

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING STRATEGY 2006/2007 – 2008/9



*“Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive
borough with strong communities”*

HOUSING STRATEGY

2006/2007 – 2008/9

“Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive borough with strong communities”

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Quality Services For Local People

“Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities”

Foreword

Our Local Strategic Partnership's ambitions set out in the Community Strategy **Vision for Sedgefield Borough in 2014** is to ensure that Sedgefield Borough is a place where...

- People can live healthy, active and fulfilling lives as part of vibrant and strong communities
- High quality businesses can prosper and local people have the confidence and skills to access the jobs that they offer
- The natural and built environment is valued, conserved and enhanced
- People can access the housing they want in attractive and safe neighbourhoods

In summary, we want Sedgefield to be a Borough that is prosperous, attractive and healthy, with strong safe communities. We have adopted these ambitions for the Council and this Housing Strategy will have a significant role in helping us deliver our vision.

The Housing Strategy looks forward over the next three years to 2008/2009 and the Council makes no apology for its ambitious nature. The issues of poverty, neighbourhood blight, decline and issues of housing stress require us to tackle the root causes of these problems, rather than simply treating the symptoms. Sedgefield Borough Council is committed to continuing the work undertaken to date on championing the cause of all residents in all tenures across the Borough.

The Council through its role as a partner in Local Strategic Partnership will seek to support the delivery of these ambitions through effective joint working. We have recently completed an ambitious master planning exercise for three of our communities facing the issue of housing market decline. We will be focusing our energies on delivering real change in these communities over the coming months and years.

We can improve the lives of our citizens and ensure we have strong safe communities where people can access housing they require in an attractive environment, by working together with our partners and through cross-boundary solutions to housing problems in the area



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R S Fleming'.

Councillor R S Fleming
Leader of the Council



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Waters'.

Councillor W. Waters
Portfolio Holder for Housing



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Allen'.

Brian Allen
Chief Executive

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How to use this Strategy

The Government in March 2006 revised its approach to the development of housing strategies away from long documents often in excess of 40 pages of text to a shorter more over arching document. Taking a lead from this change we have tried to make our Housing Strategy, an easy document for people to read and understand of 25 pages. This “how to use” it guide will help any body with an interest in housing and communities in Sedgefield Borough, get the best out of this document. This Housing Strategy brings together many elements of work in the Borough that relate directly to housing and the provision of housing services. It is a starting point for understanding housing in the Borough, the issues facing the Borough and our priorities over the next 3 years. The Council would be happy to provide more information on each of the topics covered in this Strategy if required.

What Is A Housing Strategy

A Housing Strategy brings together all the issues around housing and housing services into a single document. It sets out how we intend to improve housing across the Borough and the contribution we can make with others to ensure our communities are sustainable, clean, safe and pleasant places to live.

What Is In The Housing Strategy

This Housing Strategy is made up of four sections:

Section One - tells you about the importance housing plays in the operation of the Council, how we have developed our strategic role in relation to housing and how we are addressing changes in policy and legislation.

Section Two - tells you how we work with our partners and consult with our residents to deliver our plans.

Section Three – tells you how we developed our priorities for intervention through analysing need in the Borough

Section Four – tells you what the Council’s future priorities for action are, how we are seeking to address key Government policy issues and which options we have chosen where more than one solution exists.

Section Five - tells you how we will monitor and report on the progress we make in delivering our Housing Strategy.

Where to Find Out More Information

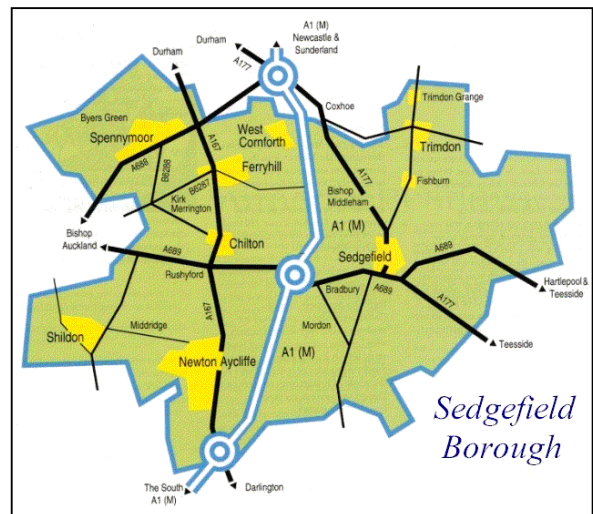
Please contact Ian Brown, Housing Strategy Manager, Council’s offices in Green Lane Spennymoor (01388 816166) or email ibrown@sedgefield.gov.uk for further information or visit or website www.sedgefield.gov.uk

Section

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Corporate Context and Wider Priorities

Sedgefield Borough is situated in the South of County Durham in the North East of England, between Durham City and Darlington. Covering some 217 sq. km, almost 80% of the 87,206 residents (2001 Census) live within the four towns of Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Shildon and Ferryhill, which provide the main focus for employment, shopping and leisure. Newton Aycliffe is a former 'New Town' and the others have developed around iron, coal and railway industries. In contrast to these urban centres, the Borough also contains small historic villages (some of Saxon origin) and coalfield communities in the more rural eastern part of the Borough. The population within Sedgefield has fallen by 4.3% since the 1991 Census compared to the North East average of 2.8%, due largely to economic migration. The departure of young families and longer lives has resulted in an increasingly ageing population within the Borough, with more than twice the number of people aged over 65 than aged under 5. At the 2001 Census the population was 99.3% white, compared to the regional average of 97.6%.



Strategic framework

Many issues drive the Council's strategy development including this housing strategy e.g. the socio-economic circumstances of local people, community aspirations identified through consultations, the policy directives of national government and regional governance structures and the Council's capacity and resources.

The key socio-economic factors influencing the quality of life of local people across the Borough are set out below...

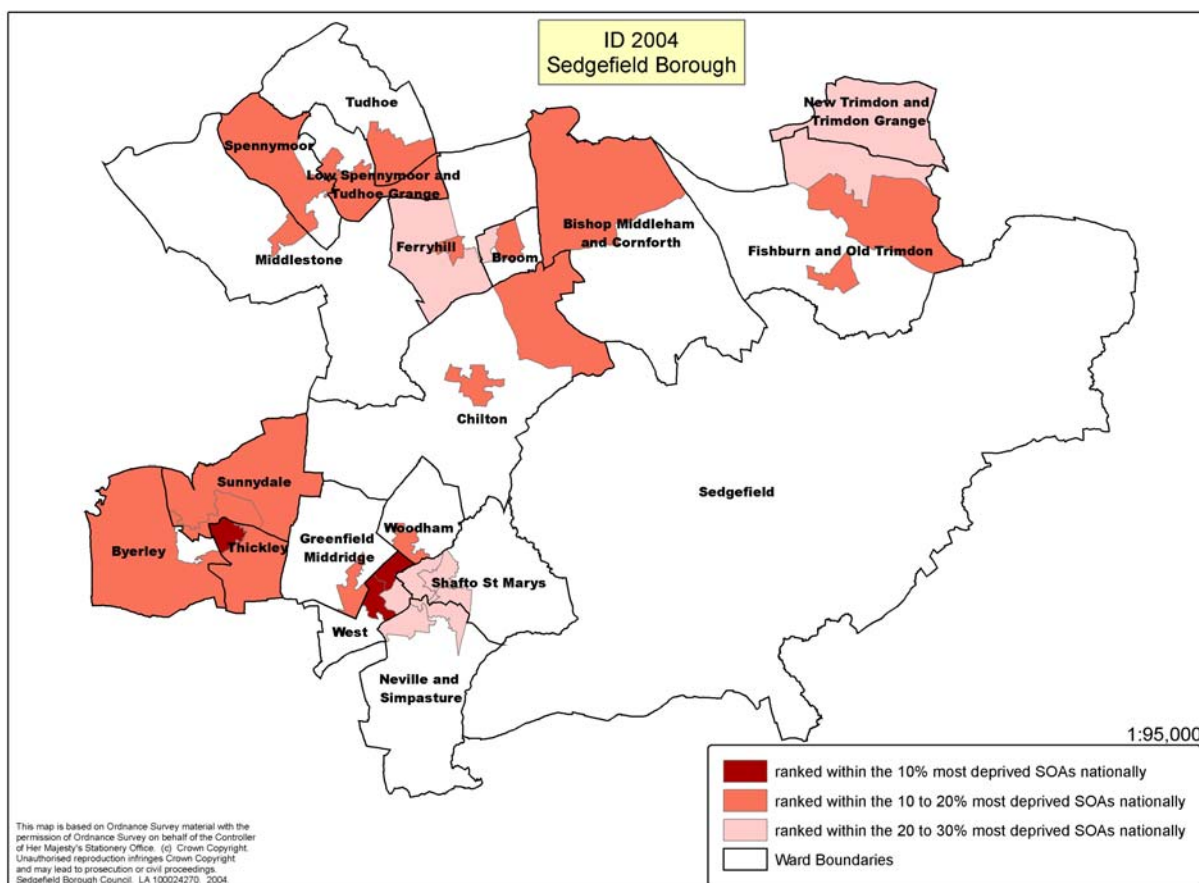
- ❑ **Health deprivation** –high levels of ill health, long-term illness and a lower than average life expectancy, with 18 of the Borough's 19 wards containing areas amongst the worst 10% in the country for health-related issues.
- ❑ **An ageing population** – more residents over 60 years of age than children aged under 14, placing significant demands on services for the elderly.
- ❑ **Low educational and skills attainment** – with less young people achieving 5 A*-C GCSE passes than the national average and a significant proportion of adults lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- ❑ **Worklessness** –low unemployment masking economic inactivity rates much higher than the national average, with means-tested benefits providing a major source of income for a significant proportion of the population.

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- ❑ **Narrow employment base** –manufacturing sector twice that of North East and National average and therefore more vulnerable to global economic pressures.
- ❑ **Sustainability of the Borough’s towns and villages** – some settlements and main town centres are struggling to maintain their competitiveness in the light of changing shopping patterns.
- ❑ **Access to key services** – is often difficult, particularly for residents in the outlying areas of the Borough.
- ❑ **Community development** – development and support are required to increase the aspirations and participation of residents in their communities
- ❑ **Reassurance** – real successes in addressing issues such as community safety need to be better communicated to local communities.

The types of deprivation outlined above can affect anyone across the Borough but tend to cluster in certain neighbourhoods. The Indices of Deprivation 2004 identifies three of the Borough’s 56 Super Output Areas (areas of around 1,000 residents constructed to allow statistical comparison) as within the 10% most deprived nationally across a range of factors and 18 of the Boroughs 19 wards containing SOAs within the 30% most deprived. The Borough was one of the original 88 areas allocated Government Neighbourhood Renewal Funding on the basis of the extent of multiple deprivation in the area and is scheduled to receive a further allocation of £2m over the 2006-2008 period.



Error!

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How we have developed our Housing Strategy

We have taken account of national policy and set this against regional and sub regional priorities. The wider contribution housing can make to sustainable communities has been considered including the tackling crime, antisocial behaviour, social inclusion, supporting people and economic regeneration.

The view of our partners and stakeholders are central to this Housing Strategy.

We have used a range of good quality data including stock condition surveys, housing needs studies, the emerging Housing Market Assessment study along with clear links to our Local Development Framework to inform this Housing Strategy.

The National Context

Housing has been recognised through the national policy agenda as a vital element in promoting sustainable communities and contributing to social inclusion. These national priorities have been set out since 2000 when the Governments *White Paper Quality and Choice; A Decent Home for All* was published. Its prime aim is to offer everyone the opportunity for a decent home, to promote social cohesion, well-being and self-dependence.

This was further reinforced in the '*Communities Plan – Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future*', which clearly defines the vision for creating thriving, sustainable communities in all regions. The Communities Plan recognised the challenges facing the different regions of the country are diverse and that a "one size fits all" policy response will not work. This was reinforced by the recent publication of the Communities Plan daughter document '*Creating Sustainable Communities – Making It Happen: The Northern Way*.' The move to the development of regional priorities will help address the unique challenges facing each area.

The Reflecting Regional Perspective For Housing In The North East

The regional perspective plays a key role in informing local housing strategies and whilst our Housing Strategy's aim is:-

'To provide a comprehensive, customer focused housing service, which makes a positive contribution to the achievement of strong and sustainable local communities.'

The publication of the North East Regional Housing Strategy (NERHS) in July 2005 is a key document that sets out a fundamental approach to the future of housing at a regional level and has four key aims, we have therefore aligned our Housing Strategy to ensure we contribute effectively in the delivery of these objectives.

- To **rejuvenate the housing stock** to meet 21st Century aspirations, replacing market failure with high quality housing in the right locations to help create successful, cohesive and sustainable communities.

- To ensure the **type and mix of new housing provides choice**, supports economic growth and meets housing needs and demand. This will reflect the diversity of urban and rural communities and the needs for affordable, family and prestige housing.
- To secure the **improvement and maintenance of existing housing** so that it meets required standards, investing in sustainable neighbourhoods.
- To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address **specific community and social needs**, including an ageing population and the needs of minority communities; this will be integrated with the Supporting People programme and promote greater community involvement.

Corporate Context

The Local Strategic Partnership's ambitions for the Borough is set out in the Community Strategy a **Vision for Sedgefield Borough in 2014**.



Sedgefield Borough
Local Strategic Partnership

To ensure that Sedgefield Borough is a place where...

- ❑ People can live healthy, active and fulfilling lives as part of vibrant and strong communities
- ❑ High quality businesses can prosper and local people have the confidence and skills to access the jobs that they offer
- ❑ The natural and built environment is valued, conserved and enhanced
- ❑ People can access the housing they want in attractive and safe neighbourhoods

We have adopted the ambitions of the Community Strategy as our own Corporate Ambitions, and have identified the 12 areas (Community Outcomes) to which we, as a Council, can have maximum influence. This housing strategy's aims can influence the delivery of many of the Council's Corporate Ambitions through the cross cutting nature of housing.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY VISION	Sedgefield Borough Council Corporate Ambition	Community Outcome
People can live healthy, active and fulfilling lives as part of vibrant and strong communities	A HEALTHY BOROUGH	Safeguarding public health Promoting independent living Creating leisure opportunities

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COMMUNITY STRATEGY VISION	Sedgefield Borough Council Corporate Ambition	Community Outcome
		Promoting cultural activities
High quality businesses can prosper and local people have the confidence and skills to access the jobs that they offer	A PROSPEROUS BOROUGH	Promoting business and employment opportunities Maximising learning opportunities Tackling disadvantage and promote social regeneration
The natural and built environment is valued, conserved and enhanced	AN ATTRACTIVE BOROUGH	Ensuring a cleaner, greener environment Improving towns, villages and the countryside Reducing waste and managing natural resources
People can access the housing they want, in attractive and safe neighbourhoods	A BOROUGH WITH STRONG COMMUNITIES	Securing quality sustainable housing Promoting safer neighbourhoods

Underpinning everything we do are the Corporate Values of the Council, which recognise and enhance our position as a modern local authority, both as a provider and an enabler of service provision. These Corporate Values are:

CORPORATE VALUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be open, accessible, equitable, fair and responsive to the public</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Invest in our people [employees]</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Be responsible with and accountable for public finances</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Achieve continuous improvement and innovation in service delivery</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Engage local communities</i>

The Wider Housing Priorities for Sedgefield Borough

Through working with our stakeholders and partners and taking account of the wider socio economic factors set out earlier in this chapter, we have identified the key broad housing priorities for the Borough these are:-

- We have areas of housing market failure where we need to deliver significant regeneration and renewal of the housing stock and support community cohesions.
- Demand for our social housing continues to rise whilst the availability of housing reduces due to the impact of the Right to Buy legislation.
- We have growing issues of affordability in some of our communities.
- Ensuring the delivery of decent homes in the social rented sector and assisting vulnerable house holds in the private sector to live in decent homes.
- The energy efficiency of our homes remains poor in the private sector.
- The private rented sector is having a significantly detrimental affect on some local communities.
- We have an aging population with underlying issues of long term ill health and disability, requiring increasing levels of housing related care and support.
- We have had high levels of homelessness that we continue to seek to address through developing our prevention role and providing effective support mechanisms.

We have recognised that there are a number of other policy issues that we must address through this strategy if we are to fully contribute to the deliver of the Regional Housing Strategy's aims and the wider national aspirations for sustainable communities. These additional priorities for action are considered in more detail in [Section 5](#).

How the Council will deliver its Housing Strategy

The Council completed its options appraisal for the future of its housing stock in 2003 with a preferred option of Large Scale Voluntary Transfer. The Council restructured separating its housing strategy and enabling function from the landlord services in 2004. Following a ballot in 2005, when the tenants of the Council voted to remain with the Council, the landlord function remained "in house" and we are closely working together to ensure the delivery of the decent homes target and high quality housing services.

The Housing Act 2004

The Housing Act 2004 represents a significant challenge and opportunity for the Borough in assisting to deliver this strategy. We have embraced this challenge and have implemented the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. We have reviewed our housing stock in light of the mandatory licensing provisions for House in Multiple Occupation and we will seek to use selective licensing of the private sector where it can help us tackle issue of low demand and Anti Social Behaviour.

The Council has a consistent track record in developing effective partnerships across all service areas. We recognise we can not deliver this Housing Strategy and our ambitions for the Borough without effective partnership working. Set out below are the key Partnerships that we are currently engaged in along with a number of examples of successful projects.

- **County Durham Supporting People Partnership** - we are part of the Countywide Partnership and contributed directly to the development of the 5-year Supporting People Strategy.
Developed the 5 year County Durham Supporting People Strategy.
Implemented the Value Improvement Programme for Community Alarms.
- **Partnership Board for Services to Vulnerable Adults** we are a constituted member of the Board and have been an integral part of the development of the integrated teams for vulnerable adults bringing together health, social services and housing staff in to provide a single point of contact for the needs of this group
Successfully implemented an innovative approach to joint work with Housing, Health and Social Care staff in 5 area based teams.
- **Durham Coalfields Housing Renewal Partnership** is developing an approach to the intervention in the older private sector Coalfield communities across the county. The Council have been a member since its inception over three years ago.
Successful Partnership bids for funding to the Single Housing Investment Programme Rounds 1 and 2.
Supported the Durham Coalfields research programme to identify the key Coalfield Communities for regeneration across the County.
Successfully bid on behalf of the partnership to "ONE" for funding to allow the partnership to employ a Project Director.
- **Sedgefield Residents and Tenants Federation** is a partnership between the resident and tenant organisations across the Borough and the Council, to ensure effective service delivery to address the priorities of our communities.
- **County Durham Homeless Action Partnership** the Council is member of this County wide group with the aim of delivering effective interventions to tackle homelessness.
Adopted a Joint Protocol for Young Homeless based on a model of good practise developed by Sedgefield Borough.
Implement a County wide mediation service for young people and their families to prevent homelessness.
- **Durham Housing Market Assessment (HMA) Partnership** we are part of the Group that is leading on the completion of the HMA for County Durham to enable us to understand how our Housing Markets operate across boundaries.
Phase 1 of the HMA completed Phase 2 to be completed later in 2006.
- **Durham Housing and Neighbourhood Groups (Challenge 9)** whilst not strictly a partnership the group consists of the Directors of Housing in the County and leads on cross cutting issues.

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- *Agreed to implement a single Travellers Housing Needs Assessment for County Durham to be completed later in 2006.*

We identified our broad priorities for intervention earlier in this Strategy through consultation with our stakeholders, partners and taking account of national and regional policy. In this section of the strategy we have identified the key evidence that has been used to confirm these priorities and the additional policy related priorities that we seek to address. This evidence has been used to develop the action plan to take forward the Housing Strategy over the next 3 years.

The evidence we have used to develop our priorities has also been used to support the recent [LSP's Thematic Review of Housing](#). This document has a whole range of useful supporting information for readers of our Housing Strategy. The Council's recently updated [Corporate Plan](#) is also useful source of background information.

The Council is part of the County Durham Housing Market Assessment Group and we have recently completed [phase 1 of the HMA study](#). This information has been used to inform a number of sub regional studies which have been undertaken by the [Durham Coalfield Housing Renewal Partnership](#) which have informed our approach to renewal of failing housing markets in our priority communities for intervention.

Our current [private sector stock condition survey](#) has further supported our understanding of the housing market in the Borough.

Issues of low demand and housing renewal are a key priority for the Council in the priority communities of Dean Bank, Ferryhill, Ferryhill Station and Chilton West. The Council working with key partners and stakeholders has recently completed the development of a [master plan study](#) which will drive forward housing renewal in these communities.

The Borough Council submitted [Single Housing Investment Programme bids](#) to support its proposed strategic interventions and support for vulnerable households. The bids attracted significant resources to the Borough of £2.4m over the next two years.

The Council recognises the need to work with the Housing Corporation and Registered Social Landlords to meet the housing needs of specific groups and to deliver our aspirations for housing renewal. We have recently implemented a partnership approach to the development of a brownfield site in at Hawkshead Place Newton Aycliffe, this model of working will be used in the development of other sites where appropriate and to support housing market renewal in our priority communities. This approach will deliver new bungalows for rent and shared ownership properties without the need for grant support from the Housing Corporation. We will continue our dialogue with the Housing Corporation to ensure that we maximise investment opportunities for the Borough.

The Borough Council completed an [Urban Capacity Study](#) in 2003, and we will be carrying out a housing land availability assessment during 2007. Whilst our performance on the use of Previously Developed Land (PDL) declined during 2005/6 to 45% from 76.5%, we have prioritised the development of PDL.

The issue of affordability has become more acute recently across the Borough and our [Housing Needs Study](#) completed in 2003 and [updated](#) in 2005, provide an early indication of this emerging issue. The Council is currently undertaking a [Scrutiny Review of affordable housing provision](#), which will support the development of a Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted in 2007 by the Council. The Council in the interim is negotiating with developers to ensure that affordable housing provision is considered as part of the planning process. The Council's draft [Local Development Framework \(LDF\) Core Strategy Options](#) document provides further details on our proposed approach to the issue of affordable housing and rural housing provision.

The Council's will achieve the Decent Homes standard by 2010 for its own housing stock and we have adopted a [delivery plan](#) to ensure we monitor our progress to the standard current 63% of our stock is decent. The Council has adopted the [Regional Housing Strategy's target](#) for addressing the decent homes standard in the private sector. The number of vulnerable households in the private sector in the Borough is estimated at 6,205, of which 3,698 are living in decent homes (58.4%). To meet the PSA7 target 956 households would have to move into the Decent Homes category by 2020/2021 (4,654). This would be regarded as minimum standard as the Community Strategy aspires to achieve Decent Homes across all tenures. Through our [Capital Programme](#) and [Housing Renewal Assistance Policy](#) we have prioritised the delivery of this target.

The Borough has some of the highest levels of ill health and disability in the Country identified through our Housing Needs Study and IMD data. We have prioritised the development of suitable interventions to support this client group including the establishment of national recognised [Integrated Teams for Vulnerable Adults](#), development of a Charter marked [Home Improvement Agency](#) and expansion of our accredited [Community Alarm service](#).

The Council own housing stock has a Standard Assessment Rating of 69 and the private sector 53. The Council works in partnership with Warm Front, its HIA, Age concern and others to tackle the issue of badly heated and insulated homes. The Council has committed additional resources through its [capital programme](#) to further enhance the work in regard to energy efficiency.

The Council has developed a [Housing Care and Support Strategy](#), which provides a range of useful information on the needs of older residents of the Borough. We are currently reviewing this document.

The Borough Council had seen [significant increases](#) in the level of homeless over the last three years in common with most local authorities in the North East. The Council adopted a [Homelessness Action Plan](#) to address this issue and we have seen a 55% reduction in application through our focus on prevention of homelessness. We are currently reviewing our [homeless strategy](#), which was produced in 2003.

We have used this information to refine our priorities the following 14 key objectives linked to the Regional Housing Strategy's 4 aims.

“To rejuvenate the housing stock to meet 21st Century aspirations, replacing market failure with high quality housing in the right locations to help create successful, cohesive and sustainable communities.”

- Understanding the Housing Market
- Tackling Low Demand and Housing Renewal

*“To ensure the **type and mix of new housing provides choice**, supports economic growth and meets housing needs and demand. This will reflect the diversity of urban and rural communities and the needs for affordable, family and prestige housing.”*

- Working with the Housing Corporation to deliver new housing in the Borough
- Effective use of Previously Developed Land for Housing
- Affordable and Rural Housing provision

*“To secure the **improvement and maintenance of existing housing** so that it meets required standards, investing in sustainable neighbourhoods.”*

- Achieving Decent Homes – Social and Private Sector
- Adapting Properties for the Disabled and Elderly
- Improving energy efficiency of the housing stock

*“To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address **specific community and social needs**, including an ageing population and the needs of minority communities; this will be integrated with the Supporting People programme and promote greater community involvement.”*

- Meeting the Housing, Care and Support Needs of Vulnerable Household
- Preventing Homelessness
- Effective use of the existing housing stock
- Tackling Anti Social Behaviour – the Respect Agenda
- Choice Based Lettings – providing choice for social housing tenants
- Meeting the needs of Gypsy and Travellers

Section
5

Our Priorities

Our key actions over the three year life this strategy are linked to our key priorities and the national and regional policy requirements. We have set out below under each priority heading the current position on each objective, our next key action and a timescale for completing the action. The Housing Strategy’s actions set out below have been adopted as part of the Council’s [Corporate Plan](#) and the [strong communities appendix](#) provides information on progress across a range of key housing priorities and future actions and are part the relevant Departments [Service Improvement Plans](#). This “action plan” will be used to monitor and review the strategy annually in accordance with the approach set out in Section 6 of the Strategy.

Understanding the Housing Market

The Durham Housing Market Assessment (HMA) Partnership completed phase 1 of the HMA in March 2006. We have jointly commissioned Phase 2 of the HMA with the other County Durham Housing Authorities. To continue our understanding of the local housing market we completed a Housing Needs Study in 2003 updated in 2005 and a Stock Condition Survey in 2003.

Key Actions	Target Date
Complete Phase 2 Durham Housing Market Assessment	December 2006
Carry out Housing Needs and Stock Condition Survey	December 2007

Tackling Low Demand and Housing Renewal

Working with the Durham Coalfield Housing Renewal Partnership we completed a study into the priority communities for strategic intervention across County Durham. 13 communities were identified as a priority for intervention and 3 of these are in Sedgfield Borough – Dean Bank, Ferryhill, Ferryhill Station and Chilton West. The Council has completed a master planning exercise to develop detailed interventions for these communities; the Council has adopted the delivery of the regeneration of these communities as a key priority.

Key Actions	Target Date
Preparation of Area Development frameworks for the priority communities as part of a sub regional funding bid	July 2006
Approval and adoption of the master plan	July 2006
Implement Private Sector Renewal Delivery Team	September 2006
Implement Master Plan including Compulsory Purchase Orders for Ferryhill Station	December 2006
Commence Chilton West Delivery Plan	December 2006
Commence Dean Bank Delivery Plan	December 2006
Develop and implement regeneration Special Purpose Vehicle	March 2008

Meeting the Housing, Care and Support Needs of Vulnerable Household

The Council is a member of the Durham County Council Supporting People Partnership and endorses the priorities set out in the 5 year strategy.

- Effective budget management,
- Development of Home Improvement Agencies,
- Consolidation of Domestic Violence services,
- Increasing the range of housing options for older people and people with learning disabilities,
- Improving services for the homeless,
- More work on needs mapping/monitoring of demand,
- Cross partnership development regarding equality and diversity,
- Improved communication and information sharing.

We have implemented a [national recognised](#) example of good practise bringing together housing, health and social care staff in to area based Integrated Team for Vulnerable Adults.

Key Actions	Target Date
Support Service modernisation and integration through the Partnership Board for Vulnerable Adults	ongoing
Develop an Older Person Strategy sub regionally and locally	March 2007
Complete the review of Community Alarms and Warden Services in County Durham as part of the Value Improvement Programme and implement	September 2007
Achieve TSA accreditation part 3 (mobile responders)	March 2007
Achieve the CSHS Code of practice for the Sheltered Housing Service	March 2007
Achieve the Charter Mark for the Carelink Service	March 2007

Preventing Homelessness and providing support

The Borough Council have experienced rapidly increasing numbers of homeless applications and acceptances over the last 3 years in line with most Councils in the North East. We implemented an action plan in May 2005 to re focus our services on [prevention and housing advice](#). We have seen a [65% reduction in applications](#) and 45% acceptances in 2005/6 compared to 2004/5. We wish to sustain this improvement and meet the Government targets in relation to the reduction in use of temporary accommodation. We have introduced a Domestic Violence Accommodation service to provide additional housing options to the victims of domestic abuse.

Key Actions	Target Date
Review Homelessness Strategy	September 2006
Implement Homelessness Forum	October 2006
Implement County wide mediation service	September 2006
Adopt the changes to the Joint Protocol for Young Homeless	August 2007

Implement a review of temporary accommodation usage	March 2007
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Effective use of Previously Developed Land for Housing

The Council completed an Urban Capacity Study in 2003, the Council has had a relatively low level of usage of previous developed land PDL 45%. However the renewal of older private sector housing along with the proposed Housing Land Assessment will identify additional PDL to enable us to aim to achieve the national target of 60% of new build on PDL.

Key Actions	Target Date
Carry out Housing Land Available Assessment	December 2007

Working with the Housing Corporation to deliver new housing in the Borough

The Council and its Registered Social Landlord partners were unsuccessful in obtaining support for schemes submitted as part of the National Affordable Housing Programme 2006- 2008. The Council is committed to meeting the housing needs of its residents and will use innovative solutions wherever possible to deliver affordable and social housing in accordance with its priorities. However we recognise the importance of the role of the National Affordable Housing Programme. We will seek to ensure the Housing Corporation fully understand housing needs in the Borough and we will work with our RSL partners to develop schemes in advance of the next National Affordable Housing Programme.

Key Actions	Target Date
Complete delivery of new social rented units at Hawkshead Place and Ferryhill Station	December 2008

Affordable and Rural Housing provision

Whilst Sedgefield Borough has had historically low house prices below the County and Regional average, we have seen a 140% increase in prices since 1995. At the same time average earnings have remained below that of County Durham and the Regional average. This has placed pressure on the affordability of housing for our residents. This has been compounded by the good transport links to major employment centres with higher house prices. The Council through the life of this strategy intends to implement action to address this emerging issue of affordability and lack of supply in both our larger towns and rural villages.

Key Actions	Target Date
Complete the Overview and Scrutiny review of affordable housing in the Borough	November 2006
Develop Supplementary Planning Policy Document on affordable housing	July 2007

Tackling Anti Social Behaviour – the Respect Agenda

The Council has reviewed and implemented new working arrangements to tackle Anti Social Behaviour irrespective of tenure. The Council has implemented a new ASB Panel, which includes representatives of the Housing Department Tenancy Enforcement Team and Homelessness and Housing Advice Service. The Housing Department has published its policy and procedures in relation to ASB and will become a signatory to the respect agenda in the Social Rented Sector when published later in 2006. The Council will implement selective licensing of the private rented sector where it can contribute to tackling ASB and low demand. We are currently carrying out a review of Community Safety and this will be used to inform our approach to tackling ASB when completed.

Key Actions	Target Date
Develop a Community Safety Strategy for Sedgefield Borough Council	November 2006
Develop & publish Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Strategy	March 2007
Implement selective licensing of the private rented sector as tool to contribute to developing sustainable neighbourhoods	December 2007

Achieving Decent Homes – The Social and Private Sector Challenge

The Council completed its Housing Stock Options Appraisal in 2003 and could meet the Decent Homes Standard for its housing stock by 2010 from available resources. The Council continues to make progress towards the target, currently 62.5% of Council homes are decent and the 2010 target will be achieved. The number of vulnerable households in the private sector in the Borough is estimated at 6,205, of which 3,698 are living in decent homes (58.4%). To meet the PSA7 target 956 households would have to move into the Decent Homes category by 2020/2021 (4,654). This would be regarded as minimum standard as the Community Strategy aspires to achieve Decent Homes across all tenures.

Key Actions	Target Date
Review the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy to support the allocation of Private Sector Renewals and Grants on the Housing Strategy's priorities	July 2006

Effective use of the existing housing stock

Due to the increasing demand for housing in both the private and social sectors the effective use of our housing stock is a key element of meeting housing need in the Borough. We will review the use of our own housing stock through our allocation policy to ensure it is used effectively until the implementation of choice based lettings. We will work with the Registered Social Landlords in the Borough to meet housing need through effective nomination arrangement and use our powers in the Housing Act 2004 to bring empty homes back into use. We will work with the private rented sector to raise standards and ensure it can play an effective role in the meeting of housing needs across the Borough.

Key Actions	Target Date
Complete a review of the Social Needs points as part of the ongoing review of the allocation of Council housing.	September 2006
Complete the sign up of all RSLs in the Borough to written nomination arrangements.	July 2006
Consider the implementation of Empty Dwelling Management Orders in the context of housing renewal as part of the master plan	November 2006

Improving energy efficiency of the housing stock

Much progress has been made to promote sustainable energy practices throughout the Borough in line with the Council's commitment to addressing climate change. Over 1700 private households in Sedgefield Borough benefited from energy efficiency measures in 2005 through the promotion of the Warm Front Durham Energy Savers and the Affordable Warmth schemes. We will continue to focus our attention on the affordable warmth over the life of this strategy. The Council housing stock has an average SAP rating of 69 and the private sector 53.

Key Actions	Target Date
Raise Awareness of Opportunities and Implement Initiatives in Relation to Sustainable Energy Practices	Ongoing
To contribute to the use of energy efficient products as part of future private sector renewal schemes a pilot Group Repair Scheme to be complete.	September 2007

Choice Based Lettings (CBL) – providing choice for social housing tenants

The Council is the lead partner in a sub regional partnership to develop a CBL scheme for a number of local authorities and RSLs across the County Durham.

Key Actions	Target Date
Implement Choice Based Letting Scheme	April 2008

Adapting Properties for the Disabled and Elderly

The Council through its Disabled Facilities and other Grants provide support for the adaptation of private homes in excess £600,000, the Council's Housing Department invests a further £750,000 in adaptations, we aim to ensure that these services are equitable easy to access and provide value for money.

Key Actions	Target Date
Review the provision of Private Sector and Council Adaptation to ensure equity and value for money	October 2006

Meeting the needs of Gypsy and Travellers

County Durham has 6 travellers sites providing nearly 40% of the sites in the North East. The Borough Council has one site in its area with 24 plots, and is committed to meeting the Housing Needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Through the Housing and Neighbourhoods Group along with other County Durham Local Authorities undertaking housing needs assessment of travellers.

Key Actions	Target Date
Support the completion of the County Durham Gypsy and Travellers Housing Needs Study	October 2006
To develop Development Planning Document in response to the Housing Needs Assessment	September 2007

Section
6

Delivering the Housing Strategy

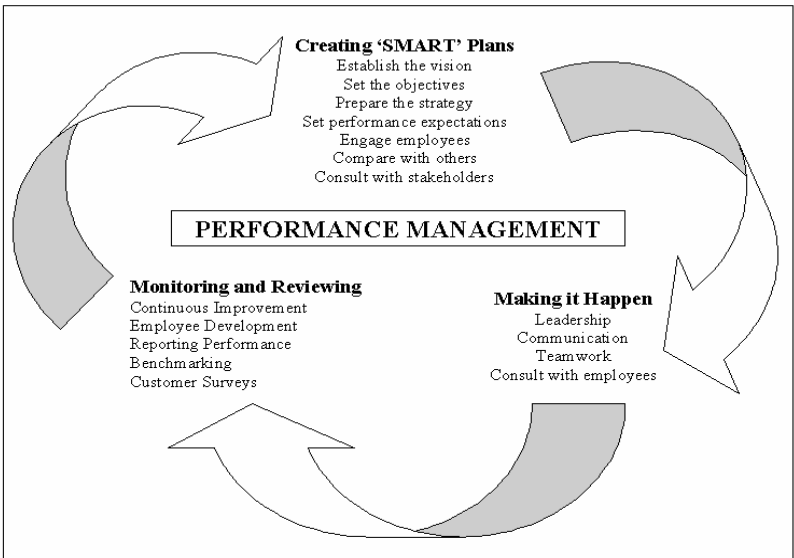
We will review our Housing Strategy annually linked to the updating of our other key strategies including the Corporate Plan and the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report. The new approach to the Housing Strategy as an over arching document will enable us to publish a revised strategy annually which takes account of changes in the housing market and priorities for intervention in the Borough. The annual strategy update will include a schedule of completed action, actions that have to be carried forward into our new strategy and new actions identified through the updating process. The Housing Strategy update will be reported through our performance management framework and to our key stakeholders and partners. Our approach to performance management and review is set out below:-

Monitoring and Review Mechanisms

Performance Management

Performance Management is at the heart of Corporate Planning and is crucial in the drive for continuous improvement.

Sedgefield Borough Council is a progressive local authority committed to delivering on its Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes. The Council has developed its performance management arrangements significantly in recent years and now has in place robust Performance Management systems to ensure the delivery of our Corporate Plan. The Performance Management Framework operated by the Council is displayed within the diagram below:



In order to modernise our approach to service delivery and complement our Performance Management arrangements the Council has introduced a number of changes: -

Cabinet level Strategic management

The Council has recently reviewed its approach to Strategic Leadership and established a specific working group with this remit.

Strategic Working Groups.

Corporate strategic working arrangements are anchored around the Council's corporate policy arrangements and performance management framework and are designed to assist in the delivery of stated priorities. They are aligned to the Corporate Ambitions and Community Outcomes and provide clear policy advice and output/outcome performance management information. Performance management information is reported and acted up on at these strategic working groups

Monitoring of performance measures at Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees play an important role in performance management in that they receive regular update reports on the achievement of the Council's ambitions through bi-annual reviews of the performance information submitted and monitored by Strategic Working Groups.

Driving performance management throughout the delivery of the Council's Corporate Ambitions and Values is a key activity of all services.

Equal Opportunities Statement

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إذا أردت هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، أو إذا كنت بحاجة إلى خدمات مترجم، فنرجو أن تقوم بالاتصال بنا.

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান অথবা যদি আপনার একজন ইন্টারপ্রেটারের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

本文件可以翻譯為另一語文版本，或製作成另一格式，如有此需要，或需要傳譯員的協助，請與我們聯絡。

यह दस्तावेज़ यदि आपको किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये, या आपको आनुवाद-सेवाओं की आवश्यकता हो तो हमसे संपर्क करें

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਫਿਟਰਪੈਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو براۓ مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

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Quality Services For Local People

“Working towards a more healthy, prosperous and attractive Borough with strong communities”