

Herefordshire Council

and the

Homes and Communities Agency

Local Investment Plan 2011-2026 (LIP)

January 2011



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The Local Investment Plan (referred to as the Plan) is not legally binding upon the parties.

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Signed:

Signed:

Name:

Name:

Position:

For and on behalf of the HCA

Position:

For and on behalf of Herefordshire Council

Date:

Date:

Executive Summary

The Herefordshire Local Investment Plan (LIP) has been developed by Herefordshire Council (HC) in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). It provides a strategic framework within which the organisations will work and invest together alongside key partners in the public and private sectors to deliver the key priorities in meeting the vision for Herefordshire for regeneration including transport, health, housing and education.

Whilst the plan provides information relating to the period of 2011-2026, to reflect the delivery of key strategic priorities across the Herefordshire Public Service Trust (PST), the plan will be monitored annually and reviewed every 5 years, with the next review being 2016.

The development of the LIP is underpinned by key strategic groups and documents including The Herefordshire Partnership, the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2011, the Housing Strategy for Herefordshire, the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005-25 and the Local Development Framework.

The key challenges that the County faces have been identified as follows:

- Herefordshire is predominantly rural creating challenges for service delivery
- Limited transportation and communication structure
- Higher than average number of older people in the county (nearly a quarter are of state retirement age)
- Out migration of young people
- Housing affordability
- Lack of smaller 1 and 2 bed accommodation
- Potential, subject to Herefordshire's LDF for up to 18,000 new homes for the county by 2026 with a significant focus on Hereford City
- A requirement to provide a range of quality, energy efficient homes in the right place at the right time
- Lack of affordable housing with significant numbers on the housing register
- Affordability - Herefordshire has low earnings and high house prices
- Significant demand for homelessness services
- Herefordshire economic impact is low per capita compared to West Midlands and rest of England.
- Number of jobs predicted to decline between 2010-2026
- Existing stock - Issue of non-decent homes, particularly older homes in rural areas
- Meeting the needs of vulnerable households to maximise independent living

It is therefore considered that the key priorities for Herefordshire's are:

- Growth in Hereford City and its surrounds (8,500 new homes)
- Rural and Market town housing
- Supporting independent living for vulnerable households
- Increasing energy efficiency and decent homes

To achieve the long term vision of growth and regeneration for Herefordshire, the LIP, Herefordshire Council and the HCA will bring forward delivery of specific schemes and projects in order to meet the goals and the agreed spatial thematic priorities. The undertakings agreed between the HCA and the Herefordshire Council are as follows:

- Joint investment at the core of delivery
- Place making approach
- Investment aligned to the wider context of public sector funding

In terms of outcomes the PST are seeking to deliver activities to support growth and future prosperity, through meeting the needs of all households across the county. The 4 outcomes are:

- Outcome 1: Growth of Hereford City
 - Infrastructure necessary to facilitate growth in housing and employment
 - Focus on new homes
 - City centre regeneration including housing, education and retail.
 - Regeneration of The Oval, Newton Farm
- Outcome 2: Rural Areas and Market Towns
 - 4,500 homes to be built in rural service centres to meet housing need and support the economy
 - Improved infrastructure inc. pedestrian and cycle links
 - Provision of relief road and enterprise park
- Outcome 3: Supporting independent living/vulnerable persons
 - Through major and minor home improvements and disabled facilities grants
 - Further extra care provision for older persons
 - Delivery of housing solutions for mental health/learning disabilities
 - Provision of pitches for Gypsy and Travellers
 - Supporting Homeless families, prolific offenders and socially excluded families through private rented accommodation
- Outcome 4: Increasing energy efficiency and decent homes
 - To address category 1 hazards and non decency criteria
 - Bring empty properties back into use, including those in remote areas where a need has been identified
 - To utilise vacant spaces above shops
 - Policies have been developed through the LDF to improve energy efficiency
 - Key County-wide policies are being developed to include renewable energy and sustainable design
 - New retail development to be delivered to BREEAM excellent standards

There are a number of long term strategic projects that aim to stimulate and regenerate economic growth in Herefordshire creating housing and new job opportunities including Rotherwas Futures and Hereford Futures.

Funding to enable delivery is critical to delivering Herefordshire's vision. This Plan, in conjunction with the Herefordshire Public Services Joint Asset Management Capital Strategy 2010 and the emerging Herefordshire Partnership External Funding Strategy (providing for a county wide approach to external funding) will be central in co-ordinating funds, particularly for capital investment, as well as bidding to various agencies for funds for programmes and individual projects.

1. Introduction to the Herefordshire Local Investment Plan 2011-26

The Herefordshire Local Investment Plan (LIP) has been developed by Herefordshire Council (HC) in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). It provides a strategic framework within which the organisations will work and invest together alongside key partners in the public and private sectors to deliver the key priorities in meeting the vision for Herefordshire.

The Plan focuses on meeting the Government's Total Place agenda, which has an emphasis on a "whole area" approach to commissioning and investment by all partners and demonstrates how joint investment by HC, the HCA and the private sector will be prioritised through agreed spatial and thematic priorities for regeneration, including transport, health, housing and education.

Underpinned by Local Area Partnership and National Strategies, it provides a clear structure for future investment that is integrated with all aspects of regeneration and growth, creating sustainable communities where people wish to live.

Whilst the plan provides information relating to the period of 2011-2026, to reflect the delivery of key strategic priorities across the Herefordshire Public Service Trust (PST), the plan will be monitored annually and reviewed every 5 years, with the next review being 2016.

The overall plan has been developed through joint partnership working with key stakeholders, utilising stakeholder engagement including around the Local Development Framework (LDF) development, to inform and agree the thematic and spatial priorities.

The LIP has been endorsed by the HCA regional management board, the Herefordshire Partnership Board and approved by Herefordshire's Cabinet Member on 11th January 2011.

The plan will be monitored annually to take into account delivery, changes in policy (regional, national and local) and reflect any emerging priorities.

2. The Herefordshire Vision

Herefordshire Council is responsible for many key services including education, highways and planning, social services and economic regeneration. As a unitary authority it also manages a large number of additional services, most prominently council tax collection and domestic refuse collection.

The Herefordshire LIP will form part of the delivery mechanism to fulfil the vision of its unique partnership formed during early 2008, through which Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire became the first local authority and primary care trust to form Herefordshire Public Services having a joint Chief Executive. It was based on a shared vision to improve the life chances, quality of life and health and wellbeing of people in Herefordshire.

Working together the Herefordshire Partnership, the Council, the Primary Care Trust and our other local public, private and voluntary sector partners have agreed a vision for Herefordshire in 2020. It is that:

“Herefordshire will be a place where people, organisations and businesses, working together within an outstanding natural environment will bring about sustainable prosperity and well-being for all”

3. Local Context

Herefordshire has a great deal to offer those who live here, work or visit, including a rich heritage, a beautiful natural environment and a wide range of cultural and leisure opportunities. Herefordshire is ambitious for its employment sector and the education of young people is of a high standard. It is a safe place to live and work, with low levels of crime. There are however, challenges for the county that are identified within this document.

Herefordshire is a predominately rural county of 842 square miles situated in the south-west corner of the West Midlands region, bordering Wales. Fig 1 below highlights the county of Herefordshire in relation to the region. The city of Hereford is the major location in the County for employment, administration, health services, education facilities and shopping. The principle locations are the five market towns of Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington. The rural nature of the area often creates barriers to providing equal services to all and businesses find the infrastructure in the County a challenge. It is the widely dispersed and often sparsely populated communities that need support if they are to have a sustainable and successful future. A map highlighting the market towns/rural areas can be found in appendix 1 which provides some sense of the challenge in meeting the remoter rural areas particularly in terms of maximising independent living through health care.

Fig.1



Herefordshire has limited access to the motorway network via the M50, which starts near Ross on Wye and joins the M5 north of Tewksbury in Gloucestershire. The other main links, which all pass through Hereford City, are the A49 (running from north to south), the A438 (running from east to west) and the A4103 to Worcester joining the M5. Hereford, Ledbury, Leominster and Colwall (towards Malvern) are the only railway stations in the county and many of the lines are single track.

Herefordshire contains a wealth of listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and conservations areas. These add to the special built quality and environmental character of many areas of the county and their protection and enhancement is recognised as an important ingredient for economic and neighbourhood renewal.

Key features in Herefordshire

- 2 Areas of Great Landscape Value (parts of)
- 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- 77 Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- 3 National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- 773 local wildlife sites (SWS, SINC and LNR)
- 117 Regional Important Geological sites (RIGS)
- 24 historic parks and gardens
- 64 Conservation Areas (CA)
- 1 Area of Archaeological Importance (Hereford)
- 262 Schedule Ancient Monuments
- 5,918 listed buildings.

Herefordshire is considered to be the West Midlands' most rural county and boasts a quality of landscape that is nationally acclaimed. Herefordshire has two landscape areas of national significance, the Wye Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the south and the Malvern Hills AONB in the east.

Herefordshire is host to many important habitats and species. The importance of the nature conservation and geological resources is reflected in the number and variety of international, national and local designated sites.

Herefordshire also contains areas of archaeological importance. It is recognised that archaeological remains are a valuable but fragile part of the county's heritage. In addition to the large number of nationally designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the county also contains non-scheduled but nationally importance archaeological sites and those of regional and local importance.

The archaeological importance of Hereford city was recognised by the designation in 1983 of a large part of the central area as an Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI).

There is an acknowledgement of the need to provide greater awareness of the importance of protecting and enhancing the County's natural and historic assets.

There are approximately 80,000 dwellings in Herefordshire. 2,381 homes were built over the last 3 years with 80% of homes built last year on brownfield land. The number of vacant dwellings was 1,652 of which 832 had been empty for over six months. Owner occupation is high, although there are significant variations across the county. This would be expected to follow from the county's age distribution, with its higher than average

number of older people who are likely to have paid off a mortgage. The proportion of socially rented properties in the county is lower than the national average limiting 'turnover' in the sector and high un-met demand for social housing in particular. There is a distinct affordability gap and an associated shortage in affordable housing across the county.

This manifests itself through housing stress indicators including housing waiting list numbers exceeding 5,000 households and ongoing significant demand for homelessness services expressed later in this document.

The county has the 4th lowest population density in England (0.9 persons per hectare). A particular challenge for service delivery is how scattered the population is which leads to higher costs in delivery terms on average per household. A quarter of the population lives in areas defined as "very sparse" and over half (54%) of the County's residents live in areas defined as "rural". About one third of the population live in Hereford City, a little more than a fifth in the market towns and almost half elsewhere.

Herefordshire's resident population grew by 2% between 2001 – 2007 to 179,300. This was entirely due to net in-migration. Nearly a quarter (24%) of Herefordshire's population are of state retirement age. Numbers of older people have grown more rapidly than nationally and the growth is expected to continue. In particular the number of people aged 85+ is expected to more than double from 5,000 in 2007 to 10,200 in 2026. One of the main challenges faced in supporting those growing older in Herefordshire is how to help people live safely and independently in their own homes. Many older and disabled people are supported by informal carers (normally family) who often require support in their own right if they are to continue to undertake this very valuable work.

Our community is not as ethnically diverse as other parts of the region or England and Wales as a whole. The black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population makes up only about 4%. However, this increased by 64% between 2001-2006 compared to 2% growth in its total population. This increase is due to the higher number of migrant workers coming to Herefordshire since the expansion of the European Union in 2004.

Within Herefordshire, there are defined areas within the county that see the highest unemployment levels, the poorest health, and the lower education attainment. The Golden Post/Newtown Farm area in South Wye was ranked the 2570th most deprived area nationally out of 32,482 areas; Leominster Ridgemoor was ranked 4605th. People who live in the most deprived areas are more likely to die prematurely from all causes than those in the least deprived in Herefordshire. (source:2009 director of public health report).

The most commonly used measure of child poverty is the proportion of children living in families in receipt of out of work benefits or tax credits where their reported income is less than 60% of median income. In 2008 data showed that in Herefordshire 15.2% of children were living in poverty, however, within the Golden Post/Newton Farm area of Hereford City this figure rose to 48.6%. This area poses a particular challenge in terms of reducing inequalities, improving the environment and improving the quality of life for residents.

Further details are available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures/deprivation.aspx

4. Strategic Context

The development of the LIP is underpinned by key strategic groups and documents which are summarised below to provide an overview of the key issues faced by the county.

The Herefordshire Partnership

The agreed vision for the county is also based on the aspiration of the residents, and through the Local Strategic Partnership (The Herefordshire Partnership) delivery is monitored through the following:

The Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2011 is developed around 6 key themes for action with the three basic elements of people, place and action remain at the heart of the strategy. These themes together with the aims and outcomes of each are summarised overleaf:-

Key Theme	Aim	Outcomes include	Linked strategies include
Children and Young People	Improve the lives by developing the knowledge, skills and judgement needed to lead fulfilling lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have healthy lifestyles • Are safe, secure and have stability • Achieve educational, personal, social and physical standards • Engage in further education, employment and training • Engage in positive behaviour 	Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011
Economic Development and Enterprise	Create an environment for enterprise to thrive and enable business growth and prosperity for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining existing businesses • Develop more adaptable and higher skilled workforce • Supporting businesses and home working through better broadband • Attracting high quality and better paid employment • Promoting Herefordshire as a place with a diverse business base 	Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005-2025 Local Transport Plan Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire LA statement of need 2009/10 WM Economic Strategy WMRSS Herefordshire Tourism Strategy

Environment	Protect and enhance Herefordshire's distinct environment and address climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce waste and increasing recycling • Mitigate climate change 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and enhancing biodiversity within the county • Encouraging investment in high quality streets, public space and built and historic environment • Assisting local communities to identify, retain and develop local distinctiveness 	<p>Includes:-</p> <p>Green infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Herefordshire Climate Change Strategy</p> <p>UDP</p> <p>Affordable warmth Strategy</p> <p>LDF</p> <p>Herefordshire Environmental Strategy 2001-2011</p>
Healthier communities and older people	Work with people in their communities to enable them to lead healthy and fulfilled lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring vulnerable adults are kept safe by a fast and reliable service response • Supporting people with assessed social care needs to live independently in their own home, with accessible services and the information they need • Working with local people to enhance emotional wellbeing and intervene to reduce suicide, accidents and injuries • Supporting people to maintain a healthy weight • Supporting smokers to quit 	<p>Public Health Annual Report (April 2009)</p> <p>JSNA</p> <p>Older Persons Strategy</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Strategy (draft)</p>
Safer Communities	Work together to make Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing crime • Reduce incidents of domestic abuse 	<p>Safer Herefordshire Strategy Plan 2008-11</p> <p>Safer Herefordshire</p>

	an even safer place to live, work and visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing drug and alcohol related harm • Increased road safety • Reducing incidence of ASB, and dealing with local concerns 	<p>Strategic Priorities 2009-10</p> <p>Children and Young People's plan 2008-11</p> <p>Harm Reduction Strategy</p> <p>Herefordshire Adult Drug Treatment Plan 2010/11 and Annual Needs Assessment 2009</p> <p>Herefordshire Drugs Housing Strategy 2010</p> <p>Young People's specialist substance misuse treatment plan</p> <p>Herefordshire Local Transport plan</p>
Stronger Communities	Develop stronger, vibrant, more inclusive communities in which people enjoy a good quality of life and feel they have influence over decisions that affect them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing affordable and decent housing/addressing homelessness • Ensuring vulnerable people have access to a range of housing options • Providing accessible and high quality sporting, cultural and recreational facilities • Promoting a county where people feel accepted, confident and empowered • Ensuring fair access to services needed 	<p>Includes:-</p> <p>Community Development Strategy</p> <p>Comprehensive quality policy</p> <p>Housing Strategy</p> <p>Arts Strategy</p> <p>Local Transport plan</p> <p>Race equality scheme</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Strategy (draft)</p>

The strategy will be updated during 2011 to reflect the deep partnership being established through the HPS.

Housing Strategy for Herefordshire

Herefordshire's Housing Strategy is in the final stages of being refreshed in advance of the development of a sub-regional housing strategy by the West Housing Market Area Partnership. Following consultation the following Vision has emerged for the Herefordshire Housing strategy:

“By 2020 housing in Herefordshire will be more accessible, appropriate and affordable for local people, supporting sustainable communities. Housing will be of a high quality, increasingly energy efficient and suitable for the diverse needs of the community”.

The Housing Strategy priorities endorsed through the consultation process are:-

- ***To Achieve a Balanced Housing Market*** – reflecting objectives to support housing growth in Hereford City, provide more affordable housing for the County and enable better balance of provision within the market to meet demand through maximising access to a range of housing types and tenures. Key projects will include delivering the Urban Village, Hereford City growth, market and rural housing delivery, empty properties and supporting regeneration including Oval Regeneration where opportunities for additional affordable homes can be created.
- ***Decent Homes*** – reflecting the objective to improve the condition of homes across all tenures in Herefordshire, reducing the numbers of empty properties and limit the impact of fuel poverty and climate change. Key projects will include using advice, loan and grant-based approaches to creating Decent Homes, enforcement of standards including with HMO sector and supporting partners initiatives which create decent homes or regenerate areas including e.g. Highmore Court and the Oval Regeneration Project.
- ***Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Households*** – supporting objectives 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. Development programmes will be informed by relevant housing plans including Learning Disability Housing Plan, Mental Health Housing Plan, Older Persons Housing Plan.

An associated objective under this priority includes providing solutions for the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Projects will include delivering new Gypsy and Traveller pitches to meet assessed needs and providing market and supported housing to meet the needs of a range of vulnerable households identified within relevant housing plans including, where appropriate Extra Care Housing for older people.

- ***Preventing Homelessness*** – supporting objectives to prevent homelessness through the effective targeting of housing advice and services and in the longer term to provide access to sufficient accommodation across all sectors. Projects include increasing the range of housing options for households who may be experiencing housing stress.

Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005-25 (HEDS) was published in 2005.

Whilst the existing strategy is still current (see appendix 2 for existing key themes), consultation on the evidence base was concluded on 1st December 2010, to inform a replacement strategy covering the period 2011 – 2026, to align with the emerging LDF. The consultation document draw on recently published research to inform future thinking on how to support the growth of the local economy. Since the last Strategy was published the county has seen major transformation mainly due to the economic downturn, but more widely aspirations, lifestyles, the nature and opportunity of business has changed, and will continue to change.

Herefordshire has felt the effects of the recession. At its peak unemployment in the county saw a 100% increase (3,106 claimants, 3% of the working population in total), and 30% of businesses had experienced a decrease in turnover in the last 12 months preceding May 2010.

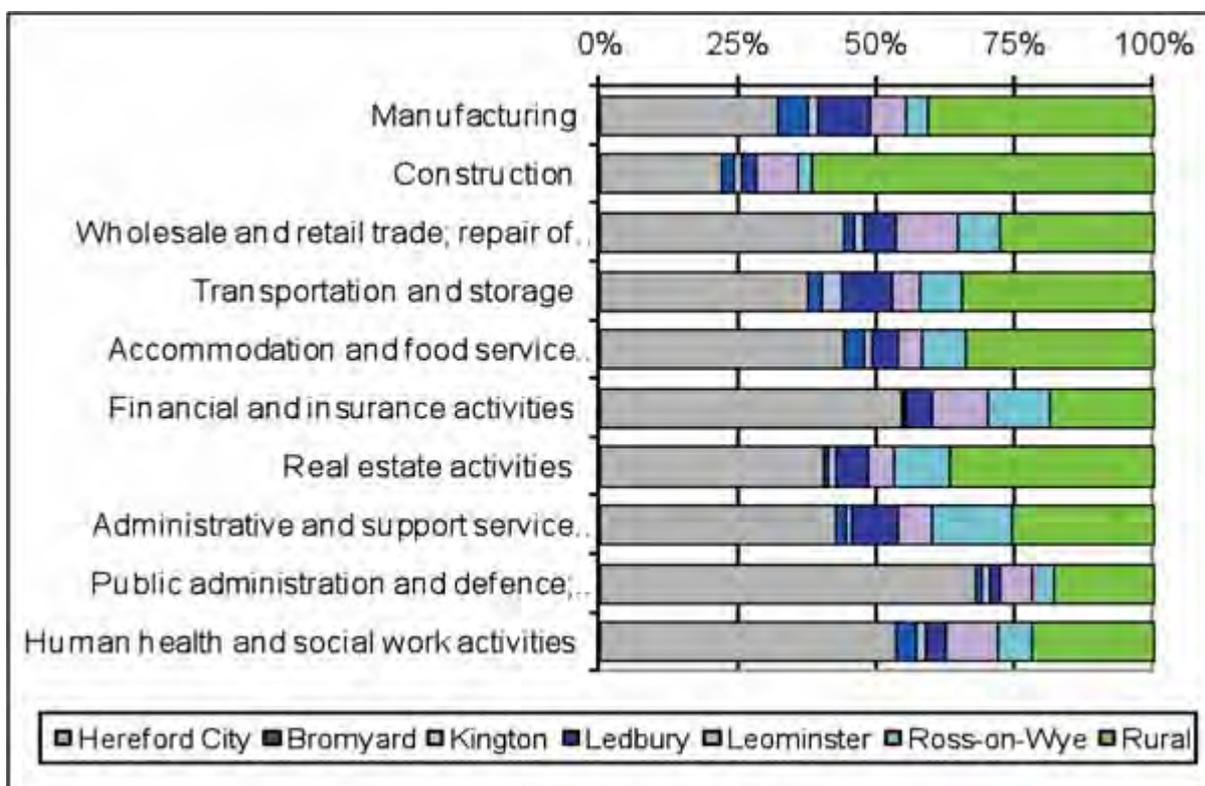
Five key principles have been established that will run through the proposed strategy

- Distinctiveness** – any economic development will build on the specific strengths and character of the county. This means creating a competitive advantage based on what we have to offer through the added value in being a business based in Herefordshire
- A wealthier county** – the purpose is to increase wealth in the county which means business based growth that can foster quality employment, more choice of work, increased wage levels and in turn support the circular flow of income. With a wealthier county comes better services, better quality of life and a reduction in poverty
- Enterprise** – that the county is an area where enterprise can flourish, that social and private enterprise has the opportunity to take the next steps in their development and diversification whatever their sector or size. That private sector through its growth leads the regeneration of the county that creates benefit for all
- Potential** – that every person, business and social enterprise maximises its potential, and has an equal opportunity to prosper
- Connectivity** – the challenges of the county are only solvable through taking a combined approach, addressing a number of issues at once to create solutions. This means considering the impacts of areas such as housing and transport

Herefordshire's economic output, as measured by Gross Value Added (GVA) per resident, is low and has increased at a lower rate than both the West Midlands region and England as a whole over the last 10 years. The difference in output (GVA per resident) between Herefordshire and the rest of the UK can be explained by differences in the value added per hour worked, the number of hours worked per job and the amount of commuting out of the county. Herefordshire has a dominance of low value added sectors such as agriculture, wholesale and retail and public administration, education, health and other services.

Herefordshire has a relatively high employment rate compared to national and regional figures, with the number of self employed, small businesses and home working being significantly higher. However, the number of workless people claiming out of work benefits has increased during the recession. The largest group of claimants from the out of work group was long term (over 5 years) male claimants of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Incapacity Benefits (2,048) making up 20% of all out of work benefit claimants. The rate of claiming out of work benefits still remains low in Herefordshire (10.2%) compared to regionally (15.2%) and nationally (13.0%). The recession may also have increased under-employment with the proportion of people working part-time being greater in Herefordshire (14%) than nationally (12%).

Herefordshire's earnings are low with the gap between the County's earnings and those of the rest of the country (£389.40pw in Hereford compared to £448.90pw in the West Midlands and £483.10pw in England) continuing to widen. The following table provides the proportion of employees in Hereford city, the market towns and rural wards for each industry sector.



Source: Herefordshire Council PPS6 Assessment – note the total catchment area for Herefordshire does not exactly match the administrative boundary.

Over the period 2010 – 2026 the number of jobs in Herefordshire is predicted to decline from 87,200 to 83,000 with most of this decline occurring in the decade 2010 – 2020. The major losses are expected to be in agriculture and manufacturing sectors with increases in other sectors such as financial and business services, construction, government and other services, distribution, hotels and catering and transport and communication.

Transportation and communication infrastructure is a key issue for the County, as it impacts on employment, health, access to services, quality of life and the County's economic development. Herefordshire is particularly dependant on road transport because of limited public transport links within and outside the County.

Poor communication links across the County are a barrier to business growth with 46% of rural areas having access to no, or only low speed broadband. This compares only to 1% in urban areas and brings with it huge challenges for businesses as well as the provision of wider access to information and services.

Whilst Herefordshire has a high level of employment this masks levels of under-employment and long term unemployment. Key data suggest a lack of skills and choice of suitable workers that may be constraining businesses, plus the opportunities for young people looking for employment is a challenge with an increase in the retirement age, a predicted decline in jobs and skills to meet a changing business environment. There is potential to address levels of employment through growth in new sectors and diversification of traditional industries.

There are a number of long term strategic projects that aim to stimulate and regenerate economic growth in Herefordshire creating new job opportunities.

Rotherwas Futures - will transform the existing Rotherwas Industrial Estate, creating new jobs and helping the local economy to compete in the longer term.

The Hereford Futures (formerly Edgar Street Grid), development will regenerate 100 acres within Hereford City Centre, including significant infrastructure works (flood alleviations, link roads) which will create opportunities for local people through development to additional housing, leisure facilities, retail outlets, and other business developments in addition to exploring the potential for a university gateway for the County.

The potential to address the needs of rural communities is challenging and is further complicated by the increasing prevalence of people simply working from home. There is however, a fine line between live/work and working from home before it becomes a material change in planning terms. As a rural County, working from home is a significant feature of rural living therefore promoting live/work solutions may provide positive opportunities to support economic development.

The aims of the Economic and Development strategy will be to create an environment in which enterprise can flourish through:

- improved productivity and wealth generation
- increased average wage levels through better paid jobs
- sustained business survival and growth
- maximised employment opportunities

This will be done through:

- Availability of good quality employment land and buildings, including, live / work
- Effective road and public transport network
- Improve broadband coverage, internet trading and use of technologies
- Diversification of business to meet new trading opportunities
- A focus on business start-up, sustainability and growth to create employment opportunities
- A skilled workforce to meet current and future business needs
- Promote Herefordshire to businesses and consumers nationally and internationally
- Address the challenges of poverty in target groups and geographic communities
- Support people into employment

- Enable business efficiencies through collaborations, environmental technologies, knowledge and investment

Tourism in Herefordshire

Herefordshire's visitors produced almost £416 million for the local economy per annum with visitor spending also helping to support over 8,500 jobs in the County.

To add to this contribution, the local authority has been working with Visit Herefordshire to establish an increase in tourism return. To that end the local authority will be taking a commissioning role for Visit Herefordshire to operate and develop the tourism service. The role of Visit Herefordshire (as a limited company combined with charitable status to be launched on the 5th April 2011) will be to deliver the newly developed tourism strategy.

The Vision:

... to firmly establish Herefordshire as a **must visit** rural destination for leisure and business tourism in England for both high value international and domestic tourists based upon creating a unique range of year round Herefordshire creatively presented visitor experiences.

The Ambition:

... to use tourism as a means of helping to make Herefordshire a better place to live, work and visit by growing the value of tourism over the next ten years at a rate per annum that is higher than the national average and in so doing generate more jobs in tourism-related work and grow the number of businesses involved in tourism-related activities across the County.

How will this be achieved?

- through bold, inspirational branding, positioning and marketing that captures the 'essence' of Herefordshire.
- implementing a focused, unambiguous, strategy that develops market-led products that are distinctly Herefordian.
- capturing the imagination of the communities, the residents, the tourism stakeholders and others who want to help Herefordshire achieve its potential.
- sharing our way of life, our heritage and culture and our countryside with guests who wish to experience the "best of traditional English life with 21st Century style".
- working closely in partnership with the brand winners in food and drink with the ability to market the uniqueness, as well as other leading brands and businesses across the County.

The Local Development Framework (LDF)

"Shaping our Place 2026" core strategy consultation ran alongside the consultation on the Local Transport Plan and are 2 key documents in identifying potential locations for future employment, housing and other developments in Hereford City and the market towns, as well as possible rural growth settlements, options for future sustainable transport measures and a outer distributor road for Hereford.

The vision and objectives for the emerging core strategy as set out in the Place Shaping Paper (January 2010) have been developed from extensive internal and external consultation and are considered to be in a form that can be taken through to submission

stages. Full details of the consultation undertaken too date can be located at <http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/34819.asp>.

Vision 2006-2026

Herefordshire will be a place of distinctive environmental, historical and cultural assets and local communities, with sustainable development fostering a high quality of life for those who live, work and visit here. A sustainable future for the county will be based on the interdependence of the themes of social progress, economic prosperity and environmental quality with the aim of increasing the county's self reliance and resilience.

The identified themes and their objectives as they relate to the LIP are summarised below to provide an overview:-

Social Progress

'To meet the housing needs of all sections of the community (especially those in need of affordable housing), by providing a range of quality, energy efficient homes in the right place at the right time'

Economic Prosperity

'To strengthen Hereford's role as a sub-regional focus for the County, through city centre expansion as part of wider city regeneration and through the provision of a balanced package of transport measures...'

Environmental Quality

'To achieve sustainable communities and protect the environment by delivering well-designed places, spaces and buildings, which use land efficiently, reinforce local distinctiveness and are supported by the necessary infrastructure including green infrastructure.'

'To address the causes and impacts of climate change by ensuring new development: uses sustainable design and construction methods to conserve natural resources, does not increase flood risk to new or existing property, increases the use of renewable forms of energy to reduce carbon emissions, minimises waste and pollution, manages water supply and conservation and conserves and protects biodiversity and geodiversity.'

Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

In response to the Government's request for local authorities to submit proposals on forming Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford made a formal submission in August 2010 setting out the rationale for the formation of a new Marches LEP. The Government confirmed its approval for the proposal in October 2010.

The overriding ambition of the partnership will be to create the conditions for a strong, diverse and enterprising business base resulting in an increase in sustainable private sector jobs.

The Marches LEP are confident that they can achieve this through building on particular strengths and opportunities of the area, and business leadership through their business boards and intense business engagement.

The challenges that will be tackled by the partnership will include:-

- Housing affordability
- Communications and mobility
- GVA runs at £15,600 per head, as compared with in excess of £20,000 as the national average
- Poor and inconsistent broadband speeds.
- Net outward migration of young people due to limited employment and higher education opportunities in the area currently

The Marches LEP Board have initiated a series of Task and Finish groups to develop the themes identified in the submission proposal and these have been working to generate a fuller understanding of how the LEP can achieve economic growth. It is anticipated that this work will culminate in the development of the Marches LEP Business Plan. The groups draw in specialist knowledge from the private, public and 3rd sector to ensure the plans are informed by those on the ground. The 6 themes are facilitated as follows:

- Enterprise
- Transport and infrastructure
- Housing and planning
- Sustainability
- Employment, education and skills
- Strategic Leadership

Task and Finish groups will review the available evidence, discuss the experience of partners, look at the ideas of other LEPs and brainstorm ideas for activity under the theme which the LEP can implement through an agreed strategy to achieve economic growth. Whereas the LEP Board will be focus specifically on strategic leadership.

The LEP is currently seeking bids for the Regional Growth fund and an early priority for both Herefordshire Council and the Homes and Communities Agency is the development of the Urban Village in Hereford City Centre in partnership with Sanctuary Housing Group. To facilitate this development, a Regional Growth Fund bid will be submitted to contribute to the funding of the acquisitions/relocations and construction costs of the road.

Total Place

Herefordshire Public Services has identified nine localities as service provision areas. This is not about changing democratic structures and people will be able to continue to access services in the way that suits them best, but the nine areas will give a structure to a joint approach to service delivery. The boundaries reflect civil parish boundaries and largely follow school catchment areas. This approach has been endorsed by the Local Strategic Partnership and a number of partners are now actively working to shape service delivery mechanisms in this context.

An important principle in Herefordshire's approach to service delivery is about getting closer to the communities we serve, to ensure that we reflect local needs, with people being able to reach services in a way that is flexible and not determined by where they live.

Within the context of the Government's Big Society agenda and requirements to deliver improved outcomes for the local population within ever increasing financial constraints, there are clearly opportunities to improve access to services by agreeing common approaches.

Working through Herefordshire Partnership a series of Total Place asset reviews are being undertaken in each of the nine areas with the following aims:

- more effective/efficient use of properties;
- improved public access to services through integrated front offices;
- increased co-location and co-working across all sectors;
- reduced revenue expenditure by sharing and redesigning services;
- reduced county carbon footprint.

Services are already being brought together to benefit the local community in some market towns. The Bromyard Centre is an example, housing the info shop, library and HALO Leisure with an integrated front desk. There is also public access to computers, tourist information, job centre plus information and a group room all within one building. This approach is also reflected in community led and other public sector schemes based on multi-use centres e.g. Peterchurch.

The vision for the future is to deliver joined up working with communities and service providers at a local level. Through locality working the aim is to achieve:

- Services delivered that reflect local need
- Increased influence by residents over local decisions and budgets
- Genuine involvement of residents in designing solutions to locally identified issues
- More accessible and integrated local services
- More and better information about the type and range of services available
- Opportunities provided for community involvement in running services
- Strengthened local leadership at every level across the County

As part of this approach, Herefordshire is developing a joined up approach to community engagement. In particular:

- enhancing local democracy at both ward and parish council level, to support the community champion role of those democratically accountable to their communities
- empowering local communities to influence, shape and deliver local services and activities which they have identified as priorities in their area
- developing and implementing a framework of support to voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure that they are able to support and develop empowered communities.

Herefordshire is currently working in partnership on a number of initiatives to improve and enhance community engagement. Reaching the Hearts of Herefordshire has been successful in engaging a range of partners from all sectors with local residents and community groups and, by supporting the role of local ward members, has resulted in

practical actions being taken around issues that matter most in that area. Herefordshire now has 55 completed community led plans (parish and town plans), with a further 22 under development. This represents half of the parish councils in the county. Community led planning is a process by which local communities set down their aspirations and needs, based on robust community engagement activity, with the deal scenario that the parish council then adopts the plan as its business plan. Other initiatives to improve community engagement and local democracy include participatory budgeting, where the parish council top slices an amount of its precept and asks the local community to put forward and decide on activities that this funding should support. Indeed, Herefordshire is one of nine areas to take part in the Your Local Budget, a pilot scheme supported by the Big Society Network, to give communities more control over local budgets.

5. Housing and Spatial Issues within Herefordshire

Whilst the Secretary of State has indicated his intention to revoke all regional strategies including the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), the evidence behind the RSS for the West Midlands was subject to the scrutiny of an Examination in Public in 2009 and the subsequent Inspectors' Panel Report of September 2009 contains a number of relevant recommendations including affordable housing targets and indicative house building trajectories. These were securely based on relevant evidence and, along with other regional planning policies, now need to be considered in the preparation of the Council's Core Strategy, having been supported by Herefordshire Council.

In terms of simple numbers the above RSS Panel Report set out a requirement of 18,000 new homes for the whole County for the twenty year period 2006 to 2026, with 8,500 of those in or around Hereford City itself.

The indicative "Housing trajectory" as set out by the Panel Report assumed lower house building rates for the early parts of the plan period, picking up after 2016 thus:

The Panel Report suggested the annual overall house building requirement would be

2006-2011	530
2011-2016	795
2016-2021	1085
2021-2026	1190

Within the overall delivery requirements it is likely that the council will be seeking between 33% and 35% affordable housing provision of the residential overall housing target, which would equate to the following potential delivery targets if based on the basis of 35% being sought

2006-2011	170 pa
2011-2013	264 pa
2013-2017	287 pa

The annual provision from 2017 onwards will be reviewed to reflect the current housing needs data.

An affordable housing viability assessment was completed during 2009, providing robust evidence to support a range of delivery thresholds across the county where affordable housing could be achieved from 25% in the North, to 40% in the East and the South of the county. On the basis of the assessment and with the preferred proposals in the

emerging Core Strategy in mind a revised assessment of affordable housing targets is set out in the table on page 32.

The provision of affordable housing is a priority for the county due to the combination of low earnings and high house prices which implies significant barriers to house purchase for residents of the County. The housing affordability ratio, defined as the ratio of lowest quartile house prices to lowest quartile earnings, was 9.1 in Herefordshire in 2008. This was the highest of all counties and unitary authorities across the West Midlands; the lowest affordability ratio was 4.4 in Stoke on Trent, the second highest after Herefordshire was 8.7 in Shropshire.

Affordability:

Median house price (Jan – Mar 2010):		£195,000
Median earnings (April 2009):		£19,986
Average Housing Assoc. Rental: (per week)		1 bed £58-£67 2 bed £65-£75 3 bed £73-83 4 bed £78-94
Affordability levels to Purchase:	Purchase	Rent in Private Sector
Single earner 1 bed	£78,000	£96 per week
Dual earner 2 bed	£97,000	£144 per week
Dual earner 3 bed	£109,000	£144 per week

(source: Herefordshire Council Research Team)

The average house price is above the national average. In the first quarter of 2010 the median house price in Herefordshire was £195,000, with Housing Association rentals ranging from £58-£67 a week for a one bed roomed dwelling to £78 - £94 a week for a 4-bed roomed home.

House prices in Herefordshire peaked in 2007-8 and then fell during 2009. The average price of detached houses fell 12% from £312,000 to £275,900. Semi-detached house prices were less severely affected, dropping, on average, by 9% from £189,900 to £173,600. Terraced houses prices were similarly affected, dropping by 8% from an average of £157,700 to £145,700. Flats and maisonettes took a greater hit; from an average of £142,300 in 2008 to an average of £126,000 a year later, an 11% decrease. (Land Registry Data, Quarterly Economic Bulletin, May 2010)

Below shows the types of dwellings in Herefordshire compared to the West Midlands region and England at the time of the 2001 census. Most noticeably Herefordshire has a higher proportion of detached houses or bungalows than regionally or nationally. Consequently, Herefordshire has a lower proportion of semi detached and terraced houses and flats.

With higher levels of detached housing across the county attracting high house prices, this reflects the increased need for the provision for both affordable housing options and smaller 1st time buyer properties to meet the needs of local people with low incomes.

	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%

Source: 2001 Census, ONS – Crown copyright

As indicated below, there is a predominance of owner occupation across the county, which has led the authority to focus attention onto opportunities to address this imbalance, through improving the private rented sector to assist in meeting local housing needs and balancing the housing market.

This is evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment which indicated that the private rented sector could do more in addressing the needs within each housing market area. Herefordshire has an excellent track record of bringing empty properties back into use for all tenures (i.e. market and affordable), improving decent homes standards which continues to be key focus over the Plan period.

	Private Rent	Owner Occupied	Social Rented / SO
Total Number (2001) :	9,794	52,568	11,920

The council has established comprehensive records of the current position with regards to private sector empty properties, with the breakdown of the current Long Term empty properties (based on the latest data provided by Council Tax on 1st October 2010) detailed below:

City	182	21.9%
Town	205	24.6%
Rural	445	53.5%
Total	832	

The average breakdown by each quarter for the current financial year varies only slightly. Average ratio is City 1:5, Town 1:4, Rural 1:2.

The summary for short term empty properties is as follows

City	163	28.6%
Town	149	26.1%
Rural	258	45.3%
Total	570	

Up until 30th September 2010, it was established that the owner's future intentions for 84% of all long term empty vacant properties were:

For Sale	201
For Rent	36
Renovation	206
Redevelopment	26
Probate	18
Occupied	121
Second Home	20
No address for landlord	17
EDMO Action	8
Business Purposes	26
Holiday Homes	3
Total	682
No. of cases with a known potential outcome	83.68%

(source: Housing needs and development team)

Therefore based on the above information, 72% of all long term empty properties in the County are transactional (e.g. something is physically happening with them).

The Council has over recent years, continued to apply more challenging targets to bring empty properties back into use assisted by the introduction of additional initiatives to assist owners of empty properties to find a solution that is appropriate to them.

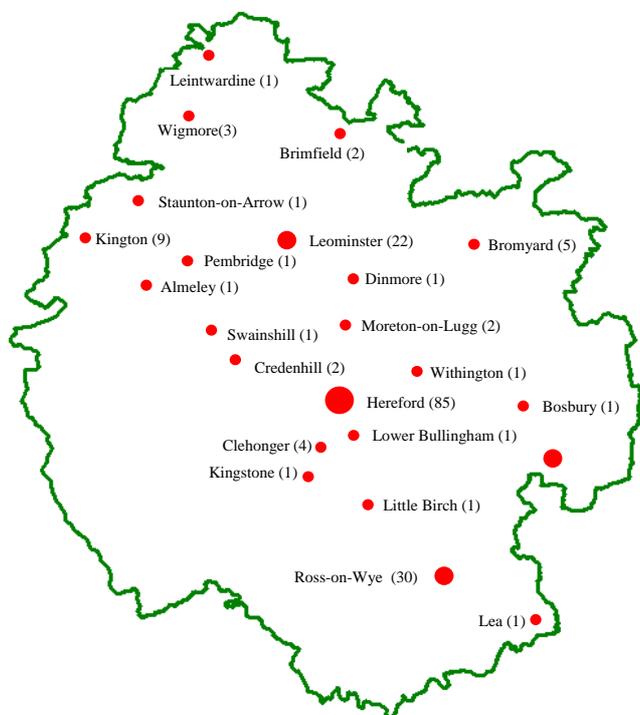
The table below, illustrates that in the last 3 years 474 empty properties have been brought back into use. This has been achieved against challenging targets of 100, 110 and 120 units respectively, and demonstrates the commitment and the resources that the council has directed towards empty property work in recent years.

Year	07/08		08/09		09/10	
	< 6 mths	> 6 mths	< 6 mths	> 6 mths	< 6 mths	> 6 mths
Advice and assistance	Not available	26	Not available	21	0	11
Leasing Scheme		1		1	14	8
TSH grant		7		12	2	9
Purchase & repair		4		7	1	3
Rent Deposit					113	15
Sub total		107		38	112	41
Total	145		153		176	

(Source: Herefordshire Empty Property Strategy 2010-2013)

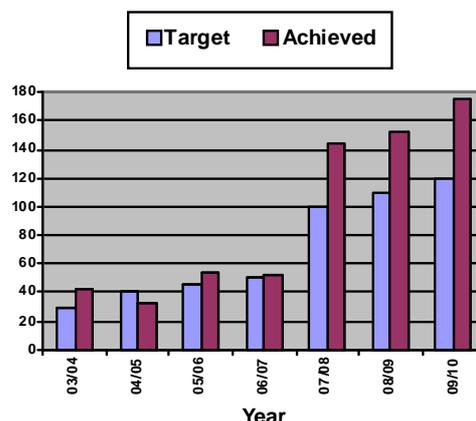
In terms of performance against targets, this is demonstrated below together with a plan highlighting the locations of where empty properties have been brought back during 2009/10.

Locations where empty properties have been brought back into use 2009/10



Performance against Targets 2003-2010

No. of empty properties brought back into use



Affordable housing stock is managed across the county by 24 housing partners, of which there are currently 8 preferred development partners. Herefordshire council is currently supporting the rationalisation of stock amongst the smaller housing partners, referring to our preferred development partners for disposal.

Currently 98% of the affordable housing stock is advertised through Home Point Herefordshire which is a choice based lettings scheme with the remainder being specialist affordable housing where housing associations hold their own waiting lists.

As at 30th June 2010, there were currently 5052 households registered on Home point seeking affordable housing assessed as priority 111, gold 807, silver 2,206 and bronze 1,928. The highest demand is for 1 bed accommodation with 2,732 and 884 seeking 3 beds+. The age profile (by the main registered applicant) of those registered is 1187 (24%) under 26, 2940 (60%) aged 26-59 and 799 (16%) aged 60 years and above.

Age (ys)	%	Home Point
Under 26	24	1187
26 – 59	60	2940
60+	16	799

With an evidenced high level of need for affordable housing, associated with the mismatch between high house prices and low wage levels, homelessness remains a key issue for Herefordshire. Homelessness services continue to experience a high demand, however, the utilisation of preventative approaches has enabled significant progress to be made in reducing the use of temporary accommodation in the county. Furthermore, associated with the need to rebalance the housing market, significant effort has been made in securing access to the private rented sector as a housing solution for households in need, both through supported limited capital investment to secure leased properties and the use of rent deposit schemes to access tenancies.

The Council has prevented homelessness to 381 households during 08/09 during which time it spent £251,000 from its prevention fund, which includes £96,269 spent on rent deposits.

During 09/10 the Council prevented homelessness in 416 cases, and spent an estimated £179,000 from its prevention fund.

The target set for preventing homelessness is currently 4 households per thousand of population. During 08/09 the Council achieved an outcome of 4.4 households per thousand of population. During 09/10 this had increased to an estimated 6.1 households per thousand of population.

As a result of our focus on prevention homeless presentations and acceptances are continuing to reduce. At its height during 04/05 presentations were at an all time high of 719, with 510 acceptances. By 09/10 presentations were down to 381, with acceptances at 201.

Therefore, the prevention of homelessness is also an important strategic priority that we can demonstrate that significant progress has been made in reducing homelessness and reducing the use of temporary accommodation. Our Homelessness Strategy and Youth Homelessness Strategy provide the strategic steer to tackling and preventing homelessness. Operationally, our response has been to focus on the prevention of homelessness, embraced by a range of support, preventative tools and strong partnerships, working collaboratively.

The delivery of new affordable housing has fluctuated but generally increased as summarised below

	2006 / 7	2007 / 8	2008 / 9	2009 / 10
Overall Housing Delivery (Gross)	840	829	689	547
Market Housing provision	697	747	540	442
Affordable Housing *	177	141	208	185

(source: Housing needs and development team, Herefordshire Council)

* includes low cost home ownership products which is not included in the gross housing delivery.

The council is keen to continue to support the provision of a range of affordable housing options which have included intermediate rental within the private sector, low cost home ownership, (both through local mortgage rescue and Do it yourself shared ownership) and also low cost housing market (whereby the sale prices takes into account the available earnings for the county). Whilst there has been no decision within the authority regarding the proposed introduction of affordable rents through the preferred partners, it is envisaged that this will be considered favourably to enable key partners to maximise any borrowing capacity to deliver additional units in the future.

In terms of future development standards, the council will also be seeking to review the current requirement of both Lifetime Homes and SDS, particularly in rural areas, given that recent changes in Building Regulations incorporates the majority of requirements. Whilst it is likely that there will be a requirement to retain the minimum code of sustainable homes level 3, the council will always seek to support housing providers that can deliver higher codes, whilst continuing to achieve value for money. The council will be seeking to discuss this further with the HCA over the coming months to ensure that good quality housing is still provided for the more vulnerable households.

Decent Homes

A priority for the council to address, which has also been referenced in the community consultation, is the issue of decent homes, a factor that is associated with the prevalence of older, predominately larger detached housing, particularly in rural areas. More specifically, challenges associated with thermal efficiency account for relatively high level of non decency compared to urban areas and the issue of “decent” housing is reflected as an issue for the community strategy and a priority for the housing strategy.

Our approach to improving the quality and use of existing housing can be evidenced across a number of services including through the use of Empty Property Strategies and Homelessness Prevention initiatives.

The House Condition Survey for Herefordshire was published in 2006 and is programmed for renewal during 2010/11 in partnership with Shropshire Housing Authority. The 2006 survey identified that 40.8% of homes in Herefordshire were non-decent when considered against the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), introduced in April 2006. Overall, the main reason for non-decency is due to properties having poor thermal efficiency, an issue associated with the comparative age, size and rurality of much of the housing stock in the County. Any defects within properties as assessed under the HHSRS remain a priority.

The implementation of an electronic record system was completed during 2009, in part to improve efficiency and effectiveness of gathering and reporting data to reconcile with the survey completed in 2006. Inability to import historic decency data into the new system means there is currently no up to date information readily available. However, it is envisaged that a baseline position will be established in 2011 following the completion of the joint survey with Shropshire, which will be updated through ongoing data collection and analysis to prioritise the use of scarce resources.

Our Housing Renewal Policy Approach has been set out in our Renewal Policies for 2003 - 2006, 2006 - 2009 and 2009 - 10 which have been consistently reviewed to keep pace with emerging policy and funding developments. A key policy approach has been to focus resources on improving housing conditions for vulnerable and low income households amongst whom the incidence of non-decent housing is known to be higher. We can evidence that we have used targeted approaches to non-decency by focusing

some interventions on identified areas of social deprivation. Wards targeted since 2006/07 received focused investment under the Council's Special Energy Efficiency Scheme (SEES). Our relocation grant can be used flexibly to alleviate overcrowding/under-occupation and facilitate moves specifically to meet the needs of disabled households.

The funding for provision and adaptation of properties suitable to meet the needs of disabled members of the community, thereby contributing significantly to independent living, is a high priority.

The council will seek to continue the positive work on developing new approaches to meeting these challenges and working to sustain targeted investment in minor works grants, handy person schemes and loan based interventions currently accessed through our membership of the West Midlands Kick Start Partnership, particularly as national and regional funding support for traditional grant based approaches declines. The private sector renewal policies have been systematically updated and our approach has included a proactive programme of investment in energy efficiency initiatives and grants in support of tackling the thermal efficiency aspects of non-decent housing.

The council's Affordable Warmth Strategy identifies positive approaches to tackling, for instance fuel poverty and we will continue to support the development of affordable warmth strategies and monitor the effectiveness of energy efficiency interventions undertaken by our registered provider partners.

Regeneration

The regeneration of Hereford City Centre (known as the Edgar Street Grid project) is an example of how the Council is working in partnership to regenerate a significant area within the City and provide circa 800 new homes, of which 35% will be affordable to meet local needs. This significant project has drawn together a partnership between the Council, the former Advantage West Midlands and Sanctuary Housing and has formed part of Herefordshire's Local Investment planning conversations with the HCA which includes proposals for a link road, an ambitious plan to develop an outer-distributor road for the City and support further sustainable housing growth and regeneration.

The Council is also supporting Herefordshire Housing Ltd. (our largest social landlord) in helping develop and realise a community-led response to the need for housing and community investment and regeneration at The Oval, South Wye. The Oval project area is located to the south west of Hereford City forming part of the Newton Farm Estate. With the drivers for change including severe deprivation indicators, poor public perception of the area, predominance of a poor standard of system built housing and an identified need for more affordable housing, a community regeneration plan has been developed which will require strong partnership working to deliver. A summary of the oval project is provided in appendix 5.

Other projects of a partnership focus include the proposed demolition and development of Highmore Court, Hereford (formerly bedsitted accommodation for older persons) in partnership with Marches Housing Association where lettings will be prioritised to address the under occupancy of family accommodation elsewhere and make better use of housing stock.

Housing for the vulnerable

The Herefordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2009 examined the health and social care needs of the community alongside considering other factors that affect people's life chances, quality of life and well-being. The resulting information informs future plans for Herefordshire Council, NHS Herefordshire and our partners and helps determine what should be prioritised. Alongside a general reflection of the need for affordable housing a key finding that will be reflected within the refreshed Mental Health Housing Plan is the need for more supported housing that enables people with moderate to severe mental health problems to live in the community rather than in residential care.

The World Class Commissioning Strategic Plan 2010-14 utilises significant background research to enable NHS Herefordshire to identify the strategic priorities it will address in its partnership with Herefordshire Council and other partners. Key issues which will feed into the Housing Plan for Herefordshire include the need to maximise opportunities for independence for older people through more supported housing and tackling inadequately heated housing, an issue already at the forefront of the Council's Affordable Warmth Strategy and renewal policy programme.

In the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 2008, it was identified that there was a need for 83 additional pitches up to 2012 and a further 26 pitches due to family growth from the period 2012 - 2017. Due to the recognition that the long term unauthorised sites are tolerated and have caused no problems due to their location these have been taken into account towards this need, along with private sites coming forward over the past couple of years the need figure remaining as stated within the 2010 Annual Monitoring Report is 53 pitches up to 2012.

To enable the delivery, there will be site allocations as part of the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan (MTRAP) Development Plan Document (DPD) following a call for sites which took place in September 2010.

6. Priorities and Resources to deliver the Vision

Funding to enable delivery is critical to delivering Herefordshire's vision, but the current and future financial climate is uncertain, within significant funding cuts that are expected. This Plan, in conjunction with the Herefordshire Public Services Joint Asset Management and Capital Strategy 2010 and the emerging Herefordshire Partnership External Funding Strategy (providing for a county wide approach to external funding) will be central in co-ordinating funds, particularly for capital investment, as well as bidding to various agencies for funds for programmes and individual projects.

In partnership with Three Dragons Consultancy, an economic viability assessment is currently being undertaken which in future months will provide the authority with evidence regarding the viable level of development contributions which may be expected once the emerging LDF has been formerly adopted. Once the assessment has been published, the findings will be incorporated within the LIP.

The council has a spend to save budget that is available for creative revenue and capital schemes, whereby the initial pump priming will deliver a saving in future years.

It is envisaged that reference to the government's new initiative "New Homes Bonus" will be incorporated within the viability assessment report being undertaken by 3 Dragons, as

a potential funding resource. In addition, however, an initial analysis of the potential receipt based on housing projections is being undertaken.

Based on the evidence, the following table outlines the summary of current key priorities of the Council and how, with its partners, it is proposed to address these issues. It also provides an indication of how these align with the HCA priorities for future investment.

Key Priorities

Herefordshire Council's Priorities		Delivery Priorities	Supported by HCAs priorities		
			Increasing Supply	Place-making/Regeneration	Existing stock / retrofit
1	Growth in Hereford city and its surrounds (8,500 new homes 2006-2026)	Infrastructure including flood alleviation work / urban village link road / Hereford relief road / water/sewerage Market and affordable housing Urban village City centre living - use of empty spaces Community Stewardship and sustainability	✓	✓	✓
2	Rural and Market town housing	Delivery of market and affordable housing Rural affordable housing in settlements below 3,000 Infrastructure including flood alleviation works, water supply and drainage	✓	✓	
3	Supporting independent living for vulnerable households	Including Extra Care provision Mental Health Learning Disabilities Physical Disabilities Drugs and substance misuse Homelessness and prevention G & T site provision/improvements Adapting existing stock (PSH/HIA) Prevention work through Handy person services	✓	✓	✓
4	Increasing Energy Efficiency and decent homes	Decent homes in the private sector Bringing empty properties back into use Oval Regeneration and improvements/demolition of existing social stock Improving energy efficiency measures Annual SEES scheme delivery measures to around 1300 households	✓	✓	✓

The Emerging Core Strategy's spatial strategy centres on:

Focusing approximately ½ of all new homes (including affordable) with associated employment, retail, leisure, education and cultural development as well as new transport and green infrastructure in and around the main urban area of Hereford to support its regeneration and status as a growth point.

	Anticipated housing completions 2006-2026	Built 2006-2010	Commitments 2010	Residual housing requirement	Number anticipated on strategic sites	Number anticipated on non strategic sites
Hereford	8500	1094	1083	6323	5300	1023
Leominster	2500	152	588	1760	1700	60
Ross-on-Wye	1000	182	312	506	350	156
Ledbury	800	33	25	742	700	42
Bromyard	500	63	149	288	250	38
Kington	200	105	60	35	0	35
Rural Areas	4500	1001	790	2709	0	2709
County Total	18000	2630	3007	12363	8300	4063

Outside of Hereford City, the majority of development is proposed to be focused on the market towns of Leominster, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, Bromyard and Kington (with Leominster taking the greatest amount) to support their status as service centres to their rural hinterlands and to support rural regeneration including employment creation/diversification, delivery of and access to services (including affordable housing), realising the environment as an economic asset and reducing the need to travel.

To pursue targeted regeneration and possible modest extensions (including homes and jobs) at Rural Service Centres and Hubs to meet rural housing needs (including affordable), employment and community needs and to reduce the need to travel.

At other appropriate settlements, small scale development to help meet rural housing (including affordable) and employment needs and support local community services will be permitted.

Elsewhere, the proposals are to limit development to rural exception housing needs (agricultural, forestry, farm diversification, replacements, conversions or rural affordable housing only) and diversification of farms or rural businesses of an appropriate scale to protect the countryside for its own sake and address climate change. Where possible, to pursue a sequential approach to development utilising brownfield land and buildings before greenfield land.

As the core strategy is still emerging, details of preferred strategy options are detailed in appendix 6.

Herefordshire Council, through its Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations have a good track record of securing funding to support community infrastructure needs arising from new developments ranging from affordable housing provision to open space, community safety and public realm. In April 2010, this was replaced with the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regulations which made provision for pooled contributions to be collected for infrastructure excluding affordable housing.

Three Dragons Consultancy and Roger Tym & Partners were commissioned in May 2010 to undertake an Economic Viability Assessment (EVA) as part of the LDF evidence base. Specifically the EVA will inform the Core Strategy, Hereford Area Plan and Market Towns and Rural Area Plans. The essential purpose of the EVA is “to test through the application of a thorough methodology, the circumstances in which the Council can expect the scale of planned development in Herefordshire to deliver an appropriate level of developer contributions/community infrastructure levy towards required new infrastructure”.

As part of the study, guidance will be provided on the following to assist the Council in meeting its key priorities

- Viability and infrastructure delivery across the county in different locations.
- How best to strike a balance between what is needed to fund infrastructure and economic viability and whether different payment levels are justified for different land use types
- Dealing with economic uncertainty over the life of the Core Strategy.

It is anticipated that when findings and recommendation are available they will be included within the LIP.

In addition, the consultants will be providing a toolkit that will enable the Council to assess the viability of schemes as they arise.

With regards to affordable housing, this continues to be delivered through the planning system, albeit at a slower pace in market towns, although in smaller rural communities this has become more difficult. Whilst the emerging LDF has identified some scope to potentially seek financial contributions from open market rural schemes, this is only emerging policy with no evidence to suggest that contributions will be forthcoming sufficiently to deliver the rural programme.

Herefordshire Council currently has 8 preferred development partners actively supporting the delivery of affordable housing through new build, refurbishment and also home ownership initiatives. However, the LIP will provide an ideal opportunity in detailing requirements, targets for delivery and therefore provide a platform for reviewing partnership arrangements throughout the county to maximise the investment and delivery. Expressions of interest to deliver a range of affordable housing options for all needs, is currently being undertaken.

The overall projections of the estimated affordable housing provision is summarised below:

Affordable Housing Targets

Location	Strategic site	Housing units	Affordable housing requirement	Indicative Affordable housing target
Hereford (see appendix 6 Map 1)	Lower Bullingham	1,000	35%	350
	Whitecross	1,500		525
	Three Elms	1,000		350
	Holmer West	1,000		350
	Brownfield/Urban village	800		280
Leominster (see appendix 6 Map 3)	Southern expansion	1,700	25%	425
Ledbury (see appendix 6 Map 5)	Viaduct	700	40%	280
Ross-on-Wye (see appendix 6 Map 2)	Hildersley	350	40%	140
Bromyard (see appendix 6 Map 4)	Hardwick Bank	250	40%	100
Strategic Total		8,300		2800

Location	Number anticipated on non strategic sites	Estimated number of dwellings on sites above threshold	Affordable housing requirement	Indicative Affordable housing target
Hereford	1023	500	35%	175
Leominster	60	20	25%	5
Ross-on-Wye	156	60	40%	24
Ledbury	42	15	40%	6
Bromyard	38	15	40%	6
Kington	35	15	35%	5
Rural Areas	2709	2709	35-40%	1000
Non-strategic Total	4063			1221
County Affordable Housing Target 2010-2026				4021

Note: Rural areas based upon 38% of provision with a 40% target and 62% of provision with a 35% target (based on distribution of RSCs and hubs).

Work is continuing on the likely delivery rate of housing across the county but this is dependant on the provision of the necessary infrastructure to enable growth in the strategic locations and economic conditions in the County. A key priority is to commence the urban village within Hereford city. In addition master planning for Leominster has commenced and smaller scale housing sites in other market towns may also be able to be released in the early years of the Plan. In order to achieve housing targets across the County it will be important to release the strategic sites at the earliest opportunity, however, until such time as the housing trajectory has been finalised and included in the submitted Core Strategy, this remains work in progress.

The council will continue to strive to achieve high levels of affordable housing through planning gain. However, through extensive community events to raise awareness of affordable housing, preferred development partners have also been successful in bringing forward 100% affordable housing development opportunities across the county, which require some form of subsidy. The current programme of affordable housing delivery is summarised below

Summary of estimated new built affordable housing delivery 2010/11 – 15/16

Funding Source	Hereford City	Market Town	Rural Village	Total
Total Number of units	722	318	131	1171
Planning Gain (nil grant)	216	268	59	543
LA/ HCA Funding already secured	8	38	33	79
Grant funding required	498	12	39	549

(Source Housing needs and development team delivery programme as at 5.1.11)

The council is not land rich, but an evaluation of potential development opportunities is currently underway, with RSLs already responding to the request to submit initial development proposals. Although financial evaluations are currently ongoing, the land has the potential to deliver in the region of 100 affordable homes across 2/3 years. This is referred to in more detail later in the plan.

Shared Principles for Delivering the Vision

To achieve the long term vision of growth and regeneration for Herefordshire, the LIP, HC and the HCA will bring forward delivery of specific schemes and projects in order to meet the goals and the agreed spatial thematic priorities detailed in this section. Through enabling and investment the organisations will jointly take forward these priorities through a shared understanding. These undertakings are set out below to provide clear guidelines to partners about how the HC and the HCA will maximise resources.

As highlighted previously on page 29, all the HC's key priorities are supported by the core themes of the HCA which in summary are

- Affordability – increasing people's access to affordable homes in places that they wish to live
- Existing stock – improving the stock currently existing in an area in a sustainable manner
- Growth/Renewal – supporting local ambitions for growth and renewal

The undertakings agreed between the HCA and the HC are as follows:-

1 Joint investments at the core of delivery

The HCA and HC will work together via the LIP to ensure that joint investment is core to delivering the priorities. Innovative contributions of assets (finance, land and buildings) will enable the most appropriate mechanisms for delivery to be determined for each priority. The effective utilisation of public funding, alongside private sector partner investment will be central to how parties will determine funding going forward with this

plan. However the following provides an illustration on some key factors that will assist in determining funding opportunities

- Land in public sector ownership

The council will, where possible, seek to maximise its own resources to enable the delivery of key priorities. Therefore, as mentioned previously, the council has undertaken an initial assessment of land in its ownership to identify potential sites suitable for development opportunities. Sites identified have been subject to an evaluation process by the council's preferred development partners. Initial assessments have been concluded and a report is due to be presented to Cabinet. The sites provide a potential opportunity to deliver 100 units over the next 2/3 years although at present some form of subsidy will need to be considered. A summary of the potential sites are given in Appendix 3.

Although early stages, available land within the city centre regeneration project (ESG) is being considered to maximise the potential to reinvest through land swaps across the project.

Potential development opportunities are also being pursued where the asset is in the ownership of the PCT. Although progress is limited at the current time due to amalgamation of existing arrangements, working relationships are established and alternative options are being considered where appropriate and able.

- Strategic commissioning approach to working with partners

The council has undertaken an exercise to seek expressions of interest from individuals or consortia that are keen to commit to delivering a range of affordable housing solutions across the county, to become "preferred delivery partners". It is the intention that those who meet key criteria will form a partnership to deliver the targets required to meet local housing need. No formal arrangements have been agreed, as it is the intention to discuss preferred partnership working with those selected.

The arrangements will include specialist housing for vulnerable households and where appropriate market housing to enable cross subsidy and other financial models of delivery.

2 Place making approach

The creation of balanced communities, where people want to live will be a key consideration when determining any investment in line with stated priorities. The creation of communities served by a range of facilities, including retail, community facilities, open and recreational space, and connected to other communities is at the core of what the LIP looks to achieve. Key to this will be

- Total Place / total capital approach
- Creation of mixed, sustainable communities
- Exceeding standards of design and environmental sustainability

Hereford is one of nine localities, around which there will be joined up property reviews with other public sector partners and quite clearly the ESG site forms an important part of the property asset in respect of the review in Hereford. In terms of joining up front line services, opportunities will be taken in relation to the relocation of the Garrick House Offices (currently incorporating the Info centre) and potentially co-locating front offices with the Police, PCT, Council and other partners so the redevelopment of the livestock market enables that joining up of public sector properties asset in the concept of Total Place.

The proposal is to develop area based budgets around the nine localities, and inform new LSP structures and organisational structures.

It is also important to recognise that the ESG is an important property asset within the context of Hereford. Given there are Local Authority, Police and PCT assets on the site, we are focussed on how we make best use of all those public sector resources and join services up together where possible.

The Urban village will play an important role in meeting the total place making agenda and will provide environmental and social sustainability through mixed communities, providing a range of market and affordable provision both rent and for sale options

3 Investment aligned to the wider context of public sector funding

The council will be seeking to maximise new funding opportunities to enable the delivery of key priorities with partners including

- **Regional Growth Funding** – the council, Sanctuary Housing Group and the HCA will be supporting Hereford Futures in applying for Regional Growth funds to implement the infrastructure required to deliver 800 new homes in the Urban Village. In addition, the council will also be seeking to support Herefordshire Housing Ltd in submitting a bid for the regeneration of the Oval Project and Marches Housing Association Ltd in a potential submission to kick start the wider regeneration of a prime location within Hereford inner city limits.
- **New Homes Bonus** – The council has recently responded to the consultation paper to maximise the potential to attract the incentives being proposed. Due to the proposed housing growth throughout the county and the high performance of bringing empty properties back into use and consistent delivery of affordable housing, is envisaged that funding should be attracted to reinvest in the local communities.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy** – As mentioned previously in the LIP, an Economic Viability Assessment is currently being undertaken to test through the application of a thorough methodology and the circumstances in which the council can expect the scale of planned development in Herefordshire to deliver an appropriate level of developer contributions/community infrastructure levy towards required new infrastructure. Once the outcome of the Assessment is known, it will be considered further to update the LIP. However, it is recognised that the expectation of the coalition government is for local communities to benefit from CIL contributions either by contributing towards larger projects funded by the council or funding smaller local projects like park improvements, playgrounds and cycle paths.

- **Local Housing Allowance (LHA)** – it is envisaged that the proposed changes due to be implemented on the 1st April 2011 will have no impact for households seeking accommodation in the private sector. This is due to Herefordshire having rent levels well below the cap rates set nationally. As the legislation changes to permit an extra bedroom for a non resident carer for the claimant or partner, this will enable better utilisation of the private sector to meet the needs of the more vulnerable households.

However, this may be hindered due to further changes proposed in October 2011, where the LHA will be set at the 30th percentile of the local market rents. Further analysis of the implications of this restriction will need to be considered nearer the time. In addition the change to the increase in the one-bedroom shared room rate of LHA, in 2012, will apply to those under 35, rather than the current 25 years. The impact of this and also the maximum benefit that can be received (£26,000pa), will be unknown at this time and thus will again be monitored to fully understand the impact on the utilisation of private sector accommodation.

The key impact of the changes being proposed relate to the provision of housing in rural areas, where for sustainability reasons, the minimum of 2 bedroom properties are developed. The evidence from local housing need surveys indicates a higher need for single person accommodation, however, under the proposed change in 2013, where an RSL property is under occupied by a working aged claimant their HB entitlement will be restricted to the appropriate single person allowance.

Ensuring investment achieves priorities

Due to the uncertainty concerning the contents of the Localism Bill and the indication that the RSS will be abolished by the Secretary of State there may need to be adjustments to the contents of the LDF and the timetable for producing the documents. However, Herefordshire remains committed to ensuring that the priorities for the people of Herefordshire are delivered.

In terms of outcomes the PST are seeking to deliver activities to support the growth and future prosperity, through meeting the needs of all households across the county.

Outcome 1 - Growth of Hereford City

1.a Infrastructure

The draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) set out in the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD details the major infrastructure requirements necessary to facilitate the growth in housing and employment across the county and regeneration of Hereford city centre proposed as part of the spatial strategy. The IDP is currently being used as the background to an Economic Viability Assessment (EVA) to ascertain what levels of developer contributions (either in the form of S106 or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)) can be requested whilst at the same time ensuring viability.

Countywide Infrastructure	Current planning status	Estimated Cost £m
Transport Hub		6
Connect 2 Cycle Scheme	Phase 1 funding approved. Planning application due 2011	2.58
Hereford Relief Road and Sustainable Transport Measures		150
Edgar St Link Road	Planning permission granted. Awaiting CPO	24
Broadband – Improvements to speed and coverage	Government funding in part announced	50
Sporting Facilities		8
Surface Water and Sewerage to facilitate new development		TBC
Tertiary College	Feasibility study completed	6
Historic Core Enhancement (Butter Market and Eign Gate)	Planning application for butter market due 2011	TBC
Yazor Brook/Widemarsh Brook Flood Alleviation	Planning permission granted. CPO decision imminent	4.2

Major infrastructure requirements associated with the growth and their estimated costs are set out in the table above. This list is not exhaustive but gives a flavour of the types of infrastructure required. As the EVA is not finalised it is not possible to determine the level of the CIL required or any possible funding gap that may be apparent.

A strategic flood risk assessment is currently underway in Herefordshire which will inform flood alleviation strategies necessary to inform future investment to support strategic developments across the County. Current priorities include the delivery of the Yazor Brook flood alleviation scheme which, alongside local flooding works will support the delivery of the ESG urban village.

1.b Housing Growth

The preferred proposals for Hereford emerging through the preparation of the Herefordshire Core Strategy propose that around 8,500 new homes are completed in Hereford in the period 2006-2026. Of this total almost 2200 have been completed (see table on page 30), have planning permission or are existing housing allocations. In respect of the outstanding target (6,300) it is anticipated that over 2,000 could be affordable housing delivered through the planning system (see table setting out affordable housing targets on page 32).

In terms of affordable housing delivery the following provides a summary of the units that are anticipated to be delivered over the next 4 years across Hereford City, market towns and the rural areas as at 5.1.2011, but it should be recognised that this can change due to the complexities of rural delivery.

Funding Source	Hereford City	Market Town	Rural Village	Total
Total Number of units	722	318	131	1171
Provided through planning Gain (nil grant)	216	268	59	543
LA/ HCA granted already secured	8	38	33	79
Grant funding to be secured	498	12	39	549

(Source: Housing needs and development team delivery programme as at 5/1/11)

The publication of the Local Housing Market Assessment which is currently being undertaken will inform future provision of housing across the county in terms of size, type and tenure of both housing and market housing. The assessment is expected to provide detailed information relating specifically to the regeneration of Hereford City.

1.c City Centre regeneration

Over the next 10 - 15 years, a number of schemes will be implemented to support Hereford's growth and renaissance. These include

- A flood alleviation scheme at Credenhill which significantly reduces the flood plain in the city resulting in new residential and commercial redevelopment opportunities
- The redevelopment of the Cattle Market by Stanhope PLC for a high quality retail and leisure offer providing up to 1200 new jobs
- The provision of circa 800 new homes in the urban village in partnership with Sanctuary Housing Group. A key element of this is the construction of a link road which is fundamental to releasing identified development opportunities.
- The redevelopment of the Butter Market resulting in improved retail and commercial opportunities.
- Enhancing the Higher Education offer for our young people
- City centre living to provide accommodation and support a vibrant city culture and economy.

In the immediate future the council in partnership with Hereford Futures is seeking to promote development opportunities, particularly in terms of maximising empty properties and regenerating brownfield sites which includes

- City centre living, which envisages a mix of converting empty space and providing mixed use commercial/residential development
- Berrington/Aubrey Street area of Hereford City where a number of potential sites exist with planning permission and partners identified

- Sites adjacent to the urban village development which are in the ownership of both the LA and private sector
- Bastion mews where development has stalled due to the financial changes in the market

It is considered that by supporting these key priorities this could kick start future private investment across city centre as a whole.

Priority for investment will also be given to brownfield sites adjoining the city centre to support the wider regeneration and proposed growth required across the city

- former Whitecross School site, Whitecross
- Highmore Court, Westfields
- Mill Court, Ledbury Road
- Derelict empty properties including the Sportsman and Campion's Restaurant being prominent focal points for visitors to Herefordshire.

1.d Oval Regeneration

The Oval in Newton Farm is a prominent pre-cast concrete estate bordering the A465, Belmont Road in South Wye. The Wimpey No-Fines construction is reminiscent of accommodation built in the 1960s for the armed services but now signals a poorer area of the city. The visibility reinforces the stigma associated in living on this now unpopular estate. The Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) Golden Post, Newton Farm, Belmont is the most deprived in Herefordshire and out of 32,482 LSOAs in England, is in the top 10% for multiple deprivation nationally.

Typical of the income levels, there have been very few sales and the area remains in the ownership of Herefordshire Housing Ltd. Community consultation over the past 18 months has concluded that radical change is needed.

With the support of consultants EC Harris, financial modelling has indicated that replacement exclusively with social rented housing will cost in the region of £45m. Other options including sale and a variety of tenures are being explored in order to reduce the funding gap.

Redevelopment will be phased so that rehousing of existing residents can take place. It is anticipated that funding will be prioritised for 2012.

More information is included in Appendix 7.

Outcome 2 - Rural Areas and Market towns

There is evidence of significant housing market stress within the rural communities of Herefordshire where a predominance of larger detached housing and high house prices exclude many households from the housing market or any housing pathway.

Outside of Hereford the main focus for development is proposed to be at the market towns to support their status as service centres for their rural hinterlands and to support

rural regeneration including employment creation access to services and reducing the need to travel. Outside of the urban areas the preferred Spatial Strategy anticipates that around 4,500 houses will be developed in rural parts of the County. To distribute these in a manner which meets the needs of rural communities (including affordability issues) development is proposed to be focussed into more appropriate villages by looking at the functions of the various villages to identify those most suitable for new development (Rural Service Centres and Hubs). Elsewhere more limited development (including affordable housing) will be permitted at appropriate locations.

The Council has established a 4 year rolling programme of housing need surveys to identify local housing needs within the rural areas. The programme is reviewed annually and provides information on the level of housing need and size/type of provision. Across the market towns, a range of methodologies are currently being explored to ensure that needs are assessed and met where appropriate.

The following table provides information on developments in the pipeline over the next 4 years across the market towns and the mechanism for delivery, whether with or without grant.

Market Towns	Ross on Wye	Leominster	Ledbury	Kington	Bromyard
Total Number of units	96	177	0	3	42
Provided through planning Gain (nil grant)	83	140	0	3	42
LA/ HCA Funding already secured	1	37	0	0	0
Grant funding to be secured	12	0	0	0	0

(Source: Housing needs and development team delivery programme as at 5.1.11)

2.a Ross on wye

At Ross-on Wye it is proposed that around 1,000 new homes be built over the Core Strategy period, a strategic urban extension has been identified at Hildersley as the largest development over the Plan period. The non-strategic housing sites will be identified in more detailed Development Plan Documents. In respect of affordable housing a target of 40% of new housing on sites above 15 dwellings, will be required to be affordable homes.

In respect of new jobs provision the 10ha Model Farm site now has planning permission and it is anticipated that it will be developed during the first half of the Core Strategy plan period.

Developer contributions will be expected to help the funding of recreation space and green infrastructure. New pedestrian and cycle links between the site and the town centre will also be funded by developer contributions.

2.b Leominster

At Leominster it is proposed that around 2,500 new homes be built over the Core Strategy period, a strategic urban extension has been identified in the south west of the town as the largest development over the Plan period. The non-strategic housing sites will be identified in more detailed Development Plan Documents.

This new growth will support the provision of a southern relief road during the plan period, which will help to benefit the town in terms of reducing congestion and improving air quality.

In respect of affordable housing a target of 25% of new housing on sites above 15 dwellings, will be required to be affordable homes.

Developer contributions will be expected to help the funding of recreation space and green infrastructure. New pedestrian and cycle links between the site, the town centre and the Enterprise Park will also be funded by developer contributions.

In terms of large scale planning applications, there is a current planning consent for 425 dwellings on a brownfield site at Baron's Cross, this permission is yet to commence.

2.c Bromyard

At Bromyard the preferred proposals suggests the provision of 500 new homes of which 250 will be provided on an urban extension at Hardwick Bank. The remaining dwellings will be provided through smaller scale non-strategic sites. A target of 40% of new housing on sites above 15 dwellings will be required to be affordable. Five hectares of employment land will be developed on and adjacent to the existing Linton Trading Estate with contributions towards improved sustainable access to the town.

2.d Ledbury

The emerging Core Strategy proposes around 800 sustainably constructed new homes (2006-2026) to meet housing need and demand, including an affordable homes target of 280 dwellings. These will be provided in a single strategic urban extension to the north of the Viaduct to the north of Ledbury (subject to a satisfactory transport assessment and likely improvements required to the junction between the Bromyard and Hereford Roads). Around 12ha of new employment land is also proposed to counter people travelling long distances for work and support economic regeneration.

Developer contributions will be required towards: sustainable transport to the town centre, new green infrastructure (linear park) and biodiversity enhancements along the Leadon Valley to promote sustainable communities. Contributions will also be required towards any identified need for new/improved community facilities (to include land for the provision of a 210-place primary school (1ha) within the site) and land and contributions to facilitate a restored canal.

We are awaiting the outcome of the economic viability study to ascertain whether the infrastructure required in association with the proposal for Ledbury is viable in the current market.

2.e Kington

At Kington, the smallest of the market towns, the preferred option proposes that around 200 new dwellings will be completed during the plan period, with limited

further affordable housing development identified. Housing and employment sites for Kington will be identified in the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan.

Across the market towns generally, there is a partnership approach to delivering affordable housing through the planning system, so historically little funding has been requested to assist delivery. However, opportunities on sites of sufficient size to secure significant delivery of affordable housing, via planning gain, has been limited. Therefore, there remains a distinct need for funding to support affordable housing development on smaller sites in market towns. With the LDF still being prepared and the ongoing process of assessing sites through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment landowners have held back on releasing their land for affordable housing in the hope that the value of their land will be increased. It is envisaged that as the LDF progresses, land owners will begin to release sites for affordable and market housing.

2.e Rural Areas

The preferred proposals for the Core Strategy sets out a rural settlement hierarchy of Rural Service Centres and Hubs as the top tier settlements to receive the most growth. The proposed strategy states that around 2,700 new homes need to be found in the rural areas between 2009 and 2026, taking into account those already built and those with planning permission. To accommodate this growth, further details on the specific numbers and sites for each settlement, the infrastructure capacity, location and design of developments will be detailed in the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan.

In terms of affordable housing delivery across the rural areas, the table below provides a summary of the current schemes in the pipeline with an anticipated delivery over the next 4 years within the identified localities. However, it should be noted that these figures exclude the market towns within each locality area/

Localities excluding Market Towns	Total Number of units	Provided through planning gain (nil grant)	LA/HCA funding already secured	Grant funding to be secured
Mortimer	44	12	32	0
Leominster	9	9	0	0
Kington	19	1	0	18
Weobley	7	0	0	7
Bromyard	0	0	0	0
Hereford Rural	28	15	1	12
Golden Valley	18	18	0	0
Ross on Wye	0	0	0	0
Ledbury	6	6	0	0
Total Overall	131	61	33	37

(Source: housing needs and development team delivery programme as at 5.1.11)

In addition to those listed, within the localities, there will also be schemes that are at various stages of the development process e.g. consultation with parish councils/communities and pre planning and therefore there are a number of parishes where a need has been identified and sites are being developed, in particular Weobley, Lyonshall, Pembridge and Canon Pyon. Schemes meeting an identified local housing need in rural areas will continue to remain a priority for the local authority

Outcome 3 - Supporting independent living/vulnerable persons

Private Sector Housing employ the services of an in house Home Improvement Agency (HIA) to support independent living targeted specifically at vulnerable individuals such as those on low income, older persons, people with mental or physical disability, and those whose life experience leaves them at a disadvantage. The work of the HIA cuts across health and social care activities for example facilitating timely hospital discharge, providing access to grants, loans and many other services to improve housing conditions for the most vulnerable groups and play a major part in achieving outcomes for National Indicators NI136 and NI142 by ensuring people remain living independently in their own home. The HIA is able to engage hard-to-reach groups and act as 'a foot in the door' for a range of other preventative services for such as the Herefordshire Signposting Scheme.

Core functions of the Major Works and Adaptations team are to provide support for choice by assessing client's circumstances and aspirations at home in their own environment, providing information and advice about a range of options to meet their needs and aspirations, and supporting clients to achieve their preferred housing option. A range of services are employed, including guiding the client through the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) process, liaison with Occupational Therapy (OT) services, helping to find and manage a reputable contractor to carry out work necessary to protect the health and safety of the client, and identifying funding options e.g. welfare benefits and the Kick Start Partnership. DFGs processed by the HIA and Private Sector Housing over the last 2 years equate to a committed spend of £1,845,709.36 that equates to a NHS / PCT saving of just under £8M over a 2 year period. Other savings to the NHS for interventions through Major, minor and Kick Start assistance have been calculated using the BRE / CIEH HHSRS outcomes toolkit in the following table for falls and excess cold.

	NHS Herefordshire Annual Cost	Estimated Total Cost of works where an accident is anticipated	Ratio of remedial action to NHS Annual Cost
Falls on stairs	£639,000.00	£84,838.00	0.13
Falls on the level	£1,137,500.00	£171,370.00	0.15
Excess cold	£4,281,600.00	£1,253,243.00	0.29

The Handyperson service offers a quick and effective solution to housing problems, at low cost that is carried out by trusted individuals. They carry out small works of

adaptations, repair, improvements and home safety checks that cut across Herefordshire Partnership priorities around Stronger Communities, Safer Herefordshire and Health & Well Being. The service is able to act as a referral point to a range of other services aimed at promoting independence and provides an important link to the other services the HIA provide. It is a highly visible service with 99.5% satisfaction levels. Benefits accrued from the service within the categories of reduced falls, burglaries, bed days, use of social services, fuel poverty and improved or maintained independent living saved health services £91,215, the individual £4,395, the Police £1,336, and social services £194,841 over the period 2009/2010.

2009/10 outputs for the HIA and Private Sector Housing were 2018 Handyperson jobs (including Sanctuary Scheme, adaptations to aid hospital discharge, small adaptations for social services, and specialist smoke alarms for the Fire and Rescue service), 1887 Herefordshire Handyperson (low level Supporting People contract), 184 DFGs, 20 major works (up to 20K work for significant housing hazards), 39 minor works (under 5K work to address decent home issues), and 16 Kick Start loans. The statutory obligations to provide for adaptations is anticipated to be 200 DFGs for 2010/11 with an increase of 15% per subsequent year to accommodate for increasing demand.

Contracts for the HIA currently amount to £255k (£130k and £125k) towards service costs. The recent Spending Review has indicated that such housing support services, together with DFGs are to be rolled into the Formula Grant. As any funding that may be available for this valuable service is not likely to be confirmed until the start of 2011, it is unclear whether the service will continue beyond spring next year. The situation is further compounded by the scraping of the housing renewal budget and the knock on effect for fee income from improvement works that would traditionally be generated.

3.a Older persons

To address the needs of the growing older population the Herefordshire Public Services has commissioned Peter Fletcher Associates to undertake A Study of the Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire. Initial findings will not be known until late February 2011. It is however envisaged that following the successful delivery of the extra care housing provision at Rose Gardens, Ledbury Road Hereford that support will be given to future provision across the market towns for additional accommodation. The final study is anticipated during April 2011 and the recommendations will be included within the LIP.

This only complements the delivery of solutions within outcome 3 above.

3.b Mental Health / Learning Disabilities

The delivery of housing solutions for these distinct areas of need will be in accordance with the housing plans which have been developed previously, but are currently both under review. Early indications suggest that following positive feedback from residents with learning disabilities that further “core and cluster” general needs housing where residents can provide mutual support with support services provided on an outreach basis to meet individual needs, would be required and supported.

Learning disabilities, the delivery of the following will be sought over the next 4 years

- Core and cluster – Hereford City
- Extra care models – Hereford City – it is not suggested that there is a need for a specific extra care provision for those with learning disabilities over 50 but to consider the integration with the wider concept of older persons extra care for over accommodation and support to maximise the benefits on independent living.
- Extra care model - for people with complex needs - Hereford
- Single persons general needs accommodation – rental and home ownership models. Whilst Hereford City remains a priority, need is arising in the majority of market towns.
- General needs properties used for shared supported accommodation - Hereford and market towns
- Ground floor and adapted accommodation as part of overall accommodation models outlined above

Mental Health, the delivery of the following will be sought over the next 4 years

- General needs accommodation for single people - Hereford City, North and South Herefordshire
- General needs accommodation for families – Hereford City, North and South Herefordshire

Whilst a needs assessment has been undertaken, it has yet to be clarified whether more specialist accommodation is required to meet the needs of the more complex households. Once the information is available, the LIP will be updated to reflect the requirements.

3.c Gypsy and Traveller communities

In response to the needs identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (July 2008) the need of 83 pitches from 2007 – 2012 has been reduced to 54. An internal working group has been pro-active in ensuring that provision is in place to ensure pitches continue to be delivered to meet this target.

Members have been informed and are engaged in meeting the needs, with a call out for sites recently undertaken, forming part of the consultation on “Issues and Options” for the Hereford Area Plan and Market Towns and Rural Areas Development DPD.

Opportunities for funding have been investigated to assist with new provision and refurbishment of existing pitches, but this has been limited and alternative sources are being sought.

Expressions of interest have been sought from organisations who would like to become preferred partners of the Local Authority to deliver affordable housing, including Gypsy and Traveller pitches. This has received a very positive response and the process is currently ongoing. Local authority owned land is also being

investigated to establish if any sites are suitable or could be made available for pitch provision.

An options paper is currently being developed to identify the priorities and opportunities available to meet the accommodation needs, including the further investment into refurbishing existing council owned pitches. Any decisions from the options paper will inform investment priorities.

Although additional pitch requirements can be met through private sites coming forward through the planning system, it is anticipated that any additional Local Authority or RSL pitch provision, will require some financial assistance.

3.d Drugs and substance misuse

With local drug strategies focussing on community based treatment and recovery via outreach support a key approach will be in terms of increasing supply of general needs housing. This will include working with private sector landlords to provide private rented accommodation. Challenges around homelessness for prolific offenders will be initially addressed through such strategies. A number of housing support interventions are listed in the Herefordshire Drugs Housing Strategy 2010 that has been adopted by Safer Herefordshire.

3.e Homelessness and socially excluded households

The Council's prevention focussed approach to homelessness has reduced its reliance on temporary accommodation but homelessness enquiries and pressures remain consistently high. In the future we plan to utilise legislative changes to increase the use of the private rented sector to discharge homelessness duty building on our current rent/deposit approaches in partnership with private landlords and agents. Current levels of self-contained temporary accommodation will need to be retained in the short term. A key challenge is in meeting the accommodation needs of the most socially excluded households and the approach will be to use private sector leasing and licence arrangements to house those with little hope of success through the housing waiting list.

Housing-related support services will need to continue helping sustain tenancies but funding challenges will require innovative and cost effective solutions into the future. We will continue to seek opportunities for improving refuge provision for victims of domestic violence.

Outcome 4 – Increasing Energy Efficiency and Decent Homes

The significant numbers of private sector non-decent housing in Herefordshire continues to be a challenge particularly where the occupying homeowners are on very low incomes. Good progress has been made in the last 2 years, since Herefordshire became a partner in the regional Kick Start initiative to provide loans to address category 1 hazards (under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System), and other non-decency criteria. The culture change from the provision of direct grants to the system of loans has been successfully achieved - with a small budget only for low-level grants for extreme emergency measures. The availability of loan funding from the private sector renewal budget in future years has been scrapped, and will curtail this activity if no other funding streams are found.

The value of the current year activity for large loans to a maximum of £30,000/loan is: £245,000

The value of current year activity for small unsecured loans to a maximum value of £2,000 is: £34,000. The value of current year activity for emergency grants to a maximum of £3,000 is: £28,000

For future years, it is proposed that the emergency grant fund and criteria remain to assist households on an emergency basis only, with a proposed annual budget of £30,000 for 2011/12. and on a review basis for future years as ongoing funding beyond 2011/12 is uncertain at a local level. The grant level will be reduced to a maximum of £2,000.

We are currently evaluating options around recyclable loan funding with proposals providing up to 50 loans and a minimum of 60 emergency grants in the event funding is secured beyond 11/12.

For those households able to obtain loans through other funding streams e.g. family, Home Improvement Trust, advice and guidance will continue to be provided to ensure satisfactory outcomes are achieved.

The Private Sector Renewal approach will continue to focus on utilising enforcement powers where appropriate, licensing provisions and advice services to compliment loan and grant based interventions in tackling non-decency in the private sector especially associated with the most vulnerable households.

Herefordshire Council also remains committed to bringing empty properties back into use as they are otherwise a wasted resource. Through a range of innovative housing solutions, returning vacant properties back into occupation can help contribute to a balanced, sustainable housing market.

A key objective of Hereford Futures is to create a vibrant city centre through the use of any vacant space above existing shop units. A project plan has been prepared to enable the identification of empty spaces and their owners to aid discussions on future funding implications. The council has been successful in bringing a range of empty properties back into use through a wide range of schemes across the city centre and other rural areas. Early investigations have enable the delivering of an additional 12 units of accommodation being secured through partnership working with a range of freeholders, investors, land agents and a local RSL. This compliments the ongoing work as detailed on page 22.

Our main challenge is with the number of empty properties located in the remote rural regions of the County. Many were constructed Pre-1900 and require considerable refurbishment, which are often difficult to retro-fit with energy efficiency measures. Nevertheless, the benefits of returning as many empty properties as possible back into use provides the opportunity to create accommodation (including affordable), which can benefit local communities through investment in the local economy.

Historically, it has been cost effective for small, local crafts people and private individuals to regenerate empty properties in scattered rural locations through the use of the council's capital receipt and the Temporary Social Housing Scheme. This provides a grant to RSL's to undertake necessary works to bring the property up to the decent homes standards. Due to the limited capital resources available, loan arrangements are

being considered to enable future reinvestment opportunities and more detailed costs are currently being prepared.

Supporting owners by securing a reduced VAT rate on refurbishment costs is also proving to be an extremely effective method of returning long term empty properties back into use, together with pressuring Empty Dwelling Management Orders, Compulsory Purchase Orders and general advice & assistance.

In the current housing market many owners are experiencing problems selling their properties and are turning to a letting strategy until the market improves. Private sector landlords also face difficulties letting their portfolio of properties and are increasingly turning to the Local Authority for assistance with nominations. This provides a reduced waiting time for home-seekers to access accommodation and also helps to return a property back into use that would otherwise remain empty. More information on the success rate of the council is on page 23.

All of these measures help to contribute to the outcomes identified earlier.

It is envisaged that the council will continue to seek the delivery of affordable housing to be developed to the minimum Code of Sustainable Homes standard Requirements and will be seeking to support housing providers to increase this to Code 4 from April 2011 where possible. RSL partners are supported and encouraged to develop above the minimum standards, this has become more challenging over recent times.

To ensure the future sustainability of development, a suite of policies will be developed through the Local Development Framework to help improve energy efficiency. Key county-wide policies will include Renewable Energy, Sustainable Water Management and Sustainable Design. The policies will help to ensure that the Code for Sustainable Homes and other sustainable measures are incorporated into Core Strategy policies. Other more detailed Development Plan Policies will contain area or site specific policies.

Hereford Futures are looking into the feasibility of a sustainable district heating system for the urban village. In addition, the retail development at the cattle market is likely to be delivered to BREEAM excellent standards.

7 Governance and Delivery Arrangements

Herefordshire Partnership Board membership is detailed in Appendix 4, and is made up of senior officers from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Having developed the vision based on a sound understanding of the County and local issues which are articulated in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), they have the responsibility to ensure delivery of efficient and high quality services. It lobbies, campaigns and champions the issues of importance to the County at a regional and national level and acts as an ambassador for the partnership.

The Herefordshire Partnership Management Group takes responsibility for delivering the Herefordshire Sustainability Community Strategy, by agreeing the allocation of resources and performance of the Local Area Agreement. They are also accountable for the work of the 6 policy and delivery groups by reporting their progress to the board.

The 6 Policy and Delivery Groups are focused around the 6 key themes for action in the SCS and have representatives from organisations committed to delivering high quality services which address their groups priorities. The Herefordshire LIP has been endorsed by the Stronger Communities Policy and Delivery Group in reflecting the significant degree to which the LIP aspirations around housing growth, regeneration, decent homes

and supporting vulnerable people to live independently represent key issues and priorities under the Stronger Communities theme prior to the approval of the Board and Cabinet.

The Director of Sustainable Communities has taken the lead to deliver the LIP, with various meetings held with the Chief Executive of the local authority and the Homes and Communities Agency and Partnership Board members through the Local Investment Planning process to discuss and initiate the development of the LIP in Herefordshire, with ongoing discussions held with senior managers to consider the wider governance arrangements in light of the changes being implemented by the coalition government.

More specifically, Herefordshire in partnership with Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin have been successful in their submission for the formation of a new Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for the area covered by the unitary authority. Submitted jointly by the leaders of the 3 local authorities and the chairs of the 3 county level business boards, the partnership will build on the existing framework of successful collaboration and housing and regeneration will be a key consideration within that context.

Although at an early stage, it is envisaged that the existing West Housing Market Area Partnership (WHMAP) will play a key role in supporting the LEP to achieve its outcome to improve the economic prosperity, job growth in expanding sectors and new business start ups, by shaping all the main drivers of economic development (including housing, transport, tourism, inward investment, skills and quality of life). The WHMAP already has a track record of collaboration on key shared housing priorities, for instance in terms of commissioning the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments. A joint Housing Strategy is under development which will reflect the shared priorities and approaches to achieving a number of issues of key importance under the LIP including, for instance, affordable housing growth, tackling decent homes and meeting the accommodation needs of vulnerable people. Membership of the WHMAP, which includes the vice chair of the Stronger Communities Policy and Delivery is detailed in Appendix 5.

The delivery of Housing Growth aspirations within Hereford City is one of a number of priority projects for the County which reflect the aspiration to create a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable future for the City. To help drive delivery Herefordshire Council has established the Hereford Futures Company as an arm's length vehicle to deliver key regeneration schemes in and around the City of Hereford. The Company has been established as a joint venture Company with Advantage West Midlands (AWM). AWM funding will come to an end from 31st March 2011. From 1st April 2011 the Company will be fully funded by Herefordshire Council. The Company will have its own private sector Chair and Board and will oversee the delivery of key regeneration projects in the City of Hereford.

Key Projects for Hereford Futures linked to the LIP are:-

- Housing Growth – the delivery of 8,500 homes (from 2006) up to 2026 including affordable homes
- Urban Village – the delivery of circa 800 new homes within Hereford City Edgar Street Grid area of which 35% will be affordable
- City Living – supporting the creation of a vibrant Hereford City Centre environment by supporting and enabling the development of affordable and market housing above commercial premises and on infill sites within the City Centre.

Each key project has a Task Group to co-ordinate and monitor delivery through the board, creating linkages and opportunities for cross working.

8. Risk Management

Risk Management approaches are well integrated into Service Planning and Performance Monitoring arrangements within corporate Performance management systems and each Service and Directorate operate risk registers that can escalate significant issues to the Corporate Risk Register. Risks to the corporate capital strategy are addressed on a regular basis through the Capital Strategy management group. Committee report templates require consideration to be given to the Risk Management issues associated with decision making. Risk Management is addressed within Homes and Communities and Directorate Management Team agendas for monitoring purposes.

Risks to specific housing developments are noted within the Forward Development Programme which is updated to enable the impact on delivery targets to be identified. Major developments including the urban village and associated infrastructure projects are risked managed under Hereford Futures project management arrangements.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

Our approach to formalising the Local Investment Plan will include consideration of the impacts of investment approaches in Equality and Diversity terms and associated considerations within The Herefordshire Equality and Human Rights Charter 2010 – 2013.

This charter sets out how public service providers will work in partnership to embed equality and human rights within all that we do. It also sets out an agreed vision around equalities for the communities of Herefordshire. The charter supports the Sustainable Community Strategy and builds on the priorities set out in the strategy.

It provides a focus to ensure that we meet our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the detailed requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the Equality Framework for Local Government and World Class Commissioning for the NHS.

We recognise the significant Equality and Diversity implications the Local Investment plan has and will consider the demography, socio-economic data along side other equality data when determining the County's future housing and funding priorities.

10. Proposed Timetable - Local Investment Plan Process

September 2010	Submission of LIP Scoping Paper to HCA HCA Peer review of initial Scoping Paper
October/November 2010	Feedback from HCA Commence drafting of final LIP
December 2010	Internal consultation around emerging draft (early December)
December 2010	Housing Partnership for Herefordshire Review Endorsement through Herefordshire Partnership Stronger Communities Policy and Delivery Group Herefordshire Partnership Board
January 2011	Cabinet Member approval Submission to HCA

Appendix 1 – Map of Herefordshire highlighting market towns and main settlements



Location of main towns, city & villages in Herefordshire



SCALE 1: 220,000

Herefordshire Council
 Research Team
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 Hereford
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Appendix 2 - Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 5 key themes

Theme	Aim	Objectives	Outcomes
Sustainable Development	Build on existing current efforts to take forward development in sustainable land use management, local sourcing, renewable energies, the environmental economy and education in sustainable development	Establish and promote Herefordshire as a leading county for knowledge and education in sustainable development practices and incorporate into local policy and business support	Maintain Herefordshire high quality of life, attract entrepreneurial businesses in sustainable high value sectors such as environmental technologies and knowledge based activities
Business and Enterprise	Develop the environmental technology, food and drink, health and care, creative industries and tourism sectors	Increase the business birth rate in the county through diversification and entrepreneurship and to support these and other indigenous businesses in their development. This provides support for virtual business centres in parishes and market towns and for development of the social economy Development to Hereford City	Increase attractiveness to entrepreneurs and provide a boost for local businesses
Skills and workforce development	Working through sector skills council, employees will leads to design new courses, qualifications and methods of delivery to improved workforce development	Improving learning opportunities for residents and businesses across the county. Includes improvements in the communications infrastructure. Support	Strong links developed with higher and further education providers and centres of excellence outside of the county and opportunities for and effectiveness of workforce development will be enhanced.
Communications and Infrastructure	To raise productivity, increasing skills and encouraging enterprise across the County	Maximise the economic impact of the competitive locations by improving the land and property offer and to continue to lobby for road investment to improve transport links	To deliver flexible business accommodation and other support services in peripheral locations as well as provide a

		and reduce congestion, particularly the Hereford Outer Relief Road	sector specific property offer for key sectors. In rural areas, improvements in ICT infrastructure and digital connectivity through virtual business centre networks
Inclusion and community cohesion	Improve the quality of life for older people and to create greater opportunities for older people and “incomers” to contribute economically	Enhance opportunities for developing social and community enterprise, particularly in transport, childcare and community based financial services and to fully understand and address affordable housing and other issues associated with urban disadvantage, particularly Hereford City	Improved accommodation and community integration opportunities for older people and “incomers”

Appendix 3 – Summary of Potential Council Owned Land for development opportunities

Location	Estimated No of Units	Estimated Grant per unit £	Estimated Total Grant required £
Hereford City – Growth	35	This is currently unknown and to be agreed	
Ross on Wye	10		
Bromyard	30		
Leominster	25		
Rural – West	21		
Rural – North	2		
Totals	123		

+

Appendix 4 – Herefordshire Partnership Board

Chief Executive – Herefordshire Council/NHS Herefordshire

Leader – Herefordshire Council

Chair – NHS Herefordshire

Chamber of Commerce

2 x Voluntary Sector Representatives

West Mercia Police

Fire and Rescue Service

Herefordshire Association of Local Councils

Portfolio holder

Chair of each of the 6 Policy and Delivery Groups

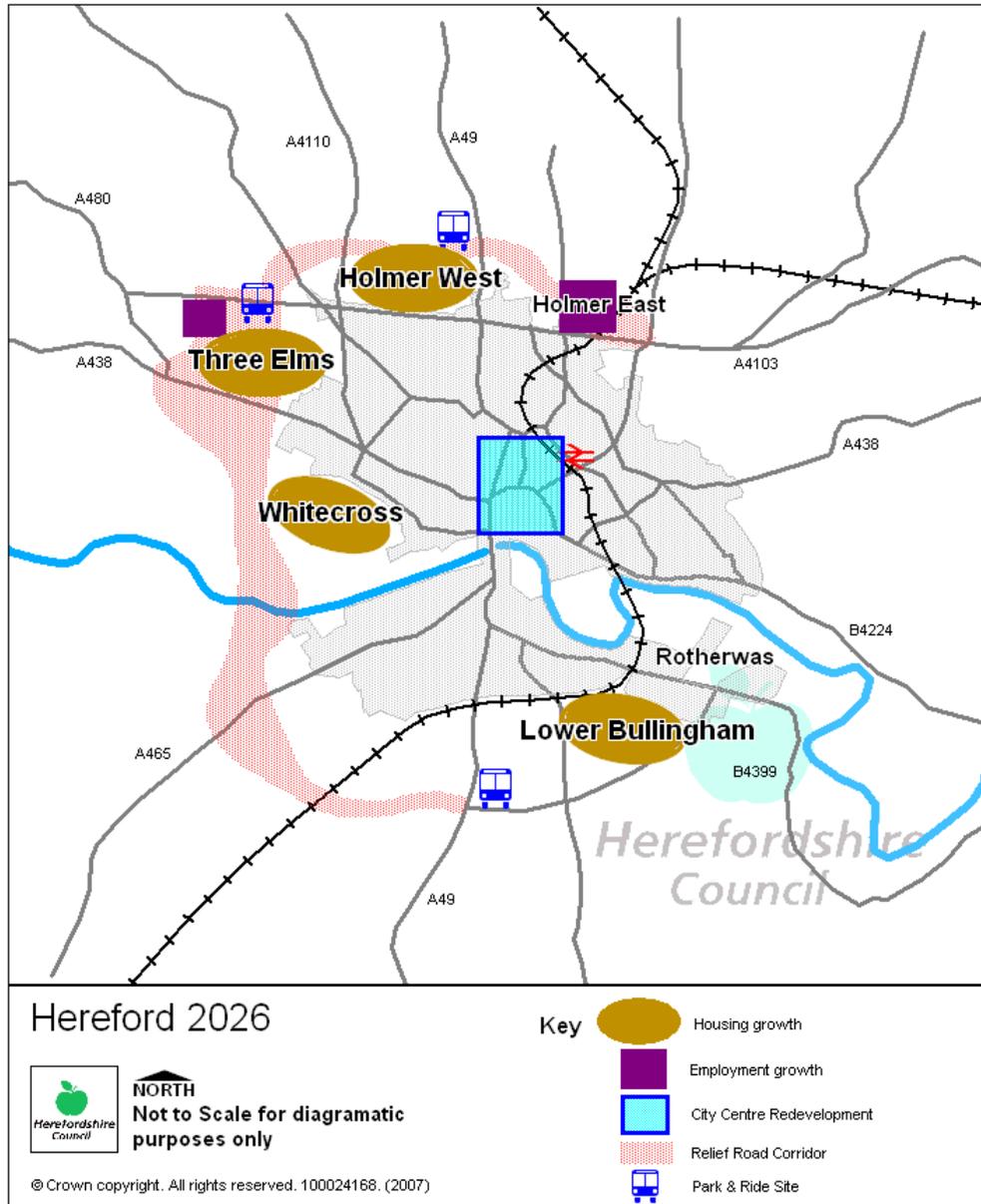
Plus Duty to co-operate members

Appendix 5 - Membership of the West Housing Market Area Partnership

Role	Named Individuals		
	Herefordshire	Shropshire	Telford & Wrekin
Members	<p>Cllr John Jarvis (Portfolio Holder Environment & Strategic Housing)</p> <p>Cllr AJM Blackshaw (Portfolio Holder Development & Community Services)</p>	<p>Cllr Malcolm Price (Portfolio Holder Housing)</p> <p>Cllr Gwilym Butler (Portfolio Holder Community Working)</p>	<p>Cllr Eric Carter (Portfolio Holder Regeneration)</p>
Senior officers	<p>Richard Gabb (Assistant Director, Homes & Communities)</p> <p>Andrew Ashcroft (Assistant Director, Environment, Planning & Waste)</p>	<p>Steve Price (Assistant Director Housing Delivery)</p> <p>Nick Taylor (Assistant Director Strategy & Development)</p>	<p>Clive Jones (Head of Regeneration & Housing)</p>
Housing Associations	<p>Peter Brown (Chief Executive, Herefordshire Housing) Representing the Herefordshire Partnership</p>	<p>Martin Holland (Chief Executive, South Shropshire Housing Association) Representing the Shropshire Housing Forum</p>	<p>George Rushgrove (Chief Executive, The Wrekin Housing Trust) Representing the Telford Housing Associations</p>
West Midlands Councils	Emma Kiteley		
Homes & Communities Agency (observer)	Lucy Blasdale (Senior Regeneration Manager)		
Partnership facilitator	John Sheil (Senior Policy Officer, Shropshire Council)		
Minutes	Marie Gallagher (Secretary to Assistant Director, Homes & Communities, Herefordshire Council)		
Other officers as required	<p>Jane Thomas (Housing Needs & Development Manager)</p>	<p>Jake Berriman (Head of Strategy and Policy)</p> <p>Helen Howie (Principal Policy Officer)</p>	<p>Katherine Kynaston (Strategic Housing Manager)</p> <p>Chris Winter (Business Manager - Housing Strategy & Development)</p>

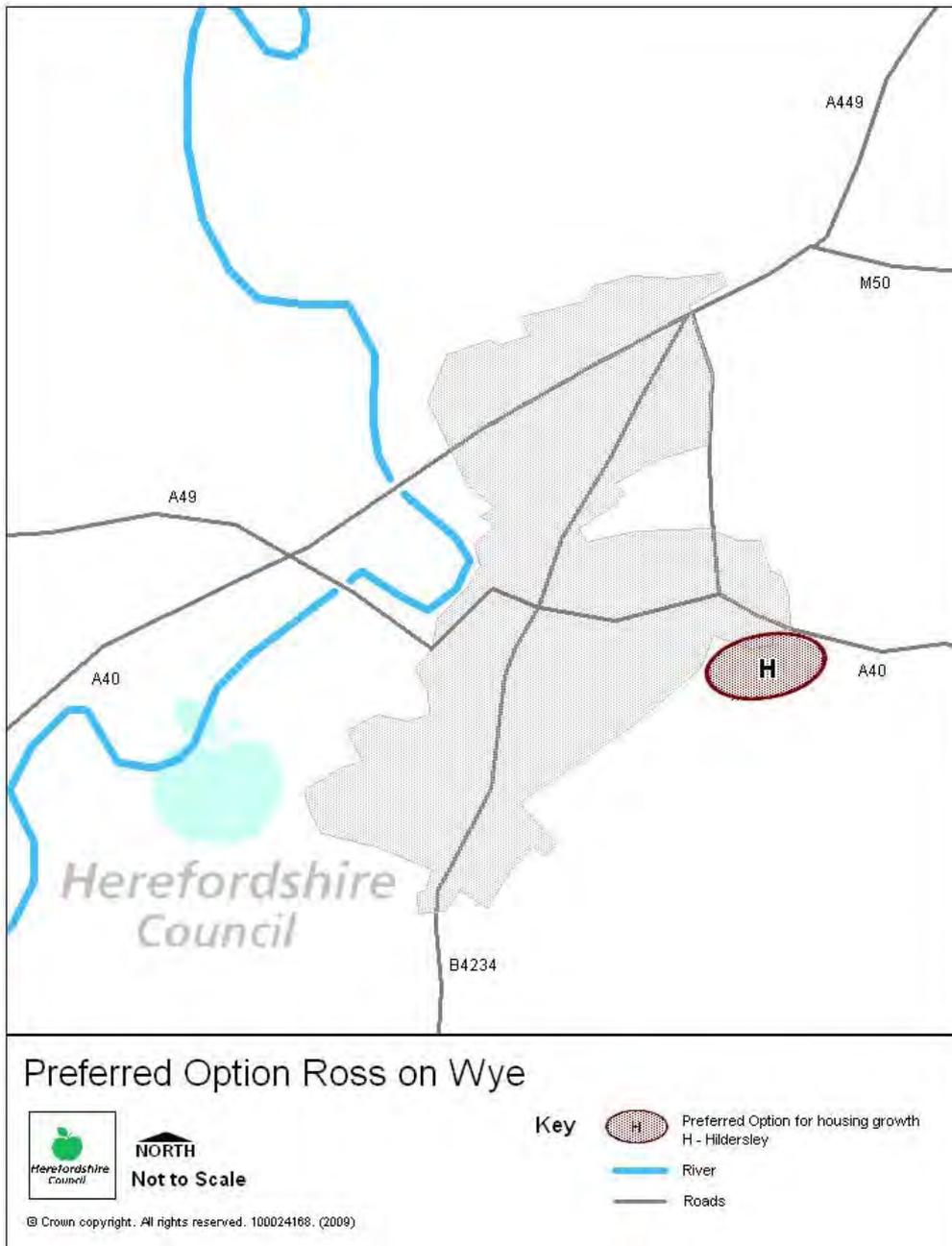
Appendix 6 - Map 1 Spatial preferred options

(refers to affordable housing target tables page 32)



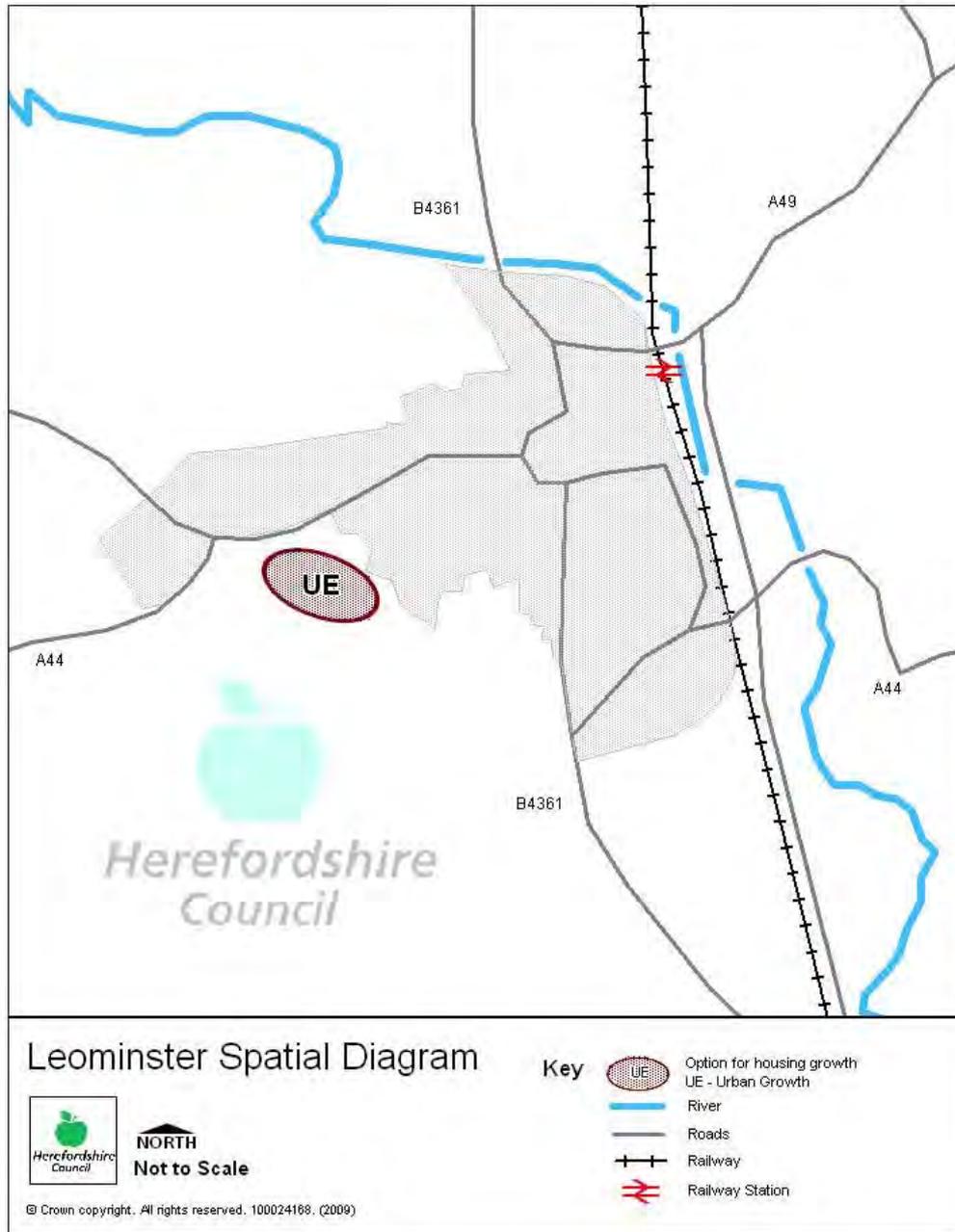
Appendix 6 - Map 2 Spatial preferred options

(refers to affordable housing target tables page 32)



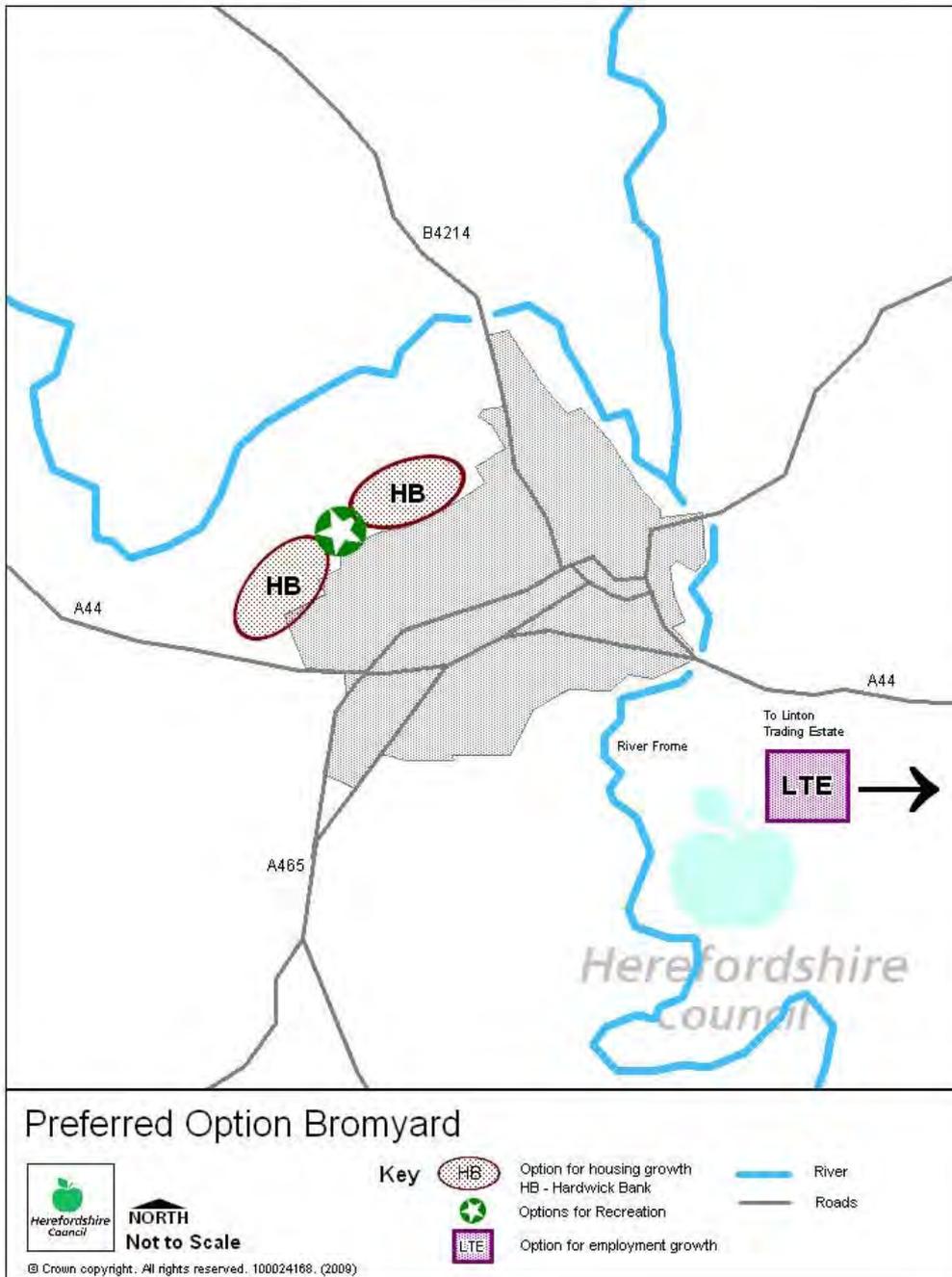
Appendix 6 - Map 3 Spatial preferred options

(refers to affordable housing target tables page 32)



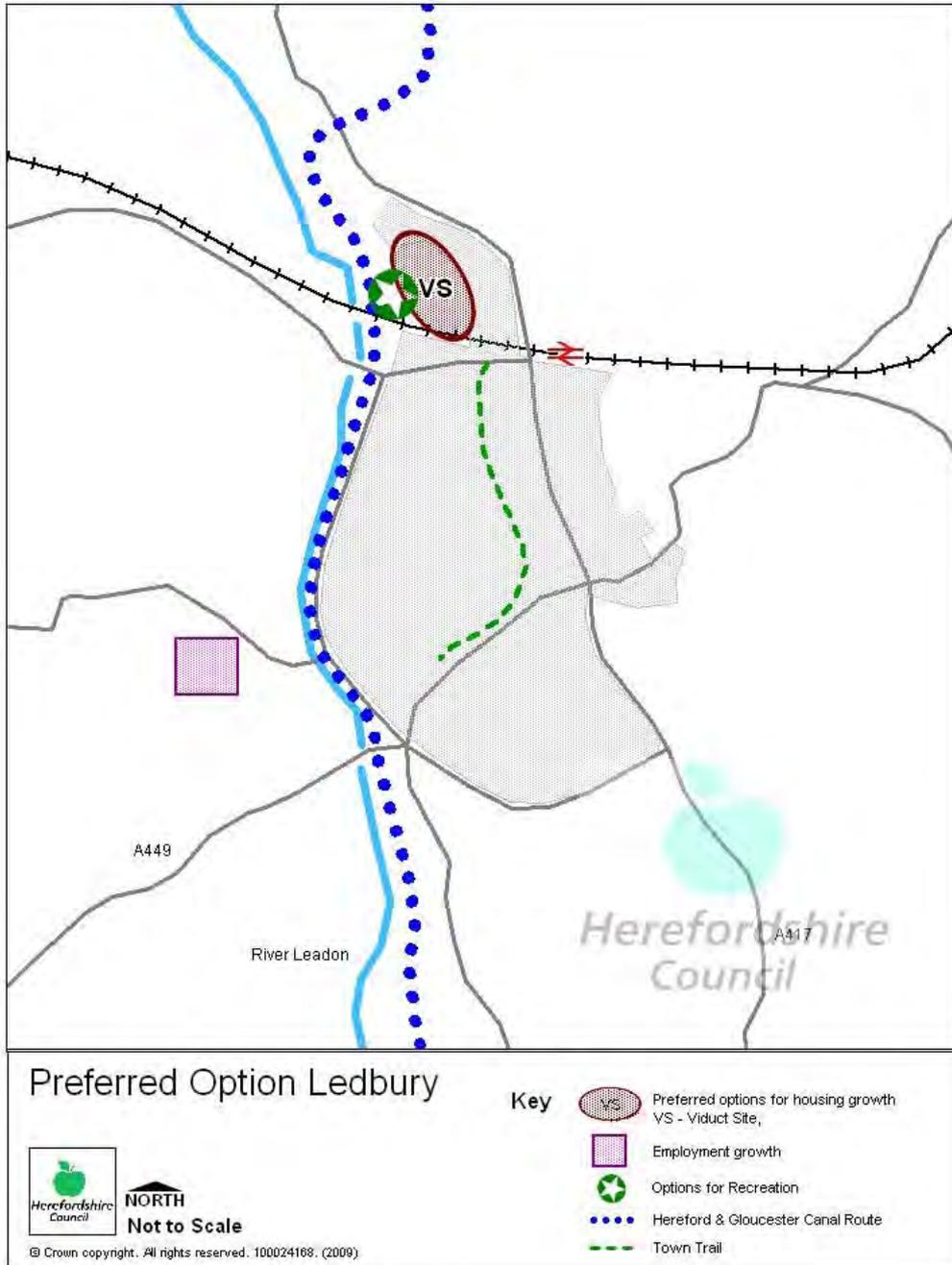
Appendix 6 - Map 4 Spatial preferred options

(refers to affordable housing target tables page 32)



Appendix 6 - Map 5 Spatial preferred options

(refers to affordable housing target tables page 32)



Appendix 7 – Summary of the Oval Regeneration Project

Introduction

In March 2009 Herefordshire Housing Ltd (HHL) appointed EC Harris, supported by Community Regeneration Partnership and Trinity Architecture to advise on the development of a Community Regeneration Plan for The Oval Estate. The aim of the project is to work in partnership with residents and other stakeholders to develop deliverable proposals which would ultimately transform the neighbourhood, both physically and in terms of the life chances of the residents of the area.

A key objective of the project is to create a sustainable community within the Oval Regeneration Project area, establishing ways to improve the environment, and improve access to local amenities and services. The project seeks to identify connections with the full range of public (education, health, police etc.) services as well as relationships with retail and employment centres.

Location

The Oval project area is located to the South West of Hereford city centre, forming part of the Newton Farm Estate. Apart from local retail and commercial premises and the purpose built neighbourhood housing office, the local church (no longer used) and police station, the estate comprises c.200 low density residential accommodation in predominantly walk-up flatted form, constructed in the 1950s using non-traditional construction techniques.

There are two locations within the project area that are not currently owned by HHL. These are an area that is currently open space owned by the local authority which has a covenant on it restricting its use to a community facility. It is envisaged that the covenant could be lifted by agreement if the appropriate community facilities are incorporated into the overall project. These community facilities could potentially be located in the second area shown not owned by HHL which is currently accommodating a disused church and is land owned by the local diocese.

Drivers for Change

Factors that support the need for change have been identified as being:

- The Oval area itself, being part of the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) Golden Post, Newton Farm, Belmont is the most deprived in Herefordshire and out of 32,482 LSOAs in England, is in the top 10% for multiple deprivation nationally.
- The area has a much younger than average population with high levels of unemployment and part time working and experiences high levels of economic, health and educational deprivation with the wider effects of the recession being magnified. Of particular concern is that 42% of the working age population have no formal qualifications and 49% of children live in income deprived households.
- Despite a strong sense of community in the area, it suffers locally from a poor reputation. This reputation has led to a stigmatisation of the area and a perception that crime and anti social behaviour is prevalent. Again the LSOA falls within the 10% most deprived in England in terms of the crime indices.
- There is an identified need for more affordable housing provision and this is set alongside the context of the highest affordability ratio in the West Midlands.

- The system built housing in the area is of a poor standard that has come to the end of its economic life despite significant investment by Herefordshire Housing over a period of time. And whilst the open plan estate provides well maintained green space there is no evidence that the investment so far has brought about any degree of transformational change.
- It is acknowledged that the shops on the estate do provide a focal point for the community, but their potential as a commercial centre is constrained by the frontage that is currently in place and the difficulty the area experiences with parking. That being said the area is well served by public transport, though there is a lack of facilities for children and young teenagers.

Project Delivery

From the comprehensive engagement carried out with residents and stakeholders over the last 18 months it is evident that there is an overwhelming desire for transformational change and the project has developed a vision for the sustainable future of the Oval estate. This has manifested itself in a wish to see the majority of the existing buildings on the estate replaced through a programme of phased demolition and re-provision with high quality, sustainable mixed tenure homes. This vision now has to be turned into reality, not an easy task given the constraints imposed by severe public spending cuts and uncertain prospects for the economy which are likely to impact on unemployment and thus consumer confidence.

The project has been through an option development and appraisal process which included: the development of an overall concept and strategic approach for the renewal of the estate; the identification of land parcels/subprojects for option appraisal; convening an option development workshop; scoping of the potential physical interventions (refurbishment, new build, environmental) ; assessing relocation/decanting needs; producing option costs and appraisals; valuation of development proposals; option benefits/dis-benefits appraisal; option impact assessment; project budget reality check; exhibition and presentation of options at a community day.

Having carried out a headline appraisal of the individual development areas a financial model has been developed to facilitate the option appraisals assessment which is now necessary to bring the project to a deliverable position in the current economic climate. The model developed takes cost, value, and accommodation inputs and allows option testing of the key variables.

To enable decisions to be made about the make up of the preferred development solution, a baseline model has been established to confirm the current scheme position. This baseline includes all the preferred options. A number of options to improve this have then been tested to help guide and shape the delivery strategy.

The testing undertaken thus far and the subsequent analysis are by no means exhaustive. Rather, HHL are using the outputs as a guide, allowing colleagues, tenants and other community stakeholders to understand better the relationship and interplay between different cost and value drivers.

HHL now wishes to embark on the next stage of this project, the aim of which is to refine the proposals to a stage where they can be brought to market as an attractive proposal for developers and so that the costs, balance sheet and risk implications for the association can be clearly identified and informed judgements made by both the organisation and the community. To support this, a soft market testing exercise is currently being undertaken with private developers to gauge interest levels in partnership project. Private sector interest in the project is hoped to be established before the end of the 2010 calendar year.