



HILLINGDON

LONDON

Homes fit for Hillingdon

The London Borough of
Hillingdon's Housing
Strategy 2012-15

Draft

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Foreword

This strategy looks ahead to 2015, setting out Hillingdon's housing needs and what the Council and its partners will be doing to meet them over the next three years.

Hillingdon is a good place to live – we have thriving shopping centres, varied job opportunities, excellent parks and green spaces, better leisure facilities and easy access both to the centre of London and the towns, villages and countryside outside the capital.

However, for some people their housing circumstances can make life a daily challenge – whether it's the high cost of housing, keeping on top of maintenance and repairs, needing support to be independent or just not having a decent, affordable home. Unsuitable housing affects many aspects of people's lives – health, employment, social and support networks and the education attainment of their children.

The aim of our strategy is to help as many people as possible to improve their wellbeing and quality of life by living in good quality, affordable housing, whether in the private rented sector, as an owner occupier or by renting from a social landlord such as the Council or a housing association.

Schemes to promote low cost home ownership such as the Council's First Time Buyer Initiative are excellent ways to help local families to gain a foothold on the property ladder.

The development of new homes for rent helps those who find home ownership out of their reach.

We want to help vulnerable home-owners and people renting privately to maintain and improve their homes. We want to support those with care needs and with health and mobility difficulties to remain at home as part of the community rather than move to residential care or other more institutional forms of accommodation.

We also want to make sure that the Borough has the homes it needs to attract employees to support the local economy – recognising that using the planning system and developing the market priced homes we need will itself stimulate economic growth.

Hillingdon may be on the outer edges of London but we are at the centre of working in partnership with other local authorities and housing associations across the West London sub region and in London as a whole to meet housing need and develop initiatives that deliver good quality affordable accommodation which offers value for money.

Local partnerships are essential to the delivery of quality housing. The local Hillingdon Housing Partnership between all of the main social housing providers in the Borough is particularly successful. We will be working with the Partnership and other service providers to implement this strategy.

Councillor Philip Corthorne
Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Housing

Section 1 Introduction

This strategy updates the Borough's previous housing strategy which was published in 2007. In the last five years there have been many changes at a local, regional and national level. The impact of the worldwide financial difficulties makes the task of delivering decent housing that much more difficult. Our revised strategy shows how we are responding to change and how we are intensifying our efforts to improve the supply and quality of homes in the Borough.

This strategy explains how the Council, working in partnership with other housing providers and developers will :

- Deliver more quality housing to meet the needs of Hillingdon's residents
- Invest in the quality of existing housing stock in the private sector and within the Council's ownership
- Invest in new supported housing to meet the needs of vulnerable people such as those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health problems
- Commission and deliver housing support services to help people to remain independent and in their own homes
- Ensure that there is enough land available to build the homes in all tenures which the Borough needs

The housing strategy is complementary to *Choice, Control and Independence*, Hillingdon's Personalisation and Commissioning Plan for Adult Social Care. The Plan sets out how the Council's approach to the delivery of its community care responsibilities for adults will improve over the period 2011 to 2015 to maximise the independence of vulnerable residents.

Section 2 Executive summary

Introduction

Many of the challenges faced in developing this strategy are familiar. House prices and rents in the private sector remain high while demand for affordable housing exceeds supply. The national financial situation means that all Councils must challenge the way that resources are currently used and change the ways in which services are delivered. As expected demand increases, available funding is reducing.

To respond to these challenges, the Council's housing services will incorporate a major programme of change. Services will be developed according to three strategic priorities :

Managing demand – keeping residents independent, investing in preventative services to stop or significantly delay residents becoming homeless, in housing need or requiring ongoing social care.

Managing supply – commissioning private and voluntary housing services, and social care, delivering support, choice and independence to vulnerable, complex and high dependence residents

Managing support – efficient and effective in-house service provision that is focused on reablement, delivering time-limited interventions to effect change so that residents can learn or re-learn crucial skills to live independently

Figure 1: Housing services: current position and proposed action to 2015

Current position	Action by 2015
<p>Homelessness prevention</p> <p>The number of households with a priority need for housing has shown a 10% rise in the first quarter of 2012/13 compared with the same period in 2011/12. This reflects the trend in other Boroughs in west London. It is due to a number of factors – property prices remain high compared with average household incomes, the welfare reform programme is starting to take effect and the supply of social housing remains low</p>	<p>There will be more advice and support for people approaching the Council for help with their housing problems.</p> <p>Proactive work to prevent households becoming homeless has already begun, initially focusing on Hillingdon residents whose housing benefit payments will fall as a result of planned Government changes.</p>

Current position	Action by 2015
<p>Temporary accommodation</p> <p>We have been successful in reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation to 500 from 1,876 in 2005.</p> <p>A range of Council schemes are used to procure good quality private rented sector accommodation. However, there is increasing pressure on the availability of suitable affordable housing in the private rented sector due to market conditions.</p>	<p>The use of temporary accommodation will be reduced to 290 households by 2014.</p> <p>Use of the private rented sector will continue to be maximised.</p> <p>The available supply will be such that not all households approaching the Council for housing assistance can be accommodated within the Borough boundaries. Accommodation within Hillingdon will be prioritised for those with strong local connections. Accommodation will be procured outside Hillingdon in order to increase the Council's ability to meet housing need and place people in homes which they can afford.</p>
<p>Homelessness duty</p> <p>The Council has a strong partnership with private sector landlords and uses good quality accommodation in the private rented sector to prevent households becoming homeless.</p> <p>Some households may remain in temporary accommodation for longer periods of time, waiting for a social rented home to become available.</p>	<p>Good quality private rented housing will also be used for households where the Council has a statutory duty for housing. Changes in legislation will allow the Council to discharge its duty to rehouse in the private rented sector, retaining a duty of care for a two year period.</p>
<p>Allocations policy</p> <p>The Council last reviewed its policy for the allocation of social housing in 2011. Over 50% of the households on the waiting list will never be offered a social housing tenancy however long they wait. This is due to a combination of the demand and supply imbalance as well as the fact that all residents in the Borough are entitled to be placed on the waiting list regardless of whether there is an over-riding priority.</p>	<p>The Council has again reviewed the allocations policy in 2012/13. The review explored whether non-priority households should continue to be able to apply for social housing. Access will be increased for those with a greater need for housing in particular household groups</p>
<p>New housing provision</p> <p>1,699 additional affordable homes have been completed in the Borough</p>	<p>A minimum provision of 5,475 additional homes is planned until 2026, based on known sites coming</p>

Current position	Action by 2015
<p>in the four years to 2011/12, against an effective target of 772 over the same period.</p> <p>546 completed low cost home ownership sales were made over the same period to 2011/12, an excellent achievement against a Council target of 330. Initiatives include the Hillingdon First Time Buyer, shared ownership, shared equity and Council build discounted sale schemes</p> <p>The Council has made a successful bid for Government funding toward the cost of the supported housing which it will build over the next three years.</p> <p>On sites with a capacity of ten or more homes, we aim for 35% affordable homes, with a tenure mix of 70% for social rent and 30% for intermediate housing.</p> <p>Affordable housing should reflect the need for family sized homes. High quality design is a priority for housing in all tenures.</p> <p>The Council works with developers, affordable housing providers and the planning system to ensure that the Borough has the market housing it needs to support the local economy and a supply of affordable homes.</p>	<p>forward to be developed.</p> <p>The Council, in partnership with housing associations, will deliver 422 new supported homes for vulnerable people including people with learning disabilities and physical disabilities.</p> <p>Use of residential care and more institutional forms of accommodation will be reduced so that Hillingdon is more in line with the national average.</p> <p>Hillingdon has an excellent record of delivery against targets and will continue to work with partners to ensure future housing supply in all tenures.</p>
<p>Social housing tenancies</p> <p>Following a probationary tenancy which is often in place for the first 12 months, social housing landlords have traditionally offered lifetime tenancies to their residents.</p> <p>It is now possible to move away from lifetime tenancies for the majority of social housing tenants, to meet the Government aim of making the</p>	<p>The Council's Tenancy Strategy sets out how the flexibilities in the Localism Act 2011 will be used in Hillingdon. The overall aim of the strategy is to ensure that social housing is targeted to those that need it, for as long as they need it. The Council supports the use of fixed term tenancies, following on from probationary tenancies. The Council's expectation is for a minimum of a five year fixed term tenancy to be offered to most households</p>

Current position	Action by 2015
<p>scarce resource of social housing available to people only while they need it.</p>	
<p>Private sector housing</p> <p>In Hillingdon, the housing which is in the poorest condition is in the private rented sector. Management standards in this sector can vary widely. We have accredited 347 landlords to the London Landlords Accreditation scheme.</p> <p>Houses in Multiple Occupation have increased in some locations. The Council has licensed 435 HMOs since the start of the current scheme in 2006.</p>	<p>The Council will have updated its information on the condition of the private sector stock.</p> <p>We will continue to encourage accreditation of private sector landlords and to promote good practice via the Private Sector Landlords Forum. We aim to accredit a further 30 landlords annually</p> <p>We will continue to operate mandatory and additional HMO licensing. We will license an additional 80 HMOs annually.</p>
<p>Empty homes</p> <p>Less than 1% of housing in Hillingdon (across all sectors) is empty for more than six months. Demand for housing, particularly affordable housing, is very high.</p> <p>Only 160 homes are empty in the very long term (five years or more). The remainder of the 700 empty properties are empty for specific reasons – the owner may have gone into residential care, a grant of probate may be awaited, they may be second homes or may be awaiting refurbishment</p>	<p>The Council's strategy for dealing with long term empty homes involves working with owners and landlords to bring them back into use as affordable homes. Grants and loans will be used by the Council to achieve this. As a last resort, empty dwelling management orders or compulsory purchase will be used if necessary.</p>
<p>Energy efficiency</p> <p>Domestic buildings produce over a quarter of the UK's carbon dioxide emissions. At the same time, one in 25 households—equivalent to about 4,000 in Hillingdon—are fuel poor, with over 10% of their income going on heat and other home energy.</p>	<p>We will continue our very successful strategy to access resources for energy efficiency work. We are currently assessing how best we can support local residents and landlords to benefit from the Green Deal when it is introduced. We will work with the Mayor of London to ensure the scheme's effective introduction. This work will help us to achieve our energy efficiency targets :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An average SAP rating of 62

Current position	Action by 2015
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of properties with cavities to have cavity wall insulation • 20% of solid wall constructed properties to have walls insulated • 30% of properties to have 200mm or more of loft insulation
<p>Council housing</p> <p>The Council is the Borough's biggest landlord. The housing stock is of good design and sound construction, meeting the Government's target for Decent Homes.</p> <p>Consideration is currently being given to how borrowing capacity within the Housing Revenue Account can be used to fund further investment in existing stock as well as developing new homes.</p>	<p>Further investment will have been made in a number of areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • essential work on electrical and fire safety • maintaining the Decent Homes standard • supporting independence at home for older and vulnerable residents • energy efficiency measures • improving estates and shared spaces
<p>Council housing management</p> <p>The Council housing management service is based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring tenants and leaseholders are involved in how their homes are managed • Collecting the rent and service charges • Keeping housing estates clean and attractive • Tackling nuisance, crime and harassment 	<p>The Council's Tenancy Policy sets out how Council housing tenancies are changing to ensure that suitable affordable housing is available to those who need it most.</p> <p>For new tenants, a five year fixed term tenancy will be granted in most cases. Fixed term tenancies will be re-issued at the end of the term unless there is a significant change of household circumstances. Different tenancy lengths will apply to some households in specific circumstances.</p> <p>Existing social tenancies will be protected and remain unchanged from their current status</p> <p>We will be developing our work with tenants and partner managing housing associations on joint inspections in areas where there are multiple social landlords.</p> <p>We will focus on equipping tenants to play a more important role in the scrutiny of the Council's landlord role.</p>

Current position	Action by 2015
<p data-bbox="236 239 539 273">Mobility and choice</p> <p data-bbox="236 315 699 421">The Room2Move service helps tenants who are overcrowded or wanting to downsize.</p> <p data-bbox="236 461 767 566">The Cash Incentive Scheme rewards Council tenants who downsize to smaller properties.</p> <p data-bbox="236 607 775 786">We promote sheltered housing and non – sheltered bungalows to older tenants who may wish to move to this type of accommodation and free up a family sized home.</p> <p data-bbox="236 826 783 1115">The Seaside and Country Homes scheme allows tenants over 60 to move out of Hillingdon to a one or two bed home on the coast or inland, often downsizing from a family sized property. We also take part in the West London cross Borough lettings scheme.</p>	<p data-bbox="809 315 1522 456">We will take part in the Mayor’s pan London mobility scheme which prioritises under occupiers and helps social tenants to move in order to find employment.</p> <p data-bbox="809 497 1525 638">We will continue our successful schemes which give tenants who wish to move to more appropriate accommodation within Council owned stock or the social rented sector.</p>

Section 3 The national and local context for the housing strategy

National direction

The Coalition Government seeks to create the economic conditions in which more people can take responsibility for meeting their own housing needs, whether they want to buy or rent. Those who want to and are in a suitable financial position to buy a property will be supported to do so. Social housing will provide support for those who need it.

The Government has a number of key actions planned as part of the decentralisation and localism agenda including:

- giving local Government greater freedoms
- providing local authorities with incentives to enable housing growth
- making the provision of social housing more flexible
- streamlining the planning system
- giving local Government a leadership role for public health

A number of the Government's plans for reform will have an impact on housing in the Borough and are described below.

Housing supply

To encourage local communities to develop additional housing in their area, a *new homes bonus* is paid to Councils equal to the Council tax for each new home for six years. A further flat rate payment is paid for each new affordable home built.

Social housing reform

Councils are given flexibility to decide locally who goes on the housing waiting list and to offer fixed term tenancies to new tenants. A new national scheme allows social housing tenants to move house more easily. Local people will have more say in regulating how social housing is run. Councils have a new ability to offer homeless households a home in the private rented sector rather than in social housing. The way that Council housing is financed is also changing and Councils are able to keep rental income to maintain homes.

Welfare reform

The Government's plans to cut the cost of benefits, including housing benefit and local housing allowance, have begun to have a significant impact on tenants in the private rented sector. Local Housing Allowance rates have been set at the 30th percentile of local rents; a maximum cap applies for each property size with an overall cap of £400 per week for a four bedroom property, irrespective of family size (April 2011). This national cap particularly affects central London, where rents are some of the highest in the country.

The majority of single, 25–34 year olds are now restricted to the Local Housing Allowance shared accommodation rate (January 2012).

Benefits will be restricted for households in the social rented sector occupying a property larger than they need (April 2013). Universal credit, to be introduced in October 2013 will integrate a number of benefits currently paid, including housing benefit, and will be paid direct to the individual. The amount of Universal Credit will be capped for 'working age' out of work households. Where a household's combined benefits exceed the cap, their benefit entitlement will be reduced to the cap. Until full migration to Universal Credit is complete (2017/18) local authorities will apply the cap to Housing Benefit by reducing a household's Housing Benefit by the amount over the cap. New Housing Benefit for people of pensionable age will be included in Pension Credit administered by the Pensions Service (October 2014). A localised Council Tax Support Scheme will replace Council Tax Benefit (April 2013). A localised Welfare Assistance Fund administered by Local Authorities will replace social Fund and Crisis Loans (April 2013).

Reform of health and social care

The White Paper *Caring for our future: reforming care and support* published in July 2012 sets out the Government's proposals for the future of adult social care. There is a renewed emphasis on the commissioning of preventative and early intervention services, extending personal budgets to all social service users, working in partnership to deliver care and support and reducing spending on long term residential care. The role of supported housing, including extra care, in supporting older and disabled residents to live independently in the community is recognised and £200m has been identified by Government to assist Councils in developing new schemes.

London strategic direction

The responsibility for housing in the capital rests with the Mayor of London. From April 2012 the Mayor has been responsible for the strategic direction of housing, regeneration and economic development across London. The Localism Act 2011 devolved the powers and responsibilities of the Homes and Communities Agency in London to the Mayor. The London Housing Board oversees housing investment and delivery.

The Mayor wants to see better quality housing in all tenures in London, more affordable housing and more opportunities for social and economic mobility for Londoners. The Mayor has expressed a wish to further devolve housing delivery in the longer term to local authorities.

The Mayor has recently published his revised London Housing Strategy which updates the housing priorities for London. Hillingdon's local housing strategy is required to be in general conformity with the London Housing Strategy. The Mayor's London Plan brings together the geographic and spatial aspects of the Mayor's strategies, including the housing strategy. Hillingdon's spatial

policies for the development of housing must be in general conformity with those in the London Plan.

The Mayor's aims for housing in London are:

- Increasing the supply of new homes in all tenures across London, in particular affordable and family sized homes
- Ensuring better quality and higher standards for new and existing homes in all tenures
- Joining up housing investment with wider regeneration initiatives
- Meeting Londoners' home ownership aspirations
- Improving options for social tenants to move
- Tackling housing need, including overcrowding and rough sleeping

Hillingdon's priorities

The Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy 2011 identifies the need for new homes, including affordable homes, and the need to provide support to help people live more independent and healthier lives.

The Health and Wellbeing Board now takes responsibility for the social care, health and housing agenda. The Board's Wellbeing Strategy focuses on the contribution that health, social care and housing can make to achieve the broader objective of improving the wellbeing of Hillingdon's residents. Hillingdon's partnership ambitions for improvement to 2015 include:

- Preventing ill health and promoting wellbeing will be embedded in everything we do; people will be supported to stay healthy and independent, with early interventions to prevent existing problems getting worse
- Improved wellbeing outcomes will be achieved through reducing wider inequalities present within the Borough, improving economic, social and environmental conditions which influence a person's life chances.
- More services will be provided in the community and closer to people's homes, not in hospital or in institutional settings

The Council has a range of housing related powers and responsibilities including:

- Matching housing requirements and supply
- Ensuring adequate market priced housing
- Delivering affordable homes for rent and to buy
- Bringing empty properties back into use
- Making sure that private rented homes are in good repair and well managed
- Providing property adaptations funded by Disabled Facilities Grants
- Inspecting and licensing houses in multiple occupation

- Preventing homelessness, including rough sleeping
- Maintaining Council owned homes in good repair
- Helping vulnerable homeowners to maintain their properties
- Making sure that social rented homes are well managed
- Providing advice and assistance to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes
- Administering Housing Benefit, Local Housing Allowance and Council Tax Benefit.

Housing services works closely with planning, property services, adult social care and health to deliver additional housing, including affordable homes, and housing related support services for Hillingdon residents.

Transforming adult social care

Over the period to 2015 the Council will be seeking to make a number of important changes to the provision of social care and support including:

- Reducing the use of inappropriate residential care for vulnerable residents and increasing the opportunities for supported living within normal community settings
- Supporting carers to deliver the vital role they have in looking after vulnerable members of the community
- Developing integrated approaches to health and social care services
- Protecting existing preventative services and developing new services where the need exists
- Enabling all eligible social care service users to have a personal budget by April 2013

Historically, Hillingdon has been host to a very traditional model of care, heavily reliant on residential and nursing home provision. For example, in 2010/11 51% of net care expenditure for older people was made on this type of service, as opposed to the 40% which is more in line with best practice. The major programme of change needed is outlined in Hillingdon's Personalisation and Commissioning Plan 2011-15 - Choice, Control and Independence.

Section 4 Housing priorities

Our housing mission is to enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives.

Services will be developed according to three strategic priorities:

Managing demand – keeping residents independent, investing in preventative services to stop or significantly delay residents becoming homeless, in housing need or requiring ongoing social care.

Managing supply – commissioning private and voluntary housing services, and social care, delivering support, choice and independence to vulnerable, complex and high dependence residents

Managing support – efficient and effective in-house service provision that is focused on reablement, delivering time-limited interventions to effect change so that residents can learn or re-learn crucial skills to live independently

Commissioning plans for housing services are developed under these three major headings in this strategy.

Supporting principles

The Council will:

- Use up to date, evidence based approaches to services which are more efficient and effective
- Work closely with social care, health, planning and other partners to commission services that draw on existing networks and community capacity. The whole community has a role to play in keeping people safe, healthy and independent.
- Achieve sustainable change by supporting individuals and communities to help themselves and each other
- Ensure that users of services are in the driving seat, deciding how their desired outcomes will be achieved within available resources
- Shift from providing long-term institutional services to providing time-limited support which helps people regain or maintain independence in the community

Section 5 Key facts about Hillingdon and housing

Some of the challenges faced in developing this strategy are familiar. House prices and rents in the private sector remain high and demand for affordable housing exceeds supply. There are also a number of new factors which present both challenges and opportunities for the Council in carrying out its strategic housing role.

Policy changes affecting social housing represent the biggest restructure of the sector in many years. The direction is for local authorities to have greater flexibility to manage social housing stock more efficiently, cutting down on empty or overcrowded properties. This will include flexible tenancies, fairer allocations, greater mobility, fairer provision for homeless people, affordable rents, more straightforward tenancy succession policies and less complex Council housing finance. The effects of changes to the benefit regime have begun to be felt but will affect some households more deeply over the life of this strategy.

About Hillingdon

Hillingdon is the second largest of London's Boroughs and covers 42 square miles (11,571 hectares), over half of which is a mosaic of countryside including canals, rivers, parks and woodland. The Borough has two airports - Heathrow and RAF Northolt. Hillingdon shares its borders with Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire to the west and Hounslow, Ealing, and Harrow.

The north of the Borough is semi-rural, much of it protected by green belt regulation with Ruislip as the major town centre.

The south of Hillingdon is more densely populated and urban in character, containing the administrative centre of Uxbridge and towns of Hayes and West Drayton.

Heathrow airport is situated in the south of the Borough, and is the largest employer offering a range of relatively well-paid skilled and unskilled manual jobs.

There are a number of major manufacturing and retail organisations with headquarters and sites in Hillingdon. Stockley Park, to the north of Heathrow, is one of Europe's largest business parks. The Council, RAF Northolt, Brunel University, Harefield and Hillingdon hospitals are major public sector employers in the area.

Housing market

Average house prices in the Borough have been rising since mid-2009. According to the Land Registry, in January 2013 the average price of a property in Hillingdon was £264,537. There are wide differences in entry level (lower quartile) prices across the Borough, from £169,000 in Yiewsley to £355,000 in Ickenham.

In 2011 sales turnover of private housing stock in Hillingdon equated to 1.9% of the total, compared with 1.8% in London. Residential property in Hillingdon remains some of the least expensive to purchase in West London. At the end of 2011, properties were taking an average of 5.4 weeks to sell, compared with 4.9 weeks 12 months earlier and were achieving on average 95% of their asking price. (Hometrack Housing Market Intelligence System)

Household growth

According to Government projections (CLG, November 2010), household numbers in Hillingdon were expected to grow from an estimated 107,000 in 2013 to 131,000 in 2033, an increase of 22%. Household numbers in Outer London overall were also expected to grow by 22%, and in London overall by 21% over the same period.

The first results of the Census 2011, published in 2012, showed that 273,936 people were normally resident in 100,214 households, indicating that the previously published projections for Hillingdon are higher than is in fact likely to be the case.

Unemployment

The proportion of Hillingdon residents who claim Jobseekers Allowance was 1.9% of economically active residents in July 2012. The rate compared favourably with that for London (3.3%) and for England (2.2%).

Requirement for affordable housing

The number of households on the Council's housing register increased during 2010/11 by 31% to 9,800. By 1st April 2013 this figure had further increased to 12,112. The register is not a reliable indicator of the need for social housing, as the majority of applicants do not have any of the needs which the Council's policy for allocating social housing (backed by housing legislation) can prioritise. It is however an indication that there an increasing number of households who cannot easily afford to buy or rent on the open market.

Hillingdon's most recent Housing Market Assessment (HMA) found that a net additional 2,624 homes a year over five years would be required to meet the current and newly arising need for affordable homes. The actual number of homes for which building land has been identified is lower and is discussed in Section 8.

The assessment also showed that there was a need for larger, family sized social rented homes and that only 22% of the households who needed affordable housing could afford intermediate rather than social rented homes, if they were priced at the midpoint between market and social rented prices. (This assessment was made assuming that a household should spend no more than 35% of its income on rent). However, the current cost of new build shared ownership housing available in the Borough was closer to that of market housing and therefore accessible by few local home seekers.

Figure 2
Estimated size requirement for net additional affordable housing

Estimated size requirement for additional affordable housing (net)		
	Net annual need	% of annual need
1 bed	174	6.6
2 beds	969	36.9
3 beds	913	34.8
4 or more beds	568	21.7
Total	2,624	100.0

Source : Hillingdon HMA 2009

Our own information systems show that homes required to accommodate households accepted as homeless should in most cases have one or two bedrooms.

Affordability

The HMA estimated in 2009 that the mean gross annual household income in Hillingdon was £37,192. There is a wide range of incomes in the Borough, with more than a third of families having an income of less than £20,000 and more than a quarter having an income in excess of £50,000.

Some 26% of private rented sector households receive Local Housing Allowance (LHA). Almost three quarters of these households contain children, compared to only a quarter of non LHA private rented sector households.

Hillingdon average house prices are seven times the average household income. The continuing squeeze on mortgage finance makes home ownership less accessible to residents of the Borough. Mortgages for buy to let property and shared ownership schemes have also been restricted.

A large number of households in rented accommodation are in private sector rented homes. The greatest concentration of rental property is in the south of the Borough where rent levels are generally lower. However, since there is more demand for rental property because of a decline in home ownership and also because more renters are moving to outer London as central London, becomes unaffordable, private rents in Hillingdon are increasing. The average monthly rent for a two bed property is £994, the lower quartile rent is £875 (Source : Valuation Office). These figures represent an increase of 2.7% and 2.9% respectively on those in 2011.

Social rents have also risen. The average rent for a two bed property rented from a housing association was £112 per month in 2011/12, and rose by 6.7% from the previous year. The average rent for a Council owned two bed house was £102, a rise of 6.2%. The Government has announced investment in new affordable housing for Affordable Rent and Affordable Home Ownership products. In future, housing associations will have the flexibility to let an Affordable Rent property at up to 80% of the market rent for a property of that size and location. The GLA's London Plan requires Councils in London to

work to maximise the provision of affordable housing, including the new Affordable Rent and Home Ownership products. However, the definition of 'affordable' has a requirement that housing should be affordable to local people and the Council is working to ensure that this is the case. An important step in this work is to agree the maximum proportion of its income which any household in the Borough should spend on rent, including service charges.

In common with other Councils in West London, the Council has the option of using an income proportion of 40% to define affordability in the Borough. 86% of homeless households for which the Council accepted a duty in 2011 were dependent solely on income from benefits. They will be affected by the proposed Universal Credit cap introduced in 2013. This will restrict weekly income from all benefits to £350 for a non working single person and £500 for a non working family. The household cap has been set at a level to reflect an average household income of £35,000 before tax, and has been used in researching the effects of different income proportions to define Affordable Rents in the Borough.

If the income proportion is set at 40% our research indicates that at average private sector rent levels in the south of the Borough :

- if housing providers set rents at 80% of average market rents, then only homes with one or two bedrooms are affordable
- if housing providers set rents at 67% of average market rents, then one, two and three bedroom homes would be affordable, but those with four or more bedrooms would not.

If the income proportion is set at 35% of the Universal Credit cap, at average private sector rent levels in the south of the Borough :

- if housing providers set rents at 80% of average market rents, no homes are affordable.
- if housing providers set rents at 67% of average market rents, then one and two bedroom homes would be affordable, but those with three or more bedrooms would not.

Of those households accepted as homeless in Hillingdon, 76% need a one or two bedroom home, indicating a three quarters match between need and supply. As providers generally propose to set rents at or close to 80% on smaller homes in order to subsidise lower rents on larger (four beds plus) homes, setting the income proportion to define affordability at 40% is likely to work in Hillingdon.

The section on the Affordable Rent regime in Hillingdon in section 8 of this strategy considers further the Affordable Rent model and its effect on the housing market.

Overcrowding

Hillingdon's HMA showed that some 5.6% of households are overcrowded, compared with the national estimate from the Survey of English Housing of 2.5%. Overcrowding was measured against the national bedroom standard. The assessment suggests that overcrowded households are more likely to be living in the social rented sector – almost 45% of overcrowded households were living in social rented homes.

Supply of social housing to rent

The total number of social rented homes let in 2011/12 was 765.

There is only a limited supply of the larger family sized homes which overcrowded households need. The majority of social housing in the Borough has 2 bedrooms or fewer. As a result they are more likely to be available to let – 76% of the total in 2011/12.

Between 2008/9 and 2011/12 1,699 affordable homes were completed in the Borough (social rented or intermediate). These were developed by housing associations, by the Council or by private housing developers as a condition of planning permission on larger housing sites. The annualised target set by the Mayor of London over this period was 183 units.

Figure 3 shows affordable housing completions in 2011/12 for Hillingdon and West London Boroughs. Hillingdon's total completed homes, including 75 open market homes, was the highest in West London.

Figure 3 : Affordable housing completions in West London, 2011/12

	Affordable Rent	Social Rent	Intermediate Rent	Affordable Home Ownership	All Affordable ⁵	Open Market	Total
Brent	0	523	37	127	687	0	687
Ealing	7	432	68	151	658	0	658
Hammersmith	0	24	45	12	81	0	81
Harrow	0	213	0	188	401	0	401
Hillingdon	0	355	0	281	636	75	711
Hounslow	0	155	35	126	316	0	316
Kensington	0	57	0	0	57	0	57
West London	7	1,759	185	885	2,836	75	2,911
London	154	10,860	787	4,375	16,176	1,406	17,582
ENGLAND	1,685	33,227	1,627	15,126	51,665	7,786	59,451

⁵ Total affordable housing is the sum of affordable rent, social rent, intermediate rent and affordable home ownership.

Source: HCA/West London Housing Partnership

Vulnerable groups – housing and support needs

Older people

Hillingdon's housing needs to be fit for purpose in order to cope with the growth of older people in the Borough. There is likely to be an increase in need for care and support as well housing suitably tailored for older people (including extra care for rent and for purchase).

There are 34,800 people over the age of 65 living in Hillingdon according to the Projecting Older People Population Information (POPPI) system from the Institute of Public Care. Of this number, 4,800 (14%) are aged 85 or over.

There are 23,423 households containing only older people, 3,695 of which contain a frail elderly person.

There are 2,552 people with dementia in Hillingdon, and this is likely to increase by 16% by 2020, and this will have an influence on the level and type of support needed.

Only 22% of older people live in social rented housing and 4% in private rented housing. The majority are owner occupiers who do not have a mortgage. Almost half (47%) of older person only households have one or two members but live in accommodation with three bedrooms or more.

Children and young people

Research by Shelter has shown that children's life chances are affected by the standard of their housing. Growing up in poor or overcrowded housing has been found to have a lasting impact on a child's health and well-being.

Hillingdon has a significantly larger proportion of people in younger age groups (5-19) when compared with England and London. ONS mid 2008 projections indicate 65,156 children and young people aged 0 to 19 live in Hillingdon, which represents nearly 25% of the total population of the Borough.

The Council has a duty to find housing for 16 and 17 year olds who become homeless each year, for young people who have been in care since they were children and for young people who arrived at Heathrow airport as unaccompanied asylum seeking children. In total 50 to 60 care leavers require accommodation annually.

There is an increasing pressure for the Council to ensure appropriate housing for care leavers owing to the ageing unaccompanied asylum seeking children population and the Southwark Judgement, made by the Law Lords in May 2009. This piece of case law obliges children's services to provide accommodation and support to homeless 16 and 17 year olds.

Hillingdon's Placement Strategy outlines the intention to increase the number of in-Borough foster placements. Doing this will allow children to remain close to their birth parents and friends. Inappropriate housing or lack of housing can often be the barrier to fostering and adoption.

Hillingdon's Disabled Children's Strategy is to reduce the number of children with disabilities in residential care and to support their families in a more holistic way. Although parents may receive funding to adapt their housing it may be insufficient to meet the need and residential care is seen as the alternative.

As the identification of domestic violence increases, the need for more housing for women with children who are victims of domestic violence is also increasing. Currently in Hillingdon there are sheltered refuge homes available which are sufficient in the short term. However, a stable environment is required for both mother and children over a longer period.

The Institute of Public Care provides information on people with disabilities from its Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information (PANSI) system. The following information has been provided for Hillingdon.

Learning disabilities

There are 4,439 people aged 18 to 64 with learning disabilities in the Borough. This number is forecast to increase by 4.5% to 4,639 to 2015. 62% of net care expenditure for people with learning disabilities was on residential and nursing in 2010/11 compared to a national average of 43%.

The provision of good quality housing and support services is crucial to enabling more disabled people to have greater independence in the community. There is a need for supported housing development in the Borough where disabled people have their own tenancies and are allocated a personal budget to address their support needs. We have identified a need for 117 units with high or medium support provided on site, and further units with a lower level of support provided on a floating or visiting basis.

Physical disabilities and sensory impairment

The number of people of working age with a physical disability is expected to rise by 4.3% to 16,510 by 2015. For adults of working age with physical disabilities, residential and nursing care accounted for 33% of net care expenditure compared to an average of 23%.

The key issue for people with physical and/or sensory disabilities is access to adapted properties rather than the need for any housing related support. Currently we have identified a requirement for 349 general needs adapted homes required for people with physical and sensory disabilities. A further 22 units of supported housing are required by people with degenerative conditions that mean that their needs are likely to increase over time.

Mental health

The number of people of working age in Hillingdon who have a mental health problem is forecast to increase by 3.5% to 43,144 in 2015. The number of people with serious mental illness is forecast to rise more slowly over the same period.

The Institute of Public Care provides information on people with disabilities from its Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information (PANSI) system. The following information has been provided for Hillingdon.

For adults (18 – 64) with mental health needs the proportion of the care budget spent on institutional care was 39% compared to a national average of 31%.

We have identified a need for 45 units of accommodation for people with high or medium level support needs as a result of a mental health problem.

Condition of the housing stock

We have two major sources of information about the condition of the housing stock in the Borough.

The private sector stock condition survey (last conducted in 2008) is based on a survey of a sample of homes - owner occupied, privately rented and owned by housing associations. We have also commissioned a stock profile from the Building Research Establishment, based on existing data.

Council housing stock condition (last conducted in 2007) is monitored in a slightly different way. We keep the stock condition database up to date:

- By adding detail as a result of the maintenance work we carry out
- By employing surveyors to carry out rolling surveys of the stock
- By adding data from surveys of specific items such as kitchens and bathrooms

Information from these two sources provides the evidence base for much of the information in section 8 of this strategy.

Benefits

Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit is paid to 25,331 (24%) of Hillingdon households. This proportion has increased by 24% since March 2008. 70% of claimants are of working age and 30% are pensioners.

There are currently 8,557 private rented sector tenants (excluding housing association tenants) receiving Housing Benefit, an increase of 88% since the introduction of Local Housing Allowance in April 2008. 85% of private rented sector tenants are of working age. (Information as at 2012). 43% of claimants are tenants in the private sector, and 57% in the social rented sector.

Section 6 Resources for housing

The housing strategy is underpinned by the approved level of resources set out in the housing budgets agreed by Cabinet for 2012/13. The budgets broadly cover two revenue areas: General Fund Housing Services and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and, capital expenditure. The HRA includes all income and expenditure related to the Councils own housing stock, which includes sheltered housing as well supported housing that are provided for people with various level of care needs.

General Fund Housing Services

The current level of resources for housing within the General Fund amounts to around £19.09m in terms of gross expenditure. When income of around £11.12m is taken into account this leaves net expenditure of approximately £7.97m. The gross expenditure of £19.09m includes £12.41k for Housing Needs, £4.18m for Private Sector Housing and £2.5m for Housing Support.

Housing Revenue Account

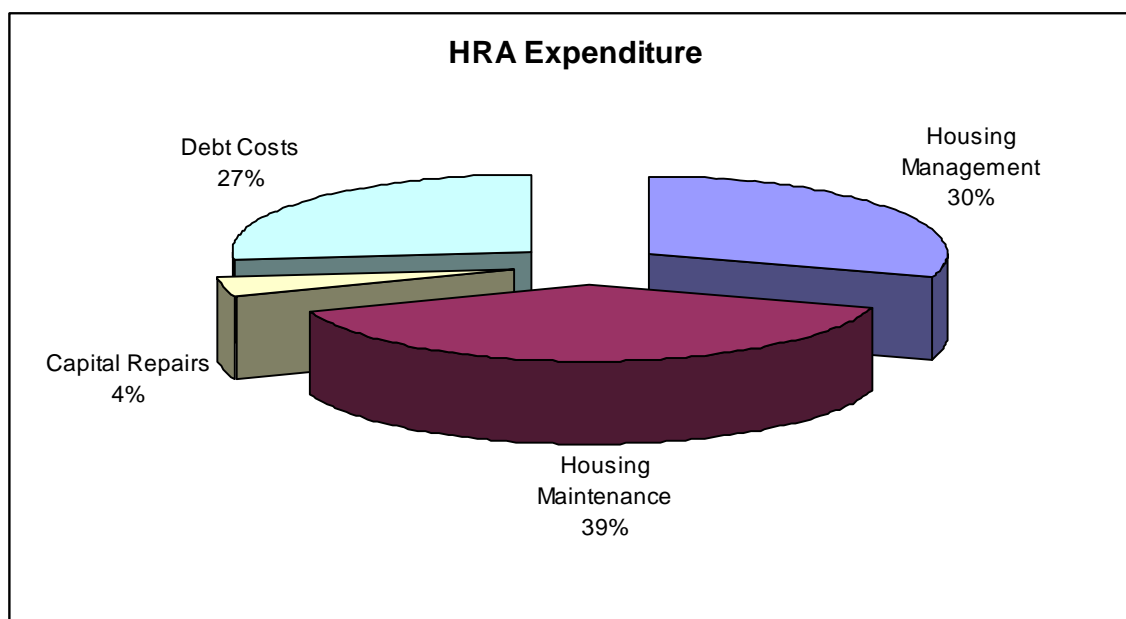
Council housing expenditure is accounted for in the HRA. From April 2012 the funding regime for the HRA has changed significantly with the introduction of self-financing. The new regime replaces the annual subsidy determination which traditionally made medium term financial planning difficult. In summary, the self-financing regime involves local housing authorities taking on new debt as the price for a “buy out” from the annual national subsidy system. The new regime will enable local housing authorities to better determine the long term financial position within the wider economic environment and be in more control over the level of investment required for Council housing.

Hillingdon’s HRA financial position has improved under the self-financing regime. This, along with a greater ability for long term planning, provides opportunities for new build properties to meet the needs of Hillingdon’s residents including vulnerable people who need help to maintain their lives in the wider community instead of institutional care.

The Council intends to lobby Government to remove the borrowing cap from the HRA so that it could, if it so wished, raise more money to provide more affordable homes.

The overall HRA budget for 2012/13 includes income from rent of £54m and other income of around £6m. The expenditure totals £58m and is mainly for the Council housing function as set out in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Housing Revenue Account Budget 2012/13



Source : LBH statistics

Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure will be financed from future rental streams, including supported housing as well as for other new build housing (pending approval by Cabinet of the business case for the supported housing programme).

The White Paper, *Caring for our future: reforming care and support* acknowledges the need to reduce spending on long term residential care. The role of supported housing, including extra care, in supporting older and disabled residents to live independently in the community is recognised and £200m has been identified by Government to assist Councils in developing in new schemes.

In addition, as part of the overall housing capital programme, the Council also spends £2.5m on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and nearly £0.5m on private sector renewal grants. DFGs are provided to households to adapt their homes to enable household members with disabilities to continue to live independent lives.

Key Items of Expenditure

As a further illustration of the financial context for the Housing Strategy, some of the key individual resource items are set out in Figure 5 below:

Figure 5 : Housing: Selected Key Items of Expenditure

2012/13 Housing Budgets – Key items of spend

Housing Needs	£12.5m
Private Sector Housing	£ 1.4m
Housing Related Support	£ 5.0m
Low Cost Home Ownership	£ 0.5m
Council Housing Maintenance	£22.0m

2012/13 Capital Budget

Council Housing - Works to Stock	£ 2.4m
Supported Housing	£14.2m
New Build – housing	£ 1.3m
Disabled Facilities Grants	£ 2.5m
Private Sector Renewal Grants	£ 0.5m

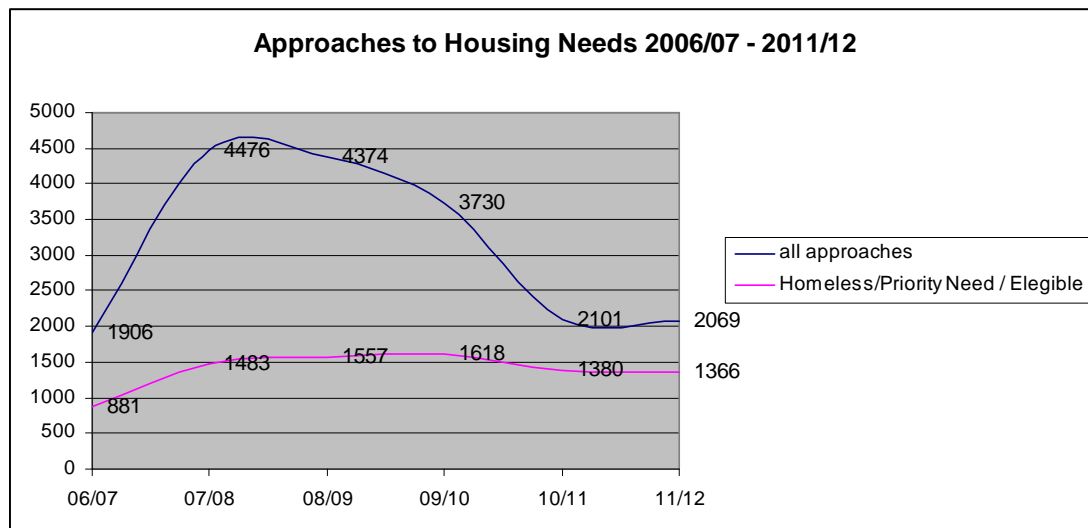
Source : LBH statistics

Section 7 Managing demand

Preventing homelessness

The decline in the number of non-priority households approaching the Council for help and assistance over the last five years has been followed by a 31% increase in the first quarter of 2012/13 compared with the same period in 2011/12. In these cases, our focus is to help put people in a position (perhaps via appropriate advice and signposting) where they can find their own accommodation in the private sector. This allows limited Council resources to be focused on those households who are threatened with homelessness, have a priority need and are eligible for assistance. Numbers remained relatively constant over the five years to 2011.

Figure 6: Approaches to the housing needs service, 2006/7-2011/12



Source: LBH statistics

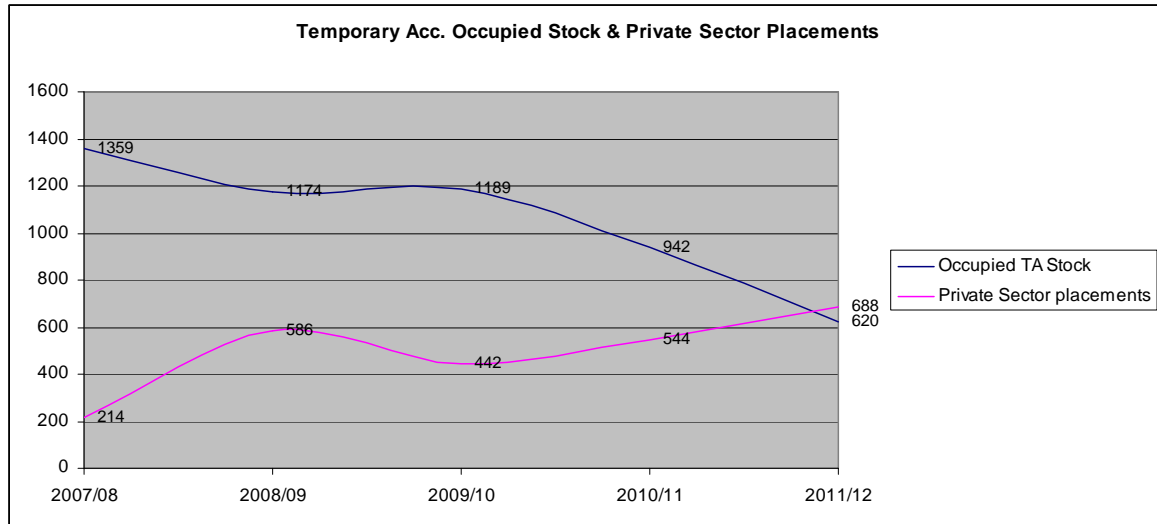
The number of households with a priority need for housing has shown a 10% rise in the first quarter of 2012/13 compared with the same period in 2011/12. This is due to a number of factors - property prices and market rents remaining high compared with average household incomes, the welfare reform programme taking effect so that the gap between private sector rents and local housing allowance has widened and the supply of social housing remaining at a low level.

Figure 7 shows the importance of the private rented sector in accommodation for households approaching the Council. In 2007/8 13.6% of placements in temporary accommodation or other settled housing were made within the private rented sector. By 2011/12, the proportion had risen to 52.6%. Our continued use of private rented sector housing helps the Council to avoid far more costly emergency housing such as bed and breakfast accommodation.

Mitigating the impact of the economic downturn and welfare reform in London will be central to our work to manage the demand for affordable housing in

Hillingdon over the next few years. Homelessness prevention remains an essential part of our strategy.

Figure 7: Temporary accommodation and private rented sector placements



Source: LBH statistics

Effect in London of benefit changes

The Government has begun to reform the welfare benefits system to simplify it and to improve incentives to work. A restriction to the Local Housing Allowance limits housing benefit to the private sector rents of the least expensive 30% of properties in an area and imposes cash limits according to property size.

Universal Credit, to be introduced in 2013, will integrate a number of benefits currently paid, including housing benefit. Universal Credit will be capped – where a household’s combined benefits exceed the cap, their benefit entitlement will be reduced to the cap. The cap is likely to be set at £500 per week for a family and £350 per week for a single claimant. The cap will not apply to working households.

The cap will be introduced irrespective of the number of children in the household or where it is located. London has relatively high levels of unemployment and housing costs are considerably higher than in the rest of the country. Research for London Councils in 2011 found that 133,000 workless households (20% of the total) will be unable to afford their current rent as a result of the caps.

The Universal Credit cap will have a significant impact on larger families with children. Less than 3% of families without children will find their home unaffordable, but 30% of families with children will be affected in this way.

7% of single people will not be able to afford their rent when subject to the lower single person Universal Credit.

Some households may be able to find work, cover modest shortfalls in rent or move to a cheaper property in the local area. For those households facing the greatest shortfalls the options will be to find higher paid work, move elsewhere in London or outside London where rents are cheaper and within the caps. This will put pressure on this type of private sector accommodation in outer London Boroughs like Hillingdon. Over 2,000 households living in Hillingdon are affected by the restrictions to the LHA and an estimated 500 to 600 households will be affected by the Universal Credit cap.

We are being proactive in contacting households renting in the social rented and the private rented sector who are or will be affected by welfare reform. Working closely with the Benefits Team, we offer advice on expected changes and on the household's housing options and can, where appropriate, negotiate on rent levels with private sector landlords on behalf of their tenants.

We support families and individuals to break the cycle of welfare dependency and get into work. Through a number of initiatives including the Reed In Partnership Families Programme, the West London Help programme and work with JGA Group, P3 and Uxbridge College we are able to encourage workless families and individuals including young people to take practical steps to find work and training.

We will also offer payments from the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund to help in specific circumstances such as making a contribution to a rent deposit payment when a household moves in order to find cheaper accommodation or when a household loses income as a result of loss of LHA for a non-dependent .

Use of the private rented sector

Hillingdon has around 500 households living in temporary accommodation, including some families in bed and breakfast. We have several private rented sector schemes which help homeless families find suitable housing.

We expect to be able to maintain or reduce our current level of temporary accommodation but only if we can continue to procure suitably priced private rented sector properties. We have already found that demand for private rented homes in Hillingdon is strong, both from local market renters and from other London Boroughs procuring private sector accommodation.

We have already been forced to seek some private rented accommodation outside the Borough and we are anticipating that this trend is likely to continue. Some households who approach the Council will find that the housing they need and can afford may be available only outside the Borough. We will keep the situation under review, and our intention will be always to place households in the Borough where suitable housing is available.

Allocations policy revision

Hillingdon's social housing allocations policy sets out the Council's priorities for ensuring that social housing is allocated to those who have the greatest need. It is a scarce resource. There are 12,112 households on the housing register but only 700 - 800 households are re-housed into social rented housing each year.

Over 50% of the households on the waiting list will never be offered a social housing tenancy however long they wait.

We revised our allocations policy in 2011 to more closely reflect the Council's vision of putting residents first and supporting collaboration with partners to deliver decent affordable housing in both the public and private sectors. The Council is committed to preventing homelessness and the allocations policy focuses on supporting residents to actively pursue suitable alternatives to avoid becoming homeless. We currently plan social housing lettings as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8 : Planned social housing lettings in Hillingdon 2012/13

Planned social housing lettings in Hillingdon, 2012/13	
Homeless households	45%
Households with a medical need to move	3%
Overcrowded tenants	20%
Underoccupying tenants	8%
Other transferring tenants	6%
Households from supported or residential accommodation	12%
Other local priorities	6%
Total	100%

Source : LBH statistics

We have reviewed our policy again in 2012/13 in response to the Localism Act. The review has considered whether non-priority households should in future be able to apply for housing. Our aim has been to explore the opportunities given by the Act to local housing authorities to offer more support to those in greatest housing need. The policy will offer priority for social housing to adopting parents, foster carers, care leavers and couples without children.

We will publish an annual lettings plan which will show the planned proportion of homes to be let to households in particular groups during the year.

Discharging duty into the private sector

Changes in legislation will allow the Council to discharge its duty to rehouse in the private rented sector (with a retained duty of care for a two year period). We already use the private rented sector, but only to prevent households becoming homeless.

We intend to investigate how we can use good quality private rented housing for households who are owed the main homeless duty. Households in these circumstances would be required to consider this option as opposed to only requesting a nomination to social housing. This is a positive change which could result in households being settled more quickly and more social rented homes being made available for those on the waiting list.

Preventing rough sleeping

Our experience at times of economic difficulty is that single people, who make up half of the homelessness prevention client group, are more likely to be at risk of losing their home. Younger single men in particular are more likely to fall into rough sleeping.

At the latest count (2011) there were 15 people sleeping rough on the streets in the Borough.

We work with partners to take people off the streets, find them accommodation and ensure that on-going health and any substance misuse needs are met. For six years we have opened a winter night shelter when the weather is coldest, working with partner organisations and volunteers. In 2012 the shelter, run with Trinity Homeless Projects, helped 15 men and found settled housing for 13.

Managing demand – what we intend to do

- Review our policy to ensure that we allocate social housing fairly and transparently
- Publish an annual lettings plan showing the planned proportion of homes to be let to households in particular groups during the year.
- Make sure that we prioritise households in the greatest need
- Monitor the effect of changes to the housing benefit system in London including pro-actively engaging with households in Hillingdon whose housing benefit will be reduced
- Only look outside the Borough for housing where there is no other affordable option locally
- Maintain or reduce our current level of use of temporary accommodation in the face of expected increased demand
- Procure homes in the private sector for use in preventing homelessness, as follows :

Scheme	Units
HA leasing direct	85
Privately managed	150
Finders Fee	150
Find your own	130
Total	515

Source: LBH statistics

Section 8 Managing supply – New homes

Introduction

There are several factors which have an impact on the supply of new housing - local planning policies, the availability of land suitable for housing, the availability of finance for building as well as the health of the local housing market.

As the housing market faces an uncertain future and the funding regime for social housing has been subject to change, the Council is working creatively with developers and registered providers to ensure that the various sources of available funding and subsidy are brought together to optimise the delivery of affordable housing.

The Council is putting forward its own land to provide affordable homes. In 2011/12 more than 100 homes were directly developed by the Council on its own land. Land is also transferred to housing associations to deliver more affordable or supported homes.

Planning policy

Ensuring the delivery of sufficient housing is a key challenge for Hillingdon's Local Development Framework (LDF). Housing provision over the period covered by the LDF must meet the London Plan targets for the Borough and address identified housing need.

Planning for housing provision is currently based on an annualised target of an additional 365 homes. Taken over the planning period to 2026, this gives a minimum provision of 5,475 homes. The annualised target may change to 425 as part of a future revision of the London Plan. Hillingdon's Housing Market Assessment identifies the need for larger properties (by number of bedrooms) in the Borough in contrast to the situation London wide. The Council's policy is to meet and exceed the minimum provision where it can be done. The Council's planned housing trajectory shows that up to 2014, current and emerging London Plan targets will be exceeded. This is based on known sites coming forward to be developed. Beyond this date, the delivery of new homes is less certain.

Figure 9 : New affordable housing starts and completions in West London, 2008/9 to 2011/12

Affordable housing starts and completions in Hillingdon, 2008/9 to 2011/12								
	2008/9		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Starts	Completions	Starts	Completions	Starts	Completions	Starts	Completions
Brent	357	664	568	616	682	497	281	687
Ealing	575	479	356	367	663	223	127	658

Hammersmith & Fulham	139	285	130	556	108	44	128	81
Harrow	251	225	370	248	331	285	44	401
Hillingdon	384	311	393	379	483	373	13	636
Hounslow	342	231	70	426	412	615	181	316
Kensington & Chelsea	95	173	236	46	32	29	0	57

Source: HCA statistics

Hillingdon's annualised affordable housing target, set by the Mayor of London, was 183 units, representing 50% of target total housing delivery of 365 units. Since July 11, the London Plan requires Councils to maximise affordable housing delivery, but according to local conditions. Based on capacity studies, Hillingdon aims for 35%. The table in Figure 9, illustrating affordable housing starts and completions over the last four years, shows how successful the Council and partners have been in providing affordable housing in the Borough..

One of the Council's priorities is to ensure that new homes have a high quality design, reflecting housing needs identified in the Borough, particularly the need to provide more family homes with adequate garden space. Guidance is available in the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD). Higher density development is most appropriate in sustainable locations with high levels of public transport accessibility. The majority of new housing is planned on large and small sites situated south of the A40.

On sites with a capacity of ten or more homes we want to ensure that at least 35% of all new homes are affordable, with a tenure mix of 70% housing for social rent and 30% intermediate housing. Housing for social rent includes housing at Affordable Rents. These proportions take into account the results of the HMA 2009 and of the Economic Viability Study undertaken in support of affordable housing policy. Our policy is also that the affordable housing mix reflects the need for larger family sized homes.

There is a comparatively high level of support for low cost home ownership (intermediate) housing in Hillingdon. A wide variety of schemes includes provision by the Council of 25 new homes including five two bedroom houses in Gilbert Road Harefield with more, family sized homes to be built elsewhere in the Borough. Hillingdon First Time Buyers' Scheme provides a grant toward the cost of buying a first home. Recent action by Councillors has succeeded in linking Hillingdon funding for First Time Buyers with a planned non -Council development in Hayes to aid viability and deliver a number of affordable homes.

Affordable housing should include provision for older people and for other groups in need of supported housing. Our aim is to maximise independence and provide self-contained accommodation with appropriate support. Our LDF

policy protects existing Gypsy and Traveller site provision at Colne Park and states that targets for additional pitch provision will take into account need and the availability of suitable sites.

Housing, including affordable housing, is planned on several significant sites in the Borough. The most strategically significant regeneration site is that of RAF Uxbridge, 47 hectares, which will be developed to complement Uxbridge town centre and provide over 1,200 additional homes. The redevelopment of the site is not expected to be complete until 2019 and the housing development will take place between 2013 and 2019.

The former National Air Traffic Services (NATS) site at West Drayton is also a large regeneration site of over 13 hectares. The site provides an opportunity to create a large, mixed tenure development of some 775 new homes, to be completed by 2017.

We will deliver a programme of supported housing development over three years from 2011/12, including an initial 126 units, based on the redevelopment of Council owned sites and supported by a successful funding bid to the Homes and Communities Agency. The development of supported housing will allow the Council to reduce dependence on residential care. Supported housing will provide independent living with additional care and/or support services provided either on site or on a "floating support" basis. Development will be funded largely by borrowing which will be paid from HRA rental streams over a 40 year period.

This programme represents just over half of the 422 units required to meet the expected need for supported housing over the three year period. The remaining homes will be provided as a result of working in partnership with housing associations and at no cost to the Council.

Government funding for affordable housing

The level of grant available to fund affordable housing for 2011 to 2015 has fallen substantially compared with the previous four year spending review period. In London, this means a drop from £3.7bn 2008-11 to a planned investment of £1.8bn 2011-15.

In order to maintain a level of investment in social housing, the Government has introduced a new approach as well as a new tenure, referred to as Affordable Rent which is expected to help fill the gap. Housing associations and Councils who develop new housing can charge up to 80% of market rents. They can then use the extra income to pay for additional borrowing. [No grant is available when affordable housing is built as a condition of planning permission.]

Rare amongst local authorities, Hillingdon Council has successfully bid and received funding for our supported housing programme, a condition of which is that the Affordable Rent model will apply to the homes built. Rents are therefore likely to be set at between 60% and 80% of market rents.

The Council has also received an allocation of £1.12m New Homes Bonus for 2012/13. This scheme rewards local authorities for increasing housing supply. Authorities are awarded a financial bonus equal to the national average for the Council tax band for each net additional property on the Council tax valuation list. This is paid for the following six years. An enhancement is added for additional affordable homes. We will explore the ways in which the New Homes Bonus may be used to support the delivery of further new affordable homes.

The Affordable Rent regime in Hillingdon

The Council's Tenancy Strategy explains how the freedoms and flexibilities in the Localism Act 2011 will be used in Hillingdon. The impact of the new Affordable Rent model is a major consideration. The Council shares the concern of the housing sector in London about the model's affordability by those most in housing need, particularly when rents are set at or around the upper limit allowed by the Affordable Rent regime.

Housing providers have said that they will deliver fewer homes as a result of reduced funding through the Affordable Rent regime. This situation will be made worse if rent levels are lower than 80% of market rent as providers will have to reduce the number of homes they provide or require more subsidy. (The section on affordability in section 5 of the strategy has more detail on this.)

The effect is a reduction in the provision of new homes and as a consequence pressure from the increased cost of bed and breakfast accommodation. As a result, there is a balance to be found between delivering homes that are affordable and maximising the number of affordable homes built. That balance appears to be at a level where 40% of net income should be the maximum spent on rent by any household but subsidy would be required for larger homes.

Affordable Rent was introduced to generate additional borrowing capacity to support the provision of new homes. The additional borrowing capacity will come from higher rents for new build developments and from the conversion of existing properties to higher rents. Restricting the level of rents that housing providers can charge and restricting conversions of existing properties to Affordable Rent would therefore be restricting borrowing capacity and in turn the delivery of affordable housing.

In terms of generating capacity within Hillingdon's own stock, Affordable Rent is an opportunity to support more borrowing to deliver more homes. The ability to do this is controlled by the GLA in London. Only providers that have signed contracts which include conversions to Affordable Rent can do so at present, but the desire to do so in the future can be discussed with the GLA. There is an assumption that proceeds from Affordable Rent conversions should produce further Affordable Rent properties.

Consultation to obtain views on the Affordable Rents regime will be part of the process of consultation and approval for the Housing Strategy.

Tenancy Strategy

The Localism Act 2011 provides new opportunities for local authorities and registered housing providers to meet housing needs in more flexible ways and ensure that suitable affordable housing is available to those who need it most. These new opportunities include the discretion to offer 'fixed term tenancies' for new social housing tenants rather than the 'lifetime' tenancies that are currently offered. At the end of the fixed term, the household's circumstances will be reviewed by the landlord and if they still need the accommodation, their tenancy can be renewed.

The Act also requires local authorities to develop a Tenancy Strategy to guide registered social housing providers in developing tenancy policies for their own stock. Hillingdon's tenancy strategy provides guidance to shape social landlords' policies to use these new fixed term tenancies in a positive and constructive way.

The overall aim of the strategy is to ensure that social housing is targeted to those that need it, for as long as they need it. The Council supports the use of fixed term tenancies, following on from probationary tenancies. The Council's expectation is for a minimum of a five year fixed term tenancy to be offered to most households. There are some circumstances where a shorter term is acceptable, but these are exceptional. Fixed term tenancies should be reissued at the end of the term unless there is a significant change of circumstances. A clear, transparent review and appeals process should be in place and understood by tenants at the start of their tenancies.

The strategy sets out the Council's preferences for minimum tenancy periods for households in specific circumstances, including

- Households with a disabled household member (adult or child)
- Families with children
- Single households and childless couples of working age
- Older people (people over working age)

Register housing providers must have regard to these preferences when designing their tenancy policy.

Managing the supply of new homes – what we intend to do

- Work with housing associations and developers to deliver new homes, including affordable homes
- Ensure that 100% of new affordable general needs homes built by housing associations in Hillingdon are let for the first time to households on the Council's housing register

- Ensure that 75% of affordable general needs homes built by housing associations in Hillingdon are let for the second and subsequent times to households on the Council's housing register
- Ensure that all residential developments are designed to include "Lifetime Homes" principles so that they can be readily adapted to meet the needs of those with disabilities and older people. 10% of homes should be wheelchair accessible or easily adaptable to wheelchair accessibility .
- On sites with a capacity of ten or more homes, ensure that at least 35% of all new homes are affordable, with an tenure mix of 70% housing for social rent and 30% intermediate housing
- Plan the redevelopment of RAF Uxbridge to include over 1,200 additional homes to be built before 2019.
- Plan the redevelopment of the NATS site to provide 775 new homes by 2017.
- Ensure that all new homes are built to high standards of design
- Continue to make planned savings in the use of residential care for people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, people with mental health problems by extending the range of supported housing options available in the Borough
- Deliver supported housing in the Borough for older people, people with learning disabilities and people with physical disabilities

Section 9 Managing supply – Existing homes

Introduction

We want all homes in all tenures to be warm, in a good state of repair, safe and free from risks to the occupants.

The better insulated a home is, the more energy efficient it is. The Council's aim is to reduce the carbon footprint of housing in the Borough – about 27% of all carbon emissions on a national basis. More importantly, reduced fuel use results in lower energy bills for residents.

We will encourage professional and consistent high management standards in both public and private sector housing.

Private sector housing

Our 2008 private sector stock condition survey estimated that 84% of the private-sector housing stock is owner-occupied and a further 16% is private rented. The most common type of property is the semi-detached house at 37% of the stock. Flats account for around 21% of the stock.

The stock is heavily concentrated in the 1919-1944 age band with only 4.4% being built before 1919, compared with a national figure of 25%.

Just under 1,800 private sector homes were vacant. Of these just under a third (30.6%) were vacant for over 6 months.

27% of homes in the private sector failed the Government's Decent Homes standard. This figure compares favourably with a national figure of 37.5%. The main reason for non-decency was a low level thermal comfort. Housing with high levels of 'non-decency' included private rented and vacant homes. Households more commonly living in non-decent housing were lone parents and single pensioners, special needs and vulnerable households.

We will update our information on private sector stock condition during the life of this strategy.

Private rented sector

The proportion of homes in the Borough rented from a private sector landlord in Hillingdon was 8.4% in 2001 according to the Population Census and rose to an estimated 16% in 2008 (Hillingdon Private Sector Stock Condition Survey). The proportion of owner-occupied homes fell to an estimated 69% of stock from 72.1 % in 2001, and illustrates the gradual move away from owner occupation identified in London and nationally.

The private rented sector has had an increasingly important role in providing accommodation for a range of different household groups. To help promote good practice we will encourage landlords to become members of the London

Landlords Accreditation Scheme so that they can demonstrate that they manage and maintain their properties to a good standard, providing their tenants with safe and high quality accommodation. Landlords are expected to show that they have undergone suitable training and fully understand their legal obligations and responsibilities to the community.

We know that management standards can vary considerably between landlords and managing agents. We will continue to take action to promote improvement as well as ensure that we only work in partnership with landlords/agents who are able to offer high standards of management and accommodation.

Empty homes

Empty properties represent neglect, financial expense and a missed opportunity. They can be an eyesore, encourage fly tipping, illegal occupation and general anti-social behaviour.

Less than 1% of residential properties in Hillingdon are vacant at any time for more than six months. Of these, some 160 have been empty for five years or more.

We aim to:

- enable empty property to be brought back into residential use
- give incentives for owners of empty property to bring it back into residential use and provide additional homes for homeless households
- retrofit empty homes with energy efficient and renewable measures to help tackle fuel poverty, reduce carbon emissions and combat climate change

Our strategy is focused on reducing long-term empty properties—vacant for more than six months—by a combination of sustained contact and advice to owners and use of appropriate enforcement powers as a last resort. We will continue to make a priority of the empty homes that have been vacant for over 3 years or are causing a nuisance to the local community.

We maintain an empty property register, liaise with owners, registered social landlords, estate agents and contractors and maintain a partnership group bringing together key stakeholders.

We have a staged approach in dealing with empty properties:

- Inspect properties after referral.
- Provide advice to identified owners on the options available.
- If there is no response, inspect and discuss with neighbours before considering enforcement
- Grants and loans are used to bring properties back into use and improve energy efficiency by reducing carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty
- Incentives to let are used including offering a fully managed tenancy for

two to five years with a guaranteed rental income, through Council or housing association private leasing schemes; advance incentive payments in place of deposits are used too

- Helping housing associations and developers to buy, renovate and re-let empty private properties
- Demolition or conversion where justified
- Court action and enforced sales
- Empty dwelling management orders
- Compulsory purchase orders as a very last resort when all else fails

With partner Boroughs in West London we will receive £2.7m funding during 2012-15 for empty property work. Hillingdon's share amounts to £600,000. The funding is from the Homes and Communities Agency and its use will be monitored by the London Housing Board

Enforcement

We will continue to take action on decent homes and disrepair, environmental health, fire and safety standards and planning compliance. In 2011/12 we made 277 homes decent and brought 394 HMOs up to our minimum standard over the same period.

Multi occupancy homes

Most Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) cause no problems, and it is accepted that they provide housing for single people who may not be able to afford other types of accommodation. However, growth in their numbers has brought more complaints, especially about over-concentration, noise and anti-social behaviour.

Our aim is to ensure that all HMOs are :

- in satisfactory condition
- have adequate means of escape in case of fire
- are safe to live in
- have sufficient bathrooms
- have sufficient kitchens
- have sufficient space and are not overcrowded

The Council has made a direction under article 4 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Permitted Development Order)1995 to limit the growth of HMOs in Uxbridge South and Brunel wards. This means that from 2013 planning permission must be sought before a property can be converted to multiple occupancy. The aim is to limit the already high concentration of HMOs in a small area.

We will continue to operate both mandatory and additional HMO licensing schemes in order to drive up and maintain management standards.

Improving homes

We will provide a range of private sector renewal grants for homes in disrepair, houses in multiple occupation, empty properties, energy efficiency and heating. We will concentrate our resources on the cross-cutting aims of making homes decent, preventing homelessness and helping the most vulnerable households.

For HMOs and empty homes, works arising from enforcement action take priority. We can give bigger grants in return for the right to nominate tenants. For home owners, the focus is essential works to help older, vulnerable, low-income households. Grants must be repaid if the property is sold within five years.

Essential repair grants are available to older owner occupiers and those in receipt of certain benefits to keep their homes in good repair. If a home has a one or more category 1 hazards, as measured by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) a grant may be available to the owner. Grants have been made for roofs, burst pipes and boiler repair and replacement. We intend to develop closer joint working with clinical commissioning groups better to target grants through joint campaigns to keep people safe and warm at home and, ultimately, prevent health and social care expenditure.

Energy efficiency

Domestic buildings produce over a quarter of the UK's carbon dioxide emissions. At the same time, one in 25 households - equivalent to about 4,000 in Hillingdon - are fuel poor, with over 10% of their income going on heat and other home energy. But the typical household wastes a third of its energy, largely through poor insulation and inefficient heating.

The link between fuel poverty and ill health is well documented. Medical conditions made worse by fuel poverty include asthma and respiratory diseases. It is an important contributory factor in early winter deaths. Also, at a time of ever increasing energy costs, energy efficiency works can reduce energy bills for all residents.

One of the objectives in the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2009/12 is to reduce the emissions associated with existing housing through improving energy efficiency to contribute to the London target for residential property emissions reduction of 60% by 2025.

Our private sector research confirms that just over half of the homes in the Borough have cavity walls, but nearly two thirds of them have no cavity insulation. Most homes have at least some double glazing. Most homes have loft insulation, but less than 5% have 200mm or more. The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the Government recommended system for home energy rating, with a scale of 1 to 100 (higher score means more energy efficient). The average SAP rating for private sector homes was 56, up from 50 in 2001 and indicating that improvements have been made. Our current target is to raise the average SAP rating to 62. Much of the

improvement achieved has been attributed to our continued programme of work to insulate lofts and cavity walls and upgrade heating boilers. We aim to increase the proportion of cavity walled properties with insulation to 75% and solid wall properties with insulation to 20%. Our loft insulation target is 30% insulated with 200mm or more of insulating material. Through reduced energy costs these improvements have also helped to reduce fuel poverty.

Our strategy has been and will continue to be to seek out resources for energy efficiency work and to ensure that we secure value for money for residents by gaining maximum output from the funding available. Partnership working with housing associations, private landlords and utility companies has been key to the success of this strategy.

We have been successful over a number of years in securing funding from available sources, such as the GLA, for energy efficiency measures targeted at specific areas where the housing stock performs poorly or households which are vulnerable or on low incomes.

The Energy Act 2011 includes a new Green Deal to improve the energy efficiency of homes funded by a charge on energy bills that avoids the need for consumers to pay upfront costs. The Act also ensures that from April 2016, private landlords will not be able to refuse a tenant's reasonable request for consent to energy efficiency improvements where a finance package, such as the Green Deal or the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is available. ECO will work alongside Green Deal funding by targeting appropriate measures at those households likely to need additional support – in particular those containing vulnerable people on low incomes and in hard-to-treat housing. The Home Energy Conservation Act remains in force and local authorities may receive new obligations under this legislation in 2012.

We are currently assessing how best we can support local residents and landlords to benefit from the Green Deal when it is introduced. Action by local authorities can range from a role as a promoter and provider of information through to a more active role in supplying loans and undertaking necessary works. We will work with the GLA and other London Boroughs to ensure the successful introduction of the Green Deal in London.

The London wide **Re-NEW** scheme coordinated by the GLA aims to deliver energy and water savings improvements to some of the least energy efficient homes in all tenures in Charville and Hillingdon East wards in the Borough. The Council is working to ensure that households get the maximum benefit from the scheme by coordinating with other initiatives.

Funding associated with the **Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT)** will be available from energy suppliers to provide grants to help pay for energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies.

The **Community Energy Savings Programme (CESP)** provides energy company funding for energy efficiency measure in six low income areas in the

Borough. The approach tackles the energy efficiency of the whole property, and the programme will close by the end of 2012.

Council housing

The Council manages 10,342 rented homes plus an additional 2,924 flats sold with a long lease under the right to buy. 74% of the stock are houses, bungalows and low rise flats, with 21% mid-rise flats (over three and less than six storeys) and 5% high rise flats (over six storeys.) The stock is relatively new – 77% was built after 1945. Most of it was built using traditional construction methods, with less than 2% built using non-traditional forms. In general, the stock is of good design and sound construction.

The HRA reforms brought into force in 2012 have seen the end of negative subsidy and provided a new focus for Council housing where we are now able to use all the rent collected to invest in existing and new housing stock. This in itself brings new challenges and risks that will be managed over the coming years. The functions of Hillingdon Homes, the Council's arms length management organisation (ALMO) have been brought back under Council control and there is a focus on reducing costs in the HRA to ensure the maximum resource is available for investment in the housing stock.

The Council is the largest landlord in the Borough and we are convinced of the importance of continuing to invest in Council owned homes. We will ensure that they are well maintained and that they continue to meet the Decent Homes standard. Our HRA Asset Management Strategy is based on an objective appraisal of the stock to determine how investment should be made. The five key asset management challenges identified in the strategy have been costed over ten years. They are:

Property compliance – essential work on electrical and fire safety.

There is a continuing revenue funded programme to carry out remedial building work in flats and shared areas. We will carry out more work on flat entrance doors, fire doors in sheltered housing and periodic electrical inspections. Further work will be undertaken as funding is available to upgrade smoke alarms, accelerate the refurbishment of lifts in tower blocks and provide remote monitoring of faults. Quality assurance of servicing contracts for fire protection and independent audit of electrical work are included in this work.

Maintaining the Decent Homes standard.

We have already ensured that the social housing provided by the Council met the Government's Decent Homes Standards two years in advance of the target. We are structuring our future investment programme to maintain decency as homes deteriorate over time owing to age or disrepair.

Support for independence

We have identified the provision of extra care and other forms of supported housing for older people and other adults as critical to reducing reliance on residential care and developing independence. There is also a continuing

need to adapt properties to meet the needs of household members with disabilities. We will ensure that existing Council homes are available and accessible to people with disabilities whatever their choice of care and support provision.

We are in the process of delivering a programme of supported housing using the Council's own resources.

Energy efficiency

The energy efficiency of the stock in general is good, with an average SAP 2005 rating of 66 (as at March 2011). There is more that we can do to improve the energy rating and reduce the cost of home heating. This is important as a high proportion of tenants are older and a high proportion are on low incomes. Our approach is to make sure that the fabric of the building is as efficient as possible before we look at other solutions such as photovoltaic panels. We will also ensure that heating and hot water is provided as efficiently as possible. We will investigate coordinating work on Council housing and private sector homes to determine how best to access Government programme funding for some of the improvement measures we want to take.

A decent home in a decent place

The shared spaces that are part of the Council housing estate and make the environment a pleasant place to live are essential to the wellbeing of tenants and the community. Estate improvements have been under funded in the past. This is a significant challenge, following on from our delivery of the decent homes programme.

We intend to take the opportunity to pilot estate improvements through investment in better lighting, fencing and security, repairing or removing sheds and garage blocks, remodelling drying areas, planting and landscaping and repair and redecoration. Our aim is to achieve *lifetime neighbourhoods*.

A **Lifetime Neighbourhood** is one in which civic and social processes – such as transport planning, information and advice provision and social networking – together with physical conditions achieve the following outcomes :

- ✓ An environment that is accessible and inclusive, aesthetically pleasing and safe in terms of both traffic and crime
- ✓ A community that offers plenty of services, facilities and open space
- ✓ A strong social and civic fabric including volunteering and informal networks
- ✓ A culture of consultation and user empowerment among decision makers
- ✓ A strong local identity and sense of place

The Glebe Estate Initiative

In 2008, the Council successfully bid for £1,350,000 funding from the London Development Agency to improve the Glebe estate in West Drayton. The Council was also required to contribute funding, and is doing so from its housing capital programme. This project is part of the Decent Estates Initiative, to provide a “Decent Home in a Decent place” by improving the environment and quality of life for residents. Planned are better security and reduced anti-social behaviour, improved accessibility and play facilities.

The four year programme is about to enter its final year and so far has achieved:-

- Two brand new playgrounds in derelict garage areas. Butterfly Park is for children aged 7 and under, and Cool Zone is for 7 – 12 year olds. The names were chosen by children on the estate in a competition, and they also chose the type of play equipment they wanted. Both playgrounds contain very innovative and stimulating equipment, aimed at including all children, regardless of ability or disability. They were opened at Easter 2011, and have been a huge success.
- Improvement of an existing grassed area, which is now an all-weather ball court for football, basketball, and tennis. This was opened by the Mayor in July 2010. There is also a landscaped family area next to it.
- Demolition of the majority of garages on the estate, most of which were empty and derelict. Provision of three new car parks.
- New street lighting to the six former garage areas
- Improved security to the estate’s 18 blocks of flats/ maisonettes by providing locked gates and upgraded lighting, and new front and rear communal doors. 7 are completed, and the remaining 11 will have works later in 2012.
- Other works to the blocks have included the extension of bin stores and provision of recycling facilities in order to reduce refuse collections from twice weekly to once a week (residents had to pay extra for the second collection as it is not funded out of their Council tax); the renewal of fragile asbestos shed roofs in the rear garden areas; and the improvement of accessibility to the blocks – particularly for people with disabilities, the elderly, and mothers with young children.
- Reduction of carbon emissions on the estate by helping residents to lower their fuel bills. There have been two energy efficiency education projects, involving adults and children. The current one, run by Thames Valley Groundwork, is being run in co-ordination with local schools.

We have held a series of open evenings with those residents affected, to find out their views, and have also regularly attended the meetings of the Tenants and Residents’ Association to discuss the scope of works, show them plans and drawings, and update them on progress. We have also enjoyed attending the estate’s annual Fun Day to talk to residents.

Reform of Council housing finance

The Localism Act 2011 included plans for bringing in the mandatory self-financing regime to replace the HRA subsidy system. The new regime provides opportunities but comes with significant risks including those associated with the repayment of new and existing debt. Each local authority will, in effect, be running a housing company funded by rents and charges rather than a housing service funded by Government allowances and subsidies.

The Council has acquired £191.6m of national housing debt in return for retaining all rental income, thus saving around £15m per year for 2012/13, rising to £25m in future years. In addition, a borrowing cap has been set that gives the HRA a headroom capacity of £47m for new housing development.

We will prepare a thirty year business plan to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the new regime. The capital programme within the HRA has been developed against this backdrop.

Council housing management

In addition to maintaining the condition of the housing stock, we will continue to improve our delivery of the housing management service, focusing on

- Ensuring tenants and leaseholders are involved in how their homes are managed
- Collecting the rent and service charges
- Keeping housing estates clean and attractive
- Tackling nuisance, crime and harassment
- Providing extra support to help vulnerable tenants sustain their homes

We will further develop our joint inspections with tenants and local housing associations in areas where there are multiple social landlords.

Tenancy fraud

Hillingdon takes social housing fraud very seriously with a number of initiatives recently introduced in order to tackle this problem further.

We have a unit based in our Corporate Fraud Team which was set up specifically to combat unauthorised occupation. We have a 24 hour fraud hotline and web page for members of the public to report their suspicions. We are also matching our housing tenancy information with information from other organisations including housing associations and credit reference agencies. Since being established in 2010, the new fraud unit has recovered 26 properties which have since been relet to households in genuine housing need.

Each year we will carry out an audit of a third of our Council tenancies in order to make sure properties are occupied by legitimate tenants. While we are

conducting so many visits, we will also take the opportunity to identify cases where tenants may need help with their tenancy or with their home and will offer to arrange appropriate help. We will also extend this work into fraud in temporary accommodation.

Landlord scrutiny

Tenants and local Councillors will play an important role in scrutinising the plans and activities of social landlords. We are looking at how this will be organised in Hillingdon. The Council's Policy Overview Committee will continue its role in reviewing service delivery

From April 2013 Councillors will have a designated role under the Localism Act in receiving and considering requests to submit complaints to the Housing Ombudsman once a local tenant of either the Council or a housing association has exhausted the internal complaints process.

We will encourage tenants to play their part and equip tenants to perform the role of, for example, inspector or mystery shopper.

Helping tenants into work

The profile of Council tenants is slowly changing, but the majority are aged over 60 and for the most part retired. 65% of tenants receive housing benefit.

The Training Initiative for Leaseholders and Tenants (TILT) was developed to support the Government's agenda on 'worklessness' and builds on partnership working. We have been running workplace skills training for tenants for the past three years and the courses have been popular and consistently oversubscribed.

Included are career coaching, job search skills, CV preparation, motivational and interview skills and four weeks of work placement that could lead to employment. The one-to-one support provided helps guide the candidates through the programme. The programme has been very successful. So far we have been able to offer training and work placements to 21 tenants, of whom nine have successfully secured employment. We intend to maintain and develop the service.

Council tenants' right to buy

The Government has expressed its commitment to reinvigorating the Right to Buy scheme, to boost home ownership and to increase funds for new house building.

The Right to Buy scheme was introduced in 1980 and gives qualifying social housing tenants the right to buy their home at a discount. In London the discount was reduced to a maximum of £16,000 in 2003. Both nationally and locally, sales have fallen in recent years with only 13 homes sold under the Right to Buy in Hillingdon in 2010/11 with a further 7 in 2011/12.

The maximum discount has been raised to £75,000 in London and nationwide from April 2012. A key element of the policy is that some of the funds from sold homes can be used by local authorities to invest in building replacement homes.

Hillingdon's Council housing tenancy policy

Our tenancy policy sets out the details of how the Council (in its landlord role) will apply the principles set out in the Tenancy Strategy for the Borough to Council housing tenancies.

Our aim is to provide a high quality housing management service to prospective and current tenants. We will respond effectively to the demands placed on our limited social housing resource and make best use of our stock to ensure it meets existing and future tenants' needs. Tenants should have the right home for as long as they need it.

Our homes are let at rents that are lower than those charged by private landlords or by registered providers for Affordable Rent homes and that means that people have fewer worries about their housing costs and can focus instead on the other things that help them succeed – like training and employment, developing independent living skills and being part of the community.

As people get older they need more support to remain independent and our sheltered and extra care housing can provide it. Some of our homes have significant adaptations to enable disabled people to live independently. Adaptations are expensive and demand for them is growing so we want to ensure that every adapted home is occupied by someone who needs the special features.

Family homes are particularly in demand so we would prefer that they are always occupied by families who need the space they provide. However, stability and the right home are particularly important to children - we want to help children to have an uninterrupted education and upbringing in a decent home. Council owned housing provides those on a low income and who cannot afford other housing options in the Borough with the stability they need. Households with a combined income which indicates that they can afford a different housing tenure will be expected to move on and release the property for someone who does not have the same options.

Our policy takes all of these considerations into account and contains the following key provisions:

- Existing social tenancies will be protected and remain unchanged from their current status
- The introduction of minimum five year fixed term tenancies for new tenants following a one year introductory tenancy
- Shorter terms in some exceptional circumstances

- Renewal of fixed term tenancies unless there has been a significant change in circumstances
- Minimum tenancy periods for households in specific circumstances, including households with a disabled household member, families with children, single households and childless couples of working age and older people
- Changes to first and discretionary second succession to a tenancy.

Supporting tenants to move

We will continue to take action to reduce overcrowding and under occupation in social rented housing.

Our Home Release Reward Scheme will continue to offer incentives to tenants who give up one bedroom or more to move to a smaller sized property and release their larger home for another family in need. 85 family sized homes were made available by the scheme in 2010/11 with a further 88 during 2011/12.

Room2Move offers a range of options including prioritised mutual exchange and help with a deposit to rent in the private sector. 100 overcrowded tenants were helped in 2011/12.

We will take part in the Mayor of London's pan London mobility scheme which prioritises under occupiers and helps social tenants to move in order to find employment

Working in partnership with housing associations

Stock condition

Disrepair is less of an issue in this sector than it is within the private sector. In 2008 around 8% of housing association homes were recorded as having a Category 1 Hazard, lower than the level found in the private sector. The energy efficiency profile of housing association homes is good with high levels of insulation and efficient heating systems. The average SAP rating is better than found in the private sector. 15% of housing association homes were found to be non-decent; again, noticeably lower than the finding for the private sector.

We have developed a formal partnership with all of the key housing associations providing affordable housing and housing related support in Hillingdon. In partnership we focus on a continuous improvement of current services as well as working to address larger strategic housing issues. 22 associations have joined the partnership and agreed an area housing plan to make the best use of housing in the Borough.

Registered housing providers such as housing associations must have regard to the Council's Tenancy Strategy. It is important that all local social housing providers manage their tenancies to best meet the requirements of the area.

The strategy outlines the type and length of tenancies appropriate for Hillingdon.

Managing the supply of existing homes – what we intend to do

- Improve the worst housing conditions in the private rented sector
- Continue to license an additional 80 HMOs annually
- Update information on stock condition in the private sector
- Accredite 30 private sector landlords annually
- Limit the high concentration of HMOs in Uxbridge South and Brunel wards.
- Use HCA funding allocation to bring empty property back into use as affordable housing
- Continue our work to reduce fuel poverty by accessing funding for energy efficiency measures
- Reduce the carbon footprint of housing in the Borough
- Improve energy efficiency to contribute to the London target for residential property emissions reduction of 60% by 2025.
- Increase the average SAP rating of private housing to 62, the proportion of insulated cavity walls to 75%, the proportion of insulated solid walls to 20% and the proportion of properties with at least 200mm of loft insulation to 30%.
- Implement work on Council housing and estates to meet the five key challenges we have identified
- Develop a long term HRA business plan in 2012 to access the opportunities available and safeguard against risk.
- Increase mobility and reduce the level of overcrowding in social rented housing.
- Work with housing associations to ensure that management standards are consistent
- Identify and eliminate Council housing fraud
- Identify struggling Council tenants and offer help to sustain tenancies

- Ensure tenants are fully involved in the landlord scrutiny process and the provision of their housing.

Section 10 Managing support

Introduction

Some people need extra support to help them retain their own home in the community. We commission or directly provide accommodation and services to help people stay independent for as long as possible.

As part of our radical programme of building new supported housing in Hillingdon, the Council is more committed than ever to provide low, medium and high level support to people as part of specialist accommodation or as floating support delivered to people wherever they live.

The financial resources available to support the purchase of these services are shrinking and are likely to shrink further over the life of this strategy but we are committed to maintaining the same level of service by finding more efficient ways to commission and contract with external providers as well as finding more efficient ways to deliver Council services.

Register of social housing for people with disabilities

We provide grant funding for adaptations to properties so that people with a disability can live there more independently. It is also important that properties that have been specially adapted in this way are always occupied by households with a similar need.

With the aim of ensuring that adapted properties are always relet to a household with appropriate needs, we will work with housing associations to introduce a disabled housing register to make better use of the social housing stock and provide a better service for residents.

Support to stay at home

Housing related support can help people become more independent or remain independent in their own home. It can make it possible for vulnerable people to leave, or avoid going into, residential care or hospital.

For those people with lower support needs, our emphasis is on community-based solutions - independent tenancies with support tailored to people's needs.

- **Floating support** services provide help with managing a budget and paying bills, cleaning, cooking and getting on with the neighbours.
- **Handyperson** services help older people to get minor repairs completed
- **TeleCareLine** helps hundreds of people with a variety of needs to stay in their own homes, by making sure that they can get help if they need it in an emergency
- **Support at home** in the form of a reablement service for a few weeks for older people who have just come out of hospital

Supported housing

We provide or commission specialist housing for people who need support to live in the community but who do not need to live in residential care.

In Hillingdon we currently have a range of supported housing for different client groups with plans to dramatically increase this over the next few years. We plan to provide additional units of supported accommodation over the next three years to meet identified need.

The Council's first purpose built extra care schemes are Cottesmore House in Ickenham (in partnership with Paradigm Housing Association) and Triscott House in Hayes. Together they provide 95 extra care places for older people, including people with learning or physical disabilities.

The supported housing programme will provide accommodation for different client groups and different situations – meeting a range of needs in the process. Some people require longer term accommodation; others need short-medium term support as part of a process of moving onto more independent living. We also retain supported housing for women experiencing domestic violence, teenage mothers, offenders and those with substance abuse problems.

Supported housing works and offers real alternatives to institutional forms of living such as residential care. Supported housing also prevents homelessness and helps to ensure that people retain the care and support they need to live well behind their own front door. We will work to promote the benefits of supported housing to potential tenants, including those who may transfer from residential care, providing information and support for them and their families.

Older people

Over the next ten years there is a projected 27% increase in the number of residents aged 85 and over living in the Borough. We need to look at how the Borough will be equipped to meet these needs, particularly in the housing sector.

There are 21 Council owned sheltered housing schemes providing 841 homes for older people. Housing associations own and manage a further 204 units of sheltered housing.

Working in partnership with tenants, we are reviewing Council owned sheltered housing to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of older people. The review will take into account services provided to tenants with the highest needs as well as the needs of older people who are not residents of sheltered housing. We are also looking to develop more extra care sheltered accommodation with 24 hour care and support provided on site, following the provision of our first two schemes.

Increased extra care provision for people with dementia is part of the Council's supported housing programme.

We will also encourage the development of private sector extra care accommodation for sale.

Information on housing choices should be easily available for older people and we will ensure that housing information is part of the care information systems developed by the Council for older people. These will include *Careplace*, a centralised on line resource of care services information in West London. By using it residents and their families can find out about care and support services available in the area.

People with physical disabilities

There are 31 flats at Grooms Court which provide a low level of support for people with physical disabilities. We currently plan to develop a further 6 homes with a high level of support as part of our supported housing programme. Our aim is to encourage the supply of adapted units which can accommodate disabled people and, if necessary, their live in carers. The programme will provide 50 supported housing units for people with physical disabilities.

People with physical disabilities, including those leaving residential care, who apply for social housing will be matched where possible with suitably adapted properties from the register of housing for people with disabilities.

People with learning disabilities

There are 42 existing places in five housing schemes providing a range of provision for people who have learning disabilities. Up to 30 people who have been living in residential placements outside the Borough will have the opportunity to live in new accommodation back in Hillingdon provided as part of the supported housing programme.

There are 13 registered care homes in the Borough provided by the third sector for people with learning disabilities. The intention is that these will be deregistered to become supported housing schemes, thus ensuring far greater independence and more fulfilling lives for residents.

We currently plan to provide 181 places in eleven new supported housing developments which will be built by the Council and in another three built by partner housing associations.

Children and young people

There are currently two voluntary sector organisations which provide non self-contained accommodation and floating support for 228 young people and care leavers in the Borough. As private sector rented accommodation has become

more difficult to access, young people may spend longer in hostel accommodation before suitable housing is available for them to move in to.

We will examine the need for more accommodation based support for young people with complex needs, particularly for care leavers who are over 18 and young people at risk. We will review existing private housing stock to identify those landlords who might be able to meet the need of care leavers.

We are committed to increasing the number of foster parents in the Borough. People who become foster parents or those fostering who wish to increase the number of children they foster are prioritised for appropriate social housing.

We will review the service “pathway” for mothers and children who experience domestic violence and need to be rehoused in settled accommodation.

Children leaving care being housed by the Council will benefit from a range of advice and assistance from the housing service. This will help to ensure that care leavers are supported to manage the transition to independent living and that they benefit from guidance on a range of areas including bidding for properties using LOCATA, moving into a Council home, budgeting and staying independent by successfully managing their tenancy.

People with mental health needs

The supply of housing services for people with a mental health related problem is being remodelled and expanded. A 24-hour long term care and support accommodation-based service is provided by Look Ahead Housing and Care for people with complex needs. It has a capacity of 31 (increasing to 32 in 2013) self-contained units and is being remodelled to be much more personalised. In 2013 Council funding of the 'core' service is expected to reduce, when users will be able to purchase complimentary 'flexi' services through their personal budget.

Two supported housing services are being transferred to Hestia Housing Support in 2012. They have a total capacity of 32 and will be remodelled to be delivered more on a short term 'floating' basis and on different buildings where most of the units will be self-contained. Hestia also provides a Borough-wide floating support service to 66 clients.

We plan to provide an additional 55 units of supported housing over the three years to 2015.

Adapting existing homes

Adaptations to existing homes can help people in a number of ways. They can help people remain independent and stay in their own home rather than be forced to consider residential care. They can make it possible for vulnerable people to leave hospital much earlier than would be the case otherwise. They can help parents ensure that their disabled child is provided with a safe and manageable environment.

Funded jointly by the Government and the Council, Disabled Facilities Grants can pay for adaptations up to £30,000 and the Council has the discretion to top them up. There were aids and adaptations for 215 private sector homes in 2011/12. Exceptionally, if adaptations are impossible, we can use our powers to help buy a more suitable home.

We have also adapted 120 Council owned homes in 2011/12 and have a target of 215 adaptations in 2012/13 reflecting an increase in funding from the HRA from £750,000 to £1.4m.

Housing benefit service

In 2011/12 Hillingdon's Benefit Service paid £138m in Housing Benefit to 7,500 Council, 4,700 Housing Association and 8,400 private tenants. Just over 20% of Hillingdon households receive Housing Benefit. The service dealt with 10,644 benefit claims and 81,239 changes to claims, and had face to face interviews with 21,976 customers. In addition, the Corporate Contact Centre dealt with 63,907 telephone calls and 33,685 enquiries at the Council's main reception and One Stop in relation to Housing and Council Tax Benefit.

In early 2012 we piloted a new service in response to feedback from benefit applicants. The service provides active assistance in the form of a personal adviser to help new benefit claimants complete their claim. In short, the adviser calls the applicant and completes the form with them online. This is followed by a face to face interview where the claim is verified and signed, with the benefit calculation fully explained to the applicant. The new system has reduced the turnaround time for claims by more than half and has proved to be popular with residents. The new system was rolled out for the majority of new claims at the end of May 2012.

Use of new information technology has been optimised to improve the Benefits service for new applicants and eliminate the completion and scanning of paper forms.

For the future we will continue to work closely with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to implement the changes to Housing Benefits and the migration to Universal Credit and Pension Credit. We will support residents and new applicants through the changes in process and benefit payments until full migration to DWP is complete in 2017/18.

The administration of the Welfare Assistance Fund will be transferred to the Council in April 2013 and we will set local criteria for eligibility for payment.

We will work closely with Council Tax colleagues to implement the new localised Council Tax Support Scheme and will administer this alongside Housing Benefit in order to support residents through the various benefit changes.

Details of the expected impact of benefit reform on local residents and of the likely migration from central to outer London Boroughs resulting from reform can be found in Section 7 : Managing Demand.

Managing support – what we intend to do

- Provide 422 units of supported accommodation for vulnerable groups as follows:

Learning disabilities	181
Physical disabilities	50
Mental health	55
Older people	136
Total	422

Source: LBH statistics

- Deliver advice and support to help people live independently
- Commission services to help people stay in their own homes
- Ensure that people supported at home have maximum choice and control over the services they receive – by April 2013, everyone eligible will have a personal budget.
- Provide aids and adaptations to households in both the private sector and in Council housing via a streamlined and more efficient service
- Maintain a register of disabled adapted social housing
- Review specialist accommodation such the Council's sheltered stock to make sure that it is what people want and makes best use of the Council's resources
- Roll out the assisted housing benefit claim service to all new claims and existing claims in 2013.

Section 11 Housing services in 2015

Introduction

The Housing Strategy sets out the action the Council intends to take with partners over the next three years. Set out below is what residents of the Borough can expect as a result of the strategy.

What can residents expect?

Homelessness prevention

- We will contact households renting in the private sector whom we know will be affected by changes to the Local Housing Allowance. Households who are affected by welfare reform, including the effect of the Universal Credit cap on their ability to meet private sector rents in the Borough, will be able to access timely and effective advice on their housing options.
- We will procure good quality affordable private rented accommodation for households who are at risk of homelessness. As the demand for such housing is strong, some households who approach the Council may find that the homes they need and can afford are available only outside the Borough.
- Use of temporary accommodation will be maintained at 2011/12 levels, or reduced further depending on the availability of suitable private sector rented properties to prevent homelessness.
- We have reviewed our social housing allocations policy in 2012, giving consideration to whether non-priority households should be able to apply for social housing. Our aim has been to make sure that more support will be available to those households in the greatest housing need.
- The register of adapted social rented housing in the Borough will be completed. When an adapted home is let to a new tenant, we will make sure that it is matched whenever possible with a household which needs an adapted home.
- We will have the option to discharge our statutory duty to house homeless households in the private rented sector rather than providing social rented housing

New housing provision

- An additional 422 units of supported accommodation will be available to support vulnerable people to live more independently in the community. Just over half will be provided by Council redevelopment of its own sites, and the remainder as a result of partnership working with housing associations.
- Over the period 2011/15, we have set a challenging target to reduce spending on institutional care from 51% of our budget in March 2011 to an average of 30% across all adult social care user groups.
- By April 2013 everyone who is eligible will receive a personal budget with which to pay for the care and support services they need. Housing support and social care services will be provided in a way that ensures choice and control for residents. This will mean choice about how services are provided and the ability to purchase independent support using personal budgets.
- Based on current plans and targets, more than 1,000 new homes will be built in the Borough to meet demand for market priced and affordable housing.
- New homes will be built to Lifetime Homes Standards and will therefore be suitable or easily adaptable to meet the current and changing needs of the families who live in them.
- Our Tenancy Strategy sets out how the flexibilities in the Localism Act 2011 will be used in Hillingdon.

Council housing

- More Council tenants will be able either to buy their home, move from their home to find work or move to a home of a size more suitable for their needs as a result of new or existing national, London or local initiatives.
- The roll out of the revised tenant involvement framework will provide increased opportunities for tenants to be involved in decisions affecting their homes and their neighbourhood. These will include an active role in scrutinising and improving landlord services in the Borough.
- Our Tenancy Policy sets out how the flexibilities in the Localism Act 2011 will be applied to Council owned housing in Hillingdon.
- We will audit a third of all Council tenancies annually to ensure that

properties are occupied by legitimate tenants.

- Over the next three years we plan to spend £26m on improving Council tenants' homes. The money will be spent on new boilers and energy efficiency measures, upgraded electrical installations, new windows, roofs and doors and new kitchens and bathrooms.
- Invest £7m to adapt properties so that a household member can live more independently at home with their family.
- Quality of life in and around Council housing, especially flats, will be improved. More investment is planned for shared spaces and areas around Council homes. Parking, paths, fences, garages, play areas and security measures, plus upgrades to the lifts at a number of tower blocks will see planned expenditure of £5m.

Private sector housing

- Increased partnership working will result in better standards of private rented accommodation in the Borough. We plan to accredit at least 90 more private sector landlords and licence 240 Houses in Multiple Occupation by 2015.
- Better insulation means better energy efficiency, reduced carbon emissions and reduced household expenditure on fuel. We will be working with the GLA to introduce the Government's Green Deal for householders in Hillingdon .
- The number of excess winter deaths in the Borough will be reduced in addition to a reduction in the number of low income and vulnerable households living in fuel poverty.
- Homes which have been unoccupied will be brought back into use to increase the stock of affordable housing – less than 1% of homes will remain empty for six months or more. We will be working with other West London Boroughs to invest HCA funding in this work.
- We will offer grants for essential property repairs to householders who own their own home but do not have the financial resources to maintain them, enabling them to continue to live independently at home.

Housing Benefit service

- Residents will be supported by a more efficient and user friendly benefits administration service. They will receive one to one help to complete application forms and will be able to refer to an advisor in

case of queries.

- We will set local criteria for the Welfare Assistance Fund and administer it locally from April 2013.
- The Housing Benefit Service will work closely with Department of Work and Pensions to ensure a smooth transition of Housing Benefit cases to Universal Credit, and support residents through the process.

Glossary

Affordable Housing

Housing which is subsidised so that it is affordable by households on an average income or below who are unable to afford housing at full market cost.

Affordable Rent

Affordable Rent homes are new social housing tenancies made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of the gross market rent.

Category 1 hazards

This is part of the HHSRS (see HHSRS) hazard rating. Local authorities are under a duty to take action in the case of category 1 hazards. There are 29 hazards in the HHSRS and Category 1 are the most serious.

Choice Based Letting Scheme (CBL)

A scheme introduced to provide an element of choice for people who apply for Council housing or housing association properties. Homes are advertised and applicants can bid for them.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

CCGs are intended to take on commissioning responsibilities as part of the Government's plans for the NHS set out in the 2012 Health and Social Care Act. The groups, made up of GPs and other medical professionals, will work together to manage their local budgets and buy health services for patients direct with other NHS colleagues and local authorities. Clinical commissioning groups will assume full responsibility for commissioning in April 2013 and will have control of approximately 80% of the NHS budget.

Core Strategy

Local Development Framework document upon which every other local development policy is based regarding development and use of land

Decent Homes Standard

A 10-year target was set with the aim of bringing all social housing up to a decent standard by 2010.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)

A local Council grant that helps towards the cost of adapting homes for disabled people, including disabled children.

Empty Property

A long term empty property has been empty for 6 months or more and is not for sale or subject to any legal processes.

Energy efficiency

Efficient use of energy which may result in saving money

Extra-care housing

Housing that allows people to remain independent while having access to care and support services if this is required to meet their needs.

Feed in Tariff

Where energy generating technologies, such as solar panels, are installed payments are made for any energy produced and used and any additional energy returned to the National Grid.

Finders Fee

Landlords or agents have traditionally asked for a month's rent in advance and a month's deposit when they let their properties. Many people on benefits or on a low income cannot afford this. Hillingdon's Finders Fee scheme assists tenants by paying a variable, one-off, non-returnable incentive payment to a private sector landlord in lieu of a deposit at the beginning of a tenancy

Find your own accommodation

Accommodation sourced directly in the private rented sector by households at risk of homelessness. The Council can assist by paying a small incentive to the landlord for accepting the household as a tenant. .

Flexible Tenancies

Social housing let on fixed term rather than lifetime tenancies.

Fuel Poverty

A household is deemed to be in fuel poverty where it spends more than 10% of its income on energy in the home

Green Deal

A Government scheme allowing private companies to provide measures to boost the energy efficiency of the homes. Costs of the measures will be recovered through instalments on the energy bills for the home concerned..

Handyperson scheme

Minor repair service for homeowners and tenants over the age of 60 and people of any age with disabilities

Health and Wellbeing Board

This is a forum established under the 2012 Health and Social Care Act. Its main purpose is to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for local residents and it achieves this through the development and implementation of a health and wellbeing strategy. Its members include commissioners from health and social care, the Joint Director of Public Health, elected Councillors and a representative from Healthwatch. In Hillingdon the Board's meetings are chaired by the Leader of the Council.

Homelessness application

An application to the Council (by a household or individual) following which a housing professional assesses whether the Council has a duty to re house the applicant under the homelessness law.

Homelessness duty

This is a duty the Council has to re-house certain households under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 based on their meeting criteria assessed following a homelessness application.

Housing Association Leasing Direct (HALD)

Housing Associations lease properties in the private sector and provide a management service on behalf of landlords. The Council nominates tenants for the properties, using them for families who are at risk of homelessness.

Housing Benefit

Financial assistance for those who may be out of work or on a low income to pay their housing costs.

Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

All properties must meet certain standards to make them habitable. The HHSRS assesses housing faults and how they might affect health and safety. The HHSRS considers how likely it is that a hazard would occur and how serious the outcome would be.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

An HMO is a house used as living accommodation by more than 2 people who are not part of the same family, where they occupy the property as their only or main residence and share amenities and pay rent

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Local authorities are required to maintain a separate account, the Housing Revenue Account, defined by Section 74 and Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This account sets out the expenditure and income arising from Council housing provision.

Landlord Accreditation Scheme

Hillingdon Landlord Accreditation Scheme is a scheme for landlords with properties to let in the Borough can join. The scheme encourages and promotes good standards of privately rented accommodation .

Lifetime Homes

The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes.

Local Housing Allowance

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) arrangements are a way of working out Housing Benefit (HB) for people who rent from a private landlord. Local authorities use LHA rates based on the size of household and the area in which the household lives to work out the amount of rent which can be met.

New Homes Bonus

This scheme provides local authorities with a bonus equal to

the national average for the Council tax band for each additional property, and is paid for the following six years as an unringfenced grant. There is an enhancement for affordable homes.

Owner occupier

A person who owns or is in the process of buying the house or flat he or she lives in.

Planning Policy Guidance

A series of documents issued by the Government. They set out Government policy and advice on planning issues such as housing.

Primary Care Trust (PCT)

Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) manage the provision of primary care services in a specific area. These include services provided by doctors' surgeries, dental practices, opticians and pharmacies. PCTs are abolished from April 2013 and most of their responsibilities transfer to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

Privately managed accommodation

This is a scheme run jointly by West London Boroughs. 17 providers have been appointed to a framework tender for procurement and management of privately managed accommodation which can be used either to house clients for whom Councils have a statutory duty to provide accommodation or to prevent homelessness.

Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector (PRS) is defined as accommodation that is privately owned (not owned by a social landlord) and rented out.

Private Sector Stock Condition Survey

The 1985 Housing Act requirement that local housing authorities carry out regular stock condition surveys was updated in the Housing Act 2004. It states that a local housing authority must keep the housing conditions in the area under review in order to identify any action that may need to be taken.

Registered Providers

The definition of registered social landlord has been replaced with the concept of registered providers of social housing. A provider of social housing can now be either a non-profit or a profit-making organisation. Registered providers are regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

RE:NEW

RE:NEW is a London wide scheme designed to make it easier for all householders to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. The scheme applies to all types of homes across London, including owner occupied, privately rented and social housing.

Room2Move

The name of Hillingdon Council's service for social housing tenants to help them to move, enabling them either to downsize or to find a larger property to suit their needs.

Social Housing

Social housing is housing that is let at low rents and on a secure basis to people in housing need. It is generally provided by Councils and not-for-profit organisations such as housing associations.

Southwark Judgement

Judgement made by the Law Lords in May 2009. This piece of case law obliges children's services to provide accommodation and support to homeless 16- and 17-year-olds.

Temporary Accommodation

Accommodation used by a local housing authority to house people it has accepted that it owes a duty to under the homelessness law. This could be private sector leased or bed and breakfast accommodation.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit will replace the present benefit structure. A new law will need to be passed first, after which changes would take effect from October 2013.

Vulnerable People

A person who is unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests, is at risk of harm, or because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than other people.

Source documents

Laying the Foundations : A Housing Strategy for England

HM Government, November 2011

The Revised London Housing Strategy

Mayor of London, December 2011

The London Plan : Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London

Mayor of London, July 2011

Does the Cap Fit?

London Councils , 2011

Chance of a lifetime

Shelter, 2011

Caring for our Future : Reforming Care and Support

HM Government White Paper, July 2012

Relevant Hillingdon plans, strategies and research

Hillingdon's Sustainable Community Strategy 2011

Hillingdon Partners, 2011

Hillingdon's Wellbeing Strategy 2010-15

Hillingdon Partners, 2010

Choice, Control and Independence : Transformation of Adult Social Care: Personalisation and Commissioning Plan 2011-15

London Borough of Hillingdon, 2011

Hillingdon's Housing Market Assessment

Fordham Research, 2009

Hillingdon's Private Sector Stock Condition Survey

Fordham Research, 2008

Hillingdon's Council Housing Stock Condition Survey

Hillingdon's Local Development Framework

Core strategy – a vision for 2026

Hillingdon Council, 2011

Climate Change Strategy 2009/12

Hillingdon Council 2009

Hillingdon Council Affordable Rent Research Report

Chilli Projects 2011

Disabilities Commissioning Plan 2011-15

Hillingdon Council 2011

These documents are available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk or by telephoning the Commissioning Team, Central Services on 01895 277451

Impact assessments

It is important that local authorities, as public bodies, pay real attention to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, and are able to demonstrate that the process of developing the housing strategy has paid due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The HCA's 'Regulatory framework for social housing in England from April 2012' also reminds housing providers that it is essential to understand tenants' needs, including those within the equality strands¹.

The process of developing this strategy has considered equality in relation to Hillingdon's overall strategic plans and what the Council knows about housing need. The Council will undertake detailed impact assessments as appropriate at the time of policy development.

¹ The Equality Act 2010 gives public bodies responsibilities in relation to: race, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, disability and marriage and civil partnership; in policy making, delivery of services and public sector employment.