

Housing in Herefordshire Strategy 2011-2012





Foreword - by the Cabinet members

We are delighted to welcome you to the housing strategy for Herefordshire, 2011/12.

Much has been achieved during the last strategy, including more affordable homes being built, a higher number of private rented properties let to homeless households, new allocation policies, the establishment of the Rose Garden Extra Care housing scheme and the recent development of rent to homebuy apartments on the Ledbury Cottage Hospital site.

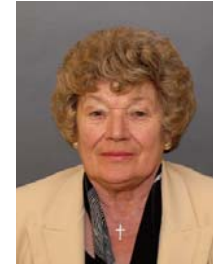
Since the last strategy was published there have been many challenges in the national, regional and local economy, which will continue to affect the local housing market, jobs, income and the availability of credit. Changes to regional arrangements for policy and investment in housing, planning and the economy aligned to planned changes to housing and planning legislation will impact on local people, alter the housing market, the demand for different types of properties and approaches to the delivery of affordable homes.

We will continue to face these and other new changes over the coming year, along with a decline in resources to deliver our priorities.

This is a challenge we will all need to rise to in partnership with our local communities through locality working, both in identifying local priorities but also in exploring community-led opportunities for improved housing outcomes and services.

This makes our Housing Strategy even more significant and it is imperative that we work closely with all our partners in response, utilising and sharing our available resources and anticipating future requirements.

Many of our challenges are common to our neighbouring authorities therefore it is also important to note that this strategy will ensure we are in a strong position to move forward towards a joint housing strategy through the West Market Housing Partnership in the course of 2011/12. We would like to thank the many people who have contributed to this strategy, responded to the consultation and will help deliver our shared objectives through partnership working. It is essential that the strategy reflects your input and that you are engaged and involved in its development – as well as its implementation. We do hope that you find this strategy interesting and informative.



Councillor O. Barnett
Cabinet member for Social Care,
Health and Well being
Herefordshire Council



Councillor J. Jarvis
Cabinet Member for Environment and
Strategic Housing
Herefordshire Council

Why is the Housing in Herefordshire Strategy important?

During 2009 we updated our Joint Strategic Needs This housing strategy for Herefordshire sets out how Herefordshire Council, the community and our partners will work together to improve the quality, affordability, availability and long term sustainability of housing across Herefordshire. It will also demonstrate how housing can and will significantly contribute towards sustainable and healthy communities through partnerships within and beyond Herefordshire Public Services.

This strategy will influence policy making and decisions affecting housing and support delivery objectives within a range of local and partnership plans including the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy, the Herefordshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy, Herefordshire Local Investment Plan and Localities Strategy.

The housing market is undergoing a time of great change nationally, with a new Government, a significantly changing policy direction and a challenging economic period expected over the coming years. This period of change is providing

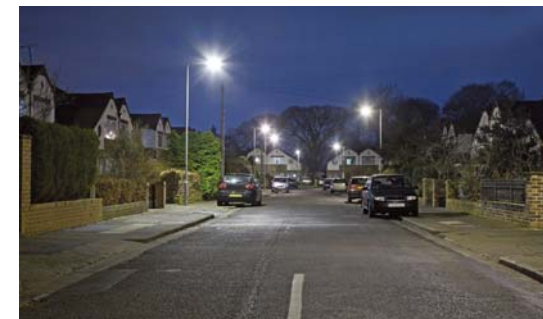
the housing market with new opportunities and challenges and will provide new opportunities to work with communities in developing our response locally.

There have also been many regional structural and policy changes over the past months, leading to significant changes in the way we work with our partners and communities across the region on housing policy, on jointly addressing housing and health issues and on funding and implementing joint actions. Increasingly, we will be relying on communities to shape and support our delivery responses.

At a local level Herefordshire is working closely within the West Housing Market Area Partnership and Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) working in partnership with our neighbours on joint policy developments, joint initiatives and securing investment. These Partnerships will add strength to our ability to deliver during uncertain times and should support the Council's objectives around identifying opportunities for greater cost effectiveness, re-shaping services to meet future

funding challenges and identifying opportunities for greater value for money and improved outcomes. This will be achieved by working with partner services and organisations, such as health, economic regeneration and housing partners but also, importantly, working with communities and the voluntary organisations through a localities approach.

This strategy must also take into account the likelihood that there will be fewer resources available over the coming years, which will impact on our ability to deliver all the objectives within the action plan. This strategy still aims to be ambitious in its vision and objectives, but must be realistic in terms of its ability to achieve.





This Housing Strategy has taken account of housing policy at all levels, including:

National and regional policy developments, consultations and research findings to guide the policy direction of the strategy and the inclusion of recommendations within the action plan

West Housing Market Area strategies, as it is expected that the importance of joint research and strategies will rise, and that this Housing Strategy will become part of the backbone for the joint Herefordshire and Shropshire strategy under development. This will provide opportunities for joint approaches on matters of common concern and interest, to our communities including affordable housing and may broaden to include Telford and Wrekin to mirror the LEP arrangements.

Wider economic and social influences which have and will undoubtedly continue to influence the future housing market, while also considering the role housing can play in ensuring sustainable, prosperous and healthy communities.

Herefordshire policy developments, including the Joint Corporate Plan, revised Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, Housing Needs Assessments and other themed contributory strategies. Supporting the delivery of housing plans and strategies which support improvements in the health and independence of vulnerable people remains important. The strong tradition of partnership working has also been built into the Strategy, particularly the Action Plan. Importantly, the corporate 'Rising to the Challenge' programme places communities at the heart of decision-making around localised services.

As this Housing in Herefordshire Strategy is the local policy document for housing, it includes an action plan to deliver the vision, priorities and objectives and identifies the lead partners we will work with corporately and externally. This action plan will be regularly monitored and updated to reflect the changing national, regional and local picture.

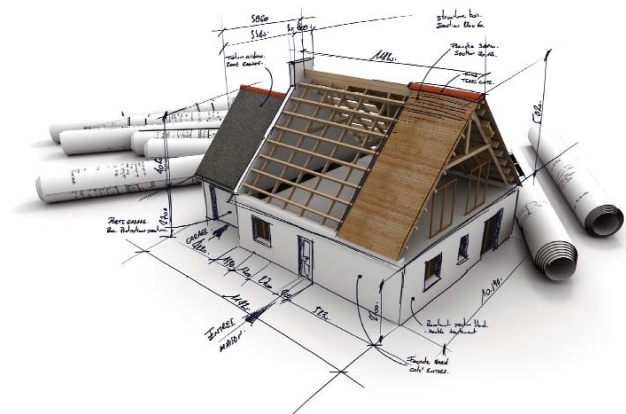
What we achieved in the previous Housing in Herefordshire Strategy and Action Plan

In the previous Housing in Herefordshire Strategy , we developed an action plan to help us achieve our priorities. As part of this Strategy refresh we have assessed progress towards the action plan, and this progress has helped to inform this strategy.

Within the action plan there were approx. 57 actions, of which 39 actions (68%) have been completed and 8 actions (14%) are ongoing.

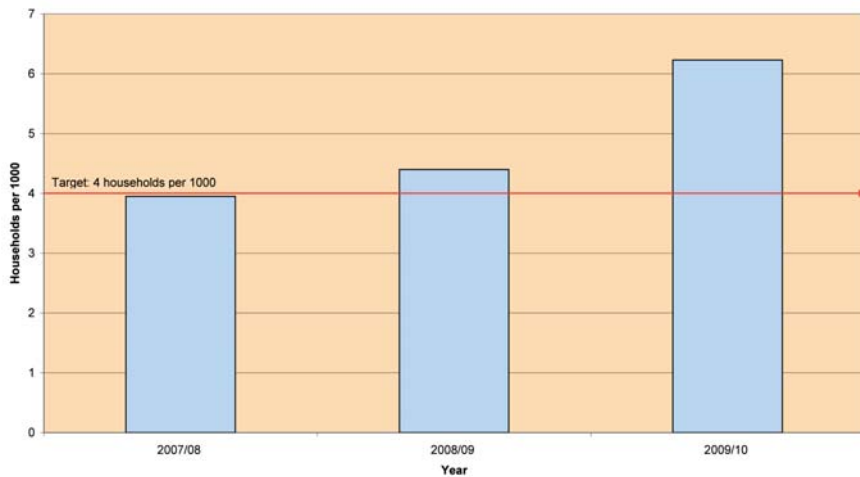
The successful actions include:

1. The development and implementation of themed strategies such as the Learning Disabilities Housing Plan and the Mental Health Housing Plan;
2. A significantly increased number of private rented properties let to homeless and potentially homeless households through the private sector leasing scheme and rent deposit scheme;
3. The number of rural housing need assessments increasing from approx. 5 to 14 per year led by Herefordshire Council's Housing Needs and Development Team.
4. Implementation of the new in-house homelessness and housing advice service, including a 'housing options' approach for housing advice and homelessness prevention;
5. Improved housing outcomes for care leavers through the provision of dedicated transitional housing and allocations policies
6. Significant reductions of families within B+B accommodation which reduced from 55 in January 2006 to 2 at the end of December 2008;
7. Development of additional crisis accommodation and schemes for domestic violence victims with the Sanctuary Scheme underway in Herefordshire;
8. Increased supply of affordable housing over the strategy period;
9. The Private Sector Housing Health and Safety Rating System and HMO Licensing scheme under the Housing Act 2004 which is now fully embedded and operational;
10. New accreditation scheme for private sector landlords which was consulted on with the landlord's focus group and launched in 2009.
11. Significant delivery of adaptations and small repairs to improve health and well-being and promote independence through our in-house Handyperson/Home Improvement Agency Service.

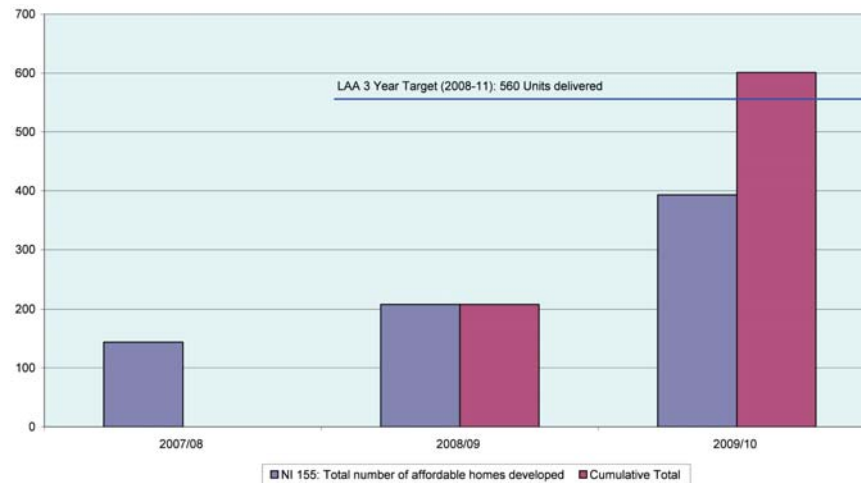




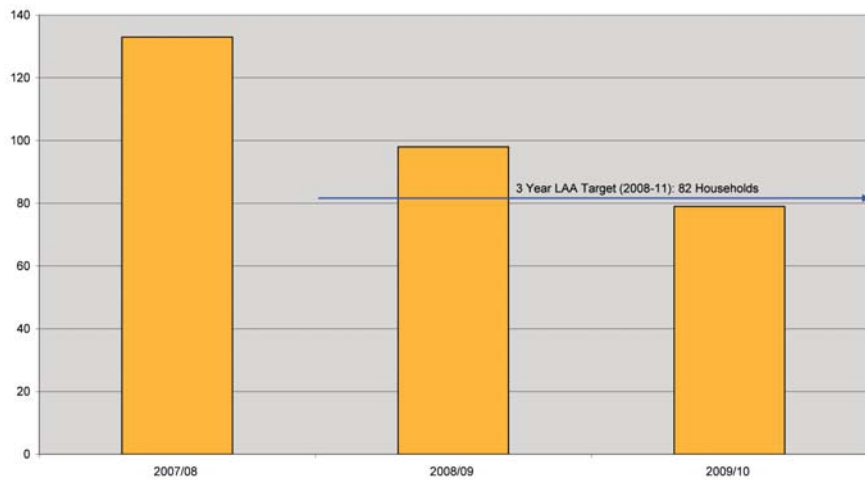
Number of those threatened with homelessness for whom advice and support prevented the occurrence of homelessness



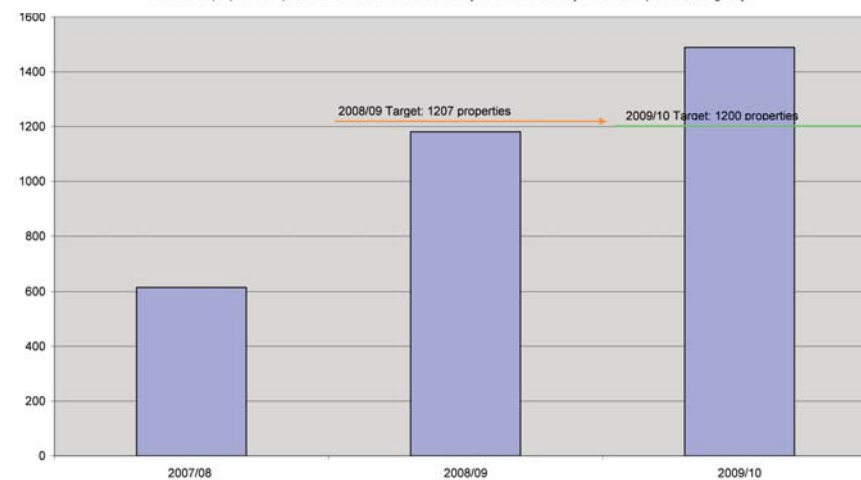
NI 155: Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (Gross)



NI 156: Number of Households in Temporary Accommodation



Number of properties improved as a result of direct action by the Local Authority or Home Improvement Agency



Developing the Housing Strategy for Herefordshire

It is imperative that this refreshed strategy reflects the views of local people and organisations. So, this strategy was developed using an interactive design and consultation process, which included:

Step 1 – An evidence base which was developed to bring together current information on housing, including: a review of progress against the previous strategy; key statistics such as population changes; house prices and levels of deprivation; outcomes from Parish Plans; Housing Needs Surveys, outcomes from recent consultations with local people; Herefordshire Voice Survey; progress against key performance indicators; local, sub-regional and regional plans and strategies; and, National Housing Policy.

Step 2 – The evidence base was then used as a basis for developing and testing the draft vision, priorities and objectives used within the consultation

Step 3 – This draft proposal was consulted upon, including an interactive workshop, questionnaire and online consultation tools through Herefordshire Council. The consultation process, supported by the Housing Partnership for Herefordshire, also asked for actions as a basis for an action plan.

Step 4 - The feedback from the consultation was assessed and used as a basis for this Housing Strategy.



Facts and figures about Housing in Herefordshire

Below is a flavour of the key facts and figures relating to housing in Herefordshire, which are part of the wider evidence base for this strategy. Further information on facts and figures regarding housing is available from the following sources:

- The Facts and Figures website (www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures) brings together data from Herefordshire Partnership, Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire. The State of Herefordshire Report can be found here, along with material on housing issues, including Housing Market Assessments, Housing Needs Assessment and other specific research.
- Herefordshire Council's Key Housing Facts Sheet June 2010 can be found at www.herefordshire.gov.uk
- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 for the West Market Housing Area is available on the West Market Housing Partnership website: www.westhousingpartnership.co.uk

Based on the definition of 'usual residence', the current estimate of Herefordshire's total population is 179,100 (2009 mid year estimate). This definition counts students at their term-time address and defines an international migrant as someone who changes their country of residence for at least a year. And since 2001, Herefordshire's resident population has grown by 2.4%, from 174,900 people to 179,100 in 2009. This is a slightly lower rate of growth than the West Midlands region overall (2.8%). It is also lower than that of England & Wales as a whole (4.7%) (Source: *Mid-year estimates of population, mid-2009 & mid-2001, Office for National Statistics (ONS)*).

Looking to the future and taking account of anticipated housing provision, the forecast population of Herefordshire in 2011 is 182,400, a 2% increase from 2009. By 2026, it is expected to be 193,600, 8% higher than in 2009. The need to achieve the new homes targets and ensure that families have decent homes to live in has been built into this forecast. (Sources: *2006-based Herefordshire population forecasts, HCRT & 2006-based national population projections, ONS. [p.28-30] – State of Herefordshire Report 2009*)

Herefordshire has an older age profile than both the West Midlands region and England & Wales; just over a quarter (26%) of the county's population is of state retirement age or above (45,900 people), compared to a fifth both regionally & nationally (20% in both cases). The older population is expected to grow significantly above national averages to 2026. Housing will need to respond to this demographic through the increased provision of housing options for older people which promote and support independent living, whilst helping to minimise the impact on health and other support services.

Conversely, the proportion of under 16s in the county (17%; 34,000 children) is similar to the national figure (19%); within this the biggest difference is in the under 5 age-group (5% of Herefordshire's total; 6% of England & Wales'). However, younger people represent the only net outflow of population from Herefordshire.

Currently there are approx. 81,200 dwellings in Herefordshire, of which approx. 1,616 are empty. Of these, 815 properties have been empty for longer than 6 months. Long term empty homes across Herefordshire could have the potential to be utilised to support housing needs. (*Herefordshire Council Key Housing Facts Sheet June 2010*).

The average (median) house price in January – March 2010 was £195,000, and average (median) earnings in April 2009 were £19,986. Herefordshire had the worst affordability ratio out of the West Midlands Authorities (unitaries, counties and metropolitan boroughs) and neighbouring counties (*Herefordshire Council Key Housing Facts Sheet January 2010*). This high affordability ratio means that being able to afford housing remains a crucial issue for people living in Herefordshire, and is expected to worsen during the economic downturn.

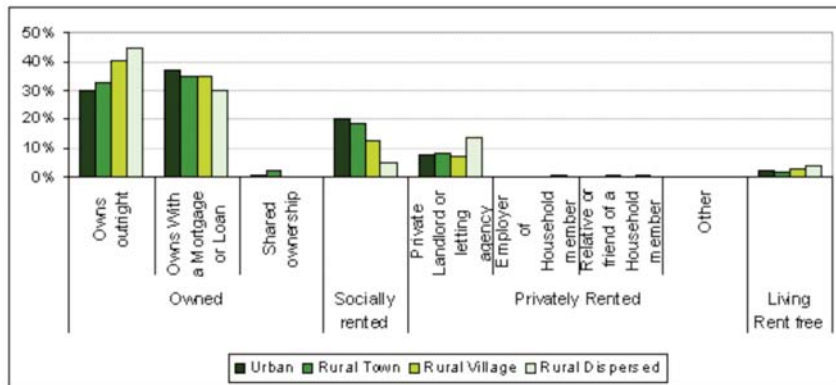
The number of applicants in temporary accommodation in Herefordshire (January – March 2010) was 79. The three main reasons for an approach are: private sector notice served, domestic violence and parental eviction. (*Herefordshire Council Homelessness and Housing Advice Team*).

Types of dwelling

| | Herefordshire | West Midlands | England |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------|
| Detached House or Bungalow | 43% | 24% | 23% |
| Semi-detached House or Bungalow | 27% | 38% | 32% |
| Terraced (including end terraced) House or Bungalow | 18% | 24% | 26% |
| Flat, maisonette or apartment - In a purpose built block of flats or tenement | 7% | 11% | 14% |
| Flat, maisonette or apartment - Part of a converted or shared house (includes bedsits) | 2% | 2% | 4% |
| Flat, maisonette or apartment - In a commercial building | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Caravan or other mobile or temporary structure | 1% | 0% | 0% |

This table shows that Herefordshire has significantly more detached housing than regionally and nationally and fewer smaller homes such as terrace houses and flats. These figures are important when considering the affordability of the housing market and the future housing needs and demographic of the population. (*Source: Census 2001 as quoted in the State of Herefordshire Report 2009*)

Households by tenure according to their rural/urban location in Herefordshire



The above table shows a high number of homes which are owned outright or with a mortgage or loan, and a low number of privately rented homes. It is expected that this picture may now be substantially different due to the effects of the economic down turn, and there is expected to be a rise in socially rented and privately rented homes in more urban areas.

Herefordshire Council moved to a preventative homelessness and housing advice service in 2006. The preventative approach has been extremely successful and has greatly reduced the need for applicants to move into temporary accommodation. With the assistance of the team, applicants can now take ownership of their own housing situation and many have been able to remain in their existing accommodation or move into more suitable private rented accommodation preventing them from becoming homeless.

The upward trend for homelessness applications has been controlled over the last three years due to the team embracing prevention approaches. Overall, however, the lack of affordable housing and economic conditions mean the number of applicants approaching the team for help has increased. (source: Herefordshire Council Homelessness and Housing Advice Team).

Herefordshire also attracts seasonal workers who move to the county for a few months during the growing season. During their stay they mainly reside in accommodation provided by their employers. This accommodation is arranged and ready for their occupation when they arrive in the county. Migrant workers who stay longer than a few months mainly reside in houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs). (Source: *State of Herefordshire Report 2009 and Herefordshire Council Homelessness and Housing Advice Team*)

Anecdotal evidence based on the experience of staff in Herefordshire Council Homelessness and Housing Advice Team in that the majority of migrant workers have employment and accommodation arrangements in place before they arrive in the County. There is a small minority who end up approaching the Advice Team due to insecure or unsuitable accommodation.

Overall affordable housing needs in Herefordshire are:

- Based on population forecasts - 325 units per year to 2011, then 229 per year until 2026
- Based on Home Point figures - 780 units per year until 2013
- Based on "Outside Consultancy" figures - 1113 units per year until 2026

(*Herefordshire Council Key Housing Facts Sheet June 2010*).

Herefordshire is a predominantly rural county, with 0.8 persons per hectare - the 9th lowest overall population density of all counties and unitary authorities in England & Wales and the 4th lowest in England. Herefordshire must therefore consider housing implications for rural areas, such as rural isolation. (Source: 2009 mid-year estimates of population, ONS).

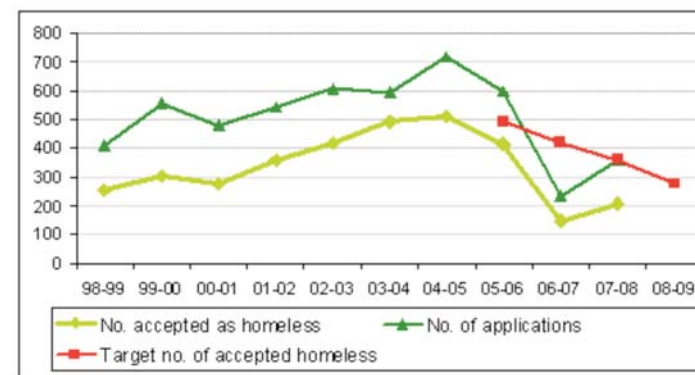
The Centre for Urban & Regional Studies (CURS) at the University of Birmingham, carried out a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for Shropshire, Herefordshire, Telford & Wrekin and Powys, published in February 2008. The CURS report concluded that 83 additional pitches are required in Herefordshire in the period 2007 to 2012, and a further 26 pitches between 2012 and 2017 (*State of Herefordshire Report 2009*)

Proportion of household types in rural/urban locations

| | | Herefordshire | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | | Urban | Rural town | Rural Village | Rural Dispersed |
| All households | | 34,500 | 7,951 | 16,145 | 15,608 |
| One person | Lone Pensioner | 16.7% | 18.8% | 14.6% | 11.6% |
| | Single Person household | 15.9% | 13.0% | 9.8% | 11.1% |
| Pensioners couples | | 10.3% | 12.8% | 13.4% | 11.9% |
| Married couple households | Without children | 12.6% | 13.4% | 18.2% | 19.1% |
| | With dependent children | 16.2% | 15.3% | 19.7% | 20.0% |
| | With non-dependent children | 5.2% | 5.0% | 6.5% | 6.9% |
| Cohabiting couple family households | Without children | 4.6% | 5.0% | 3.7% | 4.0% |
| | With dependent children | 3.6% | 3.8% | 2.8% | 2.3% |
| | With non-dependent children | 0.4% | 0.2% | 0.4% | 0.4% |
| Lone parent | With dependent children | 6.6% | 6.1% | 4.1% | 3.6% |
| | With non-dependent children | 2.9% | 2.9% | 2.4% | 2.8% |
| Other Households | With dependent Children | 1.6% | 0.8% | 1.5% | 2.2% |
| | All Students | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.3% |
| | All Pensioners | 0.4% | 0.7% | 0.5% | 0.7% |
| | Other | 3.0% | 2.4% | 2.3% | 3.1% |

(Source: 2001 Census, OA Boundaries, ONS – Crown copyright (State of Herefordshire Report 2009))

The latest housing condition survey commissioned by Herefordshire Council took place in 2005, with the report published in 2006. It was a sample survey of around 1,000 dwellings. The survey assessed Herefordshire’s housing stock under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS). 34% of dwellings in Herefordshire failed the “Decency Standard”. The majority of dwellings that failed the “Decency Standard” did so due to poor thermal efficiency. (State of Herefordshire Report 2009)



(Source: Strategic Housing, Herefordshire Council (State of Herefordshire Report 2009))

The number of people aged 65 and over helped to live at home (per 1,000 population) for Herefordshire and all English Authorities indicates that Herefordshire is just below the average figure but achieving above the target. Given the high number of older people in the County, this will remain a priority for housing. (Source: *Social Services, Herefordshire Council & Performance Assessment Framework (PAF), Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) (State of Herefordshire Report 2009)*)



The challenges for Housing in Herefordshire

From the evidence base and after considering the geographic and social diversity of Herefordshire, there are a number of clearly identified challenges emerging which effect housing, and which need to be confronted as part of this strategy and action plan.

These challenges are set out below and are relevant to the 4 priorities and their objectives. Actions relating to these challenges and relevant to the priority will be incorporated into the action plan. The challenges include:

- **How we can ensure there is a wide range of high quality, supported housing and specialised housing related support for vulnerable people.** Particularly for older people and those needing specialist support or guidance to live independently including people with a learning disability or mental health condition.
- **Geographic differences across Herefordshire which determine the way housing is provided and developed,** ranging from housing in sparsely populated rural areas through to city centre housing developments.
- **Access by all to housing services.** Ensuring that local people know how to access housing services and options, whether they are a first time service user or have specific needs.
- **The changing economic situation, which will impact on the services we provide in the future.** Including how the housing market will affect the building of new homes in the future, and maintaining funding to continue providing a wide range of housing services for local people.
- **Minimising the impact on the environment from existing and new housing development,** including the impact on the environment from the build and long term sustainability of the home and tackling fuel poverty.
- **Encouraging innovation and best practice while looking to the future.** For example innovative ways of building new homes and how these homes can contribute to sustainable communities.
- **Taking into account the demography of Herefordshire within housing policy and decision making,** particularly the higher number of older people and the need to attract younger people back to the County.
- **Making sure that local people are empowered to influence housing policy and be involved in key decisions,** by enabling local people to be involved in future service priorities, design and developments within their localities.

- Working in full partnership towards this achieving the vision in this strategy, including through the Housing Partnership for Herefordshire, the West Housing Market Area Partnership and Marches LEP and by working with communities and the voluntary sector through Herefordshire's localities.
- Taking a corporate approach which seeks to maximise opportunities for working jointly with services across HPS in delivering shared priorities.

The strategy aims to contribute towards the delivery of the vision, values and objectives agreed for Herefordshire Public Services:-

Herefordshire Public Services Vision

Working together to deliver efficient, excellent services and improve outcomes for the people of Herefordshire. We aim to put PEOPLE at the heart of everything we do.

The Joint Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Create a thriving economy
- Improve health and social care
- Raise standards for children and young people
- Promote self-reliant local communities
- Create a resilient Herefordshire
- Commission the right services



The vision for Housing in Herefordshire



Following the consultation, the vision for Housing in Herefordshire looks forward to 2020:

By 2020 housing in Herefordshire will be more safe, healthy and affordable for local people and will support sustainable communities. Housing will be of a higher quality, increasingly energy efficient and suitable for the diverse needs of the community.

The vision is supported by 4 priorities, each with a set of objectives identifying the main areas of focus. The priorities and objectives will also provide the basis for the action plan. The four priorities are:

- **To achieve a more balanced housing market**
Our aim is that Herefordshire has a balanced, flexible, healthy housing market which can respond to changes in demand, changes in the economy and support regeneration within Herefordshire. In particular, ensuring that housing is as affordable as possible to local people, is safe and healthy and that there is a choice of housing options available across all tenures.

- **Healthy homes**

Our aim is to improve the condition of homes across Herefordshire, to reduce the numbers of empty properties, and to limit the impact of fuel poverty and climate change. We will focus on creating 'healthy homes' for Herefordshire's residents, supporting improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

- **Meeting the needs of vulnerable households**

Our aim is to support those people who wish to live more independently, through adapting existing and new homes and providing a range of housing with appropriate support to meet their needs, whilst enabling them to gain community and economic benefits.

- **Preventing homelessness**

Our aim is to prevent homelessness wherever possible, as prevention is the key to promoting health and wellbeing and protecting the people of Herefordshire.

To achieve a more balanced housing market



Why is this an issue?

We know that Herefordshire has a high house price to income ratio (high house prices and low average incomes) and that the affordability of local housing has been raised as a priority in Parish Plans, the Community Strategy, Housing Needs Surveys and other local strategies and surveys.

We also know that the type of housing in Herefordshire differs to the regional and national picture, with significantly more detached homes than the regional and national average, as well as a lower percentage of socially rented and privately rented homes than the regional and national averages.

The population of Herefordshire will grow over the coming years and the proportion of older people will increase. There will also be a greater number of young adults whom Herefordshire will need to retain to support the economy, particularly the 24 to 35 age group.

It is important that local housing needs are

identified and that there is flexibility to respond to these needs. It is also important to acknowledge the role of housing in ensuring our communities are sustainable over the long term, with access to local services and a minimal impact on the environment from housing.

We should strive to maximise significant development and regeneration opportunities across Herefordshire over the coming years, which could be utilised to address any housing imbalances and provide opportunities for more innovative approaches to housing solutions, including through empowering communities to help themselves.

What is our aim?

Our aim is that Herefordshire has a balanced, flexible, healthy housing market which can respond to changes in demand, changes in the economy and support regeneration within Herefordshire. In particular, ensuring that housing is as affordable as possible to local people, is safe and healthy and that there is a choice of housing options available across all tenures.

The objectives

1. Ensure the number of overall housing completions targets are met.
2. Increase the number of new affordable homes throughout the County, including within market towns and rural villages, and ensure that their environmental impact is minimised.
3. Support the growth and regeneration of Herefordshire, particularly, subject to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, the focused growth in Hereford and urban village development.
4. Respond to changes in housing demand and promote a broad range of housing opportunities to meet local needs across a range of household groups and sizes including vulnerable households.
5. Pilot innovative housing solutions, particularly linked to economic development opportunities. Where appropriate this will include “Live Work” schemes and “Build Train” schemes.
6. The private sector plays a greater role in meeting local housing needs and balancing the housing market including through promoting city living, bringing empty properties back into use and increasing access to rented housing.
7. Housing promotes the sustainability of local communities by supporting existing services and generating new economic growth, particularly by retaining and attracting skills which support a vibrant economy.
8. Anticipate future innovations and future proof existing and new homes for the long term.
9. Working with local communities and land owners to enable land to be brought forward for development.



Healthy Homes

Why is this an issue?

Poor housing quality can have an impact on health, and under Section 1 of the Housing Act 2004 a new method of assessing the condition of a dwelling called the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) was introduced in 2006.

The Herefordshire House Condition Survey identified 41% of properties that were not decent using the HHSRS and local people have also told us in consultations that housing condition is a high priority. In addition, approximately 1% of dwellings in Herefordshire are empty (of which 815 are empty long term), many having been identified in Housing Needs Surveys within Parishes.

In 2005, nearly 11% of households in Herefordshire were in Fuel Poverty and it is estimated that this figure will have doubled due to rising fuel prices and the economic downturn. There is concern that few properties are future proofed against fuel poverty and that vulnerable households on benefit are more likely to live in non-decent housing. This, in turn, can increase reliance on health and social care services.

A combination of poor housing conditions, low average earnings, energy inefficient homes, and empty dwellings continue to be important housing issues in Herefordshire.

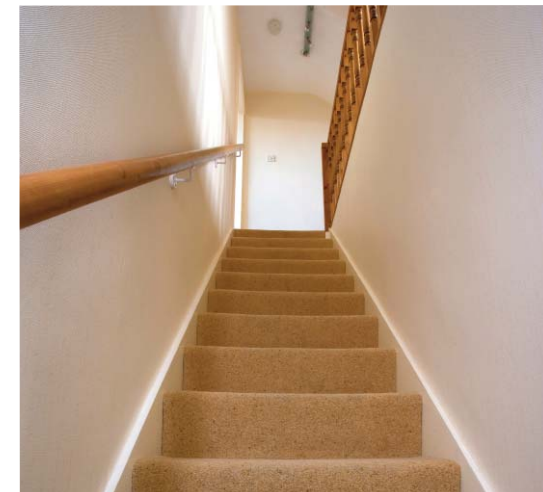
What is our aim?

Our aim is to improve the condition of homes across Herefordshire, to reduce the numbers of empty properties, to limit the impact of fuel poverty and climate change and support a healthier community. We will strive to create 'Healthy Homes'.

The objectives

1. Gain an up to date understanding of 'healthy' homes within the County.
2. Improve the condition of all homes, particularly the condition of houses in multiple occupation through a range of interventions encompassed within a Private Sector Renewal Strategy and Policy.
3. Reduce the number of empty properties in Herefordshire.

4. Encourage a reduction in domestic related carbon emissions and the number of fuel-poor households through our Affordable Warmth Strategy.
5. Influence local people and organisations to ensure that housing is of a good quality and contributes to improving health and well being and reduced reliance on Health & Social Care Services.
6. Support services and regeneration initiatives which improve the built environment for communities.



Meeting the needs of vulnerable households

Why is this an issue?

We know that most people wish to remain within their own homes for as long as possible; particularly older people and vulnerable adults. This may mean that the person needs additional support or that their home needs adapting. The person may also require additional assistance to keep their home in a decent condition.

We also know that other more vulnerable groups of people, or those with specific needs, may also wish to live more independently and require a higher degree of support in their housing choice. Given the changing economic times, there is an opportunity to utilise housing as a way of reducing worklessness through the building of local homes by local people, innovative regeneration schemes and by strengthening the links between housing and economic development. These initiatives can also contribute towards the annual housing targets.

What is our aim?

Our aim is to support those vulnerable people who wish to live more independently, through adapting existing and new homes and providing a range of housing with appropriate support to meet their needs, while enabling them to gain community and economic benefits.

The objectives

1. Ensure equitable access to housing, housing support services and information about housing options for all vulnerable households.
2. Support high quality services which help vulnerable people to remain in their own home including the provision of telecare, disabled adaptations and small repairs services.
3. Anticipate and respond to the particular needs of the high number of older people in Herefordshire including, where appropriate, through Extra Care Housing.
4. Assess in partnership with commissioning partners the need for different types of housing for all vulnerable people, and ensure that resources are deployed where possible, to where they are most needed.
5. Provide housing and housing solutions to the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities.
6. Respond to the changing economic position by encouraging economic inclusion through housing provision and support.



Preventing homelessness

Why is this an issue?

Due to the current economic downturn the Homelessness and Housing Advice Team has experienced a significant demand for its services, at a time when there is a decline in resources. The team will continue to take an innovative and imaginative prevention approach to reduce applicants from becoming homeless and maintain our success in reducing the use of temporary accommodation.

The registration/waiting list for housing in Herefordshire indicate significant levels of unmet need for affordable housing which is the key route to reducing homelessness pressures in the longer term.

Becoming homeless has also been raised as a priority issue by vulnerable groups in Herefordshire, including those with mental health issues, the Gypsy and Traveller community and young people. The three main causes of homelessness in Herefordshire consistently emerge as: termination of private rented accommodation; domestic violence; and parental eviction of a young person.

People who experience homelessness, particularly at a young age, are more likely to face repeat homelessness during their lifetime.

What is our aim?

Our aim is to prevent homelessness wherever possible, as prevention is the key to promoting health and wellbeing and protecting the people of Herefordshire.

The objectives

1. Prevent homelessness through the effective targeting of housing advice and services.
2. End the use of bed and breakfast as temporary accommodation and reduce the overall number of households in temporary accommodation.
3. Provide access to sufficient accommodation across all sectors and ensure support is available for people who are, or who may become, homeless.
4. Improve joint working amongst all agencies concerned with homelessness and prevention.
5. Reduce homelessness and its related impacts amongst vulnerable client groups including young people and children.
6. Maximise the effectiveness and targeting of homelessness services through the use of improved data collection and intelligence gathering, innovative technology and a range of communication media.
7. Keep the Homelessness Strategy and action plan up to date in responding to changing demographic, economic and social influences.



Action Plan

To achieve the vision and four priorities, actions and projects are being put into place. These actions and projects are contained within an action plan.

The action plan sets out the actions we will take, and each action has a timescale and a target or performance indicator to achieve. Actions may have one or more organisation leading or contributing to its implementation.

The actions are flexible and may alter to meet changing circumstances, but are all based on achieving the vision and priorities. Many actions and projects are well underway and some have already been noted within this strategy. For example:

Hereford Growth Point

Subject to the emerging LDF, the ambitions of the Hereford Growth point are:

- An increase in the rate of new housing built in the County, and in particular at Hereford, to provide around 8,500 dwellings (approx 4,500 net) over the period up to 2026, including the provision of affordable housing.

- The provision of necessary transport infrastructure in association with the new housing development.
- The regeneration of the Edgar Street Grid area of Hereford.
- New housing proposals for the County's market towns, enabling them to meet their needs and to aid rural regeneration.
- Supporting city living through the creation of accommodation in empty space above and within the commercial and retail environment to support a vibrant city environment.

Home Improvement Agency (You at Home)

The Herefordshire Council Home Improvement Agency (You at Home) was established by Herefordshire Council in 2005 to help homeowners and private tenants remain safe, secure, comfortable and independent in their own home. The team includes surveyors, technicians, administrative staff and caseworkers with considerable experience helping homeowners and private tenants arrange home repairs, adaptations

or improvements that have enabled them to remain warm, safe and secure in their own homes. The service includes a Handyperson Scheme linked to supporting improved health and wellbeing outcomes and reduced hospital admissions.

Oval Regeneration (South Wye)

To support the aspiration of the local community, in partnership with Herefordshire Housing Limited, there are initial plans for the regeneration and improvement of the Oval in South Wye. This project will be undertaking extensive local consultation with local people which started in 2009 and is proposing to regenerate community facilities as well as housing.



Monitoring progress

It is important that the action plan is monitored to ensure that progress is on target, (especially in these changing times), and to ensure that our actions remain the right ones. So, the action plan includes existing targets or performance indicators where appropriate as a way of ensuring that the monitoring progress is measurable and tangible. In developing a joint strategy with Shropshire we will retain an action plan which addresses local priorities for Herefordshire’s communities.

The action plan will be monitored and updated annually, with the review of progress being reported through the Housing Partnership in Herefordshire and West Housing Market Area Partnership. It may be necessary to amend, take out or add any actions depending on progress and the changing external situation.

The combined strategy itself will be refreshed to ensure it remains relevant and to reflect progress towards to 2020 vision.

Partnership working

To achieve the vision and priorities, it is imperative that local organisations work together, through the Housing Partnership for Herefordshire, and that this Partnership owns and is committed to this strategy and action plan.

The Housing Partnership for Herefordshire will work closely with other partners and priorities of the Herefordshire Partnership for instance, across economic development and health and wellbeing.

We will support the creation of a joint Housing Strategy with Shropshire Council and co-operate on tackling shared policy priorities through our membership of the West Housing Market Area Partnership and Marches LEP. We will work with communities through locality approaches which enable local people to have influence and deliver locally identified priorities.



Glossary

Core strategy - sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority area and the strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision. It will contain a set of primary policies for delivering the core strategy.

Fuel poverty - where a household cannot achieve temperatures needed to maintain health and comfort for expenditure of less than 10% of income.

Growth Point - A designation of some larger towns and cities within the Region which enables funding and support to be available for towns and cities to pursue large scale sustainable growth, including housing.

Herefordshire Partnership - The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Herefordshire, comprising public, private, community and voluntary organisations committed to improving quality of life in Herefordshire.

HHSRS - Housing Health and Safety Rating System. The means by which properties are inspected under the Housing Act 2004 by the Private Sector Housing Team.

Housing Needs Assessment - A report detailing the current provision of housing across the County, examining the housing related issues in the context of geography, economy and socio-demographic profile of Herefordshire.

Housing Needs Surveys - Surveys undertaken across Herefordshire in order to assess the need for affordable housing.

Housing Partnership - A partnership of key housing commissioners, stakeholders and providers involved in housing issues in Herefordshire.

Local Development Framework (LDF) - The LDF sets out land use and planning policy at a local level.

Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Local Investment Plan (LIP) - The LIP is a Strategic Investment Plan, setting out the investment priorities and requirements for the County around regeneration, renewal and infrastructure

Parish Plans - A statement from a local community about how it sees itself developing over the following years.

Median - The median is the figure half way along the range such that half the figures (whether prices, incomes etc.) are higher than the median and half of them are lower.

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) - A term which can include community housing associations, housing associations, housing partnerships and local housing companies.

Sustainable - Living in a way which has a positive effect on the environmental, economic and community wellbeing of an area.

Sustainable Community Strategy - Brings together the shared vision and priorities of local people, organisations, networks and sectors within an area.

West Market Housing Partnership - brings together representatives from a range of organisations that contribute to and influence delivery of housing and sustainable communities in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|----------|
| To achieve a more balanced housing market | | | | | |
| Ensure an increase in the mix of overall housing completions across the county | | | | | |
| 1.1 | To support the delivery of the annual overall housing targets | 2650 delivered | 31 March 2011 | Sustainable Communities - Assistant Director, Environment, Planning & Waste - Assistant Director, Homes & Communities | |
| | 2006-2011 530 pa | 3975 delivered | 1 April 2011 - 31 March 2016 | | |
| | 2011-2016 795 pa | | | | |
| | 2016-2021 1085 pa | 5425 delivered | 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2021 | | |
| | 2021-2026 1190 pa | 5950 delivered | 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2026 | | |
| Increase the number of new affordable housing options within Hereford City, market towns, rural villages | | | | | |
| 1.2 | To deliver the annual affordable housing targets | 711 delivered | 31 March 2009 | Housing Needs and Development Manager Housing Partnership for Herefordshire | |
| | | 170 delivered | During 1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011 | | |
| | 2006-2009 total | 528 delivered | | | |
| | 2010-2011 170 pa | | | | |
| | 2011-2013 264 pa | 1148 delivered | During 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2013 | | |
| | 2013-2017 287 pa | | During 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2017 | | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|---|---------------|---|----------|
| 1.3 | Develop housing policies jointly with planning service to ensure the delivery of the overall housing completion numbers | | | Sustainable Communities | |
| | a. housing policies (including affordable housing) published within the core strategy | Core strategy with housing policies completed | 31 March 2012 | Planning Policy Manager | |
| | b. housing policies published within the market towns and rural area plans | Market Towns and rural area plans completed | 31 March 2013 | Planning Policy Manager | |
| | c. Viability assessment undertaken to support future delivery | Viability assessment completed and published | 31 March 2012 | Planning Policy Manager | |
| 1.4 | Ensure robust housing needs data is available to support the delivery of the overall housing targets | | | | |
| | a. Undertake a Local Housing market area assessment | Assessment completed and published | 31 May 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| | b. Continue the rolling programme of housing need surveys to support development particularly in the rural areas where no surveys have been undertaken | 16 "group" local housing need surveys completed and published | 31 March 2012 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| | c. Review the assessment of need to inform future delivery | New policy agreed and published | 31 March 2012 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/Sustainable Communities Manager | |
| | d. Evaluate and support potential for Community-led planning | Evaluate policy at launch | 31 March 2012 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/Planning Policy Manager | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|--|------------------|---|----------|
| 1.5 | Form new partnership arrangements to promote and increase the delivery of all housing, particularly affordable solutions | New Housing partnership agreed with terms of reference and programme of meetings established | 30 December 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/Planning Policy Manager | |
| 1.6 | Develop a Tenancy Strategy to provide guidance for housing partners to assist in meeting future needs | Tenancy Strategy completed and published | 31 March 2011 | Assistant Director Homes and Communities | |

Support the growth and regeneration of Hereford city and its surrounds

| | | | | | |
|-----|--|--|-----------------|--|--|
| 1.7 | Ensure that the key regeneration projects are represented within core strategies/policy documents e.g. Oval regeneration, urban village, | Completed and Published | 31 January 2010 | Assistant Director Homes and Communities | |
| | Local Investment Plan 2010 – 2026 | Completed and Published | 31 March 2012 | Assistant Director Homes and Communities | |
| | West Housing Market Area Partnership Housing Strategy | Quarterly monitoring meetings with HCA | Quarterly | Assistant Director Homes and Communities | |
| | Monitor delivery of LIP | | | | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|---|--|---|---|----------|
| 1.8 | Deliver the urban village in partnership with Sanctuary Housing Group | | | | |
| | a. Establish working group to ensure delivery | Working group established with terms of reference and programme of meetings agreed | 30 June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| | b. Establish timetable of key milestones to ensure delivery | Approved and published | 30 June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/ Hereford Futures | |
| | c. Report and monitor delivery to Hereford Futures through the Homes and Communities task group | Progress reports presented quarterly | 30 June 2011 30 Sept 2011 30 December 2011 31 March 2012 | Assistant Director Homes and Communities | |
| | d. Evaluate benefits of Hereford Skills Academy for Construction and apply to Housing development, if appropriate | Report on Skills Academy proposal for HF | March 2011 | HF EE&T Task Group | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|---|-----------|--------------------------------|----------|
| 1.9 | Support refurbishment and improvement of existing housing conditions within Hereford and broader regeneration areas. | Identify programme of potential properties for targeted action. | Sept 2011 | Private Sector Housing Manager | |

Respond to changes in housing demand through a broad range of housing opportunities to meet local needs across a range of household groups and sizes including vulnerable households

| | | | | | |
|------|---|---|----------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1.10 | Annually review the housing needs and anticipated future demand, by bringing together statistics, anecdotal evidence and other sources of information particularly across vulnerable groups | Annual needs review published | 31 April 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| 1.11 | Ensure that the housing needs of vulnerable groups are assessed and housing solutions maximised, particularly for the following key priorities Mental Health Learning Disabilities Older persons | Housing Plans developed and published | 30 June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/ Integrated Commissioning programme leads/Private Sector Housing Manager | |
| 1.12 | Support implementation of outcomes from partnership review of Home Point | Publish review recommendations Develop Action Plan | April 2011 May 2011 | Home Point Partnership Board | Review underway |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|---|--|---|----------|
| 1.13 | Review of Home Point Allocations Policy taking into account Fairer Futures consultation and finalised proposals | (subject to legislative timetable) publish revised Home Point Allocation Policy and implement | August 2011 (subject to outcome of consultation) | Home Point Board Housing Solutions Manager | |
| 1.14 | Complete a review of the approach to managing the Common Housing Register, operated by Home Point, having regard to the options available under Fairer Futures consultation. | Implement review recommendations (subject to legislative timetable) | August 2011 (subject to legislative timetable) | Housing Solutions Manager Home Point Board | |
| 1.15 | Monitor the impact of legislative and policy changes on housing demand e.g. LHA and develop appropriate policy responses within resources available | Key legislative changes accounted for and policies established in response | March 2012 | Senior Strategy & Policy Officer | |

Increase the role the private sector plays to meet local housing

| | | | | | |
|------|--|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1.16 | Evaluate the possibility of promoting city living through bringing empty space back into use | Project plan developed and published | 31 March 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| | | Funding secured | 30 June 2011 | Hereford Futures | |
| | | 20 properties brought back into use | 31 March 2013 | | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|---|---|----------------|---|----------|
| 1.17 | Promote the use and value of the HMO tenure in meeting the needs of single households | Pro-active promotion agreed with partners including letting agents | September 2011 | Private Sector Housing Manager | |
| 1.18 | Develop schemes to enable greater access to the private rented sector | | | | |
| | a. Council leasing scheme | Scheme established and piloted | 31 August 2011 | Housing Solutions Manager | |
| | b. Long term private sector leasing scheme with Kemble Housing | Scheme established and piloted | 30 June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| | c. Loans to owners of empty properties | Scheme established and piloted | 31 March 2012 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| | d. Extend the current private landlord accreditation scheme | Agent accreditation scheme established | 31 March 2012 | Private Sector Housing Manager | |
| | e. Protocol for integrated engagement with landlords and agents across all teams/partners | Local agreement/protocol established between services engaged with sector | 31 March 2012 | Assistant Director, Homes & Communities | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|---|---|---------------|--|----------|
| 1.19 | Promote the bringing back of Empty properties through various media | | | | |
| | a. annual newsletter | Newsletter published | 30 June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| | b. Information events at info centres in Hereford City and market towns | 5 information events completed | 31 March 2012 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| 1.20 | Evaluate potential to use Home Point to advertise/promote private rented properties | Increased access to private sector for housing applicants | June 2011 | Housing Solutions Manager/Home Point Partnership | |
| 1.21 | Use Private Rented Sector Access Scheme to discharge homelessness duties | At least 20 households accommodated under scheme | 31 March 2012 | Housing Solutions Manager | |

Promote the sustainability of local communities by supporting existing services and generating new economic growth, through the provision of housing options

| | | | | | |
|------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| 1.22 | Pilot innovative housing solutions linked to the economic development opportunities e.g. Live work schemes Self Build/build and train. Evaluate Community Land Trusts and community Build feasibility | Partnerships established | 30 Sept 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/ Economic Development | |
| | | Potential pilots identified | 31 March 2012 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/Economic Development | |
| | | Evaluation report Schemes underway | 31 March 2012 31 March 2013 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|----------|
| 1.23 | Identify the wider needs of rural communities through the development of locality working | Locality Profiles and Action Plans to be produced for all 9 localities | April 2012 | Director of Sustainable Communities/Sustainable Communities Manager/Assistant Director Homes & Communities | |
| 1.24 | Promote the delivery of housing options within rural areas in partnership with rural communities | Parish Council Forum undertaken Toolkit developed | 30 September 2011 30 June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager Sustainable Communities Manager | |
| 1.25 | Promote energy efficiency within communities and localities | Partnerships established with local communities | March 2012 | Private Sector Housing Manager | |

Healthy Homes

Gain an up to date understanding of healthy homes within the County.

Improve the condition of all homes, particularly the condition of houses in the private sector and house in multiple occupation (HMO's) through a range of interventions encompassed within a Private Sector Renewal Strategy and Policy.

| | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|----------------|--|---|
| 2.1 | Devise a pro-active approach to inspection of properties based on risk | Approach agreed and piloted and programme of annual inspections of high risk properties | September 2011 | Standards already in existence – both statutory and policy. Priorities set by hazard rating properties | Legal and decent homes standards in Housing Act 2004 Higher standards available within Landlord Accreditation Scheme |
|-----|--|---|----------------|--|---|

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|---|---|---|--|--|
| 2.2 | Promote the private rented sector as a tenure of choice , particularly ensuring health, safety, management and licensing requirements are met in HMOs (evidence base & LIP) | Promotional strategy agreed Fully integrated policy established | Initial promotion through landlord focus group to start January 2011 December 2011 | Private Sector Housing Manager | Some promotion through Landlord Accreditation Scheme |
| 2.3 | Set targets for improving the health and safety of properties by reducing Category 1 hazards,(and how this will be achieved) | New targets in place | July 2011 | Private Sector Housing Manager / Herefordshire Council Performance Improvement Officer | Existing targets to be reviewed |
| 2.4 | Monitor RSL progress in meeting decent homes targets | Establish arrangements with RSLs for annual reporting of decent homes and energy efficiency standards | Nov 2011 | Private Sector Housing Manager /Performance Improvement Officer | Survey of individual properties by PSH officers following tenant complaint, some protocol arrangements in place with HHL |
| 2.5 | Update the House Condition Survey annually with appropriate software | House Condition Survey to be completed by July 2011 and updated annually thereafter | Annually | Private Sector Housing Manager | Joint spec with Shropshire 1st draft complete – expressions of interest sought |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|---|--|-----------|------------------------------------|----------|
| 2.6 | Review the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy in the light of budgetary restrictions | Private Sector Housing Strategy document completed | Dec 2012 | Private Sector Housing Manager/HPS | |
| 2.7 | Establish a training programme for landlords to encourage the improvement and management of private sector housing | Programme agreed with Landlord Focus Group | Jan 2012 | Private Sector Housing Manager | |
| 2.8 | In partnership with housing providers, developers, agents and other housing teams, establish a local protocol for addressing overcrowding in all housing tenures. | Protocol established | Oct 2011 | Private Sector Housing Manager | |

Reduce the number of empty properties in Herefordshire

| | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 2.9 | Implement the empty property strategy in partnership with key organisations, so more long term empty homes come back into use (LIP) Establish monitoring mechanism to ensure strategy is delivered | Established | 1 April 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| 2.10 | Review the Empty Property Strategy in 2013 | Strategy reviewed and in place by December 2013 | 31 March 2013 | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 2.11 | Bring empty properties back into use during 2011/12 a. Bring a total of 130 back into use b. of which 40 should be long term empty properties (6 months or more) c. of which 5 should be problematic | 130 achieved 40 achieved 5 achieved | 31 March 2012 31 March 2012 31 March 2012 | Housing Needs and Development Manger | |
| 2.12 | Bring empty properties back into use during 2012/13 a. Bring a total of 135 back into use b. of which 40 should be long term empty properties (6 months or more) c. of which 5 should be problematic | 135 achieved 40 achieved achieved | 31 March 2013 31 March 2013 31 March 2013 | Housing Needs and Development Manger Housing Needs and Development Manger/ Private Sector Housing Manager | |

Encourage a reduction in domestic related carbon emissions and the number of fuel-poor households through our Affordable Warmth Strategy

| | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 2.13 | Review the - Herefordshire Affordable Warmth Strategy and action plan in the light of emerging financial changes and government policy Implement recommendations within the plan | Strategy and Action plan reviewed Recommendations to be phased | June 2011 Within life of the strategy (3years) | Private sector Housing Manager/Private Sector Housing Advisor (Energy Efficiency) | Strategy reviewed |
| 2.14 | All new homes to meet the code for sustainable homes minimum level 3 (consultation) | Certificates provided for all Affordable housing delivered to code 3 | | Housing Needs and Development Manager | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|---|--------------|---|--|
| 2.15 | Establish a steering group including Private Sector Housing, Sustainability Team, Health & Care Commissioners and the Voluntary Sector to identify and support community led schemes to combat fuel poverty (consultation) | Steering group established Steering group to develop and implement up to 2 projects per year, dependent on funding | July 2011 | Private Sector Housing Team/Head of Waste & Sustainability | |
| 2.16 | Influence national policy on energy efficiency and carbon-saving initiatives within a rural environment | Ensure membership of strategic groups | January 2011 | Private Sector Housing Advisor (Energy Efficiency)/Sustainability Manager | Private Sector Housing Advisor (Energy Efficiency) officer is engaged on regional forums |

Influence local people and organisations to ensure that housing is of a good quality and contributes to improving health and well being

| | | | | | |
|------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 2.17 | Engage with commissioners and strategic -partners to prioritise actions to address housing conditions and their impact on health | Steering group to be established To report progress to The Housing Partnership for Herefordshire Secure cross-sector funding to support intervention which contribute to healthy homes and health and well-being | May 2011 Autumn 2011 Autumn 2011 | Assistant Director, Homes and Communities/Private sector Housing Manager/Director of Public Health | Cabinet member and scrutiny reports due -June 2011 |
|------|--|--|--|--|--|

Support services and regeneration initiatives which improve the built environment for communities.

| | | | | | |
|------|---|--|----------|--|---------------------------|
| 2.18 | Work in partnership with HHL to support delivery of Oval Regeneration | Oval regeneration scheme included in Local Investment Plan | Jan 2011 | Assistant Director, Homes & Communities/ Herefordshire Housing | Adopted & agreed with HCA |
|------|---|--|----------|--|---------------------------|

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|--|---|---|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Meeting the needs of vulnerable households | | | | | |
| Ensure equitable access to housing support services and information about housing options for all vulnerable households. | | | | | |
| 3.1 | <p>Collect service user feedback across all areas of the Homes and Communities service, taking action to correct dissatisfaction or underperformance devise an agreed method of feedback/customer satisfaction across all teams?</p> <p>Provide an integrated, pro-active approach to ensure fair access to services provided</p> | <p>Feedback collated by summer 2011, and then annually as part of the Business Planning process</p> <p>Agreed methodology developed and adopted</p> | Feedback collated by summer 2011 | Homes and Communities Team Directorate Services Team | |
| Respond to the housing and related support needs to help vulnerable people to remain in their own home including the provision of telecare, disabled adaptations and small repairs services and where appropriate through extra care housing provision. | | | | | |
| 3.2 | Complete a whole service review for the provision of major - adaptations, from point of enquiry through to completion of works, using recognised good practice within the housing and health sectors | Service review completed. Recommendations communicated to the Housing Partnership for Herefordshire | Oct 2011 | Assistant Director, Homes and Communities and Private]Sector Housing Manager Director of Adult Social Care | Review underway/ assisted by OT team leader |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|---|---|---|----------|
| 3.3 | <p>Explore the opportunities for Housing and related support services in particular Extra Care provision for older persons.</p> <p>Older persons support and housing needs assessed to identify housing and housing related support requirements across the county</p> | Strategy published | 31 May 2011 | Integrated Commissioning/Housing Needs and Development Manager | |
| 3.4 | To develop commissioning/housing plans for those with mental health, learning disabilities, physical disabilities and drugs and substance misuse to stay within their own home(LIP) | <p>Specific housing plans published.</p> <p>Implement the recommendations set out in the Drugs and Housing Strategy Action Plan 2010 - 2013</p> | <p>30 June 2011</p> <p>by end of March 2012</p> | <p>Integrated Commissioning/Housing Needs and Development Manager</p> <p>Homes & Communities Division</p> | |
| 3.5 | Work with partners to establish a more integrated approach to providing a 'support for choice' service to enable independent living under single assessment process | Private Sector Housing and Home Improvement Agency services are valued and integrated into partner policies | 2012 | Private Sector Housing Manager/Integrated Commissioning | |
| 3.6 | Work with funding partners to ensure the on-going provision of a HIA and Handyman service to provide access to small works of repair, improvement and adaptation to vulnerable households | Funding confirmed | March 2011 (annual review) | Private Sector Housing Manager/Integrated Commissioning | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|--|---|--|------------------|--|----------|
| Assess in partnership with commissioning partners the need for different types of housing for all vulnerable people, and ensure that resources are deployed where possible, to where they are most needed. | | | | | |
| 3.7 | Undertake sector analysis to determine key commissioning partners for all vulnerable groups and jointly agree and establish a forward programme of needs assessments (see 1.11) | Complete analysis and forward programme | 30 June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/ Senior Strategy & Policy Officer | |
| 3.8 | Establish supported housing commissioners group to develop, monitor and coordinate a programme of needs assessments and housing plans | Commissioning Group established and initial programme agreed | June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager/ Integrated Commissioning | |
| Provide solutions to the accommodation needs of the gypsy and traveller communities. | | | | | |
| 3.9 | Deliver 83 pitches as identified within the G & T Accommodation Needs Assessment 2007 | 83 pitches delivered | 31 December 2012 | Housing Needs Development Team and Gypsy and Traveller Services through the established working group with Public Health | |
| | Explore and establish new partnership to increase the delivery of pitches across the county and review management approaches | Partners identified | 31 December 2011 | | |
| 3.10 | Review the G & T Accommodation Needs Assessment through more robust needs analysis | Assessment reviewed and published | 31 March 2013 | Housing Needs Development Team and Gypsy and Traveller Services through the established working group | |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|--|--|---|-----------|--|---|
| Respond to the changing economic position by encouraging economic inclusion through housing provision and support | | | | | |
| 3.11 | Work with RSLs, developers and local economic development and skills agencies (through e.g. LEP) to identify local work and skills opportunities linked to housing, such as apprenticeships (consultation) and Train and Build | Complete bench line study of existing programmes and develop action plan to deliver schemes | Sept 2011 | Assistant Director Homes and Communities/ Economic Development Manager | |
| Preventing homelessness | | | | | |
| Prevent homelessness through the effective targeting of housing advice and services. | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Re-launch of the rent deposit scheme. Including work in this sector to improve opportunities for vulnerable or excluded clients (Housing Solutions Team) | Increased use of bonds to secure private rented accommodation. | June 2011 | Housing Solutions Manager | Information for landlords and tenants completed in draft form. Meeting on 3.11.10 to discuss procedures and obtain feedback. Leaflets produced and role of Letting Co-ordinator created. Role will now be developed and procedures written. |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|--|------------------|--|---|
| 4.2 | <p>Develop and launch a private sector housing access scheme to accommodate a variety of households that include those who are homeless as well as those who can be prevented from becoming homeless</p> <p>Agree a name for the scheme (e.g Herefordshire Social Lettings or HSL)</p> | <p>Successful implementation will make the private rented market accessible to those who are at risk of homelessness</p> <p>Convert private tenancies to HSL properties that were previously funded with the bond/rent deposit scheme.</p> <p>To be completely self financing within a two years of implementation</p> | | | |
| 4.3 | <p>Formalise the co-ordinated service approach to addressing legal requirements around harassment and illegal eviction.</p> | <p>Formal co-ordinated approach in place</p> | <p>Sept 2011</p> | <p>Private Sector Housing team/Homelessness Prevention</p> | <p>Ongoing informal co-ordinated joint approach by homelessness prevention and private sector housing teams</p> |
| 4.4 | <p>Review procedures and customer service standards. Including improving on access to our services and the whole customer experience. (Housing Solutions Team)</p> | <p>To improve customer service</p> | <p>June 2010</p> | <p>Housing Solutions Manager</p> | <p>New IT system in place. Meeting to be arranged. Ensure procedures and standards developed in line with corporate service standards</p> |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| 4.5 | Continue 'strategic approach to tackling, managing and reducing numbers of rough sleepers in Herefordshire | New services and strengthen existing | Oct 2010 Completed | Housing Solutions Manager | SLA in place with Open Door on winter shelter. Regular attendance at the Homelessness Forum, strong links made and services for Rough Sleepers available hot food and winter shelter. Rough Sleepers Strategy Group operative |
| 4.6 | Ensure those accessing temporary accommodation are given any identified 'life skills training' to assist with their move on to suitable accommodation. (Housing Solutions Team) | To reduce and prevent homelessness for the future | Oct 2010 | Housing Solutions Manager Completed | Risk assessment form now being used from 1.11.10 for those entering temporary accommodation. The assessment identifies training needs. Pilot training course 'healthy cooking on a budget' planned for the end of the year. Everyone entering temporary accommodation has a risk assessment which includes identifying life skills training needs. |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|---|--|------------|---|---|
| 4.7 | Work in partnership with Advice providers and RSLs to maximise resources to support provision of advice to prevent homelessness and promote financial inclusion | Financial Inclusion Strategy, with implementation plan | March 2012 | Sustainable Communities Manager/Housing Solutions Manager | Initial meetings held with key partners. CAB given financial support to provide advice to prevent homelessness. |

End the use of bed and breakfast as temporary accommodation and reduce the overall number of households in temporary accommodation.

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---------------------------------|--|--|
| 4.8 | Develop and produce a Temporary Accommodation Strategy with Action Plan. (Housing Solutions Team) | To reduce the numbers of clients in temporary accommodation and the time spent | 2009 onwards 31st March 2012 | Housing Solutions Manager/Accommodation Solutions Officer | Currently writing procedure for dealing with hard to house clients to promote move on. Temporary accommodation procedures to be in place for 31st March 2011 and Temporary Acc. Strategy and Action Plan 30th June 2011. |
| 4.9 | Develop further hospital discharge protocol with the County and Community Hospitals. (Housing Solutions Team) | To reduce the numbers bed blocking in hospitals and prevent homelessness on discharge | 31st March 2012 | Housing Solutions Manager in conjunction with PSH to link to Rapid Response initiative and homelessness prevention HH Trust/PCT | Hospital Discharge protocol in place for Stonebow Unit now looking at Community and County hospitals. |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|---|---|--|--------------------------|---|---|
| Provide access to sufficient accommodation across all sectors and ensure support is available for people who are, or who may become, homeless. | | | | | |
| 4.10 | Housing needs analysis to be carried out to identify the numbers and housing options required for ex offenders | To evaluate the housing requirement of ex offenders. | June 2011 | Housing Needs and Development Manager in partnership with the providers and Probation | |
| 4.11 | Review services for drug and alcohol service users, young people and those fleeing domestic violence. (Housing Solutions Team) as above | To plan future services and improve opportunities for customers. | 2011 | Senior Policy & Strategy Officer/Safer Herefordshire/Public Health | |
| Improve joint working amongst all agencies concerned with homelessness and prevention. | | | | | |
| 4.12 | Focus on service users with substance misuse issues. (Housing Solutions Team) | Planning of services | Completed | Mair Edmunds, Housing Development Officer, Mental Health | Housing Strategy for people with substance misuse in draft presented to JCG on 16/9/10 |
| 4.13 | Develop and implement a joint housing and probation services protocol. (Housing Solutions Team) | Improve working practices | Dec 2010 | Principal Officer, Multi-Agency Public Protection/Probation | West Midlands Regional Offender Housing Protocol in draft form |
| 4.14 | Continue co-operating with MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) (Housing Solutions Team) | Reduction in number of reduced homeless cases | Completed ongoing review | Principal Officer, Multi-Agency Public Protection/Safer Herefordshire | MARAC panel in Herefordshire set up to provide joined up approach to assisting high risk victims of domestic abuse. |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 4.15 | Continue to work with RHP's to ensure that their exclusion policies do not exclude vulnerable client groups. (Housing Solutions Team) | To reduce homelessness amongst those excluded from services. To meet the needs of local people whilst protecting the most vulnerable in society and better balance access to housing market | 31st August 2011 31 March 2011 | Senior Strategy & Policy Officer Senior Strategy & Policy Officer | Obtained statements will review. |
| 4.16 | Ensure the Housing Solutions Team utilises the services provided by Info to meet the needs of our client group. (Housing Solutions Team) | To improve working practices | Dec 2010 Completed | Housing Solutions Manager | Currently looking at operating a Triage system for clients accessing the team in person. |

Reduce homelessness and its related impacts amongst vulnerable client groups including young people and children.

| | | | | | |
|------|---|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 4.17 | Review mediation services. (Housing Solutions Team) | To successfully use as a prevention tool. | March 2011 Completed | Policy & Strategy Officer | Review contract annually. Through consultation with the team and mediation services it has been decided to widen the referral criteria from 16/17 year olds (due to a change in duty demand has decreased) to accommodate all situations relating to breakdown of family life, including relationship breakdown, to prevent homelessness. |
|------|---|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---|

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|--|-----------|---|--|
| 4.18 | Work with children's services and outside agencies to ensure successful pathways and services for young people including those who are 'a child in need'. (Housing Solutions Team) | To ensure support is offered to Young People | Ongoing | Housing Solutions Manager/Children's Services Including Aftercare | Review of existing protocol. Progress review of existing protocol and strengthening links with the colleges, looking at setting up protocols with colleges for early intervention work. |

Maximise the effectiveness and targeting of homelessness services through the use of improved data collection and intelligence gathering, innovative technology and a range of communication media.

| | | | | | |
|------|---|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 4.19 | Quarterly HSIg meetings with key information updates and review of the strategy. (Housing Solutions Team) | Planning of Services | Bi annually | Policy & Strategy Officer | Meetings arranged for: 3.12.10, 23.3.11, 22.6.11, 21.9.11 and 7.12.11. |
| 4.20 | Organise a presenter's survey with agencies in Herefordshire. (Housing Solutions Team) | Planning of Services | Nov 2010 Completed | Policy & Strategy Officer | Agencies have agreed to survey last two weeks of November 2010. Findings to be incorporated into a needs analysis to include a needs mapping exercise to ensure a strategic approach to tackling, managing and reducing homelessness. |

| Reference | Action (source in brackets) | Target/performance indicator /outcome | Timescale | Lead person/organisation | Progress |
|-----------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 4.21 | Research into increasing numbers of domestic violence applications. (Housing Solutions Team) | Planning of Services | March 2011 | Policy & Strategy Officer/Women's Aid/Safer Herefordshire | Will request information from Woman's Aid on numbers accessing their various services. |
| 4.22 | Review and investigate level of need for people leaving the armed forces. (Housing Solutions Team) | Planning of Services | Dec 2010 30th April 2011 | Policy & Strategy Officer | Possible pilot project next year through the Churches. Will forge links with the new MOD support groups. |

Keep the Homelessness Strategy and action plan up to date.

| | | | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------------------------------|--|
| 4.23 | To review the Homelessness Strategy | Planning of Services | Annually | Senior Policy & Strategy Officer | Possible pilot project next year through the Churches. Will forge links with the new MOD support groups. |
|------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------------------------------|--|

Overcrowding

| | | | | | |
|------|---|--------------------------|---------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 4.24 | Support development of West Housing Market Area Housing Strategy and localism action plan | Joint Strategy completed | 31 March 2012 | West Housing Market Area Partnership (WHMAP) | Draft underway and framework devised |
|------|---|--------------------------|---------------|--|--------------------------------------|

www.herefordshire.gov.uk