to an ALMO. Real progress in meeting Decent Homes will start to be seen in 2009 (see the HRA Business Plan).

Similar to other outer London boroughs, the waiting list remains high. An estimated 1,900 existing households on the housing waiting list cannot afford market housing.

Challenges for Harrow

Many challenges remain in meeting the Council's aims for housing. We have evaluated options and decided priorities and approaches. These are shown below.

Meeting needs and aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people

The biggest challenges are to ensure that services reach people in need in all tenures. This is particularly significant given that nearly 90% of households are in the private sector, with a high level of owner-occupation.

Another major challenge is to meet the needs of people from Harrow's diverse communities

Tackle homelessness and high demand; reduce use of temporary accommodation

Meeting the needs of homeless people so that they are permanently housed is one of our major challenges. We also need to continue the excellent progress we have had in the past in preventing homelessness. The acute shortage of social housing is not going to go away in the short term. A priority therefore has to be eliminating the use of bed and breakfast which we have had to start using.

We also know that BME communities are adversely affected by homelessness and implementing our BME strategy will assist in meeting these needs.

We know that we need to have additional plans in place to manage the reduction in temporary accommodation

Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life

We embrace the role of local authority as place-shaper. We intend to build on the numerous partnerships that we have with other agencies so that we can influence and improve the quality of life. The challenge will be to make all areas of Harrow attractive places to live with appropriate facilities, and so enhance the life-chances of all our residents. The Community Cohesion Action Plan for the LAA seeks to target specific areas to improve access to skills, training, leisure, arts and sports activities that will increase volunteering and improve community cohesion.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing

Our challenge is to increase affordable housing across tenures. The challenges are maximise ways to achieve this effective use of the planning system, private sector housing strategies and intermediate housing options. As well as increasing net supply, the challenge will be to provide the right size of property in the right location.

Delivery of quality services

The challenge for the authority is to deliver quality services to all its residents, and engage with them in the ways that they find best. Specifically, for our own stock the challenge is to meet the needs of our tenants and further engage with tenants and leaseholders.

Meeting needs and aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people	
Challenges	Priorities adopted
Enabling independence for vulnerable people who require housing related support - (see the Supporting People	Reconfiguring Housing related support services to increase floating support provision for all vulnerable groups.

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strategy / Annual Plan)	(see the SP strategy / Annual Plan)
	Continuing to procure support services to meet gaps in provision e.g. in 07/08 for service users with a Learning Disability and older people with Mental health needs (see the SP strategy / Annual Plan)
	Making appropriate partnership bids for accommodation based provision to the Housing Corporation
	Improving the quality and VFM of support services for vulnerable people through robust contract monitoring and the delivery of the procurement strategy (see SP annual Plan)
	Developing choice self-directed care and individual budget programmes
	Developing services that provide equal access to a range of diverse and hard to reach groups including BME service users and those with a physical disability
	Develop Outcome related monitoring that measures what support services have achieved for service users in line with the Communities and Local Government outcome pilot
Promoting independence for Older People	Staying Put (Home Improvement Agency)
	Handyperson scheme
	Harrow Adapt and Repair Team HART)
	Review the assessment and allocation to LA and RSL sheltered housing
	Provision of floating support for older owner occupiers
	Decommissioning out of date services
	Develop plans for extra care schemes
	Priorities not adopted
	Do nothing - retain schemes which are not fit for purpose not pursued as they will be increasingly unsuitable for older people's housing and support/ care needs
	Stock transfer council sheltered schemes to an RSL provider to achieve investment requirements – not pursued as the majority of Council schemes are relatively modern and can achieve Decent Homes standard and the requirements of the Harrow Matrix within the planned investment programme.

Tackle homelessness and high demand; reduce use of temporary accommodation	
	Priorities adopted
Prevent homelessness	Sanctuary scheme for Domestic Violence victims
	Mediation scheme
	Multi-agency single homeless advice surgery

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	Reduce repeat homelessness
Tackle high demand	Engage with BME residents to better understand demand
	Housing Options model
	Housing Options DVD
Reduce use of temporary accommodation	Census of temporary accommodation
	Sub-regional private sector lettings scheme
	Supported lodgings for 16/17 year olds
	Temporary to permanent scheme
	Work with RSL partners to discharge duty
Support for homeless people	Homeless Employment Link Project
	West London floating support provision through lookahead
	Priorities not adopted
	As Harrow Council is recognised for its pioneering ways of tackling homelessness (Beacon Status and Regional Champion), we are already incorporating the essential priorities needed for this area of work. The only two initiatives that Harrow do not use are;
	Private Sector Leasing schemes – the Council is happy with existing HALs scheme
	Rent deposit scheme – the Council use a Finders Fee incentive instead
Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life	
	Priorities adopted
Tackle anti-social behaviour	Deliver crime, disorder and drugs strategy
	Bring empty properties back into use
	Use ASBO legislation
	Use demoted tenancies
Safe private sector housing	Private sector enforcement
	Licence HMOs
	Increase take-up of renovation grants
	Handy person scheme
	Home improvement Trust
Decent Homes	Invest in Council stock
	Option appraisals for Mill Farm and Grange Farm estates
	HIPSP (Kier) project
	Reduce CO2 emissions
	Warmzones

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	Priorities not adopted
	Renewable energy schemes on Council estates – until 2010 investment is prioritised at meeting the basic Decent Homes standard

Increasing the supply of affordable housing	
	Priorities adopted
Increase affordable homes supply	Targets for affordable homes and specifically large family homes
	Making best use of planning powers through negotiation and legal agreements
	Ensuring access for Harrow residents to new homes in the wider sub region/region
	Improved use of under-utilised estate space and existing homes
Provide intermediate housing options	Low cost home ownership register to facilitate marketing of new homes
	Targets for intermediate housing with defined income range
	Close working with sub regional Homebuy agent to maximise sub regional opportunities
Empty Homes strategy	Empty property grants
	Voluntary and mandatory action
High quality design, increased densities and long-term sustainability	Design standards
	Targets for Lifetime homes/wheelchair homes
	Priorities not adopted
	Buy-back of former Council properties
	Implement a commuted payments system for the delivery of affordable housing outside of high density town centre developments
	Blanket policy to sell Council land solely for affordable housing – Financial constraints on the Council means that receipts for all assets must be maximised. Therefore only HRA land can be maximised for affordable housing use.
	Increased planning policy targets/reduction

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	in threshold – current UDP targets will be reviewed through LDF process. However increasing targets further (which are already in accordance with the London Plan) could have the effect of slowing down development.
	Programme of acquiring properties on the open market – expensive on a unit cost basis and there is no capital to support a programme (this would be possible if the temp to perm initiative proceeds).
	Acceptance of low cost market housing – would not meet affordability criteria as set out in the Key Worker Housing Strategy and validated by the recent HNA.

Delivery of quality services	
	Priorities adopted
Sheltered housing	Review- condition and allocation Decommission outmoded stock
Resident engagement	Access Harrow Support for Tenants Compact, TLCF, HFTRA Resident involvement strategy Right to Manage feasibility study
Quality homes and services for residents	Access Harrow Web access Kier partnership Prevention work for ASB
	Priorities not adopted

Meeting the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people

Vision : Our aim in Harrow is to meet the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people by enabling and maintaining independence and wellbeing by offering a choice of Housing Options. This will be achieved by delivering our objectives.

The definition of vulnerable people covers many categories of need including:

- Older people, a priority group for us given the demographics of Harrow
- People with long-term conditions, e.g. Learning Disability
- Socially excluded people, e.g. ex offenders, homeless persons with support needs, people with drug and alcohol problems
- Mental health sufferers

Key Objectives for vulnerable people

These are

1. Enabling independence for all vulnerable people across all tenures including those with long term conditions and those at risk of social exclusion. This will be achieved by delivering the Supporting People Strategy and joint commissioning strategies.
2. Promoting independence for Older People by reconfiguring services in line with the Older People's Housing review 2005 and the Supporting People five- year strategy and Annual Plan 2007/08.

Needs assessment

The evidence of need is quantified in the Supporting People strategy, Older People's housing review and the Housing Needs Survey. We regularly update our information on needs. Extra evidence will come from the Social Care statutory needs assessment and the London Councils supported housing assessment later in 2007.

Qualitative measures of need come from the Housing Options Plans completed by service users with learning disabilities, consultations with service users e.g. the Partnership for Older People (POP) housing sub-group, the Older People's Reference Group, and from the stakeholder groups implementing the older people's housing review action plan.

The evidence has identified the need for

Procurement Plan 07/08 – Timetable.

What needs to be procured.	Why – which criteria is this	By When	How	Estimated Cost in year
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	judged against.			07/08 / full year effect
Older Peoples provision	Strategic relevance		Reconfigure	TBC
Older Peoples EMI floating support provision	Gap	Tender for new provision in March – May 07		75k/100k
10 units of LD floating support 6 units of Independent living provision for LD	Gap	March – May 07	Tender with preferred provider list possibly a joint exercise with WL colleagues.	75k/100k
Mental Health provision - combination of accomm based and fl support.	Gap	Tender for new provision in 2007 May – July.	Tender with preferred provider list possibly a joint exercise with WL colleagues	100k/150k
Sensory Disabilities – floating support provision.	Gap	Consider funding and remodelling an existing service for April 2007		20k /20k
Funding for an existing YP service to cover a loss in revenue from a community safety funding stream	Strategic		Fund existing service	28k
Generic Floating support for Homeless etc.	Strategic relevance		Reconfigure and possibly expand.	TBC
A range of short term services that will run to 2009 and support service delivery.	Gaps	Mid 2007		TBC

Current provision: accommodation based and floating support

We have now developed a range of services to support diverse needs of our most vulnerable residents.

- Floating support provision
- Supported housing options including sheltered accommodation, learning disability community support networks and refuge provision

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- Social Care contracts to deliver specialist housing
- Staying Put services, through the Harrow Adapt and Repair service - enabling older people to remain living independently in the private housing sector
- Locata [choice based lettings scheme]
- Homelessness Forum
- Telecare . This assistive technology project has already supported 20 older people to retain their independence. Sensors automatically alert the helpline when there is a problem or the person can push a sensor button to get help
- Self directed care – individual budgets
- Our services are publicised through the Housing website <http://www.harrow.gov.uk/>

During 2006/07 Supporting People funding resulted in the provision of 59 services, in 40 contracts by 26 providers enabling 1650 vulnerable people able to retain their independence. 1113 Older People live in sheltered accommodation and a further 84 people are supported through HART. 34 owner-occupiers receive floating support services.

Other groups who get support are

- 43 people with Learning Disabilities
- 110 people with Mental Health needs
- 86 Homeless families and single people
- 46 hours per week of extra floating support for single homeless people
- 12 people who have been subjected to Domestic Violence
- 10 BME service users with physical disabilities
- 40 people given a generic support service on the Rayners Lane estate
- A floating support service for 35 drug and alcohol users across tenure
- 12 people with HIV/ AIDS to help them maintain independence
- Support for 6 Offenders in accommodation based provision and 15 extra units commissioned
- 3 Teenage Parents can be supported any one time
- 56 young people can be supported in Harrow by a range of providers. This includes 9 care leavers

Strategy implementation

Since the last housing strategy we have:

- implemented the ODPM Supporting People framework for Harrow by 2003
- increased the number of supported places in Harrow by 140 units (2002-04) through a Supported Housing strategy
- developed a Learning Disability Housing strategy following Valuing People guidelines

Future challenges

From 2009 Supporting People funding will be aligned with Local Area Agreement funding. The challenges will be to retain appropriate funding locally and within West London to:

- Maintain Inclusion and independence for our most vulnerable people
- Enable Choice for individuals
- Build capacity within the third sector
- Deliver efficiency agenda

Key achievements

Implementation of the Older Persons Housing Review

We have

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- Commissioned 35 units of floating support service to support older owner occupiers to live in their own homes, with a focus on BME groups
- Worked with a housing service user group to develop criteria to inform a planned remodelling of services
- Undertaken a joint Housing, Supporting People and Social Care review of Council sheltered accommodation that is making recommendations to how service can be re-shaped to better meet current and future need
- Participated in a London Councils pilot to deliver a streamlined – Housing Health and Social Care financial / benefit assessment.
- Supported elderly and disabled people to stay put in their homes with the support of the Harrow Adapt and Repair Team and the provision of disabled facilities grants
- Developed two short term services one for a Handy Person to provide additional aids and adaptations and the second for resettlement support for women at risk of DV

We plan to bid for Extra Care funding to the Housing Corporation, with an RSL partner, in the 2008-10 bidding round.

Key achievements

Reconfiguring services

We have commissioned new 'floating support' services for offenders and single homeless people as well as an expanded services for people with drug and alcohol issues. 15 extra people are supported this way. Also, there are 5 additional accommodation support services.

We procured a single homeless service as part of a West London initiative [see below]. Services which no longer meet strategic needs are reviewed and decommissioned as appropriate for example an offenders scheme was decommissioned and retendered as it wasn't providing the right level of support and engagement for the service users

Key achievements

West London Housing Strategy 2006 - 2008

The objective is to deliver better services for residents through joint working by the seven West London Boroughs and make efficiencies.

The West London accreditation scheme for Supporting People services is now well established and is well thought of by providers. The scheme avoids unnecessary overlap or duplication of services.

The West London Supporting People Group has developed a common approach to service evaluation, providing a consistent approach to the review process for providers across West London. The group has also developed a model to assess value for money in Supporting People funded services to help boroughs with their service reviews.

West London jointly commissioned floating support services for single homeless people, funded by a Communities and Local Government Value Improvement Project, started from April 2007

Key achievements

West London Private Sector Strategy Group

Harrow is participating in a Financial Capability Project to offer practical guidance to vulnerable people living in non-decent homes to enable them to raise the capital to carry out essential repairs and improvements. This is a one year pilot, funded by GOL/GLA, and will also evaluate the outcomes to

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determine the potential blockages and barriers for the client group in accessing appropriate finance packages.

Resources

The Supporting People programme funding of £3.5m per year is the main source of funding housing related support services. This funding is currently ring-fenced but will need to be aligned with the Local Area Agreement by 2009.

Other funding includes the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Development funding. We will bid this year for Housing Corporation capital funding for supported housing developed between 2008 –10, including extra care schemes.

Continue to tackle homelessness and high demand, whilst reducing temporary accommodation

Vision: Our vision is to prevent homelessness whenever possible providing appropriate housing advice and support.

The Council recognises that homelessness is an extreme case of housing need. We will support homeless people and provide housing options to fulfil our statutory duties.

The homelessness problem in Harrow

Harrow has a significant homelessness and housing need problem. With a buoyant private property market and high levels of homeless approaches (average 2,200 per annum) the Council faces a continuing problem in meeting the demand for affordable housing from many priority groups - families, single people, and vulnerable adults. Harrow's problems are particularly acute because it has the third lowest level of social housing in London (only Kingston and Redbridge have less) and there is a mismatch between the size and type of housing becoming available for re-letting and demand.

Statistics show that the high levels of housing need come from:

- Statutory homeless people - those households accepted as being in priority need under homelessness legislation
- Other households applying to the Council's Housing Register as being in housing need
- Black and minority ethnic households who are more likely to be in housing need than other households

Council vacancies do not generate enough void properties for families in temporary accommodation to move into, and the private sector has an important role to play in providing housing.

The Council achieved zero use of bed and breakfast as use during 2004/2005. Since then we are now placing families and single people back in B&Bs. As of 31 June 2007 there were 52 households in B&Bs of which x are families

Priorities

Our priorities are:

- Temporary accommodation census
- The Sanctuary Scheme, to assist all victims of Domestic Violence
- A sub-regional private sector lettings schemes
- Supported lodgings for 16/17 year olds

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- Engaging with BME residents in housing need to better understand their needs
- Tackle under occupancy

Key achievements – recognition of excellence

Harrow has achieved national recognition for its innovative work in tackling homelessness. We have achieved Beacon Council status (2003-2004) and more recently Regional Champion Status 2005.

Two of our officers have been seconded to CLG to advise other Councils on preventing homelessness.

Key achievements – innovative approaches to homelessness

We have successfully implemented innovative approaches to homelessness: We have:

- Pioneered the Harrow Options Model for people applying as homeless and disseminated results to other agencies and authorities. This is seen as a model of good practice by CLG and others
- Pioneered the Sanctuary Project which prevents homelessness by enabling women experiencing domestic violence to remain in their own home. This had led to a 50% reduction in homelessness caused by domestic violence, since the inception of the scheme. Further funding will enable the scheme to be widened to all victims of Domestic Violence. Funding is being sought from the Domestic Violence Forum
- Piloted a mediation scheme to prevent homelessness as a result of exclusion by family and friends
- Set-up a weekly, multi-agency, single homeless advice surgery in Harrow accessed by on average up to 20 people per week
- Supported a number of initiatives to meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers including promoting improved information exchange with health visitors on placements

As a result homeless acceptances reduced from 700 in 2000/01 to 159 in 2006/07.

Key achievements – accessing extra resources for temporary accommodation

The government is committed to reducing by 50% the number of households in temporary accommodation. This is a challenging target.

We secured an extra £50,000 from CLG (Spring 2006) a census of our stock of temporary accommodation, to detect abandoned properties and fraudulent sub letting, as well as identifying households who wish to end the homelessness duty through a qualifying offer, and conduct a satisfaction survey. These measures will help us make best use of stock and potentially release more properties for use by other families.

We have agreed the qualifying offer procedure with partner RSLs and appointed staff to manage the scheme.

In 2005 we successfully bid to the CLG Homelessness Innovation Fund to lead on a sub-regional direct lettings pilot.

The Council currently uses 2 hostel facilities to provide emergency accommodation to homeless households to deliver its statutory housing obligations. One of these sites, Anmer Lodge, in Stanmore is due to be decommissioned in February 2008. We have carried out a detailed options appraisal of suitable sites to identify a suitable location to develop a replacement facility.

We are working in partnership with Genesis Housing Group to develop a purpose built facility to provide 30 units of self contained accommodation as use as emergency accommodation. It is hoped that this new facility will be completed in 2008.

Key achievements – regional working

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The Council is lead borough on homelessness to deliver the West London Housing Strategy homelessness objectives.

We participate in the:

- West London Homelessness Sub Group
- West London Temporary Accommodation and Direct Lettings Sub Group
- West London Allocations and Lettings Group
- Harrow Homelessness Forum
- London Councils Homelessness Working Group
- Greater London Authority Homelessness Managers Sub Group

Regional working is achieving the following:

- £10million funding from CLG for the West London Temporary to Permanent Scheme. Across West London the scheme will comprise 1,400 units of accommodation. The properties will be leased to the local authorities for the use as temporary accommodation and will convert to affordable accommodation (with some shared equity housing) at the end of the lease period. This will be one element of a strategy by West London Councils to deliver the 50% target reduction in use of temporary accommodation required by government.
- The West London Councils will select their preferred providers of the scheme in autumn 2007, having been through a competitive tendering process.
- The Homeless Employment Link Project (HELP): Funded by CLG, HELP will link homeless households with local employment initiatives. Recruitment for the project is currently underway. This project has received wide acclaim as an example of good practice.
- A DVD on housing options. This is for people in housing need and is available in 16 languages. It is for individuals and community groups, and played at Homeless Persons Unit.
- NOTIFY: systems are being put in place to ensure that all relevant local authority departments use and update the Notify system correctly.
- Domestic Violence reciprocal agreements for now include housing associations as well as council tenants
- A mystery shopping exercise has been carried out for West London, and the draft report is being finalised.
- Benchmarking will take place across the sub region and used for Homelessness Reviews.
- West London Direct Lettings scheme (Finders Fee initiative): £200,000 has been secured from CLG. The scheme is due to go live in June 2007. There will be a website and single contact line for landlords seeking to let property through borough lettings schemes aimed at preventing homelessness. The Project Manager and procurement officers are in post.
- A draft research report has been prepared on the experiences of households helped into the Private Rented Sector through Local Authority direct letting schemes in West London. Commissioned by the West London Homelessness Group and carried out by London Councils the findings will inform both policy and practice.

Key achievements – tackling youth homelessness

The government is committed to preventing and tackle youth homelessness. By 2010 no 16 or 17 year old should be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation, except in an emergency. Supported lodging schemes should be set up across England.

Harrow has secured £40,000 from CLG to develop a supported lodgings scheme for homeless 16/17 year olds. The details are being worked up with the YMCA.

Resources Available

Housing Needs services are funded from the General Fund budget of £2.7m. Other sources of funding for specific activities are:

- Communities and Local Government Homelessness Prevention Grant - £190K
- Homelessness Innovation Grant - £200k (sub regionally)
- Communities and Local Government Supported Lodgings Grant – £40K

Improving Neighbourhoods and Quality of Life

Vision- To work with our partners and the community to develop and maintain safe, clean and green communities across the borough by tackling anti-social behaviour, improvement of poor housing across all tenures and cutting CO2 emissions.

To tackle this objective we will address the following priorities:

- Tackling anti-social behaviour to reduce crime and the fear of crime across all tenures
- Ensure that private housing in Harrow is free from potential risks to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in the dwelling
- Improve targeting of Housing Renewal Grants
- Achieve decent homes standard in council stock by 2010
- Reduction in CO2 emissions

Tackling Anti-social behaviour to reduce crime and the fear of crime across all tenures

“Work with our partners to reduce crime and the fear of crime” is one of our core corporate priorities. Our crime, disorder and drugs strategy addresses all aspects crime and nuisance, including anti-social behaviour and environmental nuisance.

We work with partners and other agencies to ensure that all residents are able to enjoy their homes in peace, free from harassment and the effects of anti-social behaviour.

We work in accordance with the Anti-social Behaviour Protocol and use all the relevant tools to address anti-social behaviour. This includes asking offenders to sign Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and applying to the courts for Anti- Social Behaviour Orders, Anti-social Behaviour Injunctions or evicting people on the basis of their anti-social behaviour.

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Empty homes can have an adverse affect on the local neighbourhood. They can become a magnet for nuisance and anti-social behaviour ranging from drug use, fly tipping, vandalism and arson; while neglected and overgrown gardens affect neighbouring properties and frequently are sources of rodent infestations. Empty properties can affect the market values of neighbouring properties.

We will bring empty homes back into use wherever possible. This will assist in contributing towards providing a safer living environment for local residents of the Borough, improving the local street scene and reducing the pressures on the Councils resources. Where properties are refurbished using grant assistance, nomination rights are secured enabling families in housing need to be provided with good quality homes.

Key achievements:

- Since 2003 we have successfully obtained 30 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and 55 Anti-social behaviour Contracts (ABCs). This year we have signed 15 ABC's and obtained 3 ASBO's.
- 8 notices have been served due to anti-social behaviour/race hate
- The housing department is a reporting centre for third party reporting, an additional way for people experiencing race hate crime to report it in the borough. Nine reports were filed through housing since its launch in 2006
- We updated our tackling racial harassment on estates procedure/document
- We produced a tackling anti-social behaviour handbook for our tenants
- We brought 1975 empty homes borough back into use from 2002-2007

Ensure that private housing in Harrow is free from potential risks to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in the dwelling

The links between poor quality housing, health and quality of life is well evidenced in national statistics and relevant housing strategies at local regional and national levels. 89% of the housing stock in Harrow lies within the private sector. Its quality depends on owner-occupiers and landlords maintaining and periodically refurbishing their properties.

It is important that we have a robust private sector housing strategies that deliver services that make a positive difference to individuals and communities, providing an inclusive and sustainable environment to live and work in. The priorities for the Council are to:

- Improve substandard private sector dwellings, including houses in multiple occupation, through advice to owners, landlords and the business community, enforcement and financial assistance. We achieve this by working in partnership with voluntary and non-voluntary agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Age concern, Housing Advice, Housing Provision, and Homelessness charities such Shelter etc;
- Ensure the private sector stock is used effectively to minimise empty properties, under occupation and overcrowding;
- To improve energy efficiency within private sector dwellings, with particular priority for vulnerable households on low incomes.

Key achievements

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- In 2006/07 the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team implemented the two enforcement regimes contained in the Housing Act 2004. These are the application of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to tackle 29 health and safety hazards that contribute to poor housing conditions.
- The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team also enforces much other legislation to remedy defects and combats statutory nuisances or require intervention on the part of the Council- In the period 1st April 2006 - 31st March 2007 145 private sector were made free of category 1 hazards (see HHSRS) or made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the Council.
- At the 31st March 2007, 293 properties were registered or licensed by the Council as Houses in Multiple Occupation under the legislative requirements for these properties..
- We have been asked to share our knowledge of HMO licensing with other West London boroughs to establish consistency across West London, in recognition that many landlords have portfolios of property across several boroughs.

Performance indicators

- to enforce the licensing regime for Houses in Multiple Occupation provided by the Housing Act 2004. The performance indicator is the number of houses for which licences have been granted in the financial year ending 31st March
- to enforce the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 in respect of housing conditions. The performance indicator is the number of private sector (non RSL) dwellings were made free of category 1 hazards (see HHSRS) or made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the Council.

Improve targeting of Housing Renewal Grants

Housing Renewal Grants are a key intervention tool in delivering the Council's Private Sector Renewal Strategy. The type and amount of assistance is determined locally, and is targeted at those members of the community living in the worst housing conditions, who are least able to afford the cost of the necessary repairs, improvements or adaptations. Further assistance is provided through Disabled Facilities Grants, which are mandatory grants to enable necessary adaptations to be carried out for disabled people.

Key Achievements

Assessment of all existing applications to determine level of priority using a priority points system.

- A total of 197 Housing Renewal Grants were paid in 2006/07
- We participate in the West London Financial Advocacy Service, an initiative to provide assistance to vulnerable people living in non-decent.

Harrow Adapt and Repair Team, deliver the renewal grant programme. HART has developed integrated approaches, and works with other agencies in order to meet the Council's strategic priorities. The programme provides grants and repayable grant options to ensure that properties do not fall into disrepair. The team includes the Harrow Staying Put service (a Home Improvement Agency) which offers the support and assistance necessary for the most vulnerable members of the community. The agency also includes a Handyperson Service that provides low-level, invaluable support to the same target group.

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Partnerships and initiatives assist owner-occupiers release capital locked up in the equity of their property. The Council works with the Home Improvement Trust as a partner in Houseproud, a national scheme to support homeowners raise funds for improvements or repairs.

The Council also works in partnership with the Police and the private sector, giving small grants to provide security upgrades to vulnerable victims of crime. This has helped reduce the incidence of distraction burglary in the borough.

Achieve decent homes standard in council (by 2012) and private sector stock

Works to achieve the Decent Homes in Harrow are programmed by the housing team and delivered by Property Services under the new Harrow Integrated Property Services Partnership project (HIPSP) with Kier. Kier will be responsible for the repair and maintenance of all Council housing, as well as schools and other local authority owned buildings. The contracts began on 1 July 2007, with the minor works contract lasting for 5 years extendable at the Council's option to 10 and the major works contract for 4 years. The contract value is £125m.

Stakeholder priorities

For the Council and residents, it is imperative that we achieve the Decent Homes standard in Council stock within the Government's timeframe not just because we are required to do so but also because it is a fairly basic standard and the least that our tenants deserve. Resident priorities for planned maintenance identified at the Strategy Conference and by TLCF include:

- a high standard of quality control in works programmes
- a robust programme of planned and cyclical maintenance that will prevent repairs problems happening
- improve communications between residents and contractors
- the use of better quality components with a longer life cycle.

Challenges

To date little progress has been made in reducing the overall percentage of Council homes that are non-decent. The new HIPSP partnering contract should accelerate delivery of the Decent Homes programme, and we estimate that there will be significant progress in 2007/8 as backlog works are completed. However a significant decrease in non-decency will not be recorded until 1 April 2009 when the programme starts to tackle newly-arising non-decent homes.

The estimated investment needs up to 2010 for Decent Homes works and other planned maintenance including disabled adaptations and environmental improvements now total £32.7m.

Key Achievements

The new partnership with Kier has been a collaborative effort including colleagues across the Council and residents. The complex process has been undertaken on time and offers the prospect of significant improvements to Council homes

A detailed 3-year programme is now in place allowing for early planning of work through the Kier partnership and to ensure timely delivery of programmes as resources are made available.

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A 3-year programme detailing all the Decent Homes works required by individual property up to 2010 has been developed using the Codeman stock condition database. It was widely consulted on with residents in January and February 2007. Expenditure is shown in the table below.

Programme	2007/8 £000	2008/9 £000	2009/10 £000
Decent Homes programme	10,400	10,600	9,100
Other planned work including environmental improvements	1,400	1,400	900
Disabled Adaptations	500	500	500
Total	12,300	12,500	10,500

The Mill Farm estate and Grange Farm estate are subject to further option appraisal to select the best solution for their improvement taking into account wider social and economic issues as well as the condition of the housing. The Mill Farm appraisal is due to complete in summer 2007 with Grange Farm following shortly after.

Decent Homes standard in the Private Sector

Sub regional grant funding of £1.6m has been successfully obtained from the London Regional Housing Pot. These funds are aimed to improve the quality of privately rented accommodation in the borough and contribute towards enabling these properties meet the decent homes standard.

The Better Homes grant will be targeted at Houses in Multiple Occupation, and properties let through the Council's Direct Lettings scheme (Finders Fee) in order to meet the decent homes standard. This scheme encourages landlords to match fund with their own investment to carry out improvements to properties which are let to vulnerable households.

Energy efficiency projects should also link to the work being carried out to private sector decent homes standard

Reduce CO2 emissions

The Energy Team's objectives are to reduce CO₂ emissions within private sector housing by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy, and to tackle fuel poverty within the borough. Inadequate thermal comfort levels in a property make it non-decent, can lead to health problems for the household and can affect disposable income increasing the risk of fuel poverty. By improving the energy efficiency of a property we can help tackle climate change, which is part of the Mayor's Climate Change strategy.

Key achievements:

- 4000 assessments have been carried out revealing 80 properties as needing boiler replacements or full central heating systems.
- Harrow Council has contributed £25,000 to install solar thermal heating to 9 suitable properties, which should supply 60 – 70% of the households' hot water needs throughout the year. These systems will be monitored by University College London over 3 years to study the effects.
- Warm Zones project will bring £590,000 into the borough over two years and will

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Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing

Vision: our aim is to increase the quality of housing for Harrow residents within mixed and balanced communities. Specifically we seek to increase affordable housing to meet the priority needs identified from the recent Housing Needs survey that contribute to sub regional and regional housing targets.

Our key objectives are to:

- Increase the supply of affordable family housing
- Provide a range of affordable intermediate housing options
- Continue promoting our Empty Property Strategy to ensure we make best use of existing housing resources
- To use high quality design to increase densities and improve the long term sustainability of housing

Increasing the supply of affordable housing

Harrow is a built-up residential borough with large areas of green belt. There are limited opportunities for new development, particularly large development sites at which the Affordable Housing Policy thresholds apply. Housing and Planning Services work closely together with developers and RSLs to maximise the contributions from planning policy and legal (S106) agreements.

The Harrow UDP was adopted in 2004, in accordance with the London Plan. It encourages an increased supply of housing by identifying suitable land and housing policies that support change of use to residential. In December 2006, the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) confirmed that the London Plan annual housing supply target of 400 homes per annum had been exceeded in both 2004/5 and 2005/6.

The Local Development Framework review will take place by 2009. It will be including new planning policies that address the Council's planning objectives. Harrow will be including within the review specific planning policies for the supply and delivery of affordable homes.

A Supplementary Planning Document for the delivery of affordable housing will be produced within the same timetable as the Local Development Framework review.

The Affordable Housing policy requires an overall strategic target of 50% affordable housing from all sources. While a minimum 30% is to be provided on sites capable of being developed for 15 or more units, the Council would normally expect up to 50% on qualifying sites. The affordable housing is to be provided in the ratio 70% social rented housing to 30% intermediate. Affordable housing contributions are calculated either by units or habitable rooms to encourage the provision of larger homes.

Levels of affordable housing negotiated through planning agreements have increased since 2004

Year	Total Affordable Homes completed	No. Provided via planning policy
2004/5	78	78
2005/6	136	122
2006/7	139	139

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In that time we have further modernised processes to ensure the corporate approach continues to follow best practice principles:

- Housing officers attend Planning Advice meetings to give advice on affordable housing requirements and to support specific developments
- Internal Project teams are established to progress large or complicated developments
- Housing officers lead on the negotiation of the affordable housing including toolkit analysis to assess financial viability and liaison with RSLs and Housing Corporation
- Housing officers contribute to legal agreements to ensure long term objectives are met

The AMR shows that affordable housing is below target. In 2005/6, 28.6% of total housing completions were affordable (i.e. 121 out of 423). This is partly because of the relatively low number of larger sites above the 15 unit threshold to which the policy can be applied and the high cost of land generally which makes it impossible for RSLs to compete on the open market to acquire sites for 100% affordable housing. The LDF will consider further opportunities for tackling some of these issues, such as a reduction in the policy threshold to 10 units.

Our partner housing associations are key to realising our objective to increase the supply of affordable family homes. Innovative partnerships have enabled the sale of Council land to realise corporate objectives and provide affordable housing (*case study Grant Road*). The pipeline development programme aims to deliver around 650 new homes including 59 large family homes over the next 3-5 years.

Projected additional RSL stock next 2 years

Projected New Build Schemes are shown in the table below

2007/08 Completions	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+	Total
RENT					
Elmgrove,	3	11	10		24
Grove			3		3
Mepham			2	3	5
TOTAL RENT	3	11	15	3	32
INTERMEDIATE					
Elmgrove	12	12	1		25
Grove		44			44
Railway Hatch End	4				4
TOTAL INTERMEDIATE	16	56	1		73

2008/09 Completions	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+	Total
RENT					
Pinner Road	2	23	2		27
Biro	17	23	11		51
Marsh Road	2	4			6
Raebarn	1		5		6
TOTAL RENT	22	50	18		90
INTERMEDIATE					
Pinner Road	47	38			85

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Kenton Road	6	4			10
Marsh Road	2	4			6
Raebarn	12	23			35
TOTAL INTERMEDIATE	67	69			136

Pipeline schemes (awaiting planning)	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+	Total
RENT	27	50	31	56	164
TOTAL INTERMEDIATE	63	77	14		154

The London Plan, 2007/08 to 2016/17 annual target provision for affordable housing for Harrow is 200 units.

We continue to firmly support the principles of sub regional and regional partnerships to make the best of opportunities regardless of borough boundaries. The West London Partnership works closely to ensure fair and equitable access to all new homes funded through the Nation Affordable Housing Programme while acknowledging the benefits brought to the partnership by those boroughs with greater development opportunities. Harrow has been able to maintain new development contributions at about the same level as our assessed need meaning that we have had only limited nominations to out of borough properties to date.

Key Achievements

We have:

- Secured 162 new affordable homes through planning policy permissions in 2005/6 against the HUDP annual target of 165.
- Completed 34 new rented homes in 2005/6 and 112 in 2006/7.
- Completed 10 large family homes (4 bed plus) in 2006/7 with 59 homes in the pipeline
- Delivered 121 new rented homes in Harrow for the West sub regional NAHP 2004-2006 against an initial allocation of 90.

Provide a range of affordable intermediate housing options

We know that most people aspire to own their home but cannot afford to buy. In Harrow mean there is a large group of people who can afford more than social rent but cannot afford open market housing. Access to affordable intermediate housing options is vital to enable young people and families, including key workers, to continue living and working in Harrow and deliver mixed and balanced communities.

We have set a target that 30% of new affordable housing should be intermediate and affordable to households with incomes in the range £17-48,000. We published a Key Worker Housing Strategy in (2004-07) together with an on-line Low Cost Home Ownership register (www.harrow.gov.uk/lcho). We work closely with the Homebuy agent and other boroughs to ensure a one-stop shop approach to the marketing of new intermediate housing opportunities.

Key Achievements

- 1580 households registered with the Low Cost Home Ownership Register. The majority (75%) are one or two persons households. 71% have household incomes within the £17,000 to £48,000 target range, with the average income within that range being £26,469.
- 165 new intermediate homes completed 2004-07 – 64 x key worker intermediate rental studio flats, 54 x 1 bed and 47 x 2 bed shared ownership flats. A total of 91 of these new homes were sold to key workers.
- A further 73 intermediate homes are in the pipeline for completion in 2007/08 – 12 x 1 bed, 56 x 2 bed and 1 x 3bed shared ownership flats

Continue promoting our Empty Property Strategy to ensure we make best use of existing housing resources

Bringing empty properties back into use is one way of meeting housing need. We carried out a survey of all registered empty properties in the borough in 2006. There were 1010 (1.4%) properties empty, over 680 of which had been vacant for more than 6 months. This information has enabled us to target our resources effectively at those properties, which have been empty for the longest period of time.

Owners of empty properties are offered a comprehensive range of options to enable these properties to be brought back into use, including the provision of Empty Property grants, Housing Association leasing schemes and direct lettings schemes. The Council will take appropriate enforcement action, such as Compulsory Purchase Order, or Empty Dwelling Management Orders to ensure a property is brought back into use where voluntary arrangements cannot be made.

We have promoted the conversion or reuse of vacant commercial premises for residential use. In Wealdstone this has resulted in 96 new affordable homes in the town centre at the Railway Hotel, Poppy Court and Bannister House.

We are working with our sub regional partners on a temporary to permanent leasing scheme partly funded through the SHI initiative. This will enable the purchase of existing properties that will initially be let as temporary accommodation but convert to permanent social housing over a 15 year period.

Key Achievements

Total units brought back into use 2002 – 2007	1975
Number of Empty Property Grants awarded (to long term empty properties) 2004 - 2007	51
New units created through conversion schemes	127
Successful Compulsory Purchase Orders since 2002	2

Using high quality design to increase densities and improve long term sustainability

In a developed borough like Harrow better use of existing land is vital if we are to increase housing supply. Increases in density in appropriate locations must be matched by high quality design and regard to long term sustainability, and also ensure compatibility with existing housing. On the Rayners Lane estate the Council has led the way working with residents and the Home Group to replace poor quality

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Council housing with high quality higher density mixed tenure housing as well as vastly improved community facilities.

We have maintained a policy to ensure that 10% of all new housing is built to full wheelchair standard and the rest to Lifetime Homes standards. This is set down in our Accessible Homes SPD, adopted in April 2006.

Key achievements

Wheelchair units against target 2005-2007

Scheme	Total no. of rental units	No. of wheelchair units	Size of units	10% wheelchair target
Templar House	6	2	2 x 2b4p (flats)	1
Poppy Court	8	1	2b3p (flat)	1
Grant Road	44	4	1 x 3b4p (house) 3 x 3b5p (houses)	4

Making best use of the space

The Council is committed to making best use of space on its existing estates. We are in the process of developing plans for a number of small sites, including disused garages and other under-utilised space. We have identified sites for about 10 new homes. We will be surveying all our estates to identify further disused space that might be suitable for redevelopment. It is our intention to develop these for much needed large family housing.

Through the West London Partnership we are also participating in an initiative with government funding to extend or deconvert existing Council properties into larger homes. The scheme has been slow to start in Harrow as each property must be capable of providing an additional 2 bedrooms at an average capital cost of £50k. We have one extension in the pipeline and are in the process of identifying others.

Delivering quality services

Vision: to provide excellent services to all residents by making best use of resources available to the Council. This will be through increased consultation and inclusion of residents in service and budget discussions and by increased accessibility to Council services and services of partner agencies

We will deliver this vision by adopting the following priorities:

- Improve customer care and quality of service through partnerships and best use of resources
- Increasing accessibility of all our services
- Continue to increase resident consultation and involvement around decision making

Housing Need

An innovative and challenging Homelessness Mystery Shopping project took place in West London in the spring of 2007. The project was jointly commissioned, as a sub-regional initiative, by seven West London boroughs

The project sought to confirm and compare the manner in which front line Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention services are delivered across the participating boroughs and to share good practice. By using Mystery Shopping techniques and utilising a range of case studies, the project aimed to obtain a clear picture of the range and type of advice and information given and the action taken by front line staff when responding to contact from those who are homeless or who are threatened with homelessness. A prime concern was to ensure that the services provided assisted in the prevention of homelessness. In addition, any need for service improvements would be identified and outcomes would inform service changes that would reduce disadvantage caused by homelessness.

The findings from this project will influence the content of staff training, review of policies and procedures and is likely to lead to significant changes in front line service provision.

Resident Services

Our Audit Commission Inspection on housing services we were assessed as 2 star and promising. Since the decision to retain council stock we have had the direct opportunity to improve the quality of services provided to our tenants and ensure that we get Best Value from key support services such as finance and Human Resources.

We are determined to continue the involvement of residents in shaping and monitoring the service and will do this through the Tenant Compact and consultative mechanism like the Tenant and Leaseholder Consultative Forum (TLFC), Harrow Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations (HFTRA), leasehold support group.

We will develop a more integrated approach to providing services by bringing together key elements of the service into Harrow's customer service team- Access Harrow and take full advantage of new technologies such as SAP and new web development programme.

The HRA Business Plan identifies the need for a review of management arrangements and options in 2012, subject to annual review of our turn, as the plan indicates deficit by 2012.

Improving customer care and quality of service through partnerships and best use of resources

Key achievements

We have:

- Embarked on a sheltered housing review. Our review looks at achieving excellent services for older and vulnerable people promoting independence and well-being. Our sheltered housing stock is included to ensure it is fit to meet the future requirements of service users.
- Exceeded our targets for void turn around in 06/07:target 35 days, achievement 32days
- Carried out a self-assessment review of the Home Improvement Agency to determine priority areas for improvement.
- Made equity release products available to vulnerable client by a partnership with the Home Improvement Trust under the Houseproud scheme.

Increasing accessibility of all of our services

Key achievements:

We have:

- Been working with the Somali Community by inviting them into the housing department so we can demonstrate what we do and obtain their views on how we can profile services to better meet their needs.
- Reviewed the content of housing webpages and improved its speed of response
- Launched the award-winning Access Harrow
- Production of a BME Housing Strategy on 2004-2007 addressing accessibility of our services within housing
- Set up a BME Housing reference group.

Increased resident consultation and involvement around decision-making

Key achievements:

We have:

- Strengthened our resident involvement strategy through our resident involvement compact, September 2006
- appointed an independent tenant adviser to build capacity and increase the volume of involvement by residents.
- Explored the Right to Manage
- Appointed KIER as repairs partner with full resident participation in the process.
- Incrementally devolved budgets and decision making to Harrow Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations

Monitoring Progress

The action plan in Annexe 1 will be the key document by which delivery of the housing strategy objectives will be monitored and progress tracked. We will report progress to the Housing Strategy Officer Group. Information will also be incorporated into performance indicators and periodic reports to the Harrow Strategic Partnership Board and the Harrow Policy Network meetings. Progress on those elements of the Action Plan relevant to other corporate strategies will be reported to those strategy meetings and meetings involving service users on a regular basis.

Feedback from Harrow residents and stakeholders will be obtained through:

- Consultative user groups e.g. Supporting People, BME Housing reference group, RSL group
- Harrow’s Tenant and Leaseholder Consultative Forum
- Cross tenure residents surveys as appropriate
- Newsletters and update bulletins via borough wide means of communication- newsletters, Housing Strategy website page
- Consultative events e.g. Private landlord events, tenant and leaseholder events, Housing Conference

Earlier in the strategy we identified how we integrate housing strategy activity within corporate actions, and the role of the housing strategy officer group in maintaining the progress. Housing strategy activity will be monitored and evaluated as follow:

Action	Responsible group	Frequency
Review housing objectives and priorities	Housing Strategy Review Group	Annually
Monitor progress on the overall Housing Strategy and review action plan	Housing Strategy Review Group	Half- yearly
Monitor housing input to corporate strategies and ensure coherence	Housing Strategy Review Group	Half- yearly
Monitor delivery of the capital programme	Housing Strategy Review Group	Quarterly
Review progress against BVPP	Departmental management team meetings Portfolio holder meeting	Monthly
Consult with stakeholders on current objectives, priorities and actions	Established forums including private landlords, BME housing reference group, supporting people, TLCF, RSL forum, owner occupiers	Annually
Ensure actions are taken to deliver the action plan and the capital programme	Departmental management team	Monthly

Action Plan

Housing Strategy Priorities and Housing Objective Action Plan

2007/2008-2011/2012

Objective 1: Meeting the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people, especially older people					
Priority: Enable independence for all vulnerable people across all tenures including those with long-term conditions and those at risk of social exclusion.					
Priority Actions	Responsibility	Completion date	Resources (R=revenue) (C= Capital)	Performance indicators and Targets	
Actively promote and deliver the renewal grant programme to provide support and assistance necessary for the most vulnerable members of the community	HART PSHR Strategy Group	Ongoing	Discretionary Grant Capital Budget HART Voluntary sector partners		
Deliver the 5 year Supporting People Strategy & the SP Annual Plan 07/08 particularly: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure development of a procurement strategy for 08 onwards; 2. To develop new services for people with Learning Disabilities and Mental Health needs 3. Continued improvements in the quality and accessibility of 	Commissioning Body Supporting People Team	Ongoing to 2010	Supporting People Programme Grant 3.5 million of revenue funding per annum	KPIs 1 &2 CLG's Outcomes framework	

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<p>services through contract monitoring and partnership working.</p> <p>4. To set Harrow's priorities for the development of supported accommodation for the 2008-11 bidding round to the Housing Corporation</p>					
<p>Priority: Promote independence for older people by reconfiguring services in line with the Older People's Housing Review and the Supporting People 5-year Strategy and the Annual Plan 2007/8</p>					
<p>Priority Actions</p>	<p>Responsibility</p>	<p>Completion date</p>	<p>Resources (R=revenue) (C= Capital)</p>	<p>Performance indicators and Targets</p>	
<p>Work with Council and RSL partners to decommission conventional sheltered rented housing stock which does not meet strategic needs and ensure the remaining sheltered housing stock meets Decent Homes standard and the service requirements of the Harrow Matrix</p>	<p>Project Leader Older People's Housing Review</p>	<p>March 2012</p>	<p>R & C (amounts to be determined)</p>	<p>Decommission 100 RSL / Council sheltered housing units which are not fit for purpose Ensure all remaining RSL/ Council sheltered housing meets Decent Homes Standard and the service requirements of the Harrow Matrix</p>	
<p>Work with Council and RSL partners to provide extra care</p>	<p>Project Leader Older People's</p>	<p>March 2010</p>	<p>R & C (amounts to be determined)</p>	<p>30 modern extra care sheltered</p>	

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housing units	Housing Review			housing schemes provided for rent	
Increase the provision of housing related support to older people living in private sector housing	Supporting People Manager, HART Manager	Steve / SP to advise	R	Increase in number of owner occupiers receiving housing related support to 40 in 2007-08	
Objective 2: Continue to tackle homelessness and high demand, whilst reducing temporary accommodation					
Priority:					
Priority Actions	Responsibility	Completion date	Resources (R=revenue) (C= Capital)	Performance indicators and Targets	
Work with RSL partners to achieve discharge of homelessness duty through qualifying offers	Housing Provision Manager	2010	R CLG grant	BV213	
Implement Value Improvement Project for West London single homeless floating support to promote tenancy sustainment.	Housing Needs Manager	On going	R		
Develop supported lodgings schemes for homeless 16/17 year olds	Housing Needs Manager	March 08	R	Reduce 16/17 in B&B to 0. Minimum of 20 clients per year in supported lodging	Develop supported lodgings schemes for homeless 16/17 year olds
Deliver the Supporting People Strategy focus on reducing repeat homelessness and tenancy sustainment through a variety of provision including the new cross Authority provision for the single homeless.	Supporting People Manager	Ongoing	SP Grant (CLG)	KPIs 1 & 2 Outcomes framework	
Research ways to tackle under					

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occupancy to make better use of unit resources within the borough					
Complete the building of a new hostel at Cedars Hall	Project Manager (Housing Enabling)	September 2008 (longstop date)	R = staff/RSL time C = Affordable Housing Fund payment, RSL contribution	Planning granted Sept 07, Start on site October 07, Completion Sept 08	
Carry out an option appraisal into the future use of Vernon Lodge	Housing Enabling Manager	March 2008	R = staff/RSL time	Option Appraisal report completed	
Work with West London partners to develop a sub regional temporary to permanent housing scheme	Housing Enabling Manager	September 2008	R = staff/RSL time Possible capital contribution	EU procurement process and evaluation complete September 2007	
Decrease the use of temporary accommodation and Bed and Breakfast accommodation	Housing Needs Manager	March 2010	R	50% of 1293 – Reduce to 645	

Objective 3 : Improving neighbourhoods and quality of life

Priority:

Priority Actions	Responsibility	Completion date	Resources (R=revenue) (C= Capital)	Performance indicators and Targets	
Ensure all properties in the borough meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010	Housing Enabling Manager/Tony Graham/Steve Nye	March 2010	Capital – HRA, Corporate RSL capital Revenue – Housing, HART and Property Services RSL staff Residents	BVPI 184a and b for Council properties HSSA for other tenures	
Regenerate Mill Farm and Grange Farm estates	Housing Enabling Manager	March 2010	Capital – HRA Officer time	BVPI 184a and b Stage 1 to be	

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			ITA	completed by September 2007 for Mill Farm and January 2008 for Grange Farm	
Ensure residents have access to a construction training scheme	(Corporate- Claire Codling)	March 2008			
Review the demands placed on the Council for enforcement in respect of the Housing Act 2004 and the statutory Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation, and the service delivery process within the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team: and to bid for resources for additional staff.	Service Manager and Head of Community Safety Services	February 2008	R	Review of structure and delivery to provide an identifiable reactive and proactive Licensing provision. Completion of review and submission of bid for resources for additional staff (to be detailed and agreed for Council Budget 2008/09).	
Investigate and report on the introduction of a Landlords' Accreditation Scheme	Team Leader (Private Sector Housing Enforcement)/Service Manager	June 2008	R	Investigation complete and report submitted for Member decision.	
Implement demoted tenancies policy	Area Housing Manager ASB safer neighbourhoods team	April 2008	Officer time		
To ensure effective and proactive implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Strategy and delivery of action to address anti social behaviour in accordance with the Anti Social Behaviour Protocol.	Area Housing Managers ASB Team Safer neighbourhoods team	October 2007	Officer time	LAA ASB Unit Performance reports	

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This will include attending the weekly ASB meetings and representing the Harrow Housing Forum, which will meet quarterly to address housing based ASB issues.				Home Office ASB/Housing returns	
To ensure the implementation of Third Party Reporting sites amongst Registered Social Landlords.	Housing Managers Race Hate Crime Co-Ordinator	January 2008 – Ongoing	Officer time and Training	BVPI CPA	
To actively promote the use of enforcement action against perpetrators of Race and Faith Crime through the Third party reporting Panels and use of Demoted Tenancies and Notice for Seeking Possession.	Housing Managers Race Hate Crime Co-Ordinator	July 2007 – Ongoing	Officer time	BVPI 175 100% CPA	
To work in partnership with the Community Safety Service and Police to develop Community Tension Indicators and associated monitoring and reporting systems.	Housing Managers Race Hate Crime Co-Ordinator Police	April 2008 - Ongoing	Officer time	BVPI CPA	
Implement respect agenda	Area Housing Manager ASB team Safer neighbourhoods team	December 2007	Officer time Production of documents and training	BVPI	
To ensure the effective targeting of Housing Renewal grants- Outcome indicator –a new Private Sector Housing Strategy	HART PSHR Strategy Group	March 2008	Discretionary Grant Capital Budget HART Voluntary sector partners		
To ensure the efficient processing of Disabled Facilities Grants	HART PSHR Strategy Group	March 2008	Discretionary Grant Capital Budget HART		

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			Voluntary sector partners		
To provide a quality Home Improvement Agency service in line with Supporting People priorities- outcome indicator- to meet the foundations Quality Mark standards (the accredited Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework)	HART PSHR Strategy Group	Ongoing	Discretionary Grant Capital Budget HART Voluntary sector partners		
Reduce number of long term empty properties in borough through voluntary solutions or enforcement action as appropriate	Project Manager (Housing Enabling)	Ongoing	R – Staff time Discretionary grant Capital budget	BVPI64 CPA – H18 H23	
Work with partners to continue to explore the effective use of alternative funding and procurement sources for private sector renewal	HART PSHR Strategy Group	December 2007	Discretionary Grant Capital Budget HART Voluntary sector partners		
The West London project board are currently submitting a bid to the GLA to continue the current Warm Zones scheme until 2011.	West London Private Sector Housing Project board	Dec 2008	GLA funding	To increase the number of private households meeting the thermal comfort element of the Decent Homes Standard/ H.E.C.A target to reduce the C02 emissions in private sector housing by 31% by 2011.	
The University of London will monitor project in Roxeth on energy consumption. This project will then be used as a model for the rest of the West	Energy Team UCL Warm Zones	2007/2008	Capital	H.E.C.A target to reduce the C02 emissions in private sector housing by 31% by 2011.	

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London scheme and the scheme will be able to continue till 2011.					
Extension of the 'Heating Harrow Greener Scheme' that offers owner-occupiers solar thermal heating for £500.	Energy Team	Current until 2009- Extension to 2011	Capital	H.E.C.A target to reduce the C02 emissions in private sector housing by 31% by 2011.	
'Save on your Bills' scheme run in partnership with Hillingdon Council that offers a free service to residents to check whether they are currently with the cheapest energy supplier and to encourage the take up of green energy purchasing.	Energy Team Hillingdon Council	To run until 2012	Self funding	H.E.C.A target to reduce the C02 emissions in private sector housing by 31% by 2011.	
Free energy related advice by the Harrow Energy Efficiency Helpline.	Energy Team Energy Advice Centre	To run until 2012	Capital	H.E.C.A target to reduce the C02 emissions in private sector housing by 31% by 2011.	
Submission of a bid to the 'Communities and Local Government' to run a social housing pilot relating to Energy Performance Certificates (EPC). This will entail 50 properties being provided with an EPC as well as tailored energy advice to tenants to encourage C02 reduction	Energy Team	Nov 2007	Capital CLG	BVPI 63	
Formation of the Harrow Housing Forum	First meeting in September 2007	Officers time	ASB Unit	All of the Housing Associations who have properties in	

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				Harrow and Private landlords	
Objective 4: Increasing Housing Supply					
Priority:					
Priority Actions	Responsibility	Completion date	Resources (R=revenue) (C= Capital)	Performance indicators and Targets	
To increase overall housing supply in the borough by 400 units per annum	Housing Enabling Manager/Planning – is this now Deborah Ganley?	2015	R = Staff time	UDP and London Plan targets – monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	
To increase the supply of affordable housing by 200 units per annum	Housing Enabling Manager/Planning – is this now Deborah Ganley?	2015	R = staff time/RSL time C = External NAHP funding, Commuted payments	UDP and London Plan targets – monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	
To aim for 50% of all new affordable rented housing development to be family housing (3 bed plus)	Housing Enabling Manager/Planning – is this now Deborah Ganley?	2015	R = staff time/RSL time C = External NAHP funding, Developer contributions, Commuted payments	UDP and London Plan targets – monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	
30% of new affordable housing should be intermediate housing affordable to households with incomes in the range £17-48,000	Housing Enabling Manager/Planning – is this now Deborah Ganley?	2015	R = staff time/RSL time C = External NAHP funding, Developer contributions, Commuted payments	UDP and London Plan targets – monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	
Investigate options for producing intermediate housing, including family	Project Manager, Housing Enabling	September 2008	R = staff time/RSL time	Options report completed	

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housing, affordable to households with incomes in the range £20-30k					
Ensure that Harrow receives an equitable distribution of sub regionally and regionally funded new affordable housing	Housing Enabling Manager	Ongoing	R = staff time	Annual distribution of nominations agreed through the West London partnership	
Bring long term empty properties back into use utilising capital grant and West London sub-regional grant allocation	Project Manager (Housing Enabling)	March 2008	R – Staff time Discretionary grant Capital budget Sub-regional funding	BVPI64 CPA – H18 H23	
Bring 250 empty properties back into use per annum	Project Manager (Housing Enabling)	Ongoing	R – Staff time Discretionary grant Capital budget Sub-regional funding	BVPI64 CPA – H18 H23	
10% of all new affordable housing to be built to full wheelchair standard	Project Manager, Housing Enabling/Access Officer	Ongoing	R = staff time/RSL time	UDP and London Plan targets – monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	
Target for renewable energy?					
Progress plans for building new family homes on underused HRA land	Project Manager, Housing Enabling	Ongoing	R = staff time Capital = source to be identified	Option appraisal complete March 2008	
Deliver extensions/deconversions using sub regional funding	Housing Enabling Manager	March 2008	R = staff time Capital = Sub regional LHP funding	2 units delivered by March 2008. Pipeline established for 2008/9.	

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Objective 5: Delivering Quality Services					
Priority: Improving Customer Care and Quality of Service through partnerships and best use of resources					
Priority Actions	Responsibility	Completion date	Resources (R=revenue) (C= Capital)	Performance indicators and Targets	
Increase customer satisfaction	Resident Services Manager	March 2010		Overall satisfaction: 2007/8 – 74% 2008/9 – 80% 2009/10 – 85% Opportunities to participate 2007/8 – 60% 2008/9 – 63% 2009/10 – 85% Repairs and Maintenance 2007/8 – 76% 2008/9 – 85% 2009/10 – 93%	
Review and develop a customer care training programme for front line staff	Housing Service Managers	March 2008	R		
Develop full recycling opportunities on housing estates.	Resident Services	April 2008	R		
Create a highly visible workforce on housing estates providing on the spot management resource	Resident Services	April 2008	R		

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Develop our partnering contract to deliver skills training and employment opportunities within the Borough, directly linked to the delivery of the Councils repairs and decent homes services.	Kier Resident Services Property Services	Kier contract for review in 2012	R		
Market test our grounds maintenance services to ensure that we achieve value for money and high quality service delivery.	Resident Services Public realm HFTRA	April 2008	Existing resources		
To improve census information regarding our customers in order for us to provide more enhanced service profiling and improve efficiency	Resident Services		R		
Proposed restructure of Resident Services Team to ensure greater focus on our HRA business plan priorities and improve our performance on income collection and Anti-Social behaviour.	Resident Services	December 2008	Existing resources R		
Continue to publicise our under occupation scheme and meet our annual targets for making more effective use of this stock	Resident Services	April 2008	R		
Devise and implement a race equality and diversity training programme for front line staff and managers.	Housing Strategy and resources Manager	Nov 2007	£4,000		
Ensure that race equality and diversity training is incorporated	Housing Strategy and	March 2008			

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into a core induction programme for new staff joining the council	resources Manager				
Priority: Increasing Accessibility of all of our services					
Priority Actions	Responsibility	Completion date	Resources (R=revenue) (C= Capital)	Performance indicators and Targets	
To expand the breadth of services provided by Access Harrow including rent, housing transfer applications, garage rentals, reporting of nuisance and ASB and general housing management enquiries.	Access Harrow Resident Services Manager Housing Needs	April 2008	R Existing		
Audit the availability of translated materials and review the quality of plain English in key documents	Housing Partnerships Manager	March 2008	Existing		
Improve communication with Locata members to raise awareness and understanding of Locata and increase satisfaction levels	Housing Provision Manager				
Review the availability of interpreters within the council / housing services to provide a more accessible interpretation service	Housing Partnership Manager	March 2008	Existing		
Review the procedure for housing staff about using interpreters and translators and develop a training programme	Housing Partnership Manager	March 2008	Existing		
Review publicity and awareness of Council:	Resident Services Manager				

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal Opportunities Policy • Racial Harassment Policy <p>to housing customers</p>					
Ensure commitment to the council's equal opportunities policy from all our staff, partners, contractors and consultants	Housing Service Managers	Ongoing			
Develop the housing pages of the council's website to identify areas where more accessible information is required.	Housing Partnership Manager	March 2008	Existing	BVPI	
Priority: Increased resident consultation and involvement around decision making					
Implementation of new tenancy conditions that set out a contractual requirement to consult with residents on key decisions.	Resident Services HFTRA	September 2007	R		
Continue to promote associations across the spectrum of households in Harrow. To continue our proactive work around hard to reach groups	Resident Services HFTRA HCRE Partnership Unit	2007-2012			
To work with HFTRA to move our participation beyond its traditional boundaries.	Resident Services HFTRA	Ongoing	Existing		

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	HCRE				
Increase BME resident participation in the borough	Resident Services Strategy & Resources Manager	Ongoing	Existing		

Statistical annex to follow

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Access Harrow	The Council's customer contact centre
Accompanied viewings	Viewings of an empty property by a prospective tenant accompanied by a member of Harrow's staff
Adaptations	Work to a property to make it suitable for a tenant with physical or sensory disabilities e.g. installation of a lift or shower
Affordable housing	Subsidised housing for rent or shared ownership, for people who cannot afford to buy a property on the open market
Alleygating	Putting lockable gates at either end of an alleyway to prevent it being used for flytipping etc and to increase security
Arms length management organisations	Companies (or other legal bodies) set up and owned by the Council – but operating separately from it and governed by its own board– to manage services on behalf of the Council.
ASB (Antisocial Behaviour)	Any unreasonable behaviour by others that affects the quiet enjoyment of a home and its surroundings. This would include harassment, intimidation, verbal abuse etc.
Benchmarking	The process of comparing an organisation's costs and performance with other similar organisations
Best Value	The process of ensuring the continuous improvement of public services, through service reviews, <i>benchmarking</i> , consultation and inspection.
BME (Black and minority ethnic)	Groups of people within local communities whose race is in the minority within the UK
BP	Business Plan
BPSA (Business Plan Statistical Appendix)	Set of statistics provide to the Government by Council housing organisations
BTP (Business Transformation Programme)	Project aimed at improving customer access and systems within Harrow, including development of a contact centre (Access Harrow) and one-stop

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Term	Definition
	shop; integrated management information services etc
BVPI (Best Value Performance Indicator)	<i>Performance indicator</i> that is required by the Government to assess whether the Council is providing <i>Best Value</i>
Cabinet	Council committee that makes corporate Council decisions.
Capital expenditure	Money spent to buy or improve assets (e.g. land or buildings)
Capital receipt	Money received for the sale of a capital asset (e.g. land or buildings)
CCTV (Closed Circuit Television)	Camera used to film activity that can be monitored live
Choice-based lettings	A scheme in which people in need of <i>affordable housing</i> can ask to be considered for specific vacant Council or RSL homes, instead of homes being allocated to applicants on waiting lists on the basis of housing need
CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants)	The body that sets the guidelines for Council financial accounts
CLG (Communities and Local Government)	Government department responsible for formulating and implementing Government housing policy
Codeman	Stock condition database used in Harrow
Cyclical Repairs	Maintenance carried out on a cyclical basis (e.g. every 10 years).
Deconversion	Turning a property that has been converted into flats back into a single home
Depooling	Separating service charges from rent
DHS (Decent Homes Standard)	Target set by Government for all social housing providers to meet in their homes by 2010. In brief, a decent home will have to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet the current statutory minimum standards for housing • be in a reasonable state of repair • have reasonably modern facilities and services • provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
DSO (Direct Service Organisation)	Council department that operates in the same way as a private contractor.
Estate services	Services provided to the external areas of estates such as grounds maintenance, refuse collection and recycling facilities

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Term	Definition
Extra Care housing	Sheltered housing with additional facilities to allow staff to provide extra support for people who need it
Financial Freedoms Project	Government project looking at allowing more financial freedoms for excellent housing authorities
Former Tenant Arrears	Rent arrears owed to the Council by tenants who have now left a property
GF (General Fund)	The Council's financial account that deals with income and expenditure relating to all the Council's services
GLA (Greater London Authority)	Authority responsible for across-London policy
HFTRA (Harrow Federation of Tenants and Residents Association)	A formally recognised and constituted consultative body, made up of recognised representatives from all recognised and registered resident associations and community groups
HIPSP (Harrow Integrated Property Services Partnership Project)	A new £125m. contract with Kier Construction, who will be responsible for the repair and maintenance of all Council housing, as well as schools and other local authority owned buildings
HouseMark	An organisation that provides guidance on best practice and benchmarking services for housing organisations
Housing association	See <i>Registered Social Landlord</i>
Housing Quality Network	An organisation that provides guidance on best practice and benchmarking services for housing organisations
HRA (Housing Revenue Account)	The Council's financial account that deals with income and expenditure relating to the management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock.
HRA subsidy	An annual revenue subsidy provided to local authorities by the Government to help with the management and maintenance of their housing stock
IT	Information Technology
ITA (Independent Tenants Adviser)	An external agency, independent of the landlord, employed during a major project to work on behalf of the tenants. An ITA provides independent information and impartial advice, as well as support and assistance,

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Term	Definition
	enabling tenants to understand the processes involved in the project and to play an active role in any negotiations.
LOCATA	The <i>choice-based lettings</i> scheme that Harrow offers
Mediation	A method of resolving disputes between two parties using a third, external party, known as a mediator, who tries to bring the two opposing parties to an understanding of the issues, including each other's point of view
Minor Estate Improvements fund	A fund available to fund works to the environment of estates e.g. play areas, planting, improved lighting
Minor Works team	Team within Property Services that provides the repairs and maintenance service to Housing
MORI	A market research organisation that carried out Harrow's latest <i>STATUS survey</i>
MRA (Major repairs allowance)	Annual Government subsidy given to local authorities to assist with the maintenance of their housing stock, calculated by a formula based on the type and age of the housing stock
Mystery shopping	A form of market research which uses customers to assess services. Individuals are trained to pose as customers and undertake a series of agreed tasks, aimed at monitoring service delivery.
OT (Occupational Therapist)	Professional trained to assess the needs of physically-disabled people
Partnering	A contract in which the client and contractor have a closer relationship, sharing the risk, often avoiding the time and cost of tendering.
PI (Performance Indicator)	Specific measured pieces of information that show how well a Council has performed in relation to a target
Portfolio Holder	A senior councillor, who is a member of the <i>Cabinet</i> , responsible for specific areas of Council work (e.g. housing, finance etc).
Post-inspection of repairs	Inspecting repair work after it has been completed to check that it has been done properly

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Term	Definition
Pre-inspection of repairs	Inspecting reported problems to assess what sort of repair is needed
Pre-void inspection	Assessing the condition of a property which is about to become empty
Property Services	Department within Harrow Council that is responsible for the maintenance of Council-owned buildings etc
Protocol	Agreement between different teams/organisations about how clients should be referred from one to the other
Prudential borrowing	The ability of Councils to borrow to fund capital expenditure, but only as much as they know they could pay back over the years of the loan, from their day-to-day income
RSL (Registered Social Landlord)	A non-profit making organisation (usually a housing association) that is registered with, and regulated by, the Housing Corporation.
Rent restructuring and rent convergence	A Government requirement that all councils and <i>RSLs</i> must re-calculate their rent levels, by reference to individual property values, regional and national earnings, national average rent levels and numbers of bedrooms. Nationally, council and <i>RSLs</i> must also ensure that their rent levels are brought in line with each other by 2010.
RCCO (Revenue contributions to capital outlay)	Rental or other income used to pay for capital expenditure
Resident Services	The team within Harrow Council that provides tenancy and estate management to tenants
Responsive Repairs	Repairs that are done because a part of the building fails rather than in a planned way
RTB (Right to Buy)	A Government scheme that allows Council tenants to buy their own home from the Council.
RTM (Right to Manage)	Statutory right of local authority tenants to take over the management of their homes by setting up a Tenant Management Organisation
Service Level Agreement	An agreement covering the services that one department within an organisation will provide to another, or one organisation will provide to

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Term	Definition
	another.
Sheltered housing	Independent accommodation provided to elderly people, with support from a warden and an emergency call facility, usually having a communal lounge facility
Social landlords	Generally, <i>RSLs</i> and local authorities.
SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure)	A measure of how energy efficient a property is, between a score of 0 (low) and 120 (high)
SAP	Type of business computer software
Sensitivity analysis	
Snagging	Minor additional work that needs to be done after major works are completed
SNT (Safer Neighbourhoods Team)	Team of police and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who aim to identify and tackle neighbourhood issues such as anti-social behaviour, graffiti, noisy neighbours, vandalism etc.
STATUS survey	Standardised tenants' satisfaction survey conducted every three years
Stock condition survey	A survey of the inside and the outside of some of a council's properties, that gives an indication of the condition of all the properties
Stock Options Appraisal	A process to determine the most appropriate future ownership and management of the Council's housing stock
Supporting People	A Government initiative which brought together sources of funding for supported housing into county-wide "pots" for distribution to supported housing providers within the County, based on locally determined priorities, through agreed contracts
System-built	Built in a non-traditional way using prefabricated parts such as a steel frame, large concrete panel, timber frame etc
Target rent	The individual rents for properties that councils and housing associations should aim to charge by 2012, based on a Government formula
Telecare	Assistive technology project which uses sensors to alert the Council if an

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Term	Definition
	older or vulnerable tenant's usual living pattern is disrupted so that emergencies can be identified and help provided
Third Party Reporting site	Place other than police station where victims of domestic violence or hate crime can report what is happening to them in confidence
TLCF (Tenants and Leaseholders Consultative Forum)	Forum which consists of representatives from the HFTRA, residents' focus groups, the Leaseholder Support Group, tenant management organisations, community groups, forums, and elected members and provides a two-way link between tenants and leaseholders and the Council to discuss issues affecting all tenants and leaseholders in the borough.
TMO (Tenant Management Organisation)	Organisations where tenants have taken over the running of some or all of the services on their estate
TRA (Tenants and Residents Associations)	Voluntary group made up of people who live in a particular area or estate, who have got together to have their say on local issues, improve their area or organise social events
Underoccupation	Situation where a household is living in a property that is too big for their needs
Useable Right to Buy Capital Receipts	Proceeds from sales of Right to Buy properties – only a proportion of these can be used directly by the Council as the rest goes to the Government and these are the "useable" receipts
Void properties	Empty (vacant) properties.