

7 July 2008



# **Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013**

**Hertsmere Borough Council**

**May 2008**

# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	
The purpose of the Homelessness Strategy	4
Hertsmere in 2008	4
The Experience of homelessness in Hertsmere	8
Priority Groups	9
<b>2. Contexts</b>	
2.1 The National Context	9
2.2 The Regional Context	10
2.3 The County Context	11
2.4 The Sub-Regional Context	12
2.5 The Local Context	13
<b>3. Progress from the Homelessness Strategy 2003</b>	14
<b>4. Needs Analysis</b>	
Households accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation.	15
4.2 Single homeless households, including those deemed to non-priority under homelessness legislation.	17
4.3 Households occupying temporary accommodation	18
4.4 Residents of registered social landlords	19
4.5 Young people	20
4.6 A comparison of homelessness in Hertsmere and neighbouring boroughs	21
<b>5. Partnership Working</b>	
Tenants/potential tenants of the private rented sector	21
Tenants of registered social landlords	22
Young families	23
Young people	23
Victims of domestic violence	23
Residents of temporary accommodation	24
People with special needs	24
Single homeless	24
Owner-occupiers	24

<b>6. Priorities</b>	25
<b>7. Resources</b>	26
<b>8. Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	27
<b>9. Action Plan</b>	
<b>10. Appendices</b>	

Appendix One:-	Comparison of homelessness in the four south-west Hertfordshire local authorities
Appendix Two:-	Progress since 2003
Appendix Three:-	Households accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation 2005-2008
Appendix Four:-	Homeless households deemed non-priority need 2006-2007
Appendix Five:-	Households in temporary accommodation 2006-2008
Appendix Six:-	Attendees at the Homelessness Review Partners Consultation Event, November 2007

## **A list of tables**

Table 1:-	Hertsmere's Housing Register December 2007 – earnings data
Table 2:-	Unemployed persons in Hertsmere and the county of Hertfordshire
Table 3:-	Average prices by property type
Table 4:-	Price ranges of cheapest five dwellings
Table 5:-	Ranges of rents in cheapest five dwellings
Table 6:-	Total number of homelessness applications 2006-2008
Table 7:-	Households unintentionally homeless and in priority need, 2006-2008 – age of head of household
Table 8:-	Households unintentionally homeless and in priority need 2006-2008 – type of household
Table 9:-	Household unintentionally homeless and in priority need 2006-2008 – reason for loss of last settled accommodation.
Table 10:-	Progress made in Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The purpose of the Homelessness Strategy

The Homelessness Code of Guidance (July 2006) defines homelessness as follows:-

*A person or household is statutorily homeless if they do not have accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them, and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in. It would not be reasonable for someone to continue to live in their own home, for example, if that would lead to violence against them or a member of their family.*

The vision which we hope to realise for the Hertsmere Homelessness Strategy is:-

- To prevent homelessness occurring. We will measure this through a reduction in the number of homelessness applications received by the Council.
- To tackle homelessness in a more effective way. We will measure this by an increase in the number of housing options and services which we can offer homeless households when they approach the Council for assistance to assist them in acquiring and sustaining settled accommodation.

### 1.2 Hertsmere in 2008

Hertsmere is a small borough located north of London. The borough consists of 38 square miles and has a population of approximately 96,000, a total which is likely to grow by 10% over the next 20 years. The main settlements are Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar, Radlett and Shenley. There is a number of smaller settlements in rural parts of the borough. Hertsmere Council transferred its housing stock to two housing associations in 1994:-

- William Sutton Homes, formerly Ridgehill Housing Association, owns 4,129 affordable homes in Borehamwood, Potters Bar, Radlett and Shenley
- Aldwyck Housing Association owns 1,701 affordable homes in Bushey and Potters Bar.
- Together, William Sutton Homes and Aldwyck Housing Association own 91% of the affordable housing in Hertsmere

A number of other registered social landlords are active in the borough, including Paradigm, Metropolitan, Hightown Praetorian and Churches, Genesis, Stonham and Home Group. The total amount of housing stock owned by registered social landlords on 1 April 2007 was 6,382 houses, flats and bungalows.

Hertsmere Council produced its first homelessness review and strategy in July 2003. Chapter 3 will give information on how the strategy's action plan has been implemented. Significant progress has been achieved since 2003 in terms of the homelessness strategy and the more general housing strategy. However, Hertsmere is a dynamic borough which has experienced considerable economic, demographic and social change during the past five years. New challenges have presented themselves. We aim to meet these new challenges in the second homelessness strategy and its action plan.

Some challenges faced by Hertsmere Council:-

#### In-migration from London

With 80% of its area consisting of green belt land, its excellent rail links with the capital, and its attractive settlements and good facilities, Hertsmere is a desirable destination for households wishing to move out of greater London. Competition for housing between long-term residents and in-comers is significant, with consequent effects on house prices and rents. In-migration to the borough is partially characterised by the growth of vibrant minority ethnic and faith communities who wish to move to the borough because of excellent proximity to cultural facilities. The Jewish and Muslim communities in the borough in particular are thriving.

#### The Hertsmere Economy

The 2001 Census recorded that 37% of the population commute 10 kilometres or more to get to their place of work, which supports qualitative data that a large proportion of residents work in London. However, the borough itself retains a strong economic identity, with its significant centres of employment located in the wards of Borehamwood Kenilworth, Potters Bar Parkfield, Borehamwood Hillside, Aldenham West and Bushey North. In addition, 10% of the population work at home. However, the Census also recorded that between 50% and 57% of people in the borough's least affluent areas, the four Borehamwood wards, commute less than 10 kilometres to get to work (compared to a borough average of 49%), indicating that the local economy is an important sources of employment for residents with less purchasing power.

During the past five years Hertsmere's economy has been characterised by the development of a strong service sector economy. However, the earnings levels within this sector are often insufficient to allow entry to the local housing market. In December 2007 research into economically active households on the borough's Housing Register revealed typical earnings levels among households in housing need:-

Table 1	Hertsmere's Housing Register December 2007 – earnings data			
	<u>1 bedroom queue</u> 601 Total 233 Total Survey sample 128 Survey sub-sample on earnings	<u>2 bedroom queue</u> 371 Total 152 Total Survey sample 63 Survey sub-sample on earnings	<u>3 bedroom queue</u> 267 Total 125 Total Survey sample 60 Survey sub-sample on earnings	<u>4 bedroom queue</u> 38 Total 29 Total Survey sample 8 Survey sub-sample on earnings
Earnings Levels				
£ 0 - £ 4,999	10 8%	6 10%	4 7%	3
£ 5,000 - £ 9,999	17 13%	5 8%	14 23%	1
£ 10,000- £ 14,999	37 30%	13 21%	6 10%	1
£ 15,000 - £ 19,999	31 24%	18 28%	12 20%	-
£ 20,000 - £ 24,999	19 15%	9 14%	6 10%	1
£ 25,000 - £ 29,999	6 5%	6 10%	7 12%	-
£ 30,000+	8 6%	6 10%	11 18%	2
<b>Total</b>	128	63	60	8

*The Survey sub-sample on earnings consists of all households within the Total Survey sample who were economically active and were prepared to disclose their earnings on their housing register application form.*

Hertsmere's rate of unemployment is generally consistent with the County rate:-

7 July 2008

Table 2	Hertsmere – unemployed persons		Hertfordshire County – unemployed persons	
	Total number	% of economically active residents	Total number	% of economically active residents
February 2008	771	1.3%	8,311	1.3%
June 2007	867	1.5%	9,082	1.4%
February 2007	940	1.7%	10,152	1.6%
June 2006	889	1.6%	10,276	1.6%

Source:- National Statistics (NOMIS) taken from Hertfordshire County Council website.

### Housing Prices and Rents

House prices in Hertsmere are generally higher than the Hertfordshire averages. In January 2008 a comparison of Hertsmere prices with the county average was as follows:-

Table 3	Average prices by property type			
	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat/Maisonette
Borehamwood and Elstree	£ 682,700	£ 310,200	£ 251,600	£ 184,900
Bushey	£ 548,400	£ 330,400	£ 280,800	£ 184,300
Potters Bar	£ 595,800	£ 327,400	£ 275,600	£ 172,900
Radlett	£ 763,500	£ 414,900	£ 324,100	£ 180,000
County Average	£ 575,500	£ 316,600	£ 239,500	£ 181,900

Source:- HM Land Registry, extracted from Hertfordshire County Council website.

A study in March 2008 revealed the cheapest prices levels of general needs accommodation which was then available for sale in the areas of Hertsmere:-

Table 4	Price ranges of cheapest five dwellings			
	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
Borehamwood and Elstree Postcode WD6	£ 137,950 – £ 139,950	£ 139,950- £ 176,950	£ 169,950 – £ 217,950	£ 217,950 – £ 249,950
Radlett and Shenley Postcode WD7	£ 154,950 – £ 189,950	£ 199,950 – £ 239,950	£ 234,950 – £ 320,000	£ 417,000 – £ 465,000
Bushey Postcode WD23	£ 162,950 – £ 164,950	£ 184,950 – £ 189,995	£ 199,950 – £ 244,950	£ 265,000 – £ 339,950
Potters Bar Postcode EN6	£ 139,950 – £ 145,000	£ 159,995 – £ 189,950	£ 210,000 – £ 249,950	£ 300,000 – £ 385,000

Source:- The RightMove website

The least expensive properties for sale in the borough are mobile homes, purpose-built retirement housing for older people, flats over shops, and former housing association-owned flats.

The same study revealed the cheapest rents of privately rented accommodation in the borough:-

Table 5	Range of rents of cheapest five dwellings			
	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
Borehamwood and Elstree Postcode WD6	£ 600 - £ 650	£ 800 - £ 850	£ 900 - £ 1,032	£ 1,250 - £ 1,500
Radlett and Shenley Postcode WD7	£ 700 - £ 725	£ 850 - £ 880	£ 833 - £ 1,250	£ 1,700 - £ 1,750

7 July 2008

<b>Bushey Postcode WD23</b>	£ 600 - £ 745	£ 750 - £ 825	£ 775 - £ 1,100	£ 1,100 - £ 1,720
<b>Potters Bar Postcode EN6</b>	£ 600 - £ 750	£ 680 - £ 850	£ 900 - £ 1,100	£ 1,560 - £ 1,850

Source:- RightMove website

### Numbers of households on the Council's Housing Register

The numbers of households in the Council's Housing Register since 2003 has been as follows:-

1 April 2003 – 650  
 1 April 2004 – 892  
 1 April 2005 – 959  
 1 April 2006 – 897\*  
 1 April 2007 – 1,363\*  
 1 April 2008 – 1,443

*\*the reason for the significant rise in homelessness between 2006 and 2007 was that the criteria for eligibility for the Housing Register was revised, increasing the number of people entitled to join the Housing Register.*

### Total number of lettings

1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004      460  
 1 April 2004 – 31 March 2005      497  
 1 April 2005 – 31 March 2006      346  
 1 April 2006 – 31 March 2007      439  
 1 April 2007 – 31 March 2008      310

### Number of affordable dwelling completed

April 2003 – March 2004      74  
 April 2004 – March 2005      18  
 April 2005 – March 2006      132  
 April 2006 - March 2007      77  
 April 2007 – March 2008      95

### Total number of homelessness applications 2006-2008

<b>Table 6</b>	<b>2006-2007</b>		<b>2007-2008</b>	
<b>Unintentionally homelessness, and in priority need</b>	73	19%	87	24%
<b>Intentionally homeless</b>	14	4%	16	5%
<b>Homeless but not in priority need</b>	111	28%	66	18%
<b>Not homeless</b>	185	47%	180	51%
<b>Ineligible</b>	7	2%	8	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>		<b>357</b>	

### Households unintentionally homeless and in priority need 2006-2008 – Age of Household Head

<b>Table 7</b>	<b>2006-2007</b>		<b>2007-2008</b>	
<b>16-24 years old</b>	24	33%	33	38%
<b>25-44 years old</b>	37	51%	47	54%
<b>45-59 years old</b>	8	11%	6	7%
<b>60-64 years old</b>	4	5%	-	
<b>65-74 years old</b>	-		1	1%
<b>75+ years old</b>	-		-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>		<b>87</b>	

Households unintentionally homeless and in priority need 2006-2008 – Type of Household

<b>Table 8</b>	<b>2006-2007</b>		<b>2007-2008</b>	
<b>Couple with dependent children</b>	23	32%	20	23%
<b>Lone male parent</b>	5	7%	1	1%
<b>Lone female parent</b>	25	34%	52	60%
<b>One person household – male</b>	9	12%	7	8%
<b>One person household – female</b>	7	9%	4	5%
<b>Other type of household</b>	4	6%	3	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>		<b>87</b>	

Households unintentionally homeless and in priority need 2006-2008 – Reason for Loss of Last Settled Accommodation

<b>Table 9</b>	<b>2006-2007</b>		<b>2007-2008</b>	
<b>Parents not longer willing to accommodate</b>	15	21%	22	25%
<b>Other family or friends not longer willing to accommodate</b>	7	10%	8	9%
<b>Non violent breakdown of relationship</b>	9	12%	12	14%
<b>Violent breakdown of relationship with partner</b>	13	18%	17	20%
<b>Other violence or harassment</b>	2	3%	-	-
<b>Mortgage Arrears</b>	2	3%	4	5%
<b>Rent arrears:-</b>				
~ local authority				
~ registered social landlord				
~ private landlord	1	1%	7	8%
<b>End of privately rented tenancy or tenancy of tied accommodation</b>	19	26%	14	16%
<b>Leaving prison</b>	-	-	1	1%
<b>Leaving hospital</b>	2	3%	1	1%
<b>Leaving local authority care</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Leaving National Asylum Support Service accommodation</b>	-	-	1	1%
<b>Other</b>	3	4%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>		<b>87</b>	

**1.3 The Experience of Homelessness in Hertsmere**

The most common reasons for homelessness in Hertsmere, for households accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation, are in descending order of frequency:-

- One:- Asked to leave by parents
- Two:- End of privately rented tenancy (for rent arrears and other reasons)
- Three:- Domestic Violence
- Four:- Non-violent relationship breakdown.

The most common reasons for homelessness in Hertsmere, for households accepted as homeless but deemed to be non-priority, are in descending order of frequency:-

- One:- Non-violent relationship breakdown
- Two:- Asked to leave by parents
- Three:- End of privately rented tenancy (for rent arrears and other reasons)



7 July 2008

A closer study of the homelessness applications reveal the extreme levels of distress experienced by homeless households and their hosts, exemplified by fierce arguments, irretrievable breakdown of family relationships, the inappropriate sharing of bedrooms and beds, parents and children sleeping on floors, and high use of temporary accommodation. This is illustrated by the following quotes from some homelessness applications:-

*"I can no longer have them here. They have been staying on the floor, the baby in my son's cot, and my son has had to stay in the bed with me and my husband. There is no room for me to have all these people in my home, and not enough beds."*

*"Things have got to the point where they can't live with us any longer. They walked out over an argument. They are causing stress all round".*

*"They're having to sleep on the floor with their baby – I've only got a one bedroom flat. As a night worker, this is causing stress between us."*

*"The situation has become stressful for us all. We have only two bedrooms and one bathroom. We advised her from day one that this is an impossible situation that could only go on for 28 days".*

*"There is no way she can live at home with the baby. I have given her notice to move out after the baby is born. There is just no room for her to live here with the baby."*

*"I regret that it has come to this, but the living conditions for my wife and I in our own home have become far too cramped. I feel it is not good for our health at our age."*

## **1.4 Priority Groups**

On the basis of the information which we have gathered, which is included in more detail in the *Needs Analysis* section, we have developed an action plan centred around both preventing and tackling homelessness among the following groups:-

- a) Tenants/potential tenants of the private rented sector
- b) Young Families
- c) Young People
- d) Victims of domestic violence
- e) Residents of temporary accommodation
- f) People with special needs
- g) Single/non-priority homeless
- h) Residents of registered social landlords
- i) Owner-occupiers.

## **2. Contexts**

The Hertsmere Homelessness Strategy is drawn up within the following range of contexts:-

### **2.1 The National Context**

### The Sustainable Communities Strategy

The Sustainable Communities Strategy, released in 2005, outlines the five areas which should be tackled within the homelessness context:-

- Preventing Homelessness
- Supporting Vulnerable People
- Sustaining reductions in rough sleeping
- Tackling wider causes and symptoms
- Improved access to settled homes

In addition, the Government announced a new package of measures in November 2006

- A commitment to end the use of Bed and Breakfast for 16 and 17 year olds except in emergencies.
- Family mediation and supported lodgings schemes to be developed.

### Every Child Matters (including 16 and 17 year olds)

This green paper was published in 2003, with a follow-up *Every Child Matters: the Next Steps* in 2004. This document acknowledges the high risk of poor outcomes for young people who become homeless in terms of the following:-

- Being healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Economic well-being.

We aim to ensure that the Hertsmere Homelessness Strategy Action Plan reflects this national context.

### Temporary Accommodation Target

The Government has set a target for each local authority to halve the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010. The baseline assessment is the end of December 2004.

## **2.2 The Regional Context**

### The Regional Housing Strategy

The Regional Housing Strategy for the East of England 2005-2010 acknowledges the fact that rising levels of homelessness and the associated use of temporary accommodation are both a feature across the East of England. The Regional Housing Development Group undertakes to complete the following in order to contribute to the alleviation of homelessness:-

- Review the knowledge from the Region's homelessness strategies for good practice and research the incidence of youth homelessness through its membership.
- Review the links with other strategies to ensure that action on homelessness and its causes are co-ordinated at the regional level.
- Build on its existing links with the East of England strategy for the rehabilitation of offenders to co-ordinate the accommodation pathway action plan, and consider piloting the needs assessment tool through its membership.
- Review Supporting People strategies as they are published and ascertain the implications from any changes to floating support.

7 July 2008

- Ensure that the sub-regions make the links with the Drug Action Teams in their strategies. The Regional Development Housing Group should pilot a sub-regional approach to tackling homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation.

In addition, the East of England Regional Assembly and Regional Housing Board will provide investment for new housing to enable the accommodation needs of homeless households to be met through an overall increase in the housing stock.

#### Hertsmere's role as Regional Centre of Excellence for Youth Homelessness

In June 2007 Hertsmere was designated the role of Regional Centre of Excellence for Youth Homelessness in the Eastern region. In carrying out this role we have worked primarily with two partners who specialise in assisting young people in housing need:- Herts Young Homeless Group and Aldwyck Housing Association. In undertaking this role, we have completed or will be completing the following:-

- A research project into youth homelessness in the Eastern region and the availability of schemes to prevent and tackle it. The research used a wide range of data sources.
- A conference on good practice in preventing and tackling youth homelessness. The conference was held in Cambridge on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2008 and was attended by 123 delegates from across the region. As well as plenary sessions from the Government and Shelter, there were nine workshops which focused on a range of methods for preventing and tackling youth homelessness which were being used in the Eastern region.
- Two seminars on the needs of particular homeless groups:- young people who are ex-offenders and young people leaving local authority care, held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2008 and 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008
- A brochure on youth homelessness in the eastern region. This will be completed by the end of October.

Our role as Regional Centre of Excellence for Youth Homelessness has been extended to Summer 2009 with additional funding. We are planning additional activities with Herts Young Homeless Group.

## **2.3 The County Context**

### The Local Area Agreement

Hertfordshire's Local Area Agreement 2006-2009 contains 79 targets aimed at improving the performance of services over a three year period. A total of 31 of these targets have a "performance reward grant" attached, where a financial reward is paid by the government in return for a level of performance above and beyond what would normally be expected. The reward can be invested in partnership work.

The four blocks within the Hertfordshire Local Area Agreement 2006-2009 are:-

- Economic Development and Enterprise
- Children and Young People
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Healthy Communities and Older People.

7 July 2008

The block of most relevance to homelessness is Children and Young People. The local authority is required to submit data on the young people accommodated in the borough each quarter.

### Supporting People

The Hertfordshire Supporting People strategy for 2007-2012 includes the following groups who are vulnerable to homelessness. The priority actions for each group are:-

#### *People with Mental Health Issues*

- A new mental health accommodation strategy
- More move-on accommodation
- More floating support services
- Research into examples of services for people with mental health issues who misuse drugs.

#### *Young People*

A county-wide integrated model of accommodation is being developed to include:-

- Advice, homelessness prevention and mediation services
- Crisis Intervention Provision
- Supporting Lodgings Placements
- A minimum of one medium-level supported accommodation based scheme in each district.
- Floating and/or resettlement support regardless of tenure.

This integrated model will be launched in July 2008.

#### *Homeless People*

- Remodelling of unsuitable hostel accommodation into modern appropriate accommodation for vulnerable homeless people
- Identification of ways to meet the target of reducing the use of hostel accommodation by 50% by 2010.
- Generic floating support/tenancy sustainment services to prevent vulnerable people becoming homeless.

#### *Substance Mis-users*

- Exploring the development of a floating support/tenancy sustainment service.

#### *Offenders and those at risk of offending*

- The introduction of floating support/tenancy sustainment services

#### *People Escaping Domestic Violence*

- Research on access routes and pathways to housing-related support.
- The option of delivering a proportion of required units via other services which either currently offer housing-related support or have the capacity to do so.

We work closely with the Supporting People team to assess how Hertsmere can benefit from these proposed schemes.

## 2.4 The Sub-Regional Context

### The London Commuter Belt Sub-region

Hertsmere is a member of the London Commuter Belt Sub-region which consists of all ten Hertfordshire local authority areas and five local authority areas in the western half of Essex. The sub-region is producing its own housing strategy which will directly link into each local authority's own housing strategy.

The sub-region's current draft housing contains the following which are relevant to homelessness:-

#### *Strategic Priority 4:- Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Groups*

- Monitor Best Practice across the sub-region within homelessness prevention and containment. Establish a work plan for the Sub-Regional Homelessness Group which will lead to best practice monitoring and development
- Investigate ways that negative outcomes from a housing market crash or downturn in the housing market can be negated, where possible, by intervention from the sub-region.

### Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford

The four local authorities have considerable similarities:- high demand for housing, complementary facilities, reasonable public transport links between the four areas, cross-boundary population movements. The four authorities have decided to form an informal consortium to perform the following functions:-

- Explore the potential for cross-boundary working and agreements
- Avoid duplication of services
- Monitor the implementation of each other's homelessness strategies.

In November 2007 the four local authorities held a Homelessness Action Day, inviting stakeholders in homelessness from all four areas to attend. The Action Day involved discussion of the most urgent issues which require plans and resources. More information on the results of the Action Day is in the chapter on *Partnerships*.

For a comparison of homelessness in the four local authority areas, please see Appendix One.

## 2.5 The Local Context

### Hertsmere Together – Hertsmere's Community Strategy

Hertsmere's Local Strategic Partnership has five strategic objectives. They are:-

- Create a safer environment
- Improve and sustain the quality of the environment
- Promote healthier communities and leisure and cultural opportunities
- Encourage economic development, lifelong learning, employment and regeneration opportunities
- Work towards meeting local housing needs.

Relevant priorities under the theme of Working towards meeting local housing needs are:-

- ~ increasing homelessness prevention activity
- ~ creating a new "key aim" within the action plan to "improve independent living"

7 July 2008

### The draft Hertsmere Strategic Housing Action Plan

The new Strategic Housing Action Plan will be completed and ready for implementation in September 2008. Relevant sections are:-

#### *Strategic Priority 1:- Maximising the delivery of new affordable homes*

- To maintain a sound evidence base for the development of affordable housing and the use of external research findings.
- To maximise the use of Council resources for the provision of affordable housing.
- To maximise the use of Social Housing Grant for the development of affordable housing.
- To maximise the delivery of additional units of affordable housing through the Planning process.

#### *Strategic Priority 2:- Creating a social inclusive sustainable community*

- To liaise with the Employment Service on the high levels of people in workless households who are homeless or in housing need.

#### *Strategic Priority 4:- Meeting the needs of vulnerable groups*

- To carry out regular assessments of applications for
  - ~ Housing Need
  - ~ Homelessness Assistance
- To establish a new service to advise people in housing need about alternative housing options.

#### *Strategic Priority 5:- Use of Existing Housing Stock*

- To complete the Empty Homes strategy and gain approval from Members
- To appoint a Tenancy Liaison Officer to provide assistance to both landlords and tenants in order to sustain privately rented tenancies.
- To introduce a pilot 12 month "top-up" scheme to supplement Housing Benefit and the new Local Housing Allowance.
- To research methods of reducing under-occupation.
- To review the Rent Deposit Scheme, and recommend and implement changes.
- To examine the feasibility of introducing private sector leasing.

### **3. Progress from the Homelessness Strategy 2003**

The Homelessness Strategy 2003 listed the following groups as having priority for action and resources:-

- a) Young People
- b) Older People
- c) Special Needs
- d) Tenants of the Private Rented Sector
- e) Victims of domestic violence and person who have experience relationship breakdown
- f) Prison leavers and those on Probation
- g) Ethnic Minority Groups, Gypsies and Travellers, and Asylum Seekers
- h) General.

A more detailed summary of all the tasks which have been achieved or are in progress is in Appendix Two. However, some headline achievements have been:-

**Table 10:-**

<b>Proposed solution to meet identified need/gap in provision</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
Rising numbers of homeless households who suffer from drug and alcohol abuse- require support	Better floating support mechanisms in place for people coming out of rehab.	Set up agreement with information provided to all parties	Completed
Providing low-level support to vulnerable people who are 16-17 years old and those who are young mothers.	Support youngsters in temporary accommodation and providing assistance with life skills and maintaining tenancies.	Development an agreement between Aldwyck Housing Association, Supporting People and Hertsmere Council	Completed – a eight place supported Living Over the Shop scheme assists young people and young mothers.
Working with Relate under new Government initiative to provide mediation with a Counsellor	To reduce homelessness among young people and make living with families more conducive.	Successful application for funding from Communities and Local Government.	Completed. Scheme started in June 2007.
Use of Language Line	To promote the availability of this service to members of black and minority ethnic communities.	Officers give clients the opportunity to have access to this facility if required.	Completed. For use as and when necessary.
Development of Rent Deposit/Guarantee scheme	Develop policy and payments scheme agreed by all Members	Policy and agreement drawn up and implemented.	Completed in May 2006.
Rising numbers applying as homeless – Crashpad Scheme required.	Preventing homelessness and improving the availability of temporary accommodation.	Set up agreement with Herts Young Homeless Group.	Completed. Crashpad scheme now operating and accepting referrals from Hertsmere through Herts Young Homeless Group.
Lack of knowledge of young people – working in schools to discuss prevention of homelessness for many youngsters.	Provide advice and support for youngsters to inform them of the reality of homelessness	Agreement with local secondary schools to provide advice as part of the citizenship programme.	Underway – the first talk given to Hertswood Secondary school in March 2008.

## **4. Needs Analysis**

Much has been achieved through the Hertsmere Homelessness Strategy 2003. However, a significant number of challenges must be overcome in order to reduce a real reduction in the incidence of homelessness and in improving services to those who have already become homeless. The client groups upon whom the new strategy will focus are:-

### **4.1 Households accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation.**

#### Analysis

Further information on households accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation is available in Appendix Three.

7 July 2008

From this data, a typical profile of a household accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation in Hertsmere is as follows:-

- A lone female parent with one child, or pregnant with her first child, or with two children
- 16-29 years old
- Currently living in one of the four Borehamwood wards
- Homelessness because of being asked to leave by parents or because of the end of a privately rented tenancy.
- Not working.

It is essential that we develop services around the households who are most at risk from homelessness. Therefore, young families will be a particular focus for this homelessness strategy. It is notable how the end of privately rented tenancies can play such a big role in causing homelessness. Young families can often experience the end of a privately rented tenancy, then return to live with parents and other family from whom they become homeless. While “asked to leave by parents” is the most immediate reasons for their homelessness, the end of a privately rented tenancy can be the root cause.

It is also significant that a large number of young families have “reached the point of no return” with regard to relations with their families/other relatives by the time they approach the Council for assistance. Relations have deteriorated to such an extent that they have to be admitted to temporary accommodation immediately, since there is no possibility of their families continuing to accommodate them, even for a short period of time. It is, therefore, extremely important that measures are introduced to improve the chances of privately rented tenancies being sustained, and that young families at risk from homelessness are proactively contacted before homelessness becomes imminent.

Victims of domestic violence continue to feature among homeless households who are assisted under homelessness legislation.

Discussions with Hertsmere Citizens Advice Bureau have also revealed that debt among families is rising, and inability to make mortgage payments may shortly become a very significant cause of homelessness in the borough

What has been achieved since 2003 to assist these groups?

The following measures can be said to have assisted groups most commonly found to be entitled to assistance under homelessness legislation:-

- Continuous development of the private rented sector to increase the supply of accommodation to households in need.
- Development of a Rent Deposit Scheme.
- Checking of privately rented accommodation to ensure its condition is satisfactory.
- Development of Landlord Forum.
- Development of the Living Over the Shop Scheme to assist young mothers in gaining independent living skills.
- Engaging Relate to provide a mediation service.

What needs to be done in 2008-2011?

- Ensure that a scheme is in place to reduce the possibility of rent arrears



- accruing from any shortfall between full rent levels and Housing Benefit levels in the private rented sector.
- Introduce a Tenancy Liaison Officer service to provide support to both landlords and tenants in the private rented sector.
  - To carry out research into the reasons why privately rented tenancies end and cause homelessness.
  - To set up a private sector leasing scheme for privately rented properties and flats over shops in the borough.
  - To examine the possibility of a low cost second hand furniture store in the borough.
  - To improve liaison with organisations who work with young families to create new conduits for advice on housing options, and to contact tenants of our main registered social landlords to advise them of housing advice services.
  - To introduce methods of reducing under-occupation to free-up homes for families most at risk from homelessness.
  - To look at methods of assisting young families to settle into their homes e.g. a decoration service.
  - To examine the possibility of a new higher supported housing scheme for young families, in addition to the Living Over the Shop scheme.
  - To research the need for a Sanctuary Scheme for victims of domestic violence in the borough.
  - To research the need for any special provision for 16 and 17 year olds who become homeless because of domestic violence.
    - To examine the need for a specialist adviser on mortgage issues.

## **4.2 Single Homeless Households, including those deemed to be non-priority under homelessness legislation**

### Analysis

Further information on households deemed to be non-priority under homelessness legislation can be found under Appendix Four.

From this data, a typical profile of a household who consists of a single person or is deemed to be non-priority under homelessness legislation in Hertsmere is as follows:-

- A Single Male
- 25-44 years old
- Currently living in one of the four Borehamwood wards
- Homeless because of relationship breakdown
- Not working.

It is essential that we develop services around the households who are most at risk from homelessness. The Homelessness Team generally provide a good service for this group in terms of advice on joining the housing register, referrals to the Watford YMCA and St. Albans Night Shelter, and on how to find lodgings and a privately rented property. However, because of the high numbers involved it would be worthwhile to look at additional initiatives for this group.

What has been achieved since 2003 to assist this group?:-

7 July 2008

- Improvement of links with private landlords, particularly to assist households with mental illness.
- Homelessness Team monitoring the number of ex-forces personnel who have approached the Council for assistance.
- Better links with the Probation Service.

#### What needs to be done in 2008-2011?

- To look at the possibility of a generic floating support scheme for people with a low level of learning disability or mental health problem.
- To carry out a Rough Sleeper Count.
- To examine the possibility of a SOLO scheme for single homeless people, as is managed in the nearby borough of Three Rivers.
- To produce nomination agreements for ex-offenders and substance mis-users.

### **4.3 Households occupying Temporary Accommodation**

#### Analysis

The Government has set a target for all local authorities to meet the target of halving the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010. The baseline assessment is the end of December 2004. On 31 December 2004 Hertsmere had a total of 59 households in temporary accommodation. Therefore, we have a target to ensure that the number of households in temporary accommodation by 1 January 2010 is no more than 29.

Households have to use temporary accommodation when they simply have nowhere else to go. Hertsmere uses a range of temporary accommodation, from self-contained flats over shops to hostels. Bed and breakfast is used only in an emergency – most households who are initially placed in bed and breakfast are able to move on to other temporary accommodation after a short period of time.

For homeless households who have occupied temporary accommodation, please see Appendix Five which gives information on the 181 households who approached Hertsmere for assistance under homelessness legislation and entered temporary accommodation between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2008.

The household most at risk from having to use temporary accommodation consists of 1 adult and 1 child or 1 adult and 2 children. The majority of households are rehoused. The second biggest outcome is that they return home, and the third biggest outcome is that they leave without giving details of their forwarding address.

It is notable that the overwhelming majority of households who apply to the Council for assistance under homelessness legislation and who have priority need are in need of temporary accommodation. As on 5 April 2008, the date on which the research in Appendix 5 was compiled, 42 households who had applied to Hertsmere for assistance under homelessness legislation were accommodated in temporary accommodation. Of the 181 households in the survey, 166 (92%) of the households who entered temporary accommodation had a child or children or were pregnant with a first child.

Methods for attempting to reduce the number of households who enter temporary accommodation are presented under section 4.1. Further recommendations need to be made on how to support households when they are in temporary accommodation and how to ensure they are able to move on after a shorter period of time. The biggest obstacles to a household moving on to more settled accommodation are:-

- the household has accumulated rent arrears while in temporary accommodation. Allocation criteria reduce the likelihood of the offer of settled accommodation unless the arrears are cleared.
- the household is large and accommodation of three or more bedrooms is scarce.
- The property to which the household is moving is in poor decorative order and the household does not have the means to bring it up to a satisfactory standard.

What has been done since 2003 to assist this group?

- Further temporary accommodation obtained from Asset Grove and Watford Council.
- Improvement of services at Hepburn Court.
- Successful new development of affordable housing
- Increased percentage of relets from the two major RSLs from 50% to 75%.
- Increased priority on the Housing Register given to households in temporary accommodation.

What needs to be done in 2008-2011?

- To research and implement a scheme to reduce under-occupation, thereby freeing up family-sized homes.
- To research the need for any further support for residents of temporary accommodation.
- To investigate the possibility of a decoration scheme to assist young families when they move from temporary accommodation.
- To monitor regularly the use of temporary accommodation.
- To use more options for developing settled accommodation using the Council's resources.

#### **4.4 Residents of Registered Social Landlord**

Analysis

The borough's two largest registered social landlords (RSLs), William Sutton Homes and Aldwyck Housing Associations, have both completed statements/pledges on the action which they will undertake to assist homeless households. These actions include:-

- Building more homes, especially family-sized homes
- Developing good working relationships with Housing Benefit teams
- Signposting tenants to sources of debt advice.
- Providing a Welfare Rights Service.
- Liaising closely with Homelessness Teams.
- Visiting new tenants at an early stage to assess any problems.
- Monitoring rent accounts weekly and making contact with tenants who are experiencing difficulties.

7 July 2008

The Council wishes to assist registered social landlords in the borough in implementing their homelessness statements/pledges.

What has been done since 2003 to assist this group?

- Regular meetings at all levels and liaison between RSLs and the Council
- The funding of a debt adviser at the Citizens Advice Bureau by William Sutton Homes. Funding for this service will shortly also be provided by Aldwyck Housing Association.

What needs to be done in 2008-2011?

- To work with our RSL partners to assist in homelessness prevention, including measures to prevent rent arrears and any special tenancy arrangements for 16 and 17 year olds.

**4.5 Young People who have approached the Council and/or Herts Young Homeless Group for assistance.**

Analysis

Herts Young Homeless Group (HYHG) continue to provide an excellent service for young people aged 16-25 who apply for assistance as homeless. From 1 July 2008 HYHG will be providing an integrated support service for homeless young people throughout Hertfordshire in partnership with Aldwyck Housing Association. HYHG has a base in Borehamwood which makes it a highly accessible service for this client group. A broad picture of young people who become homeless in Hertsmere is that they are mostly from the four Borehamwood wards and they have become homeless because their parents have asked them to leave home. A significant number suffer from depression or anxiety, or suffer from mild learning disabilities.

Herts Young Homeless Group see approximately 20 new clients each month from Hertsmere. HYHG have identified the following gaps in services for young people in the borough:-

- Floating support for young people
- Supported accommodation for young males, particularly those aged under 18 who have to be placed in housing schemes outside the borough.

What has been done since 2003 to assist this group?

- Mediation and Crashpad Scheme since October 2005
- Dedicated advice, intervention and support worker for the area employed by Herts Young Homeless Group.
- The Living Over the Shop scheme, which provides supported accommodation for young people, was operational from April 2006.
- 17 year olds now able to be placed on the Housing Register and accumulate points before they are eligible to receive offers of accommodation at the age of 18.
- Provision of a mediation service by Relate since July 2007.

What needs to be done in 2008-2011?

- To examine the possibility of a supported housing scheme for young males.
- To extend the education project on homelessness for young people in schools across the borough.
- To examine the needs of Care Leavers and plan any projects to assist this group.

- To examine the possibility of a local Room to View scheme, as operated by Herts Young Homeless Group in a neighbouring borough.

#### **4.6 A comparison of homelessness in Hertsmere with our neighbouring boroughs**

Section 2.4 provides information on Hertsmere's role within a sub-regional local authority grouping also consisting of Dacorum, Three Rivers and Watford.

Appendix One gives comparisons of the following within the four local authority areas:-

- Tenure
- Number of households on the housing register
- Total number of homelessness applications between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007, including the categories of application.
- Type of homeless households accepted for assistance between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007.
- The main reason for losing last settled home among households accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007.
- Total number of homelessness acceptances per year from 2002/2003 to 2006/2007.
- The age of head of household accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007.
- The ethnicity of households accepted for assistance under homelessness legislation between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007.

The most notable features of this data are:-

- Hertsmere has the lowest number of households on its Housing Register as on 1 April 2007.
- At 390, Hertsmere has the largest number of households who applied as homeless between April 2006 and March 2007. The next largest number was the 184 households who applied to Three Rivers for assistance. A significant number of Not Homeless decisions (47% of all applications) and Non Priority decisions (28% of all applications) were made by Hertsmere.
- In terms of Reasons for Loss of Last Settled Accommodation, Hertsmere is broadly in line with the other three local authorities in terms of all reasons for homelessness. Hertsmere has the biggest number and percentage of households who became homeless because of the violent breakdown of a relationship.
- Hertsmere had the lowest percentage of homelessness acceptances of households headed by a person aged between 16 and 24, and the highest percentage of households aged between 25 and 44. However, this may be because of the presence of Herts Young Homeless Group in the borough and the fact that people aged between 16 and 24 may prefer to approach HYHG directly for assistance rather than approach the Council.

## **5. Partnership Working**

7 July 2008

On 8 November 2007 a Homelessness Review Partners Consultation event was held in Hertsmere. Invitees were all stakeholders in homelessness across the four local authority areas of Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford. A list of the organisations who were represented is included in Appendix Six. Representatives from all organisations made recommendations on actions which should be adopted by the four local authorities.

Hertsmere Borough Council has incorporated the following recommendations from the Consultation Event into the homelessness strategy action plan:-

- a) Work should be undertaken in schools to teach young people about housing options and costs.
- b) Debt advice should be made more widely available and should be more accessible.
- c) "Top-up" funds should be made available to meet the difference between Housing Benefit levels and full rent levels.
- d) Floating Support should be made available for tenants of the private rented sector to help them sustain tenancies.
- e) Private Sector leasing schemes should be introduced.
- f) Sanctuary schemes should be introduced for victims of domestic violence.
- g) Registered Social Landlords should explore the possibilities of local lettings plans to achieve certain objectives e.g. tackling under-occupation.

For each priority group within the homelessness strategy action plan, Hertsmere Borough Council has a number of partners or potential partners who can assist in either preventing or tackling homelessness:-

### **Tenants/potential tenants of the Private Rented Sector**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- Hertsmere's Housing Benefit Team
- The Private Sector Housing Team
- Private Landlords
- Local lettings and estate agents
- Paddington Churches Housing Association/Pathmeads
- Neighbouring local authorities

#### Methods of Communication

- The Landlord Forum held one meeting in 2007. A further meeting is planned for Summer 2008.

### **Tenants of Registered Social Landlords**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- William Sutton Homes
- Aldwyck Housing Association
- Paradigm Housing Group
- Metropolitan Housing Group
- Genesis Housing Group

7 July 2008

- Hightown Praetorian and Churches Housing Association
- Hertsmere Citizens Advice Bureau

#### Methods of Communication

- RSL Liaison Group

### **Young Families**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- Herts Young Homeless Group
- Aldwyck Housing Association
- William Sutton Homes
- Hertsmere Citizens Advice Bureau
- Hertfordshire County Council – Children, Schools and Families, Supporting People
- Relate
- Homestart
- Health Visitors

#### Methods of Communication

- Hertsmere Housing Forum
- Homestart and Health Visitors will be approached as part of the initiative to disseminate information on housing options to young families.

### **Young People**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- Herts Young Homeless Group
- Aldwyck Housing Association
- Hertfordshire County Council – Children, Schools and Families, Supporting People
- Relate
- Local secondary schools
- Hertsmere Youth Forum

#### Methods of Communication

- Homelessness Panels
- Presentations to local secondary school pupils

### **Victims of Domestic Violence**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- Hertsmere Council's Community Safety Officer
- Herts Young Homeless Group
- The Police Domestic Violence Unit
- William Sutton Homes
- Aldwyck Housing Association

7 July 2008

- Victim Support
- St. Albans Housing Women's Refuge
- Hertfordshire County Council Domestic Violence Co-ordinator
- Pathmeads

#### Methods of Communication

- Domestic Violence Forum

### **Residents of Temporary Accommodation**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- William Sutton Homes
- Irish Centre Housing
- Asset Grove

#### Methods of Communication

Not yet formalised.

### **People with Special Needs**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- Adult Care Services
- The Probation Service
- Stonham Housing Association
- Herts Young Homeless Group
- Hertfordshire County Council – Supporting People

#### Methods of Communication

- Substance Misuse Group
- Ex-offenders Accommodation Group

### **Single Homeless**

#### The Partners/Potential Partners

- Paradigm Housing Group
- Watford YMCA
- St. Albans Nightshelter
- Worknet

#### Methods of Communication

- Discussions to take place with Paradigm Housing Group on the possibility of a SOLO scheme.
- Discussions to take place with Worknet on a combined housing and employment advice service.



## Owner-Occupiers

### The Partners/Potential Partners

- Hertsmere Citizens Advice Bureau

### Methods of Communication

- Not yet formalised.

## 6. Priorities

In devising the priorities for action and resources within the new Homelessness Strategy, the data within Tables 6, 7,8 and 9 and Appendices three and five have been taken into account. Therefore, the top four priorities within this strategy will be the following groups:-

- a) Young families (*9 tasks in the action plan*)
- b) Tenants/potential tenants of the private rented sector (*4 tasks in the action plan*)
- c) Victims of domestic violence (*2 tasks in the action plan*)
- d) Young people (*4 tasks in the action plan*)

Groups a) – c) form the majority of homeless applicants in Hertsmere so action and resources must be targeted at them in order to reduce homelessness.

Although young people do not feature highly in terms of applications for assistance to Hertsmere Council, the majority in housing need approach Herts Young Homeless Group for help. HYHG's very accessible location in Borehamwood High Street makes the service approachable for young people. Herts Young Homeless Group receive on average 20 approaches from new clients each month. Therefore, young people continue to need to be awarded high priority within the homelessness strategy.

The following sections give reasons why certain groups have not been awarded high priority within the homelessness strategy.

Older People – in a change from the homelessness strategy of 2003-2008, older people have not been awarded any priority within the new homelessness strategy. Table 7 and Appendix Three show that homelessness among older people is not currently a significant problem in Hertsmere. A range of initiatives for ensuring better accommodation and services for older people will be included in the new Hertsmere Housing Strategy.

Persons from minority ethnic and faith communities - no specific category for these groups has been included in the new homelessness strategy. This is because all services, including those for the four high priority groups a) – d) should be responsive to members from minority ethnic and faith communities. Housing and support initiatives especially for these groups are contained within the new Hertsmere Housing Strategy.

Gypsies and Travellers – Gypsies and Travellers at present do not feature among homelessness applicants in Hertsmere. The Housing team is working closely with the Planners on the future provision of pitches in the borough for Gypsies and Travellers, and this will be included within the new Hertsmere Housing Strategy. The Housing team will be advising particularly on the design of new sites and the provision of management services.

## 7. Resources

Much of the work to be undertaken to complete the tasks within the Action Plan can be met from existing resources. Special resources available for homelessness initiatives are:-

### 7.1 Homelessness Funding – Communities and Local Government

Since 2003 Hertsmere has received the total of £ 30,000 per year in Homelessness Grant. This sum has been used to fund the services provided to young people in Hertsmere by Herts Young Homeless Group.

From July 2008 the service provided by Herts Young Homeless Group will be funded by Supporting People and the Crouchfield Trust. In addition, for this year Hertsmere will receive an increased sum of £ 50,000. This sum will be spent on the following two posts:-

- The Tenancy Liaison Officer – this post will be funded jointly by Hertsmere Borough Council and Watford Borough Council. The officer will work across the two local authorities to provide support to tenants of the private rented sector who have accessed their accommodation through the rent deposit schemes within each local authority. The Tenancy Liaison Officer will also provide support to landlords.
- Housing Options Officer - this post will provide a more proactive approach to presenting housing options to households in housing need.
- Housing Supply Officer – This new post will focus on increasing the supply of accommodation from the private sector for households in housing need. This includes private sector leasing and re-use of empty homes.

### 7.2 Regional Centre of Excellence for Youth Homelessness – Communities and Local Government

In June 2007 Hertsmere became the Regional Centre of Excellence for Youth Homelessness and received £ 20,000 to organise initiatives to disseminate good practice on youth homelessness across the eastern region. Initiatives either completed or currently planned are:-

- A research project on youth homelessness in the eastern region.
- A regional conference on youth homelessness which took place on 27 February 2008.
- Two seminars, one on young people who are ex-offenders and one on young people leaving local authority care. These will take place in June and July 2008.
- A brochure on youth homelessness across the eastern region.

Communities and Local Government have awarded Hertsmere a further £ 10,000 to continue this role until Summer 2009. Hertsmere is currently engaged in discussions with Herts Young

Homeless Group on further activities which can be undertaken to improve methods of preventing and tackling youth homelessness across the eastern region.

### **7.3 Other sources of funding**

Details of the other actual or proposed sources of funding which can be used to prevent and tackle homelessness are given in the Action Plan. They include:-

- Corporate funding such as a supplement to Local Housing Allowance (Task 1)
- Community Investment funding
- Contributions from registered social landlords
- The Council's ringfenced housing options fund (composed of a number of sources including sales of land and assets). This fund can support initiatives such as the scheme to reduce under-occupation of family-sized homes.
- Social Housing Grant
- Supporting People funding for both accommodation-based schemes and floating support.
- County Council contributions to groups who are particularly vulnerable to homelessness such as young people leaving local authority care.
- Contributions from organisations who work within the remit of Community Safety to assist groups such as victims of domestic violence.

## **8. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The regular monitoring of the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy will take place at the meetings of the Hertsmere Housing Forum which take place once every three months. Members of the forum will receive a report and a presentation on progress made in implementing each of the 26 tasks in the Action Plan.

Regular meetings will also take place with the Homelessness Strategy Group which consists of representatives from Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford.

Although the Homelessness Strategy covers a five year period, the Hertsmere Action Plan allows for periodic reviews and evaluations to take place to allow for any required re-prioritisation. Much of the initial work within the tasks consists of production of feasibility reports on the proposals for schemes. The reports might disclose a general view that a proposed scheme is no longer required or is not feasible, in which case there will be no further progression in implementing it. However, no task will cease without the full consent of Hertsmere Housing Forum.