

CABINET

13 FEBRUARY 2013

HOUSING STRATEGY

REPORT OF HEAD OF NEW HOMES DELIVERY

Contact Officer: Simon Maggs Tel No: 01962 848203
smaggs@winchester.gov.uk

RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB2445(HSG) - Housing Revenue Account Budget 2013/14 and Business Plan – 2013/14 to 2043/44, 30 January 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Housing Strategy sets the Council and Winchester Housing Board's broad housing vision and strategic priorities for the next 5 years. It compliments Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy, focussing primarily on affordable housing, including the Council's own new build programme and its existing stock, and improving the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households.

It is an overarching high level strategy. Its vision and objectives are translated into more specific actions in a suite of other strategies, including the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, Council New Build Development Strategy and the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document. Planned reviews of other strategies, including the Homelessness Strategy, will develop further specific ways of meeting housing priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet adopts the Housing Strategy in Appendix 1, subject to

- i) Head of New Homes Delivery, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, making changes that may be necessary as a consequence of Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy Inspector’s Examination in Public Report.

CABINET

13 FEBRUARY 2013

HOUSING STRATEGY

REPORT OF HEAD OF NEW HOMES DELIVERY

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing Strategy (appended at 1) sets the Council and Winchester Housing Board's broad housing vision and strategic priorities for the next 5 years. It compliments Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy, focussing primarily on affordable housing and the needs of vulnerable and excluded households. The Inspector's report into Local Plan 1 is expected very shortly and it is possible minor changes may need to be made to the Housing Strategy as a consequence. It is recommended that the Heads of New Homes Delivery be authorised to make such changes in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing.
- 1.2 The Housing Strategy is an overarching high level Strategy. Its vision and objectives are translated into more specific actions in a suite of other strategies, including the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, Council New Build Development Strategy and the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document. Planned reviews of other strategies, including the Homelessness Strategy, will develop further specific ways of meeting housing priorities.
- 1.3 It has been developed through the Member led Housing Informal Policy Group which sat on a number of occasions in 2011 and 2012, and under the watch of the Winchester Housing Board. The Strategy has been subject to wider consultation, including the Winchester Housing Forum in November 2013, and has been screened using the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment methodology.
- 1.4 Fundamentally, the Housing Strategy aims to improve the Winchester communities' housing circumstances. It promotes change in order to do this. While it focuses primarily on vulnerable and excluded households it is an ambition of the Strategy to create mixed, inclusive communities. It is important, therefore, that the "squeezed middle" are not forgotten. The Strategy will, therefore, also create a framework that allows a broader range of households to benefit.
- 1.5 In doing so it recognises the broader importance that good quality housing and a functioning housing market has in the District's future success and economic, social and environmental sustainability.

2 Vision and Priorities

2.1 The Strategy's vision is:

To make sure that everyone in the District has the opportunity for a good quality of life, now and in the future by ensuring communities are sustainable and inclusive and, in particular, by supporting local people in accessing high quality, affordable housing to meet their diverse needs.

2.2 Its priorities are to:

- i. To maximise the supply of high quality affordable housing in urban and rural areas;
- ii. To improve the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households;
- iii. Supporting local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs;
- iv. To make best use of housing;
- v. To support our residents.

2.3 Chapter 5 of the Strategy provides greater detail on objectives associated by these priorities.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 3.1 Good quality housing and an effectively functioning housing market are important to the District's economic prosperity, for instance by ensuring suitable housing is available for local producers and consumers; they help to promote active communities, for example by supporting local people access affordable housing; and also support creating a high quality environment, for instance by creating an energy efficient housing stock.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 Section 6 of the Housing Strategy deals with resources. There are no direct resource implications of the Strategy. These will arise from more detailed, related strategies, action plans and business plans.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 5.1 If a Housing Strategy were not adopted there is a risk of inadequate prioritisation and co-ordination of activity and of resources (both within the Council and between stakeholders) and of ad-hoc decision making. This would threaten the ability to achieve the priority outcomes identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Change Plans. It would mean a worsening of the housing circumstances of some members of the District's

community and compromise the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the District.

6 TACT COMMENTS

- 6.1 TACT welcomes this Strategy and the opportunity to have had an input into its development. In particular we are please that new Council homes will be developed at rents which are affordable, at *up to* 80% of market rents, rather than 80% rent levels being the default position.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Minutes of the Housing Informal Policy Group

Housing Market and Needs Assessment 2012

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base/housing/winchester-district-housing-market-housing-need-as/>

WCC Council Housing Development Strategy

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategies/winchester-s-housing-development-strategy-2012-13-/>

APPENDICES:

Draft Housing Strategy

Winchester Housing Strategy



2013/14 - 2018/19

(Draft v5)



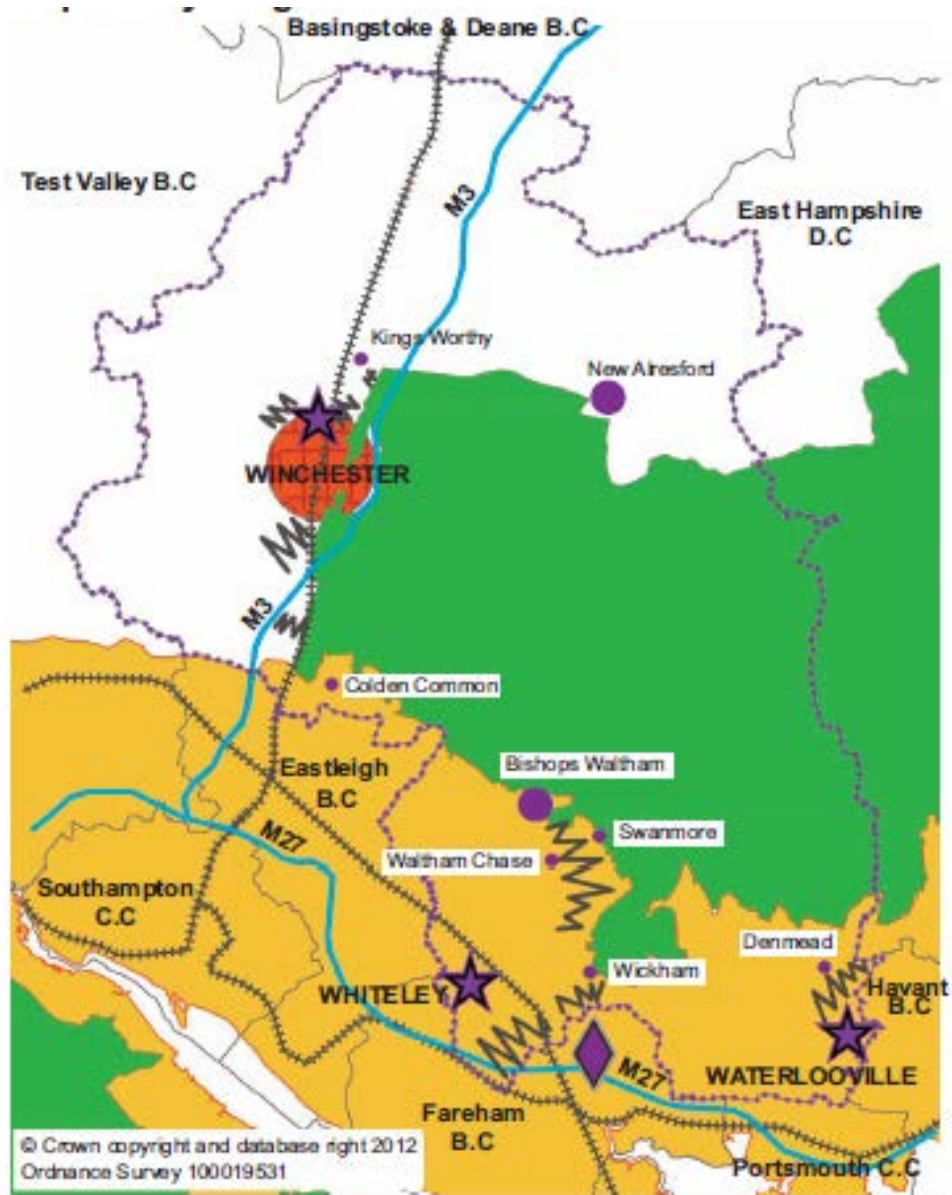
Contents

	Page
1 Foreword	3
2 Introduction	4
3 The Challenges	6
4 A Change for the Better	13
5 Housing Strategy Priorities	15
6 Implementation	18
7 Review	19
Appendices	
• The Vision for Winchester Town 2012 (extract)	20
• Glossary	21
• The Housing Strategy in Context	24

www.winchester.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategies/

If you would to receive this document in another format
please contact Winchester City Council's Customer Service Centre
on **01962 840 222** to discuss your requirements.
Alternatively, you can request this information online.

Map of Winchester District



Key:

- Winchester District Boundary
- National Parks
- Winchester Town
- Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Area
- Settlement Gap
- Strategic Allocations
- Strategic Development Area

NOT TO SCALE



1. Foreword

This strategy sets out the City Council and the Winchester District Strategic Partnership's (WDSP) vision and strategic priorities for the next 5 years. It has been developed by the Council and, under the auspices of the WDSP, the Winchester Housing Board, taking account of the evidence and talking to those involved in local housing issues and to Winchester's communities. It complements the Local Plan which provides a framework and policy context within which new development can take place.

Despite the relative affluence and general economic prosperity of the District, the area faces very real housing challenges. Economic prosperity means that everyone should have decent housing, a good quality of life and a fulfilling job. Sadly, not every member of the community has.

This Strategy aims to improve local housing circumstances. There are many forces at play in the housing market and wider economy and the Strategy cannot solve all the problems we face so it will focus primarily on vulnerable and excluded households. However, an ambition of the Strategy is to create mixed, inclusive communities and so it is important the "squeezed middle" are not forgotten. The Strategy will, therefore, also create a framework that allows a broader range of households to benefit.

Affordability of housing is a major concern, there is an increasing level of affordable housing need and it is important to continue to provide high quality services to those most disadvantaged. We must make sure that everyone in the District has the opportunity for a good quality of life now and in the future. We need to plan for change if we are to address these challenges. We need to plan for the 11,000 homes due to be built by 2031, both in new and existing communities. We need to plan to make the best use of the housing we already have. We must also make sure that our existing homes remain of a high standard and that those who aren't satisfactorily housed, particularly the vulnerable and excluded, are supported.

Localism means Winchester's communities are in the driving seat. It gives us the opportunity and the ability to plan for change. The Council has announced a multi-million pound programme of new Council house building to complement new homes provided by Registered Providers, investors are keen to invest in the District and we have a strong relationship with partners and communities that will help deliver this Strategy's ambitions. We are well placed to take up a leadership role in supporting our communities to plan for change for the better.

Cllr Tony Coates

Winchester City Council
Portfolio Holder for
Housing

Paul Williams

Chief Executive of Winchester Area
Community Action and Chair of the
Winchester Housing Board

Cllr Ian Tait

Winchester City Council
Portfolio Holder for New
Build Housing

2. Introduction

Housing Strategy Vision

To make sure that everyone in the District has the opportunity for a good quality of life, now and in the future by ensuring communities are sustainable and inclusive and, in particular, by supporting local people in accessing high quality, affordable housing to meet their diverse needs.

This Strategy articulates the key challenges and issues which impact on this overall vision. It sets out the key aims, priorities and objectives for Housing in the Winchester District. Specific actions are included in a suite of housing related Strategy and Action Plans that all link directly to this overarching Strategy. Further information can be found at www.winchester.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategies/.

The diagram in Appendix 3 shows the Housing Strategy in context of the suite of strategies and plans which all contribute towards the overall Housing Strategic vision, including:

- Council Change Plan – Active Communities
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Tenancy Strategy
- Older Persons Housing Strategy
- Council New Build Development Strategy
- Private Sector Housing Action Plan
- Homelessness Action Plan
- Housing Portfolio Plan
- Rural Housing Development Strategy
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

Winchester District is a large and varied District which encompasses a prosperous and historic county town and a flourishing business district at Whiteley. Surrounding these urban centres are many miles of unspoilt countryside, including parts of the South Downs National Park, punctuated by busy market towns and villages.

Although the District's population is around 117,000 people, the wider market area's population estimates are 1.2 million people. Its housing markets are diverse, with a well integrated sub-regional market in the south of the District, closely aligned to the South Hampshire urban areas, and several more localised markets around Winchester Town and the market towns and rural parts of the District.

These markets are characterised by good quality housing but very high housing costs, creating affordability problems for many households. This impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals and sustainability of

communities and affects the ability of the economy to change and grow. Inadequate housing impacts on economic prosperity and threatens the sustainability of local services.

It is important, therefore, to have adequate available land for development of new homes that are affordable, so that housing need does not outstrip housing supply.

However, meeting housing needs goes beyond building more homes. Building communities must be a priority. It is important that support is provided to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and excluded members of our community. What and how new housing and housing services are provided will be fundamental to building communities and ensuring we have a strong and sustainable economy.

Everyone in the District, no matter who they are or where they live, must have the opportunity to enjoy a good quality of life now and in the future.

The Winchester Housing Strategy Priorities

1. To maximise the supply of high quality affordable housing in urban and rural areas
2. To improve the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households
3. Supporting local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs
4. To make best use of housing
5. To support our residents

3. The Challenges

There are many challenges that face Winchester's housing market. Some of these are new challenges; some are becoming more serious as a result of inadequate attention in the past and changes in circumstances.

The priorities and key objectives of this Strategy, along with the associated Strategies and Action plans will address many of these challenges. However, a number are outside its scope and influence. For instance, the lending approaches of banks, migration patterns and employment opportunities.

Furthermore, in some circumstances intervention is not needed. Winchester is an attractive place to invest and, provided the opportunities exist, the market can respond unfettered to meet many of Winchester's needs.

However, not all members of the community will benefit sufficiently from a non-interventionist approach. Many will still be unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances and intervention is needed to support these individuals and to support Winchester achieve its ambitions.

The ability of the Housing Strategy to meet these needs by direct intervention is limited by the resources available and by competing priorities. Not everyone's needs or demands can be met by the Housing Strategy. Therefore, despite being ambitious, and aiming to maximise beneficial outcomes by investing wisely, and working with stakeholders, it is necessary to prioritise resource allocations and to be realistic about the impact the Strategy can have. It is therefore important to identify a primary focus for attention.

Housing Strategy Primary Focus

Those who are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing circumstances, most particularly vulnerable and excluded households.

Notwithstanding this, the Strategy is capable of having an indirect positive impact by influencing the actions and investment decisions of others. For instance, the type and numbers of new affordable homes provided by Registered Providers, supporting the role of the voluntary sector in providing supported housing and helping people make realistic housing choices.

The associated Strategies and Action Plans include a range of actions which will contribute to the key aims and objectives of this Strategy. These will be regularly reviewed to ensure that progress is being made, that actions will only be taken forward if they can be matched by resources, and where they are still relevant. Where necessary, and in consultation, planned actions may be replaced by new actions that meet changing needs.

Inadequate housing supply and housing affordability are the most significant challenges. The need for affordable housing shows a significant upward trend and unmet housing need is likely to increase further in the coming years, both in urban and rural areas.

As in other parts of Hampshire, competition for homes continues to be high. However, a good transport network, in-migration of families, from higher value areas, often with significant purchasing power, together with large numbers of students, fuels local demand and thus prices. As well as a generally high level of demand, often from families with young children, this translates into increasing numbers of households in housing need, and demand for affordable housing. It also means households need to move outside the District in order to meet their housing requirements, or live in unsuitable housing conditions due to need to stay close to education or employment opportunities.

Average District property prices are in excess of £375,000. With average household incomes less than £50,000 per annum across the District an affordability problem becomes evident. Overall, an annual household income of over £63,000 is needed to purchase a home, with significantly higher levels in some parts of the District. This is in excess of average household incomes, and importantly, well in excess of lower quartile incomes of £23,000. Consequently it is difficult for existing households seeking to trade up, but most particularly for new forming households and first time buyers who have significant problems in accessing owner occupation. Affordability can be particularly challenging for rural residents with residents often committing higher proportions of their incomes to housing costs. The result is that rural communities become less diverse as younger people leave and older, wealthier, households arrive, and local businesses and services are affected.

High levels of demand means affordability difficulties in the market rented sector too. 30- 45% of households are unable to afford to rent a 2 bedroom property on the open market unassisted. Particular problems exist for newly forming households with over 70% of new households unable to rent in the open market. Certain areas have high concentrations of privately rented student accommodation and houses in multiple occupation that affect the characteristics of those areas. It is not only students who live in multi-person households. High costs, welfare reform and lifestyle changes mean that such households include vulnerable households and also young professional sharers.

Changes to the method for setting affordable housing rents, a buoyant private rented market, and Welfare Reform and associated measures are presenting new affordability challenges, with larger families and younger single people perhaps worst affected. The consequences of these factors may be the displacement of households to areas outside the District into lower value areas (perhaps a significant distance from their communities and workplace), an increased need for affordable housing, as households are unable to meet their needs in the private sector, and households living in over-crowded

conditions. It is important to take account of these changes in devising an approach to improving access to affordable housing and housing choice.

A broad range of housing needs must be met at a variety of affordability levels. With almost 80% of households on the Council's Housing Register having incomes of less than £15,000 a year, the most pressing need is for affordable housing to rent. Incomes of those seeking intermediate affordable housing, such as shared ownership, are much higher (purchasers often have incomes of around £30,000) however unmet need is lower than for rented homes.

Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy plans for 11,000 new homes to be provided over the period 2011 to 2031. This is a locally derived target that takes into account a range of local factors, including an assessment of population change up to 2031. These will be provided on a range of sites across the District, from single dwellings to much larger strategic provisions of several thousand homes at Waterlooville, Whiteley and Winchester Town where substantial new neighbourhoods are planned. It is important that these new homes are planned and provided to support the local market. Many of these homes will be provided for owner occupation, although in recent years the private rented sector has grown. There must be a good supply of high quality, well managed homes in the private rented sector as part of the local housing market. Of highest importance, however, is the provision of new affordable housing. Provision must support the Housing Strategy Vision with particular attention being paid to supporting new communities establish themselves.

Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 Joint Core Strategy (Submission) 2012

Selected and Summarised Spatial Planning Strategy and Objectives

~ The provision of 11,000 new homes across the District by 2031, to include:

~ new neighbourhoods in *Winchester Town* at Barton Farm (2000 homes), and in the *South Hampshire Urban Area* at Waterlooville and Whiteley (3000 homes each), and;

~ housing to meet the needs of the *Market Towns and Rural Area*

~ The provision of a range of housing types and tenures to address the varied housing needs of the District's resident and working population and ensure inclusion for all, to include:

~ maximising affordable housing provision throughout the District including rural areas

~ increasing the supply of family housing

~ meeting the needs of older people, the disabled and those with support needs

~ sustaining the vibrancy of the local economy

~supporting the delivery of community aspirations for appropriate development

Despite planning for homes across the District it is likely that unmet affordable housing needs will remain high. A resistance by some communities to new development has contributed towards slowing down new housing supply. The *Blueprint* consultation experiences carried out to support the production of the Local Plan reveal considerable support for the provision of more affordable housing.

If there is to be an increase in housing supply there must be an acceptance that housing can be good rather than bad. It is important to adopt a **more positive approach to appropriate development**, to address the perception of new development amongst some communities and to engage them more effectively in what is to be provided and why. **A new consensus needs to emerge about new housing**, and the desirability of sufficient new development to maintain and increase community wellbeing. *Blueprint*, and work on neighbourhood and community planning, offers an excellent springboard for this.

Economic prosperity means that everyone has decent housing, a good quality of life and a fulfilling job.
Winchester District Community Strategy 2010-20

Imbalances between housing supply and demand represents a threat to economic prosperity. Commercial and residential development need to be mutually supportive. Homes are needed that encourage the wealth creators to locate and stay in the District, both the affluent, well established employers and newer entrepreneurs, including recent local graduates. It is also important to ensure those active in the local economy, be it in the commercial world or providing services, can live in the District.

Winchester Economic Strategy 2010-20
Key Success Factors include:

- ~ Winchester Town - provide homes for people who work here, and jobs for people who live here.
- ~ Market towns and rural areas - the enhance current, inadequate provision to facilitate home working
- ~ South Hampshire Urban Area - new communities must benefit from joined-up thinking and holistic planning processes to ensure that they live in well designed homes.

While the retail and leisure economies are supported to a great extent by the student population, there are difficulties in finding employees for lower value commercial jobs. This may impact on choices of location made by some businesses, commuting patterns and business efficiency. Lower value homes for younger people seeking employment for the first time or considering starting up their own business are in short supply. While there is a supply of

good quality higher value properties that may be attractive to more affluent entrepreneurs, seeking to move into the area, competition for homes from them, and other affluent in-migrants, has led to gentrification of some areas, with consequent inflationary pressures. This can have adverse effects on local communities, making it hard for them to compete in the housing market.

The provision of a range of property types and a variety of affordability levels can help support the broader objectives of economic development and creating mixed communities, as well as meeting household needs. Flexible residential accommodation can also mean a wider range of needs can be met, including working from home or changing household needs, for instance due to age.

Winchester recognises that more homes are needed in Winchester. Without new homes there will be fewer young people in the town to work in local business and to pay for local services.
The Vision for Winchester Town 2012

While the problem of access to suitable housing is common place across this District, it is **vulnerable and disadvantaged households who are most adversely affected**. The changing demographics of the area means meeting the **needs of older persons will become increasingly important**. There has been a significant growth in those aged over 75 years in recent years. Although, in many cases, the needs of older people can be met in their existing homes, in some cases, particularly as vulnerability increases, more specialist accommodation will be needed for some.

Winchester Older Persons Action Plan Priority

To enable older people to have a choice of accommodation and support that suits their needs, promotes independence and is affordable

Disabled people are a significant group within the District's population with some of these households having specific housing requirements, including those relating to mobility. Disability is often linked to age and therefore levels of disability are likely to increase as the population ages.

While **supported housing** of various forms is provided across the District the lack of move-on accommodation hampers its effective use and means households are unable to access accommodation they need. Furthermore there needs to be greater co-ordination between, and forward planning of provision by, the agencies and groups involved in supported housing provision.

Recent years have seen the needs of the most vulnerable groups increasing. In particular **homeless households**, rough sleepers and individuals with complex needs, such as mental health and substance dependency. While numbers are relatively low their needs are severe. Similar

is true for gypsy and travellers and travelling show people, where inadequate provision is made to meet their needs.

The limited turnover in the supported housing stock is reflected in other sectors and is one of the drivers for the type of affordable housing required. Around half of new affordable homes for rent need to be 3 bedroom houses, with 2 bedroom homes being the main focus for intermediate housing.

There is evidence of under-occupation which suggests **better use could be made of some housing**. However while, for instance, older people may be more inclined to under-occupy homes, this does create benefits in terms of social cohesion and community stability and thus can be an ingredient of a mixed community. Notwithstanding this, providing opportunities for residents to find more suitable accommodation that better meets their needs will have the added benefit of freeing up housing for larger families.

The District's **housing stock** is generally in very good condition, across all sectors. Homes are predominantly of post Second World War construction. Council and other affordable housing has achieved the Decent Home Standard. It is important to ensure that the residents of **Council homes**, and those owned by **registered providers** are maintained to high standards. Management of the homes must also be of high quality and it is important tenants are involved in this.

In the **private rented sector** homes are generally of a good standard, and programmes of accreditation operated by the Council have helped ensure high management standards. There are high levels of houses in multiple occupations in the Winchester Town area due, to a significant extent, to students. **Owner occupied homes** are also generally of a high standard. There are, however, instances of poor property **energy efficiency** in some types of housing, for instance those without mains gas in rural areas, and **fuel poverty** for some low income households.

Some privately owned properties have the poorest energy efficiency. Newer affordable housing has been built to higher standards, most recently to Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Local Plan sets ambitious low carbon policies for all new homes. Building new affordable homes to these standards will benefit, not only the challenge of **climate change**, but residents due to lower utility bills.

In order to meet local housing needs effectively, and to design sustainably, **new homes must be fit for purpose**. Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy takes this into account in setting its policies, not only regarding climate change, but also in relation to the type of housing that is built to ensure a range of community needs are met, and to securing high standards of design. Both market house builders and affordable house providers must know their markets. For affordable housing, as well as ensuring new homes are appropriate for their context, how those homes are used and who will use them are key. In the past affordable housing providers have responded well to meeting local needs. This must continue. New affordable homes need to be

of sufficient size and of a suitable design to accommodate the intended occupancy level. They need to be flexible so they meet the changing needs of residents. They need to be well integrated with other housing types and tenure, and residents must have access to the same facilities and to the same opportunities as others in order to support the creation of **mixed, inclusive communities**.

DRAFT

4. A Change for the Better

Good quality housing and a functioning housing market are of central importance to Winchester's future success, to its sustainability.

Social Sustainability

- A safe, secure, warm home
- Mixed, inclusive communities which everyone feels a part of and can play a part in
- A place to learn, be cared for, to enjoy

Economic Sustainability

- A local workforce to underpin businesses
- Local consumers to support the economy
- An attractive place to invest, to start up or to relocate businesses

Environmental Sustainability

- Shorter travel to work distances
- Improvements to older less energy efficient housing stock
- High standards in new build housing

Good quality housing and a properly operating housing market can contribute to all elements of sustainability. It is, however, clear that the market is not fully meeting Winchester's housing needs and this threatens its sustainability. Therefore there is a need for intervention, a need for change.

As Winchester has evolved as a place to live over many centuries, its characteristics have changed and so its needs have. To continue to thrive and be successful it needs to continue to change. As described above, there are limitations about what the Housing Strategy can do directly to influence change. While it must be focussed in terms of direct intervention and use of resources, it can help create an environment where needs are acknowledged and positive change is embraced. It will be for others, sometimes with Council support, to take advantage of the opportunities this creates.

The Vision for Winchester Town 2012

We have an obligation to future residents not to deny the need for change or to pretend Winchester is unique in defying the impact of external factors on its outlook.

The Winchester District Community Strategy sets out the way that Winchester City Council and its partners would like the Winchester District to change for the better.

Winchester District Community Strategy 2010-20

Our vision for the Winchester District is of diverse and dynamic communities, where people work together to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to lead a fulfilling life now and in the future.

Priorities include:

- ~ Supporting local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs.
- ~ Ensuring housing is available to meet the diverse needs of our communities, including an adequate provision of affordable housing
- ~ Supporting new communities establish themselves
- ~ Supporting older persons get the accommodation and support they need
- ~ Ensuring new development is sensitive and appropriate to the local environment
- ~ Supporting and encourage community planning
- ~ Working together to provide opportunities for people to work at home or nearer to their homes

These priorities and those contained in other plans and strategies, such as the Local plan and Winchester Economic Strategy, feature as objectives in the Housing Strategy.

Winchester Housing Strategy Priorities

1. To maximise the supply of high quality affordable housing in urban and rural areas
2. To improve the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households
3. Supporting local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs
4. To make best use of housing
5. To support our residents

5. Housing Strategy Priorities and Objectives

The Housing Strategy Action Plan translates these priorities and objectives into actions that will create change for the better for our communities.

Priority 1

To maximise the supply of high quality affordable housing in urban and rural areas

Key Objectives

- ~ Support the creation of mixed, inclusive communities
- ~ Build new Council Homes and support Registered Providers increasing the supply of high quality affordable homes in order to meet a wide range of community needs and to sustain the vibrancy of the local economy
- ~ Promote the provision of a range of affordable housing types and tenures with priority being given to family houses for rent
- ~ Develop, implement, monitor, and, as appropriate, review policies in the Local Plan to ensure new development contributes towards the supply of affordable housing

Priority 2

To improve the housing circumstances of vulnerable and excluded households

Key Objectives

- ~ Develop a Homelessness Strategy to prevent and reduce homelessness and to help homeless households secure accommodation to meet their needs
- ~ To consider and monitor the implications of welfare reform and to develop an approach to support affected households
- ~ Enable older persons to have a choice of accommodation and support that suits their needs and, promotes independence and is affordable
- ~ Help people with disabilities and those with support needs get the accommodation and support they need
- ~ With partners and stakeholders develop a joint approach to the provision and use of supported housing in the District

~ With partners and stakeholders, understand the needs and, where necessary, improve provision for gypsies, travellers, and travelling show people

**Priority 3.
To support local people accessing high quality and affordable housing which meet their needs**

Key Objectives

- ~ Effectively communicate housing options to those in housing need
- ~ Provide an effective, fair and transparent process for accessing affordable housing
- ~ Through the Strategic Tenancy Policy, enable:
 - # Tenancies to be offered that provide the tenant with an appropriate level of security
 - # The provision of new Council housing at Affordable Rents
 - # A balance between creating flexibility in social housing and promoting settled mixed communities

**Priority 4.
To make best use of housing**

Key Objectives

- ~ Promote downsizing of underoccupied Council homes through the use of incentives and other initiatives to assist tenants to move to more accommodation more appropriate to their housing need
- ~ Assist tenants in extensively adapted homes who no longer have need for the adaptations to move to more appropriate accommodation
- ~ Develop a housing strategy for private sector housing
- ~ Review the role of houses in multiple occupation in the Winchester Town housing market
- ~ Maintain and improve the standard of the housing stock to ensure it is fit for purpose and helps to meet the challenges of climate change.

Priority 5
To Support Our Residents

Key Objectives

- ~ To involve Council tenants in decisions that affect them
- ~ To empower communities and support them to achieve their aspirations
- ~ Support new communities establish themselves

DRAFT

6. Implementation and Resources

The Housing Strategy will be implemented through the actions and investment of Winchester City Council along with a range of stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and through a number of partnerships, such as HARA and PUSH. Relationships with communities will be key to understanding and meeting needs.

The objectives contained in the Strategy will be translated into specific actions in the more detailed Strategies and Action Plans, and it is these that will deliver real change.

In determining what actions to take it will be necessary to have regard to the resources the Council is likely to have available. To be taken forward each action will be resourced and “sponsored” by a lead Council officer and member. Actions and resources will be kept under review and be part of the Council’s annual budget setting and business planning round. It is an aim to work with partners on shared objectives and for projects to lever in additional resources so ambitions can be realised.

How priorities are being tackled will be monitored, with the Council and Housing Board taking the lead.

DRAFT

7. Review

Some of the ambitions of this Strategy are short term and will be achieved quickly. Others will take many years to realise. It is important to be aware that there are many influences that mean the needs of our communities will change over time. The Housing Strategy must respond to these changing needs.

The world economy is still vulnerable and this inevitably has consequences for the local economy and for the local housing market. The provision of new housing has a role to play in not only providing much needed homes, but boosting local economies. Construction creates jobs for those directly involved in building but provides a stimulus for associated trades and professions, as well as homes for those who can spend and work to support the local economy. The links between housing and local economic growth ambitions must be closer than ever in the future, and must include links with Local Economic Partnerships and to Government initiatives aimed at stimulating growth.

Providing housing is about much more than putting a roof over someone's head. It is central to individuals' health and wellbeing and it will be important to develop stronger links in this area.

Government borrowing and spending is under severe pressure. The next Comprehensive Spending Review will set out future investment priorities. The welfare system has recently undergone radical change and further changes are being discussed. It is not clear what lies beyond 2015 for the Homes and Community Agency investment programme.

The Localism agenda is still new and ideas about what this means are yet to be fully crystallised. We must capitalise on the opportunities presented by neighbourhood planning, greater influence on the use of affordable housing and the ability to build Council Homes. Winchester City Council has significant leadership role to play in helping communities shape their future

The Housing Strategy will be kept under review so that it is responsive to the changing world, changing local needs and changing ambitions and so it creates a framework to ensure change in Winchester is for the better. The Council and Housing Board will take the lead in doing this.

Appendix 1 - Extract from The Vision for Winchester Town 2012

Theme for the Future – Providing new and affordable housing

- ensure the successful implementation of the Barton Farm development
- ensure that new homes meet the needs of our community, including affordable housing;
- secure housing for Winchester's key workers essential to our economy;
- work with the University of Winchester, Sparsholt College and the University of Southampton to ensure an adequate supply of well managed student housing, and to
- reduce the pressure for conversion of family homes to houses in multiple occupation
- work with local communities on neighbourhood plans for their local area to ensure new housing integrates well
- promote the highest standards of building and urban design in all development;
- support the principle of self build or cooperative housing on suitable sites
- ensure new homes meet high environmental standards.

DRAFT

Appendix 2 – Glossary

Affordable Housing	Housing provided with subsidy for people who are unable to resolve their housing requirements in the local housing market because of the relationship between housing costs and incomes. This can be social rented housing, affordable rented (at rents of up to 80% of the local market rent) and intermediate.
Affordable Rents	Rents charged on certain kinds of affordable housing. Rent controls require rents are no more than 80% of the local market rent.
Code for Sustainable Homes	A national standard for achieving sustainable and energy efficient new housing.
Decent Homes	A national standard /aimed at improving the supply of affordable and certain privately owned stock.
Disability	The disadvantage or restriction of activity and opportunity – caused by a society which takes little or no account of people who have ‘impairments’ and thus excludes them from mainstream activity.
Disadvantage	Some people are ‘disadvantaged’ by the circumstances they find themselves in – often by a combination of social and practical factors. As a result they find it difficult to obtain services or goods on the same basis as other groups or individuals. People more likely to suffer disadvantage are often described as ‘vulnerable’.
Fuel Poverty	A household is said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain a satisfactory heating regime.
HARAH	The Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing. A partnership between local authorities (East Hampshire DC, Basingstoke and Deane BC, Hart BC, New Forest DC, Test Valley BC and Hampshire CC); Community Action Hampshire, the Homes and Community Agency with

	Hyde Housing Association that has the responsibility for delivering affordable rural housing on exception sites.
Homelessness	A person who has no home available to occupy, but necessarily rough sleepers or you people sleeping on the streets
Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Sets out the Council's strategy for its own housing stock
Housing Register	Identifies households in need who have registered with the Council and are seeking social or affordable rented housing. Those seeking intermediate homes with the Homes and Community Agency Zone Agent (Swaythling Housing Society)
Intermediate housing	Housing at prices or rents above those of social rent but below market prices or rents. Housing can include shared ownership / equity and intermediate rent.
Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy	The Winchester District Core Strategy has recently been renamed as Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 - Joint Core Strategy. The Local Plan Part 1 is the long term strategic plan for development within Winchester District, and includes the strategic vision, objectives and the key policies needed to achieve sustainable development in Winchester District to 2031.
Localism	Involving people, wherever possible, in the decisions that affect their life, and devolving to officers, members and civil society. Giving people the power to make decisions at the lowest possible level, so that the real needs of local communities and individuals are met, rather than the perceived. See the Localism Act 2012.
PUSH	Partnership for South Hampshire; a partnership of councils that aims for economically led growth.
RP	Registered Provider (registered with

	the Homes and Community Agency) most commonly a housing association.
Vulnerable	<p>The term vulnerable has two principle meanings in a housing context:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In terms of homelessness legislation a person is 'vulnerable' if he or she is less able to fend for themselves than an ordinary homeless person and so will suffer injury or detriment in circumstances in which the ordinary homeless person would not. 2. In terms of decent homes in the private sector, vulnerable households have been defined as those in receipt of at least one of the principal means tested or disability related benefits.
WDSP	Winchester District Strategic Partnership
Winchester Housing Board	A multi-agency stakeholder board that leads the cross-cutting housing theme for the WDSP. Membership includes Winchester City Council; Homes and Communities Agency; Hampshire County Council; Winchester Area Community Action; First Wessex (on behalf of the RP sector); Citizens Advice Bureau; National Landlords Association

This glossary provides a non-technical description of some of the terms used in this document. The description should not be taken as precise legal or policy definitions.

Appendix 3 - The Housing Strategy in Context

