

## Cabinet

22 September 2011



### Private Sector Housing Strategy for County Durham

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#### Report of Ian Thompson, Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development

Councillor Clive Robson, Portfolio Holder for Housing and  
Councillor Alan Napier, Portfolio Holder for Resources

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#### Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is for Cabinet to approve the Private Sector Housing Strategy (2011- 2015) for County Durham. An executive summary of the strategy is attached to the report as Appendix 2.

#### Background & housing issues in the private sector

##### The Housing Stock

2. There are about 232,000 homes in County Durham. Of these around 80% or 185,000 are private sector housing, which means they are owned by an owner occupier, private landlord or private company. In short, private sector housing is all housing except that which is owned by the Council or another social landlord.

##### Stock Condition

3. Work which Durham County Council carried out with the Building Research Establishment in 2009 using English House Condition Survey information showed a correlation between older housing and non-decency, often due to the poor thermal efficiency of older housing stock. Around 34% of private housing appeared to be failing the decent homes standard and 16,000 households living in these properties are classed as vulnerable. The total estimated cost of bringing all private sector homes up to standard is a staggering £492million, dropping to £147million to improve the homes of the most vulnerable.

##### Area based regeneration

4. In County Durham many areas offer residents a wide range of housing choice, from good quality affordable social housing to smaller starter homes, two and three bedroom family houses, and larger executive homes. But in other areas the housing mix still reflects the historic role of settlements and is less suited to the demands of modern householders, with more social rented and older terraced properties and fewer new properties on offer.  
In Derwentside, East Durham, Sedgefield and Wear Valley almost 50% of the stock is terraced, and in some cases the quality is of a poor standard. A number of communities with older terraced housing also have poor environmental amenities, with poor access to health services and leisure facilities.

### **Vulnerable people/improving and adapting properties**

5. The Council works in partnership with local Home Improvement Agencies to provide a range of support to householders to improve their homes and quality of life, either using their own funds or with the aid of grants and loans when appropriate.

Currently the Council's Occupational Therapists refer over 700 cases each year for adaptations, often supported by Disabled Facilities Grants to fund works carried out through a Home Improvement Agency

### **Management practices in the private rented sector**

6. Anecdotal evidence suggests that County Durham has a high level of private rented housing, with a significant proportion failing to meet the decent homes standard. Ineffective management by some Private Landlords, together with an unwillingness to invest and a lack of engagement with local communities, has unsettled neighbourhoods by causing a high turnover of tenants and other residents.

Councils have discretion to use various measures to improve housing management in the private rented sector, including landlord accreditation projects or selective licensing schemes to cover all privately rented property in areas which suffer from low housing demand or significant anti social behaviour. There are now three selective licensing schemes in County Durham in Easington Colliery, Dean Bank and Chilton.

### **Empty homes**

7. Analysis of data from council tax suggests that over 4,000 private sector homes across County Durham have been empty for 6 months or more. The Council's approach is to investigate and deal with those that have been empty for more than six months in the designated Housing Regeneration areas.

The Council has a range of interventions at its disposal to address long term empty homes ranging from negotiation through to Empty Dwellings Management Orders

### **Energy efficiency**

8. Fuel poverty affects the most vulnerable in our society, cold homes, cold-related illness, increased winter deaths, housing in poor repair and high healthcare costs are all visible signs of fuel poverty – a problem that affects more than 27% of households in County Durham each year. Improving the quality of life for residents is a key priority for Durham County Council by helping the most vulnerable members of our community to afford to heat their homes to a healthy level is vital if we are to achieve that aim.

### **Private sector housing priorities**

9. The priorities included within the Private Sector Housing Strategy are based on those issues set out within the background of this report and are aligned with the objectives of the overall housing strategy. The five priorities for the private sector housing strategy are:

1. Area based regeneration in the following eight areas;
  - Esh Winning Durham
  - Wheatley Hill East Durham
  - Dawdon Seaham East Durham
  - Easington Colliery (Wembley) East Durham
  - Dean Bank, FerryHill South Durham
  - West Chilton South Durham
  - Ferryhill Station South Durham
  - Craghead North Durham
2. Meeting the needs of vulnerable people/improving and adapting properties
3. Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector
4. Bringing empty homes back into use
5. Making properties more energy efficient

### **Delivery of the strategy**

10. A review of factors affecting the private sector housing service has taken place and the results were used to determine the best approach to intervening in private sector housing in County Durham.

The chosen strategic option for the Private Sector Housing Service is a targeted service with a safety net. This offers an approach which combines suitability, feasibility and acceptability to optimum effect.

This chosen option offers a three-pronged approach:

- Concentrate work in identified housing regeneration areas with the worst housing conditions and highest levels of deprivation, led by the area based housing regeneration team using a project management approach to draw in other elements of the Private Sector Housing Service around them. The Private Sector Housing Strategy describes how the private sector housing service's resources will be targeted on the existing housing regeneration projects inherited from the previous District Councils and how each element of the service will play its part in a coordinated approach to deliver sustainable improvements. Future priorities will seek to align this work and the identification of new areas for regeneration with the priorities for economic growth and with areas of economic opportunity.
  - A safety net service to deal with other priorities, for example, if an empty home outside of a regeneration area is found to be significantly contributing to neighbourhood blight.
  - Work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, disabled adaptations and energy efficiency
11. An action plan has been produced which includes a number of actions which will deliver the following range of activities for each of the five priorities. The action plan is included as section 5 in the Private Sector Housing Strategy.

**Priority 1:** Area based regeneration in the eight identified housing regeneration areas

- Group repair and facelift schemes
- Selective acquisition and demolition
- Environmental improvements such as the provision of car parking facilities and green spaces
- Working in areas with concentrated pockets of poor quality private sector housing to improve the quality of accommodation and housing standards
- Bringing empty homes back into use working with owners and private landlords and addressing anti social behaviour
- Delivering an intensive approach to improving energy efficiency

**Priority 2:** Meeting the needs of vulnerable people/improving and adapting properties with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Provision of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants
- Home improvements and repairs for vulnerable financially excluded home owners including accelerating the shift away from grants to loans
- Technical advice and assistance to households wanting to improve or adapt their properties who don't qualify for financial assistance through a project management approach
- Assistance for vulnerable owner occupiers across the whole of County Durham, liaising with Occupational Therapists and Home Improvement Agencies to ensure that a consistent service is delivered to vulnerable people wherever they live
- An equitable adaptations service for all social housing tenants across County Durham is in place
- Ten owner occupiers ( in each of the housing identified regeneration areas) to take up a loan product via the Council's Financial Assistance Policy

**Priority 3:** Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Working in partnership with private landlords to improve their properties and assist some landlords to improve their housing management practices
- To promote ,strengthen and effectively manage Selective Licensing in current licensed areas, and evaluate the schemes' effectiveness
- When formal action has failed, take robust enforcement action on the poorest private rented stock and worst housing management practices
- Advertise properties owned by private landlords into the County Durham's Choice Based Lettings Scheme

**Priority 4:** Bringing empty homes back into use with a more intensive approach in the eight housing regeneration areas.

- Reduce vacancy levels to 4% or below
- Quick wins to increase the supply of affordable homes outside of regeneration areas
- Make use of all available tools to bring empty properties back into use, for example Empty Dwelling Management Orders

- Introduction of leasing arrangements for bringing empty properties back into use through use of a managing agent

**Priority 5: Making properties more energy efficient**

- improving the energy efficiency of properties occupied by the most vulnerable households living across the County
- Improve the energy efficiency of those properties in the identified regeneration areas
- Increase average SAP ratings to above 65 to those properties in the eight housing regeneration areas

12. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed (see Appendix 3)

**Recommendations**

13 The Private Sector Housing Strategy is one of the principal strategies that is integral to the Council's Housing Strategy 'Building Altogether Better Lives' 2010-15. Cabinet are there asked to:

14 Approve the Private Sector Housing Strategy for County Durham.

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**Norman Hunt & Marie Smith 03000 262019**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Over the term of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, subject to confirmation, around £23.4 million has been earmarked to deliver the strategy. This is made up of £4 million, exclusive of grants, for Disabled Facilities, £14.6 million for area based regeneration and safety net projects and a further £4.8 million for the Financial Assistance Policy.

### **Staffing**

The strategy will be delivered through existing staffing resources.

### **Risk**

A risk assessment has been completed for the Private Sector Housing Strategy.

### **Equality and Diversity**

An equality impact assessment has been carried out and is attached to the report.

### **Accommodation**

There are no accommodation issues.

### **Crime and disorder**

The implementation of this strategy aims to contribute to reducing anti social behaviour in particular through bringing empty homes back into use.

### **Human rights**

There are no human rights issues.

### **Consultation**

Consultation has been carried out with relevant stakeholders and feedback from customers has been obtained to inform the Strategy.

### **Procurement**

Elements of the action plan require procurement of services from external contractors and agencies. Wherever appropriate Corporate Procurement assist with this process to achieve value for money.

### **Disability Discrimination Act**

The strategy addresses the needs of vulnerable people and services are directed towards those in need including the work of the Home Improvement Agencies and core team details are set out in the strategy and action plan.

## **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

### Section One: Executive Summary

The Private Sector Housing Strategy sets out how the Council and our partners will ensure that the key objectives of the Housing Strategy will be met in relation to private sector housing.

The **five key priorities** covered by the Private Sector Housing Strategy include:

1. Area based regeneration
2. Meeting needs of vulnerable people/ Improving and adapting properties
3. Improving management practices and stock condition in the private rented sector
4. Bringing empty homes back into use
5. Making properties more energy efficient

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is framed within the three overall objectives of the Housing Strategy:

**Altogether** better housing markets,  
**Altogether** better housing standards, and  
**Altogether** better at housing people.

Its purpose is to identify the activities to be undertaken which have the greatest impact on private sector housing, and in doing so make the greatest contribution to economic regeneration across the county.

The Private Sector Housing Strategy describes how the private sector housing service's resources will be targeted on the existing housing regeneration projects inherited from the previous District Councils and how each element of the service will play its part in a coordinated approach to deliver sustainable improvements. These are areas with the worst concentrations of housing problems including poor stock condition, high numbers of empty properties, high levels of deprivation and anti social behaviour.

The delivery of capital investment programmes, the selective acquisition and demolition of some housing, group repair schemes, environmental improvements, and new housing development, each play a part in this form of housing renewal, but they also need to be supplemented by effective work on energy efficiency, empty properties, with private landlords and with wider economic regeneration interventions. It is recognised that in the future housing will be more integrated with wider economic activity. The action plan within this strategy includes the introduction of a more systematic approach to the prioritisation of regeneration and areas of opportunity involving housing, planning, transport and economic functions.



Every opportunity will be taken to lever in private sector funding streams and develop private sector partnerships aimed at increasing financial resources to enable the delivery of additional housing.

The Strategy will focus on areas with the worst concentrations of housing problems and describes how the needs of vulnerable people across the whole of County Durham will continue to be met through the provision of a repairs and adaptations service supported by the provision of loans for vulnerable and financially excluded households.

A safety net service will be provided to ensure that priority housing issues in the private sector occurring outside of priority regeneration areas can be effectively dealt with.

Over the term of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, subject to confirmation, around £23.4 million has been earmarked to deliver the strategy. This is made up of £4 million, exclusive of grants, for Disabled Facilities, £14.6 million for area based regeneration and safety net projects and a further £4.8 million for the Financial Assistance Policy.

## Appendix Three: Private Sector Housing Strategy

### Durham County Council – Private Sector Housing Strategy equality impact assessment form

**NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments. You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.**

#### **Section one: Description and initial screening**

**Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.**

Service/team or section: **Housing Renewal and Improvements, Housing Services, Regeneration and Economic Development**

Lead Officer: **Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager** | Start Date: 1/4/2011

Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)

This Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the following document: **Durham County Council Private Sector Housing Strategy 2010-2015**, which sets out how Durham County Council's Housing Service, Public Health Service and other partners will ensure that the key objectives of the Housing Strategy will be met in relation to private sector housing.

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is a "business level" strategy, dealing only with issues that are specific to private sector housing, and working in the context of the Council's overall Housing Strategy, which sets out an overall housing programme for the county, having been subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment..

The key functions covered by the Private Sector Housing Service are:

- helping the most vulnerable households improve their homes;
- improving the energy efficiency of properties occupied by the most vulnerable households;;
- improving stock condition and management practices in the private rented sector;
- adapting properties to enable disabled people to maintain independent living;
- bringing empty homes back into use to increase the supply of affordable homes and make neighbourhoods more sustainable;

- working in areas with concentrated pockets of poor quality private rented sector housing to improve the quality of accommodation and housing standards.

The Private Sector Housing Strategy adopts a three-way, targeted approach to service delivery:

- *Concentrated work in identified housing regeneration areas with the worst housing conditions and highest levels of deprivation, led by housing renewal programmes using a project management approach to draw in other elements of the Private Sector Housing Service around them;*
- *Work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, disabled adaptations and energy efficiency;*
- *A safety net service to deal with other priorities, for example, if an empty home outside of a regeneration area is found to be significantly contributing to neighbourhood blight, or if new "hot spot" areas begin to emerge.*

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is framed within the three overall objectives of the Housing Strategy: better housing markets, better housing standards, and better at housing people. Its purpose is to set out a rationale and programme for the detailed activity needed to make the most of private sector housing's contribution to meeting these objectives in a challenging economic environment.

Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify)

The main stakeholders include the general public, elected members and colleagues in other DCC services, in particular:

- Private householders (tenants and owner occupiers) across County Durham;
- Private Landlords letting property in County Durham
- Letting Agents
- DCC Housing Solutions Service
- Area Action Partnerships
- Community Action Teams

- Developers and social landlords involved in housing renewal projects

Is a copy of the subject attached? **Yes**

If not, where could it be viewed?

**Initial screening**

Prompts to help you:

Who is affected by it? Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?

**Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings?** Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Disability</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<b>Religion or belief</b>	<b>Sexual orientation</b>
No measure impacting specifically on men or women.	Yes, potential positive impact on people with a disability who wish to live independently, through further improvements to systems helping with aids and adaptations, and energy efficiency measures.	Yes, potential positive impact of energy efficiency measures on older people and children in particular.	Yes, potential positive impact on all ethnic groups due to improved housing management practices in private rented sector, improved access to housing due to private landlords advertising property through Choice Based Lettings, and benefit to Gypsy, Traveller communities due to re-furbishment of	No measures impacting specifically on any faith group are included in this strategy. In so far as they are affected, faith groups are likely to benefit from the various improvements in private sector housing and neighbourhood management and to access to housing proposed in the strategy are likely to benefit residents whatever their sexual orientation.	No measures impacting specifically on any particular sexual orientation are included in this strategy. The various improvements in private sector housing and neighbourhood management and to access to housing proposed in the strategy are likely to benefit residents whatever their sexual orientation.

			<p>official sites.</p> <p>The strategic service delivery option selected in the Private Sector Housing Strategy offers a safety net service to ensure that issues involving race/ethnicity can be responded to wherever they occur in County Durham, in addition to in priority regeneration areas.</p>	<p>strategy.</p> <p>The strategy also creates an opportunity for faith groups to take part in community-based steering groups set up in each priority housing regeneration area.</p>	
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**How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?**

Reminder of our legal duties:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people
- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making

Generally: through sharing the Council's active commitment to promote equality, achieved through a range of protocols and other working relationships with other Council services and stakeholders.

Specifically:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment - *by improving housing management in the private rented sector*
- Promoting equality of opportunity - *by improving access to affordable rented housing and by helping vulnerable homeowners improve their homes*
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups - *by involving communities in local housing renewal programmes and supporting Area Action Partnerships*
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people - *by further improving processes around the installation of aids and adaptations to help people live independently and with dignity for as long as they want to*
- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making - *by involving communities in local housing renewal programmes and supporting Area Action Partnerships and working on customer care issues around aids and adaptations*

**What evidence do you have to support your findings?**

***In addition to*** the evidence cited in the Equality Impact Assessment for the full Housing Strategy, we have the following evidence:

- Private Sector Housing Market Assessment
- Self-assessment of performance against the Key Lines of Enquiry used by the Audit Commission to inspect local authorities;
- Benchmarking current practices and costs against those of similar local authorities;
- A Value Chain Analysis to show what parts of the service were most and least effective, by identifying how much impact activities had on residents' quality of life, and how many resources they used up;
- Audit of staff skills, capacity and resources to identify areas needing development;
- Cultural analysis to raise staff awareness of how the service should be delivered and support behaviours that increase customer focus;
- Stakeholder consultation to add to information gathered by the consultation exercise carried out for the main Housing Strategy;
- Scrutiny Review of Anti Social Behaviour identifying work with private landlords and empty homes as important components of a new Anti Social Behaviour Strategy

**Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes Date: 9/8/10**

If you have answered 'No' you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.

**Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity**

**Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed**

	<b>Identify the impact : does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?</b>	<b>Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.</b>	<b>What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<p>The delivery of the Private Sector Housing Strategy will have a positive impact on men and women.</p> <p>The EIA for the overall Housing Strategy identified services for male victims of domestic violence and male young parents as possible focuses for further work.</p>	<p>As noted in the EIA for the overall Housing strategy, accommodation for victims of domestic violence or for young parents is currently for women only.</p> <p>If such accommodation is required for men, then this might be through arrangements with private landlords, and require an input from the Private Sector Housing Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be aware of the Housing Service's assessment of need in respect of male victims of domestic violence and young parents who are male.</li> <li>- Facilitate, when required, the provision of accommodation for men by working with private landlords.</li> <li>- Ensure equality and diversity training delivered to all staff/ liaise with HR to secure training.</li> <li>- Ensure that performance under all joint protocols is</li> </ul>

			<p>routinely monitored, and report on how areas of concern are being addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of complaints received about housing management and related issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	<p>The strategy's commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will have a positive impact on older people and children in particular.</p> <p>The strategy's commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> and to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will have a positive impact on younger people by increasing the range of decent housing on offer to them.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will bring about specific benefits through improvements in the delivery of aids and adaptations and energy efficiency measures, and also result in a wider range of financial support products being offered to vulnerable homeowners who need to improve their home.</p> <p>The commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> will bring about specific benefits by delivering housing renewal in the most deprived areas to improve the range of housing on offer,</p>	<p><i>See below under Disability re Financial Assistance Policy (FAP)/Central Improvement Team (CIT)/Housing Improvement Agencies (HIAs)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Equality &amp; Diversity monitoring of involvement in community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas.</li> <li>- Provide equality and diversity training as</li> </ul>



	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that the age-related needs of individual residents can be addressed, wherever they live in County Durham.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will bring about specific benefits by development of ‘intermediate’ housing ( between social renting and market rent/sale) and by advertising private landlord properties through Durham Key Solutions, Choice Based Letting scheme.</p> <p>The strategic option developed in the strategy contains a commitment to work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, aids and adaptations and energy efficiency, and to provide a safety net service to deal with other priorities. These two strategic elements of the service complement the focus on delivering local housing regeneration projects in priority areas.</p>	<p>necessary to community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas.</p> <p><i>See below under Race/Ethnicity re effective monitoring of take up of housing through CBL</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>The strategy’s commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will have a positive impact on adults and children with disabilities.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Existing Homes</i> will bring about specific benefits for people with disabilities through improvements in the delivery of aids and adaptations and energy efficiency measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete EIA on CIT and in-house and out-house HIAs.</li> <li>- Review and update DCC’s Financial</li> </ul>

	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that the needs of individual residents with disabilities can be addressed, wherever they live in County Durham.</p>	<p>The strategic option contains a commitment to work with vulnerable households across all of County Durham, led by work around home improvements, aids and adaptations and energy efficiency; a safety net service will also be provided to deal with other priorities.</p>	<p>Assistance policy.</p>
<p><b>Race/ Ethnicity</b></p>	<p>The strategy's commitments to <i>Better Housing Management</i> and to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will have positive impacts for all ethnic groups, including minority ethnic groups.</p> <p>The strategic commitment to deliver re-furbishments to official sites is of particular benefit to the Gypsy, Traveller community in the county.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Access to Housing</i> will bring about specific benefits by increasing the range of decent housing on offer and by advertising private landlord properties through Durham Key Solutions, Choice Based Letting scheme, making them more likely to be available on an equal-opportunities basis.</p> <p>The commitment to <i>Better Housing Management</i> will make discrimination on the basis of race less likely, and improve landlords' responses to situations in which race is a factor.</p> <p>Only two of the county's six official sites for Gypsies and Travellers have been re-furnished so far, but the strategy contains a specific commitment to refurbish the rest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure equality and diversity monitoring of take up of private sector housing via Choice Based Lettings is effective in collecting data on all relevant groups, including Gypsies and Travellers.</li> <li>- Work with the other partners to on the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Action plan to establish a re-furbishment programme for official sites, and respond to issues from</li> </ul>

	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that issues in the private housing sector with a race, ethnicity or related social cohesion component can be addressed wherever they occur in County Durham.</p>	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy offers a safety net service to enable the service to respond to issues anywhere in County Durham, in addition to work on area-based housing regeneration and improvements or adaptations for vulnerable people.</p>	<p>recent Gypsy, Traveller Health Needs Assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service. Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team</li> </ul>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<p>The strategy's commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> creates opportunities for working in partnership with faith groups.</p>	<p>The commitment to <i>Better Balanced Housing Markets</i> will bring about specific opportunities for the involvement of faith groups in local steering groups overseeing area-based housing regeneration projects; a Big Society-style approach.</p>	<p><i>See above under Age re monitoring of involvement in community-based steering groups, and provision of equality and diversity training to their members</i></p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<p>Like the main Housing Strategy, the Private Sector Housing Strategy aims to have a positive impact for all people regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<p>By increasing the quality and range of affordable housing on offer across the county, the strategy's commitments around <i>Better Housing Markets</i>, <i>Better Access to Housing</i> and <i>Better Housing Management</i>, are likely to make County Durham a more attractive place to live for people of all sexual orientations.</p> <p>However, there is currently no way of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review monitoring arrangements with Housing Solutions to ensure any issues are</li> </ul>

	<p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy will ensure that issues in the private housing sector with a sexual orientation component can be addressed wherever they occur in County Durham.</p>	<p>measuring this.</p> <p>The strategic option developed in the Private Sector Housing Strategy offers a safety net service to enable the service to respond to issues anywhere in County Durham, in addition to work on area-based housing regeneration and improvements or adaptations for vulnerable people.</p>	<p>being picked up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service</li> </ul>
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**How will this promote positive relationships between different communities?**

By developing a more customer-focussed approach, with opportunities for community involvement, in a framework of effective equality and diversity monitoring to alert the service and its partners to where further changes will be required.

**Section three: Review and Conclusion**

**Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.**

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target date	In which plan will this action appear
<p><b>Gender</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitate, when required, the provision of accommodation for male victims of domestic violence and young parents who are male by working with private landlords.</li> <li>- Ensure equality and diversity training delivered to all staff/ liaise with HR to secure training.</li> </ul>	<p>Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team</p> <p>DCC HR</p>	<p>April 2011</p> <p>July 2011</p>	<p>Homelessness Strategy Action Plan</p> <p>Private Sector housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that performance under all joint protocols is routinely monitored, and report on how areas of concern are being addressed.</li> </ul>	Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team	April 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
<p><b>Age</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Equality &amp; Diversity monitoring of involvement in community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas<i>[NB in respect of all 6 equality strands]</i></li> <li>- Provide equality and diversity training as necessary to community-based steering groups in priority housing regeneration areas.</li> <li>- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service.</li> </ul>	Housing Regeneration Manager  Housing Regeneration Manager  Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team	July 2011  October 2011  July 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan  Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan  Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
<p><b>Disability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete EIA on CIT and in-house and out-house HIAs.</li> <li>- Review and update DCC's Financial Assistance policy.</li> </ul>	Decent Homes Manager  Housing Regeneration Manager	March 2011  April 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan  Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
<p><b>Race/Ethnicity</b></p>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure equality and diversity monitoring of take up of private sector housing via Choice Based Lettings is effective in collecting data on all relevant groups, including Gypsies and Travellers.</li> <li>- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of complaints received about housing management and related issues.</li> <li>- Work with the other partners to on the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Action plan to establish a re-furbishment programme for official sites, and respond to issues from recent Gypsy, Traveller Health Needs Assessment.</li> <li>- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service.</li> </ul>	<p>Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team</p> <p>Decent Homes Manager</p> <p>Housing Regeneration Manager</p> <p>Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team</p>	<p>July 2011</p> <p>July 2011</p> <p>April 2011</p> <p>July 2011</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p> <p>Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Action Plan</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan</p>
<p><b>Religion/belief</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote opportunities for faith groups to be involved in community-based housing regeneration steering groups.</li> </ul>	<p>Housing Regeneration Manager</p>	<p>October 2011</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing Strategy delivery Plan</p> <p>Work plans for specific area based regeneration projects</p>

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			
- Ensure effective equality and diversity monitoring of cases taken up via safety net service.	Housing Renewal and Improvements Manager/Core Team	July 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
- Review monitoring arrangements with Housing Solutions to ensure any issues are being picked up.	Housing Renewals and Improvements Manager/Core Team	October 2011	Private Sector Housing Strategy Delivery Plan