

Hartlepool Borough Council Housing Strategy 2015 - 2020

“Developing and maintaining successful communities where people choose to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.”





Hartlepool Housing Strategy 2015 - 2020



Hartlepool Housing Strategy Action Plan 2015 - 2020

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Foreword

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Hartlepool's new Housing Strategy for 2015-2020, which sets out our vision and priorities for housing for the next five years.

We have developed excellent partnership working relationships with developers, registered providers, private landlords and residents to improve our housing offer and services. There are considerable challenges ahead and the new Housing Strategy will be delivered during a time of significant reduction in funding for local government. However, we look forward to continuing to respond positively to these challenges through our strong partnership approach.

Our housing offer will have an important role in the economic regeneration of Hartlepool and the Hartlepool Vision. We need communities where people choose to live that meets the aspirations of our residents and which attracts new people to live in Hartlepool.

Hartlepool's Housing Strategy is supported by a robust Action Plan which sets out how we will work with our partners to deliver our priorities.

I would like to thank all partners, housing providers and residents who have contributed to the consultation for this Strategy.

Cllr Kevin Cranney
Chair of Regeneration Services Committee

Hartlepool's new Housing Strategy for 2015-20 arrives at a time of almost unprecedented turbulence and change for all of us involved in the housing sector. The long term implications of the seismic shift in the future rents regime for housing providers, on-going impacts of various welfare reforms and proposed extensions of the Right to Buy are just three of the many emerging challenges facing those managing and developing affordable housing in our communities.

Strong and robust partnerships will clearly be crucial to effectively meeting these and other challenges. These partnerships will also be critical to us continuing to support sustainable and thriving neighbourhoods and the ambitious wider regeneration vision for Hartlepool.

I am consequently very encouraged that this new Housing Strategy has been so well informed by a very rigorous consultation process, and am optimistic that the local authority, housing providers and the range of other agencies providing homes and services across Hartlepool can all work in unison to successfully deliver on its key aims and priorities.

I therefore look forward to hearing about positive progress and delivery against these aims and priorities over the coming period.

Mark Dutton
Head of Partnerships & Resources
Thirteen Group

1. Introduction



1.1 Why do we need a new Housing Strategy?

In 2003, the Government placed a legal duty on all local authorities to develop housing strategies. The current Housing Strategy expired at the end of March 2015 and it is therefore necessary to prepare a new Strategy incorporating an Action Plan for the next five years. The previous Strategy was developed at a time of significant change, politically, socially and economically. This Strategy builds on the progress made over the past 4 years, setting out key priorities and how we aim to meet these.

The new Strategy incorporates the Council's Homelessness and Empty Homes Strategies which both expired in March 2015. This will enable the Council and its partners to monitor and manage its strategic functions through the delivery of a single Housing Strategy for Hartlepool, working together to meet the housing needs and aspirations of Hartlepool Borough Council, its partners and its residents.

Since our last Housing Strategy was published, the local housing market has changed fundamentally. Owner occupation is in decline, the private rented sector is expanding and social housing is proving harder to let.

The priorities identified for the new Housing Strategy will be clearly linked to other strategies and plans and will be achieved through challenging but deliverable actions.

This Strategy sets out high level priority outcomes and is an over-arching document developed using a robust evidence base and reflecting issues identified through consultation.

To enable delivery of the Strategy's objectives, the Council will continue to work with a range of agencies and organisations.

1.2 Consultation

In order to ensure that the development of this Strategy reflected the views, needs and priorities of our community and stakeholders, detailed consultation was undertaken at various stages in its development.

Methods of consultation included:

- Workshops
- On-line and paper questionnaire
- Attendance at Neighbourhood Forums
- Housing Partnership Face the Public Event 2014
- Engagement with the Housing Partnership and Elected Members

Further information about the consultation can be obtained from the Council's Housing Services Division.

1.3 Equality and Diversity

This Strategy is aimed at improving housing services for all residents with housing or housing-related support needs. As such, no group in Hartlepool should be adversely affected or disadvantaged as a result of the Strategy.

The Council is committed to equality and diversity issues and will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this Strategy.

1. Introduction



1.4 Vision and Priority Outcomes

Our vision for the 2015-2020 Strategy is:

Developing and maintaining successful communities where people choose to live, by meeting the housing needs of our residents now and in the future.

To achieve this vision the Housing Strategy has been developed under five main priority outcomes:

1. Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation;
2. Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment;
3. Bringing long-term empty homes back into use;
4. Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs; and
5. Preventing homelessness and providing options.

Each of the above will contribute towards delivering the vision for housing in Hartlepool. Housing makes an important contribution towards the wider priorities of the Council, including health, the economy, education and the environment.

1.5 Why does housing matter?

Poor housing or the lack of a home has been shown to have a detrimental effect on employment, crime, education and health.

Good quality, appropriate housing contributes to successful and sustainable communities. The Council strives to support and develop places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

Housing and Health

Links between good quality housing and improved physical and mental health have been documented. The Marmot review¹ into health inequalities in England demonstrated that the 'broader determinants of health' (local environment, housing, transport, employment and social interactions) can be significantly influenced by how local authorities deliver their core roles and functions. Poor health can affect an individual's ability to access and maintain accommodation.

Poor housing conditions and a lack of housing-related support is associated with the following:

- Children and young adults living in poor housing conditions are up to 25% more likely to suffer from severe ill-health or disability than those in good quality housing;
- Homeless children are up to four times more likely than other children to have mental health problems² ;
- Increased risk of cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease; and
- Increased risk of mental health problems such as anxiety and depression - mental health is frequently cited as a reason for tenancy breakdown and people with mental health problems are twice as likely to be unhappy with their housing.

¹ Fair Society, Health Lives, 2010

² Shelter, Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives, 2006

1. Introduction



Safe, healthy and accessible housing is essential in enabling older and disabled people to live independently.

The successful delivery of the Housing Strategy and close working with health colleagues, should contribute to reduced levels of health inequality within Hartlepool. Life expectancy in Hartlepool is lower than the national average and there are disparities between wards. For example, data shows people born in Stranton live, on average, 14 years less than those born in Hart.

Unsuitable accommodation also costs the NHS at least £2.5 billion a year nationally in treating people with illness directly linked to living in cold, damp and dangerous homes. Falls and fractures amongst the over 65's is estimated to cost £2 billion according to the Royal College of Physicians.

Housing and Education

Links can be made between housing conditions and levels of academic achievement:

- Children who live in poor quality housing and overcrowded homes miss school more frequently due to illnesses and infections;
- Homeless children are more likely to have behavioural problems, which affects academic achievement and relationships with peers and teachers;
- Poor housing and homelessness can result in children finding it difficult to do their homework and struggling to concentrate and listen; and
- Many children in homeless families have lower levels of academic achievement that cannot be explained by differences in their levels of ability.

Housing and the Economy

The housing available in a community can contribute to the economic success of that community through:

- The ability of a community to attract and retain people, especially wealth creators, and provide support for those who need it relies on good housing and attractive, inclusive neighbourhoods; and
- Achieving the right housing offer, including executive, family and affordable housing, is vital in attracting and retaining skilled people, which will in turn encourage inward investment.

The long-term health problems and low educational attainment that are associated with poor quality housing increase the likelihood of a person being unemployed or working in a low-paid job².

¹ Fair Society, Health Lives, 2010

² Shelter, Chances of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives, 2006

1. Introduction

Housing and the Environment

Existing housing stock accounts for a significant proportion of all carbon emissions. To avoid further climate change in the future we need to change the way we live and this includes the homes in which we live now and how we develop new houses in the future. The role of housing in relation to climate change includes:

- Developing new houses which are as energy efficient and close to existing/newly provided services and public transport routes as is possible;
- Improving the energy efficiency of existing dwellings; this has a knock-on benefit of helping to tackle fuel poverty; and
- Ensuring new and refurbished houses do not contribute to increased surface water run-off during the more intense storm weather expected to occur as a result of climate change.

Climate change is likely to result in more changeable and intense weather patterns so homes will need to provide energy efficient solutions to these conditions.

The Council will work closely with Registered Provider (RP) and developer partners to contribute towards mitigating against further climate change and adapting to the likely impacts of climate change in Hartlepool.



2. National and Sub Regional Context



2.1 National Housing Policy Context

A number of reforms to housing, planning and social policy were made by the Government which formed in May 2010. The Council and its partners responded flexibly to emerging policies during the lifetime of the 2011-15 Strategy. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) remains the Government's national housing delivery and enablement partner and includes the regulatory function of Registered Providers (RPs).

Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act offered new freedoms and flexibilities for planning and housing with empowerment for localised decisions about housing. The significant housing related changes include:

- o Social housing allocations reform – power for local authorities to limit who can apply for social housing within their areas;
- o Social housing tenure reform – enabled a new form of flexible tenure for social housing tenants;
- o Reform of homelessness legislation - power for local authorities to discharge their duties to homeless people by using private sector accommodation;
- o Affordable rent – allows housing providers to let a property at a maximum of 80% of market rent;
- o Tenancy Strategy – a requirement on each local authority to produce a tenancy strategy; and
- o The National Planning Policy Framework - superseded all previous planning policies.

Local Response

- o The Council has introduced flexible tenancies let at an affordable rent for properties acquired through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme;
- o Thirteen Group (Housing Hartlepool and Tees Valley Housing) has also introduced flexible tenancies, mostly let on an affordable rent, for some of their properties;
- o Endeavour Housing and Home Group have a number of affordable rent tenancies;
- o A Tees Valley Tenancy Strategy was published in 2011 and updated in 2014;
- o The Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy was reviewed in 2012; and
- o The Council has produced a procedure to discharge its homelessness duty into the private rented sector where this is considered to be the most appropriate housing solution.

2. National and Sub Regional Context



Welfare Reform Act 2012

The Welfare Reform Act introduced a range of reforms including:

- o Universal Credit – a single benefit payment paid to households monthly in arrears;
- o Benefit cap – a cap on the total amount of benefits that can be claimed by any individual household;
- o Size criteria – a limit on the amount of housing benefit working age tenants in the social rented sector can claim for households deemed to be underoccupying;
- o Single-room rate - increased the age threshold from 25 to 35 under which single claimants are entitled only to the shared room rate; and
- o Council Tax benefit – abolished.

Local Response

- o The Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy was reviewed in 2012 to give greater priority to social housing tenants of partner organisations who are under occupying their accommodation and are financially affected as a result of welfare reform benefit restrictions;
- o As a result of the abolition of Council Tax benefit households now have to pay a minimum of 12% of the Council Tax on their home; and
- o Universal Credit was introduced in Hartlepool in February 2015 and an internal steering group made up from officers within housing, benefits and customer services meets with representatives of the Department of Work and Pensions.

Health and Social Care Act 2012

The Health and Social Care Act included reforms within the NHS and in social care which have an impact on the provision of housing services. The Act gave local authorities responsibility for public health and more focus on integrating health, social care and housing. The Better Care Fund creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together, placing people's well-being at the centre of health and care services.

Local Response

From 1st April 2013 the Council established its Health and Wellbeing Board to promote more joined-up commissioning of health and social care and public health services. It is responsible for the development of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

National Housing Strategy 2011

On 21st November 2011, the Government published 'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England'. The strategy presented the Government's direction of travel for housing, its role in the wider economy and its contribution to social mobility. Principles included: homeownership; increased building; overhaul of social housing; and commitment to zero carbon new build.

2. National and Sub Regional Context



Local Response

- o The Council has continued to secure affordable housing on private led schemes via Section 106 agreements;
- o The Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy was reviewed in 2012 to take account of the reforms to social housing; and to The Council made a successful bid for funding to tackle empty homes in low demand areas.

Energy Act 2011

The Energy Act introduced the Green Deal, intended to improve the energy efficiency of both commercial and residential properties. The financial mechanisms under the deal eliminate the need for households to pay for energy improvements up front; instead the cost of improvements are to be covered by savings in energy bills and through a charge on household energy bills. The rationale for the Green Deal is to reduce carbon emissions cost effectively.

The Act also introduced the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), which integrates with the Green Deal to address energy efficiency improvements in the housing sector and help to address fuel poverty.

Local Response

- o The Council entered into a partnership with British Gas in September 2013 to improve the energy efficiency of homes (Warm Up North);
- o The Council has promoted two Collective Switching schemes for gas and electricity for residents; and
- o A consortia of registered providers and local authorities in the North East has been established to support residents out of fuel poverty.

Anti Social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 includes two new measures which are designed to give victims and communities a say in the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with:

- o The Community Trigger which gives victims the ability to demand action, starting with a review of their case, where the locally defined threshold is met.
- o The Community Remedy which gives victims a say in the out-of-court punishment of perpetrators for low-level crime and anti-social behaviour.

Local Response

- o The Council has agreed its local community trigger process in partnership with the Police, Clinical Commissioning Group and all Registered Providers operating in Hartlepool.

2. National and Sub Regional Context



Emerging National Housing and Related Policies

The election of the Conservative Government in May 2015 suggests that the overall direction of travel for housing policy will largely remain unchanged during the lifetime of this Strategy. It is expected that future policies will be underpinned by:

- A market driven approach
- De-regulation
- Localism
- Minimal intervention
- Planning policies that favour development

The Conservative Government has announced its main new housing policy of extending the Right to Buy (RTB) to housing association tenants. A Housing Bill will be introduced during 2015/2016 and the RTB will be a key feature of the new legislation.

Housing pledges which featured in the Conservative manifesto include:

- Assisting more first-time buyers into home ownership;
- Building 200,000 homes for first-time buyers aged under 40;
- An additional 275,000 'affordable' homes in the social housing sector;
- A brownfield fund set up to unlock homes on previously developed urban sites; and
- Doubling the number of self build/custom build under a 'Right to Build' pledge

In addition other pledges include seeing EU migrants barred from council housing unless they have lived in an area for four years; extension of the Freedom of Information Act to housing associations and the creation of a new Public Service Ombudsman.

Policy in relation to welfare reform is expected to accelerate with a further £12b in cuts planned. Cuts that are in place or planned include:

- The size criteria for social rented housing;
- Full roll-out of Universal Credit to all working age households on benefit;
- Abolition of housing benefit for single people aged 18 to 21 (excluding those leaving care);
- Reducing the capping of benefits for individual households from £26,000 per annum to £23,000; and
- The freezing of working age benefits (including Housing Benefit) for two years.

Programmes already started under the previous Government will be maintained such as the Help to Buy scheme and the National Planning Policy Framework.

General economic conditions will determine much of what happens in the housing sector during the lifetime of this Strategy and issues to be aware of include the push to boost house building, expansion of the private rented sector, increased housing need and homelessness, welfare reform and devolution of housing investment to city regions.

2. National and Sub Regional Context



Sub Regional Context

The Tees Valley has a good record of partnership working between the five local authorities (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton) and during the last Housing Strategy a number of sub-regional schemes and initiatives have continued to operate.

Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

TVU is a partnership of public, private and voluntary bodies which coordinate activities, appropriate to a city region, designed to improve the economic performance of the entire Tees Valley.

TVU is the LEP that covers Hartlepool focussed on delivering jobs and economic growth across Tees Valley. The LEP is doing this by tackling barriers to growth, developing key assets and creating an environment that encourages growth and long-term prosperity. The LEP has adopted a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), whereby local partners will:

- Drive the transition to a high value, low carbon economy; and
- Create a more diversified and inclusive economy

The LEP's focus is on increasing jobs, Gross Value Added and the number of enterprises, as well as raising the educational attainment of residents.

Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy

The Council is a member of the Tees Valley Climate Change Partnership which has a vision of "creating prosperous and resilient communities in a low carbon

economy." The partnership produced the Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy in 2010 which prioritises substantial and measurable emissions reductions, adaptation to the impacts of climate change, and developing the economic opportunities associated with climate change. The strategy states that, for instance, in future all homes in the Tees Valley should be 'insulated to the best possible standards and are resilient to impacts such as flooding and heat waves' and that 'new homes are designed to maximum possible sustainability standards'.

Compass Choice Based Lettings (CBL)

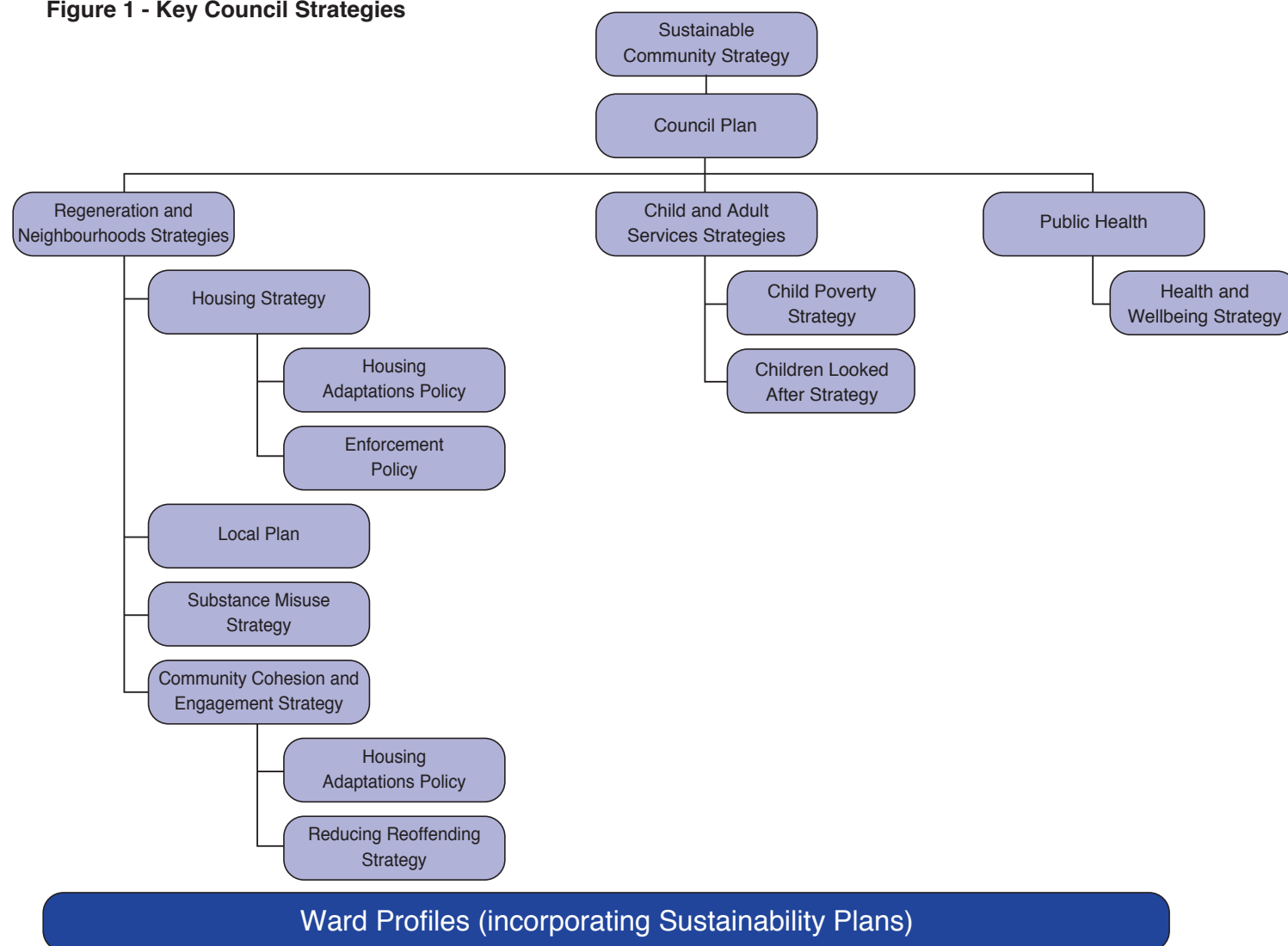
This scheme was introduced in 2009 and is a partnership between the five local authorities and housing provider partners; Housing Hartlepool, Erimus Housing, Coast & Country Housing, Tristar Homes, Tees Valley Housing, Endeavour Housing, Accent and Home Group. It is the system through which social housing is let throughout the Tees Valley and it operates a common allocations policy. All other registered providers and private landlords are able to advertise their vacant stock via Compass.

3. Hartlepool Local Context

Key Strategic Links

The Housing Strategy does not stand alone. It is linked into a number of other documents as demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Key Council Strategies



3. Hartlepool Local Context

Table 1, details the key strategic links that exist between the Housing Strategy and the other Council documents and strategies identified in Figure 1.

Table 1 – Key Strategic Links

Strategy	Date	Key Strategic Links	Comment
Sustainable Community Strategy	2014 - 20	Sets out a long term vision for the town and explains how the Council and its partners will improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Hartlepool.	
Economic Regeneration Strategy	2011 - 21	Sets out the vision, priorities and actions for the delivery of economic development and physical regeneration programmes to improve the environment and attract businesses to invest and grow in Hartlepool.	This Strategy was refreshed in April 2014
Constructing Hartlepool Strategy	October 2014	Complements the shared goals of the Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy. Through the implementation of this strategy, developers will be invited to advise the Council on how they plan to incorporate local supply chains and targeted, recruitment and training clauses within their planning proposal which will support business growth and enable greater access to employment and skills for local residents.	
Housing Adaptations Policy	ongoing	Provides a policy for supporting people to live as independently as possible through adaptations or rehousing to more appropriate long-term accommodation.	
Enforcement Policy	ongoing	The purpose of this policy is to explain clearly the approach of the Council's Housing Service towards enforcement. It provides guidance to enforcement officers, businesses, consumers and the general public on the range of options that are available to achieve compliance with the legislation that we enforce.	

3. Hartlepool Local Context

Strategy	Date	Key Strategic Links	Comment
Child Poverty Strategy	2011 - 14	Provides the strategic priorities which aim to improve the life chances of all children, young people and their families.	The Child Poverty Needs Assessment has recently been updated to reflect the latest statistical data on child poverty. The action plan has also been updated. The strategy has expired and will be updated.
Children Looked After Strategy	2014 - 17	This strategy outlines the vision for children and young people in care and care leavers. Hartlepool Children's Services is committed to improving the experiences and outcomes for children looked after and care leavers in the town and are aspirational in its plan to deliver continuous improvement and remove the gap between children in care and their peers.	
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	2013 - 18	The vision of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy is to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities among the population of Hartlepool through integrated working, focusing on outcomes and improving efficiency.	
Hartlepool Local Plan 2006	2006	Establishes a spatial strategy together with strategic policies. It sets out the planning policy framework to enable ongoing regeneration, provide new housing sites and ensures an appropriate mix of housing is delivered.	The 2006 Local Plan will be replaced by the 2016 Local Plan
Hartlepool Local Plan 2016	2016 - 31	This Local Plan will replace the 2006 Local Plan when adopted. It establishes a spatial strategy together with strategic policies, guiding development over the next 15 years. Sets out the planning policy framework to enable ongoing regeneration, provide new housing sites, ensure an appropriate mix of housing is delivered and affordable housing is provided.	

3. Hartlepool Local Context

Strategy	Date	Key Strategic Links	Comment
Community Cohesion and Engagement Strategy	2014 - 17	This Strategy is responsible for ensuring governance arrangements are in place to enable community participation in local government decision making processes; shaping public services around the residents and communities that use them and improving quality of life; and tackling deprivation in our most disadvantaged and vulnerable neighbourhoods.	
Substance Misuse Strategy		This Strategy is supported by an Annual Substance Misuse Treatment Plan with recovery as the central goal. Recovery requires an effective 'whole systems' approach working with education, training and employment, housing, family support services, wider health services and criminal justice agencies where appropriate	
Reducing Re-Offending Strategy	2014 - 17	This Strategy aims to break the cycle of offending by 'ensuring that local services are coordinated in a manner that meets the needs of offenders, whilst at the same time ensuring local communities remain safe'.	
Ward Profiles	ongoing	Ward Profiles are being refreshed with sustainability plans to be produced for the localities identified as vulnerable.	

Key Facts: Key facts and statistics relating to Hartlepool are set out below:

- There are currently 42,599 dwellings of which 40,631 are occupied dwellings³
- Hartlepool has a population of 92,600 and this is projected to increase 5.2% by 2037³
- 23.2% of the population have a limiting long-term illness compared to 17.9% in England and Wales⁴.
- The median house price in Hartlepool remains consistently lower than the national average³.
- Levels of owner occupation in Hartlepool remain lower than the national average.
- Levels of social and private renting are higher than the national average⁴
- 2.7% of households are overcrowded which is less than the national average of 4.6% across England³
- At the end of March 2015 3,092 applicants in Hartlepool were registered on the Compass CBL Waiting List of which 955 were in the Priority Bands 1-3⁵.
- The percentage of empty properties in Hartlepool's private sector exceeds the national average with an overall vacancy rate of 4.6% compared to 2.7% across England³.

³ Hartlepool Strategic Market Assessment, 2015

⁴ Census, 2011

⁵ Priority Bands contain the applicants who have been identified as in the greatest housing need

3. Hartlepool Local Context



- The affordable housing requirement calculated by the Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was calculated at 144 net additional units³.
- 34.8% of the private sector stock is non decent and there are estimated to be 21.2% of households in fuel poverty⁶.
- The average energy efficiency rating using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure is 51 which is slightly above the England average⁶
- At June 2015 3.7% of people were unemployed in Hartlepool which is nearly double the national average.
- The number of working age adults on out of work benefits was 16.7% (November 2014)⁷
- 11,433 people commute out of Hartlepool for work³
- The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010 identified that just over a third of the population of Hartlepool live in the 10% most disadvantaged areas nationally.
- Since 1990 approximately 300 new homes are built each year in Hartlepool.

Hartlepool's Housing Partnership and Registered Providers (RPs)

Hartlepool's Housing Partnership brings together a range of partners with the common aim of improving housing provision within Hartlepool. The partnership includes representatives from the Council, Registered Providers (RPs) and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The focus of the Housing Partnership is to ensure the delivery of this Strategy. The Partnership will co-ordinate and facilitate multi-agency and private sector involvement and provide a link between housing and

wider policies for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area, including the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. The Partnership will be responsible for agreeing and monitoring the Housing Strategy action plan, addressing areas of underperformance and promoting achievements.

13 RPs currently operate in Hartlepool, including Hartlepool Borough Council from 1st April 2015. The largest of these is Housing Hartlepool with approximately 70% of the social housing stock. Table 2 sets out the stock levels of the RPs operating in Hartlepool.

Table 2 – Registered Providers operating in Hartlepool

Registered Provider (RP)	Stock Number (at February 2015)
Housing Hartlepool	6727
Home	888
Four Housing	385
Tees Valley	379
Guinness Northern Counties	364
Anchor	333
Endeavour	275
Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust	242 of which: 150 rented 58 shared ownership 34 owner occupied
Hartlepool Borough Council	186
Accent	103.
Housing & Care 21	44
Railway Housing	14
Places for People	1
Total Social Rented Stock	9849

⁶ Private Sector House Condition Survey, 2009

⁷ Hartlepool Economic Profile, June 2015

3. Hartlepool Local Context

Local Economy

The economic downturn, reduced public expenditure, planning, social housing and welfare reform have had an impact in Hartlepool. These circumstances provide the backdrop to the Strategy and will continue to present challenges in terms of unemployment, cutbacks in housing led regeneration programmes, cuts in public spending and restraints on affordable mortgage finance.

Hartlepool Wards

Figure 2 illustrates the wards within Hartlepool.

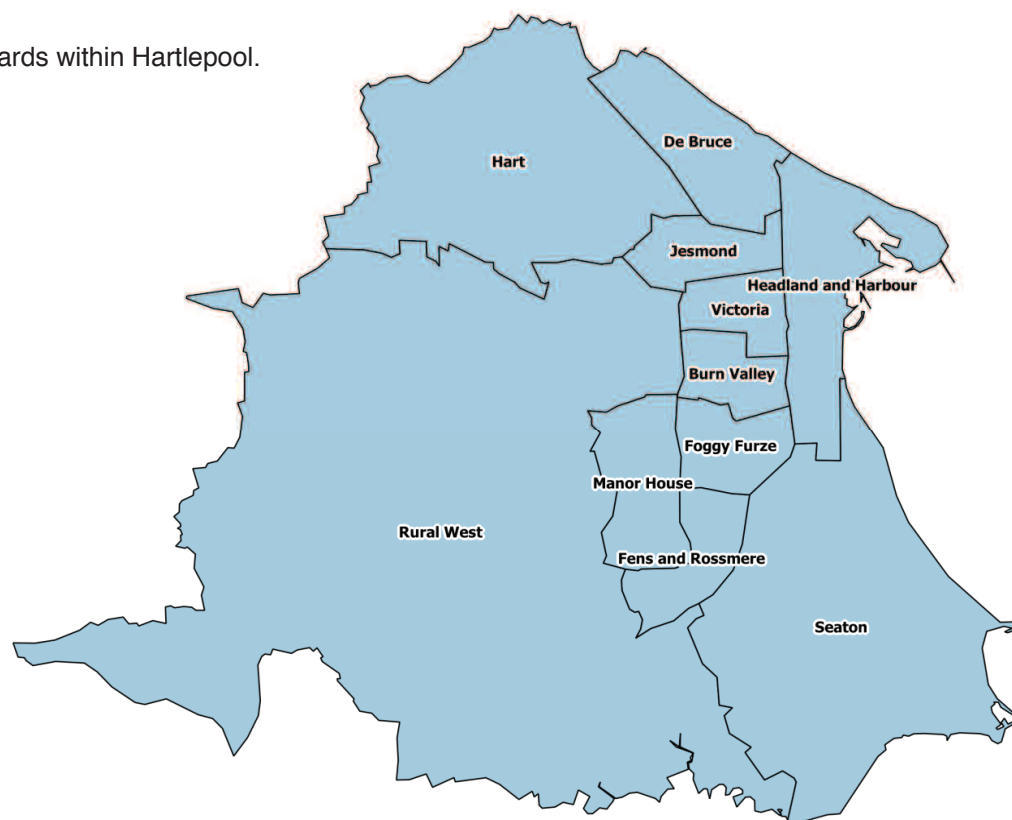


Figure 2 - Hartlepool Wards

4. Local Housing Need

Local Housing Need

The Housing Strategy, along with other key strategies will address current and future housing need and demand in the Borough. As a result a comprehensive and robust evidence base has been established, including the following documents and sources detailed in Table 3:

Table 3 - Housing Need Evidence Source

Evidence Source	Information
Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015)	Local housing need and demand
Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012)	Sub-regional and local housing need and demand
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014)	Specific housing need with regard to the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show persons groups
Hartlepool Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2015)	Identification of sites with housing land capacity.
Private Sector Housing Condition Survey (2009)	A detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector.
Homelessness Statistics	Data relating to housing advice and homelessness cases
Compass Housing Register	Social housing need and demand
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	The JSNA analyses the health needs of the population to inform and guide commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services.
Census 2011	Provides a detailed snapshot of the population and its characteristics

4. Local Housing Need



Current Housing Need

Housing need is affected by a variety of factors. Evidence on the overall housing market in Hartlepool, established in Table 3, can be summarised in that currently:

- Hartlepool is a self-contained housing market on the basis of migration and also in terms of workplace.
- There is a mismatch in market demand compared to availability and aspirations/expectation.
- During the period January 2013 to end of June 2014, median house prices across Hartlepool were £112,000 and lower quartile prices were just under £70,000.

Evidence on the key demographic drivers that affect housing need and demand, established in table 3, can be summarised as being:

- An increasing population with ONS 2012-based population projections indicating an increase of 5.2% from 92,600 in 2014 to 97,400 by 2037.
- Decline in working age populations and increase in elderly population.

Current economic drivers include:

- 67.1% of residents in employment work in Hartlepool Borough.
- Median incomes are lower than the national median but slightly higher than the regional figure.
- There is considerable income polarisation across Hartlepool, with 51.2% of households receiving less than £300 each week, 21.7% receiving between £300 and £500 each week and 27% receiving at least £500 each week.

In terms of dwelling stock:

- 73.3% of properties are houses, 12.1% are bungalows, 13.7% are flats/maisonettes and 0.9% are other property types
- 51% of the housing stock was built before 1964, 7.7% has been built since 2005.
- 84% of the housing stock has 3 bedrooms or less, with 40% having 2 bedrooms or less.
- Housing stock tenure is owner occupier 60.2%, social rented 23.1%, private rented 16% and 0.7% intermediate tenure.
- There is a strong aspiration for houses

All of the above drivers influence the current and future housing market. Through evidence established in the documents listed in table 3, it is demonstrated that there are 4,694 households currently in housing need, representing 11.6% of all households. The current housing need can be used as baseline with which to estimate the future housing need.

Future Housing Need

Using evidence identified in the 2015 SHMA analysis suggests there should be a focus on delivery of:

- 3 bedroom houses and 4+ bedroom semi-detached and detached houses for market sale; and
- Bungalows for both market sale and social rent Table 4 indicates where there is a lack of a particular type and size of property by ward, based on the aspirations of households planning to move.

4. Local Housing Need

Table 4- Comparison between current dwelling stock and market aspirations

Dwelling stock relative to aspirations

Dwelling type	Ward											
	Burn Valley	De Bruce	Fens and Rossmere	Foggy Furze	Hart	Headland and Harbour	Jesmond	Manor House	Rural West	Seaton	Victoria	Total
Detached house/cottage 1-3 Beds	● -18.6	● -8.5	● -17.4	● -17.2	● -6.8	● -17.0	● -14.3	● -18.9	● -2.8	● -13.4	● -18.8	● -14.1
Detached house/cottage 4 or more Beds	● -20.8	● -23.7	● -18.6	● -23.4	● 17.8	● -21.3	● -23.7	● -24.7	● 17.6	● -3.6	● -24.8	● -13.1
Semi-detached house/cottage 1-2 Beds	● -2.7	● 5.8	● 3.0	● 1.9	● 0.4	● 0.5	● 4.9	● 10.4	● -1.8	● 1.1	● 3.1	● 2.2
Semi-detached house/cottage with 3 Beds	● 5.3	● 33.5	● 32.8	● 23.9	● 10.6	● -0.2	● 14.3	● 8.8	● 1.2	● 18.6	● 2.2	● 13.8
Semi-detached house/cottage 4 or more Beds	● 7.9	● -0.1	● 2.0	● 2.3	● 1.5	● -0.8	● 2.1	● -1.8	● 0.7	● -1.0	● 2.0	● 1.6
Terraced house/cottage 1-2 Beds	● 17.6	● 5.1	● 4.7	● 4.1	● -2.0	● 3.0	● 2.3	● 25.6	● -2.0	● -0.8	● 28.2	● 7.9
Terraced house/cottage 3+ Beds	● 29.8	● 10.9	● 3.9	● 18.2	● 2.5	● 25.3	● 38.6	● 27.3	● -0.1	● 7.4	● 30.9	● 17.4
Bungalow	● -13.1	● -12.7	● 0.1	● -2.7	● -15.4	● -15.8	● -10.9	● -18.5	● -2.3	● -6.7	● -16.9	● -10.1
Flat	● -5.4	● -11.9	● -10.5	● -7.4	● -9.1	● 23.2	● -13.3	● -8.2	● -10.6	● -3.6	● -7.4	● -6.4

●	Insufficient dwellings available relative to aspiration
●	Sufficient dwellings available relative to aspiration

The Housing Strategy will help deliver and guide this new housing provision alongside the emerging Local Plan.

5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation



5. **Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation**

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to deliver suitable and affordable new homes for all demographic groups. The challenges faced in achieving this priority revolve around delivering high quality new housing which meets identified need, in places where people choose to live whilst continuing to deliver Housing Regeneration.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- Deliver new homes that will meet current and future housing needs;
- Ensure new affordable homes are high quality with good standards of design and construction; and
- Support employment through development.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011-2015

- Through the strong working relationship of the Housing Partnership rapid solutions to housing need have been produced and opportunities for development have been successfully explored.
- Continued delivery of affordable housing with 151 affordable houses delivered over the last 4 years.
- Imminent completion of new build on Alexandra Square (Perth and Hurworth Streets Regeneration Scheme) and the Headway site following a successful Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

- A continued track record of housing delivery on brownfield sites.
- Continued delivery of executive and family homes at Wynyard and Bishop Cuthbert.
- Production of the 2012 Tees Valley Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
- Production of the 2015 Hartlepool SHMA.
- Delivery of schemes through the 2011-15 National Affordable Housing Programme with all new housing built to a minimum Level 3 Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Progression of the Carr/Hopps regeneration scheme with over 150 properties acquired and the demolition contract being finalised.

5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation

CASE STUDY 1 – ALEXANDRA SQUARE (RABY ROAD)

Following on from the assembly and demolition of the Perth/Hurworth Street Regeneration Area, Keepmoat were chosen by Hartlepool Borough Council to deliver 83 new homes on the site. North Star (Endeavour Housing Association) contracted with Keepmoat to be the affordable housing provider, initially taking 15 of the homes, which was later increased to 25. The remainder of the new housing will be available to private purchasers.

Work started on site in early August 2013 and the housing association homes were handed over between March and November 2014.

The Endeavour properties are a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses and bungalows, built to a high standard in a range of house types.

The properties provide good space and energy efficiency standards and also Secured by Design accreditation.

North Star invested £2.03m in the scheme including grant support from the Homes and Communities Agency (£480,000) to enable the properties to be let at Affordable Rents.

The properties are popular with customers and the scheme has transformed the area offering the opportunity to live in good quality new housing near to the town centre.



5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation

The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 5 details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority.

Key Facts		Source
Tenure Mix		
Tenure	%	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Owner-Occupier	60.2%	
Housing Association	23.1%	
Private Rented	16%	
Other	0.7%	
<p>Tenure profile varies across Hartlepool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of owner occupied dwellings is highest in Rural West (85%) and Hart (80%) wards. Social renting is highest in Manor House (47.3%) and Headland and Harbour (43.8%) wards. Private renting is highest in Victoria (33.9%) and Burn Valley (30.7%) wards. 		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
House Prices		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Median prices in Hartlepool have been consistently lower than the median prices for the North East and England over the period 2000 to 2014. Overall prices have increased 115.4% from £47,000 in 2000 to £101,250 in 2014. Prices peaked at £115,000 in 2013 but fell in 2014. House prices are relatively lower in Burn Valley and Victoria wards and relatively higher in Hart and Rural West wards. 		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Relative affordability		
<p>Hartlepool is one of the most affordable districts in the region, with a lower quartile house price to income ratio of 3.9 (i.e. lower quartile house prices are 3.9 x lower quartile gross earnings) compared to 4.6 across the North East as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013, the median income for people in employment living in Hartlepool was £24,721 per year compared with £24,560 for the North East and a national median of £27,076. 		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Income		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomes amongst owner occupiers tend to be high with 40.7% receiving at least £500 per week. 63.3% of privately renting households receive less. 87.7% of households living in affordable housing (social rented or shared ownership) receive an income of less than £300 gross per week and 60.6% receive less than £200 gross per week. 		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Help to Buy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been a total of 221 Help to Buy completions in Hartlepool. 		2011-2015 Hartlepool Housing Strategy
Population Changes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of residents aged 65 and over is expected to increase by 50.6%, from 17,000 in 2014 to 25,600 in 2037. In the same time period the proportion of residents aged under 65 is expected to fall by 5% from 75,600 to 71,800. Over the next few decades the population is going to age in Hartlepool and this will put increasing strain on resources directed at the housing and support needs of older people. 		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
New Housing Requirements		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an affordable housing shortfall of 144 units (net). 		Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Land Availability		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council has identified a five year housing land supply. The Local Plan is in development and will provide a 15 year housing land supply prioritising land in locations which are well served by public transport and other services. 		Strategic Land Availability Assessment 2015
Housing Regeneration		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,000 obsolete terraced properties identified as oversupply in 2002. Demolition of 1,200 obsolete properties has already taken place. 		Housing Regeneration Strategy 2002

5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation



Why is this a priority?

The Local Planning Context

The Local Plan currently being prepared will replace the existing 2006 Hartlepool Local Plan. The Local Plan is the main document that allocates strategic sites for housing, employment, retail, leisure and infrastructure and safeguards assets in the borough such as the natural environment. Once adopted the Local Plan will replace policies established in the 2006 Local Plan. In terms of housing, over the next 15 years the Local Plan will seek to:

- (ii) plan for housing to meet the current and future needs of the borough;
- (iii) allocate new land for housing;
- (iii) outline the mix of housing that is required; and
- (iv) establish affordable housing requirement on private housing developments of 15 units or more. It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be adopted in 2016.

Delivery of New Housing

In planning for new housing within Hartlepool a number of issues have been identified that need to be taken into consideration. People's realistic aspirations need to be understood fully to be able to match need and demand with provision. The local market and demographics need to be understood and in particular awareness of Hartlepool's changing population.

The development of sustainable communities is integral to the new Housing Strategy. This means local implementation of sustainable communities as illustrated earlier in the document (see page 6). This

approach includes future proofing new properties to make sure they are adaptable to a household's changing needs, the development of mixed tenure communities, ensuring high quality design and build, consideration of affordability, and reducing carbon emissions. All of these will be a challenge for this Strategy, but should create places where people will choose to live.

New housing needs to be developed in the right locations encouraging development on previously used (brownfield) land and on the most sustainable greenfield sites, taking into account the associated costs with acquiring and building on both.

Significant community involvement is underway with the development of the Local Plan which will allocate land for 15 years of housing development. The Council is committed to community engagement and this will be strongly encouraged through the Localism agenda and in emerging Neighbourhood Plans.

In Hartlepool, funding and land issues need to be considered, particularly the low value of land and the reluctance of owners to sell, compounded by the lack of Council owned land. There is insufficient previously developed land in the town centre available for all of the new housing development required so there is a need to strike a balance between developing further away from the town centre and the detrimental impact this may have.

Despite the current housing market situation, house building in the borough has continued at around 300 net additional dwellings each year. However, this has been primarily due to the success of publicly funded housing developments supporting ongoing private developments.

5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation



The current housing market condition has not only affected new house building, but has also resulted in even attractive new build flats remaining vacant. This is particularly evident within flat developments at the Marina.

When planning new housing developments links to infrastructure, services, health and the economy need to be considered. In particular they need to be responsive to the recently approved sites within the Enterprise Zones. Links need to be made between job creation, in migration of wealth creators and new homes. This may involve employing local people in all stages of house building; creating training opportunities and attracting people into Hartlepool to live and work.

Delivery of Affordable Housing and Access to New Housing Developments

Affordable housing is defined as housing available to those who are unable to access accommodation suitable for their family's needs, at a price that they can reasonably afford on the open market, whether for rent or home ownership. Affordable housing includes social rented housing and intermediate housing. Intermediate housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents.

As detailed in Chapter 2 the affordable rent product was introduced by the Government in April 2011. Affordable rented homes will be made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and this will be the key way in which new affordable housing will be funded. Tenancies will be offered through the Compass Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) and are eligible for housing benefit. Affordable rented properties will be owned by RPs

and retained in perpetuity in the same way that social rented properties are.

In Hartlepool all RPs also operate in other local authorities and the Council will need to ensure that revenue raised through the introduction of higher affordable rents locally is not used by RPs to fund the delivery of new affordable social housing in another area. It will also be important to assess the impact of potential rent increases on affordability for local residents in housing need.

It is important that through the Housing Strategy the supply of affordable homes is increased and homelessness continues to be prevented in Hartlepool. The successful delivery of affordable housing is dependent upon the relationships with RPs, funding bodies and developers. Work needs to continue with developers to make new homes more affordable. Reductions in funding will necessitate the ongoing use of policies in the 2006 Hartlepool Local Plan and emerging Local Plan to secure affordable housing provision or financial contribution as part of private housing developments; working with the HCA and developing smarter and more affordable building techniques. In addition to the new affordable rent product affordable housing will continue to be delivered, albeit on a smaller scale, through the National Affordable Housing Programme. The current 2015-2018 HCA funding programme awarded funding for a number of schemes in Hartlepool.

As outlined, perhaps the most important way of securing the delivery of affordable housing in the future is through the use of planning obligations. Affordable housing policies will be included in the emerging Local Plan, and seek to secure affordable housing as part of all private housing developments

5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation

with over 15 units. The level of provision is dependent on the economic viability of an individual scheme and, in some instances, can be provided off-site or as a commuted sum to benefit housing regeneration elsewhere in the Borough.

When building new affordable housing, consideration should also be made to reducing potential service charges as far as possible. This will be achieved through developing self-contained accommodation wherever possible and low maintenance communal facilities where this is unavoidable. Service charges should be avoided completely on shared ownership products where these costs could be going towards more equity purchase.

Since the start of the economic downturn, mortgage availability has been reduced, higher deposits are required and it is becoming increasingly difficult for first time buyers to get on the housing ladder. Increasing housing costs will impact on household's spare income for food, fuel bills, leisure and recreation. The Strategy will need to be responsive to the potential for increased crime, anti social behaviour, homelessness, fuel poverty and put in place measures to mitigate this.

The central area of Hartlepool where first time buyers traditionally bought is increasingly vulnerable because people who can get a mortgage are now choosing 'estate houses' rather than terraced properties.

The overall health of a housing market relies on a steady flow of first time buyers, particularly as the market is largely based on a system of trading up in the value, type and size of a home. New purchasers need to be encouraged and supported through initiatives to access a first home. Access to home

ownership for first time buyers will be partly addressed through house-builders own initiatives such as shared equity, deposit match and the Government backed Help to Buy scheme to encourage the sale of properties. The opportunity for council backed mortgages and deposits will continue to be explored during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy.

Housing Regeneration

Housing Market Renewal (HMR) has been an important route in providing new and affordable housing within Hartlepool. It has been an integral part of the success of the Housing Strategy 2011-2015. However, funding streams and housing regeneration interventions have moved on.

Housing market failure continues to persist in some parts of the town, particularly in the central area, typified by:

- Low demand in certain housing sectors including a collapse in the market for terraced properties in particular streets within the central area;
- An imbalance between demand and supply in the local housing market;
- Relatively low house prices;
- Decline in owner-occupation, together with increased concentrations of private landlords;
- Housing management issues, including absentee private landlords;
- High levels of household moves and anti-social behaviour in certain areas of low demand; and
- High levels of dissatisfaction with housing provision reflecting changing aspirations and outdated layouts.

5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation

During the last strategy the Council's HMR programme has continued with the acquisition of private properties on the key strategic sites in the town funded by both central government and council funding:

- Raby Road Corridor
- Belle Vue
- Carr/Hopps Street

Through this Strategy it is imperative that Housing Regeneration is continued. Funding for all forms of regeneration has been significantly reduced by Government and this includes all forms of improvement grants. The schemes that come forward involve a partnership and a joint funding requirement. It is therefore essential that future committed sums towards affordable housing are channelled to match any available Government funded programmes.

An example of this includes the Carr/Hopps Regeneration Scheme where the Council has been awarded grant funding to complete the scheme, subject to 50% match funding from the Council. The ability to continue with our plans for Housing Regeneration will be assisted primarily through the use of planning obligations. The Carr/Hopps scheme is match funded from off-site contributions under Section 106 agreements, which forms the planning permission conditions on new build sites in Hartlepool.

It is critical that areas adjacent to HMR sites are monitored to protect the investment in these areas and to continue the successful regeneration of Hartlepool. Housing Regeneration schemes are linked closely to empty homes initiatives and investment in bringing them back into use minimises the risk to these adjacent areas.

The Strategy also aims to support the regeneration activity of the Council's RP partners, such as the acquisition, clearance and redevelopment of the Raby Estate by Housing Hartlepool.

Economic Regeneration

In October 2014 the Council adopted the Constructing Hartlepool Strategy which complements the shared goals of the Hartlepool Vision, Masterplan, Economic Regeneration Strategy and Housing Strategy. These strategies provide the catalyst for revitalising the town and creating a more inclusive, prosperous and resilient economy which will attract new investment and major development, boost the business stock and increase the number of residents entering into sustained employment.

The Constructing Hartlepool Strategy adds significant value by capitalising on the role of the Council as a planning authority and facilitator of major developments which in turn supports the Construction sector. Through the implementation of this strategy, developers will be invited to advise the Council on how they plan to incorporate local supply chains and targeted, recruitment and training (TRT) clauses within their planning proposal which will support business growth and enable greater access to employment and skills for local residents. The Council is currently working with national housing developers to implement this strategy.

5. Priority 1: Delivering suitable new homes, including affordable homes and older person accommodation

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 1

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Maintain an understanding of the current housing needs in the Borough;
- Ensure all new residential developments supply good quality new homes across all tenures to meet local housing need;
- Ensure where appropriate all new developments are linked to the creation of job opportunities and training;
- Ensure all relevant residential developments include an affordable housing provision;
- Continue to work with Registered Providers and developers in the provision of affordable housing;
- Deliver a mix of affordable housing in line with planning policy;
- Ensure new build houses are flexible to the changing needs of future residents;
- Monitor areas adjacent to HMR sites to protect the investment in these areas;
- Continue to tackle the imbalance of supply and demand and pursue funding for housing regeneration programmes;
- Cater for the needs of an ageing population; and cater for the needs of the disabled population.

6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

This chapter details how the Council will aim to improve existing homes across tenures. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring housing quality and choice across the rented sector. Particular challenges include raising standards within the private rented sector, tackling fuel poverty and helping owner occupiers to maintain their homes.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- Improved management standards, housing quality and choice in the rented sector;
- Improved energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty across tenures;
- Improved neighbourhoods and the environment ; and
- Owner occupiers are better able to maintain and improve their homes.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011-2015

- Enforcement Policy published in October 2011.
- Review of the six Selective Licensing areas (introduced in May 2009) and approval for a second designation in 13 streets (effective from 6th July 2015).
- 100 empty properties purchased through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme and 60 long-term

empty properties refurbished through the Empty Homes Lease Scheme.

- 96% of Registered Provider (RP) stock in Hartlepool improved to Decent Homes Plus standard.
- Review of the Good Tenant Scheme in 2011 which confirmed increased take up of the scheme and identified improvements.
- Year on year increase in the number of empty homes brought back into use.
- All RPs have signed up to the RESPECT – ASB Charter for Housing.
- Baden Street Improvement Project implemented resulting in significant decline in levels of crime and anti social behaviour and 18 long-term empty properties have been brought back into use to date (April 2015.)
- HCA empty homes funding secured.
- £55k health funding secured for the Warmer Homes Healthy Hartlepool project.
- The Council entered into a regional partnership with British Gas and eight other Local Authorities, Warm Up North Scheme.
- Photo Voltaic panels have been installed in Council housing stock and Registered Provider stock across Hartlepool.



6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

CASE STUDY 2 – HOMEPLUS GRANT SCHEME

Concerns were raised by the neighbour of a gentleman who appeared to be having difficulties maintaining his own home. Officers from Housing Services visited and found the home to be in poor condition – the boiler had broken down and the owner had been unable to clean the property, items had accumulated and it had become filthy. The owner was willing to engage with officers and agreed to allow a contractor to carry out a thorough cleanse of his home and to pay for this. The resident was then assisted through the homeplus grants scheme to have a new gas boiler installed and is now able to live safely in their home and able to carry out regular cleaning as well as having the added benefit of heating throughout.

CASE STUDY 3

– WARM HOMES HEALTHY HARTLEPOOL

During 2012/13, the Council received some funding through the Department of Health and this was used to improve the energy efficiency of homes and to carry out essential work to prevent/minimise health effects due to inadequately heated and/or insulated homes.

One female resident aged 67 was referred to the scheme by Connected Care in January 2013. The lady had a disability and was in receipt of means tested benefits. She was an owner occupier and her boiler had broken down leaving her without hot water or heating. Due to her circumstances, she was offered a grant to replace her boiler. Housing staff handled the process for her, obtained estimates, appointed a contractor, supervised the work and then paid the contractor directly once she was satisfied with the work. The whole process took three weeks.

The resident took part in a survey after the work was done and reported a number of positive outcomes including that her health had improved, she could heat more rooms in her home and she'd made fewer visits to the doctors or hospital. She added –

'This scheme has saved my life. I couldn't have went through another winter without heating. From start to end the scheme was very helpful'

Another resident aged 80 benefitted from the replacement of some draughty windows and extra radiators to previously un-heated rooms. She reported amongst other things, an improvement in her well-being. There were added benefits to residents helped through this scheme. As this resident stated '.....the windows particularly have proved a boon as I can now open them without having to climb on a chair – and to do so at 80!!.....'

6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 6 below details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority.

Table 6 – Priority 2: Key Facts

^a The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard, each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having Category 1 (serious) or Category 2 (other) hazards. <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/hhsrsoverridingguidance>

Key Facts	Source
Private Renting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The private rented sector accommodates 16.2% of households across Hartlepool. 20.3% of all private rented dwellings are in Victoria, 17.9% in Burn Valley and 13.3% in Headland and Harbour. The characteristics of tenants are diverse and in particular the private rented sector accommodates lone parents (16.7%), singles under 60 (31.9%), couples with no children (17.9%) and couples with children (15.4%). 43.7% of private renting households have lived in their accommodation for less than 2 years. 63.3% of private renting households receive less than £300 gross each week. 51.1% of heads of household living in private rented accommodation are employed. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Social Renting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The affordable sector (social rented or shared ownership) accommodates 23.8% of households across Hartlepool. 30.2% are older singles and couples, 30.9% of households are singles under 60, 6.9% are couples with children, 6.2% are lone parents, 9.2% are couples/lone parents with adult children and 12.2% are couples with no children. 87.7% of households receive less than £300 gross each week. 18% of heads of household living in affordable housing are employed. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Overcrowding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the 2011 Census, 2.7 % of households were overcrowded compared to 4.6% across England. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Housing Conditions (Private sector)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An estimated 11,300 dwellings in Hartlepool (34.8% of the stock) were classed as non decent. The majority of dwellings are non decent because of Category 1 Hazards⁸ (18.5%) and thermal comfort failure (15.4%). In Hartlepool non decent dwellings were most associated with low rise purpose built flats, the private rented sector and properties built pre-1919. Non decency was also associated with heads of households aged 16 to 24 and those aged 75+. The highest non decency score by sub-area was recorded in the Central sub-area at 44.1%. 6,000 (18.5%) dwellings were estimated to have at least one Category 1 Hazard. The highest proportion of Category 1 hazards was found in the Central sub-area followed by the Rural sub-area. The total funding requirement for repairs in all dwellings that failed under the repair criterion of the Decent Homes Standard was £21.2 million, an average cost of £4,500 per dwelling. 	2009 Private Sector House Condition Survey
Housing Conditions (Social sector)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALL RP stock in Hartlepool meets the Decent Homes Standard and 96% of stock meets the Decent Homes Plus Standard. 	2011-2015 Hartlepool Housing Strategy
Energy Efficiency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2009 there were estimated to be 6,900 (21.2%) dwellings which contain households in fuel poverty within Hartlepool. The survey indicates that the highest rate of fuel poverty was found in the Central sub-area at 25.8% followed by the South sub-area at 19.1%. The average energy efficiency level in Hartlepool, using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure, was 51 (on a scale of 1 to 100). This was slightly above the all England average of 49 from the English House Condition Survey 2006. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2012 there were estimated to be 4,616 (11.6%) of households in Hartlepool in fuel poverty compared to 10% of all households nationally 	Department of Energy and Climate Change 2012

6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

Why is this a priority?

The Rented Sector

The private rented sector (PRS) accounts for 16% of housing stock in Hartlepool and has an important role to play in the housing market. The increase in the size of the sector is reflective of a 5% fall in the number of owner-occupied households and 4% fall in the number of social rented households. It provides homes for a variety of people at different stages in their lives, including would-be first time buyers who cannot afford to take the first step onto the property ladder, people who enjoy the flexibility of short tenancies and those who the Council has helped into the sector to prevent them from becoming homeless. Developing products and services that will respond to those households is also an integral part of the town centre regeneration and underpins regeneration activity.

It is recognised that the PRS presents a number of challenges. These include housing quality, housing management and the unsecure nature of tenancies in the sector.

During the Housing Strategy 2011-2015 good relationships were built with private landlords and agents to improve the management and quality of accommodation.

The long term aspiration is one of a town with a variety of accommodation which is balanced to ensure communities can have a greater choice in where they live and if applicable move around the housing market rather than move out of the Borough.

Through the Strategy the aim is to continue to develop a healthy PRS with improvements in property conditions and management standards

supported through the enhanced tenant/landlord service delivered by the Council's Housing Services. This service delivers Selective Licensing which aims to improve the management standards and improve the quality of privately rented accommodation within a designated area. The service also manages the Good Tenant Scheme, a referencing service for tenants which has the express aim of reducing anti social behaviour in the PRS. The Council will also be developing additional complementary measures such as a Voluntary Landlord Scheme (VLS) and General Register of Landlords (GRL) across all areas of the town.

In addition, the Council is in the process of setting up a Social Lettings Agency (SLA) which will provide similar services to a commercial letting and managing agent. However, it will work closely with the landlord and tenant to help establish and sustain tenancies. The SLA aims to provide good quality and affordable housing management services and access to a range of inhouse skills and expertise. As a managing agent the Council will insist on good housing standards, reasonable rent levels and effective tenancy agreements. Target tenants will include those facing homelessness, those unable to afford homeownership and who find it hard to secure a tenancy in the existing rented sector.

The responsibility for maintaining private property rests with the home owner. However the Council recognises that intervention and assistance is necessary where areas are in decline, owners are in financial hardship (a problem which is increasing as the impact of the economic recession continues) or landlords refuse to undertake essential repairs or improvements. The Council will take appropriate action where it finds landlords failing in their responsibilities.



6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

The Council will also work closely with landlords and agents to ensure any additional support services are provided when required. The Council actively participates in an annual Tees Valley Landlord Forum which is an essential point of contact between the Council, landlords and agents and is used as a conduit to share information and best practice.

The objective of the Strategy is to improve access and improve information on the PRS which is needed together with work being undertaken with landlords to promote the sector. The strategy will aim to bring together the package of tools available to the Council and its partners to improve the overall private sector housing offer. This includes the enhanced tenant/landlord liaison service.

The impact of Government changes to Housing Benefit (HB), Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and introduction of Universal Credit (from February 2015 in Hartlepool) on people's ability to afford a home in the rented sector will continue to present challenges.

It is important that the Council works with partners to minimise the impact of these reductions in people's income, particularly if this means people are at risk of being made homeless and unable to afford to maintain their home. The social rented sector (SRS) accounts for 23.1% of housing stock in Hartlepool. Registered Providers have a key role in providing affordable housing and assisting the Council in its wider housing objectives such as regeneration and the provision of new affordable homes.

As well as providing new homes, it is important that high quality services are provided to people living in the social rented sector. Since the last Strategy 96% of all RP homes have achieved the decent homes plus standard. Through this Strategy all RPs

operating in Hartlepool will be encouraged to continue to offer well managed and good quality housing and participate actively in the Housing Partnership.

The Council is working proactively with local housing providers to respond to the outcomes of Welfare Reform. It aims to ensure a tailored service is provided to all residents who have been affected by the changes and to signpost them to relevant services such as Lifeline or addictive behaviour services and support them to get back into work, where appropriate. As a result of the size criteria there is relatively low demand for certain properties in some areas of the town. The Council will continue to work with partners to make best use of existing homes, increase demand and identify opportunities to increase the provision of suitable housing to meet needs.

The Council will monitor and respond carefully to ensure that the needs of local people are not adversely impacted by the measures already implemented and any future government policy.

From 1st April 2015 Housing Services took on the direct housing management role for all properties owned by the Council. This is comprised of 82 properties built during the 2009/10 Local Authority New Build programme and 100 properties acquired through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme as part of the 2011-2015 Housing Strategy. The Council has taken on this direct role to retain and expand in-house services whilst delivering well managed and good quality accommodation for tenants. Through the lifetime of this Strategy the Council will continue to work with partners to identify opportunities to increase its portfolio.

6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

Neighbourhoods

The level of crime and anti social behaviour within our neighbourhoods destabilise feelings of safety and security and can be a major influence on the health and wellbeing of residents. Any type of anti-social behaviour or crime affects all types of tenure. The Injunction to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance and the Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) are two of the new powers that will be available to tackle anti-social behaviour. The injunction will tackle low level anti-social behaviour and CBOs will be used for serious cases which result in criminal conviction. We will continue to work with the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and housing providers to respond positively to reports of antisocial behaviour and help make Hartlepool a safer place to live.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership is in the process of refreshing ward profiles and wards identified as 'vulnerable localities' will be supported with a sustainability plan.

At a local level multi agency Joint Action Groups will continue to use a localised action plan to tackle community safety issues.

Housing Conditions

The Strategy acknowledges the essential role that good quality housing plays in promoting health, well-being, educational attainment and independence for residents, maintaining quality of life and vibrant local communities.

As evidenced earlier, the private sector in Hartlepool accounts for a large proportion of residential accommodation. A Private Sector Stock Condition



Survey undertaken in Hartlepool in 2009 identified that 34.8% of stock did not meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. It also found that the poorest housing conditions are concentrated in the oldest housing stock. The challenge for the Strategy is to work to improve conditions within the owner occupied and private rented sectors, targeting the most vulnerable residents including encouraging reporting of poor property conditions.

Where substantial work is required to remedy Category 1 hazards (HHSRS), all available options will be fully considered including assistance, housing options advice or enforcement action, as appropriate.

A further challenge will be the lack of available funding for grants and loans which has previously been available for improvement works.

Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty refers to a household that cannot afford to heat its home to an adequate standard of warmth and meet its other energy needs, in order to maintain health and wellbeing.⁹

The official definition of fuel poverty is the **Low Income High Cost (LIHC)** Indicator which classes a household as being in fuel poverty if its energy costs are above the average (median) for its household type and this expenditure pushes it below the poverty line. In 2012, this meant that 11.6% (4,616) of households in Hartlepool were in fuel poverty compared to 10% of all households nationally.¹⁰

⁹ An introduction to fuel poverty, UK Health Forum 2014

¹⁰ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2012) Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics 2012

6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

Fuel poverty is determined by the interaction between three factors:

- The energy efficiency of the home
- Energy costs
- Household income

During the 2011-2015 Housing Strategy the Council has been able, through a number of measures, to influence the impact of fuel poverty of Hartlepool residents and energy efficiency of homes. These have included:

- One-off health funding
- Home Plus Grants and Regional Loans
- Warm up North
- Collective Energy Switching

A key challenge is to continue to tackle energy efficiency of homes to help reduce fuel poverty and a priority for the strategy will be to identify new sources of funding to continue to provide financial assistance to those in need.

The Council entered into a partnership with British Gas and eight other Local Authorities in the region to deliver a scheme to improve the energy efficiency of homes in the North East and the 'Warm up North' (WuN) scheme was officially launched in September 2013.

A wide range of measures to improve energy efficiency and therefore reduce energy consumption are available through this scheme including, but not limited to, external wall insulation (cavity and solid walls), loft insulation, solar panels and replacement boilers.

Work continues to promote the take up of these measures in partnership with Warm up North and

areas will be targeted on a rolling programme as well as ongoing referrals and general promotion through the distribution of literature and attendance at relevant meetings.

The Council has promoted two Collective Switching schemes which have enabled residents to come together, facilitated by an independent organisation, and negotiate with a number of suppliers to secure a better deal on their energy supply. Further schemes will be promoted during the lifetime of the Strategy.

Responding to the challenges of climate change

As a service provider the Council needs to plan ahead to be ready to deal with the likely impacts of climate change. It must consider the risks from intense weather events such as heavy rainfall causing surface water flooding and heat-waves causing homes to overheat as well as the potential for flooding from the sea caused by anticipated sea level rise.

There is a need to reduce carbon emissions and prevent further climate change in the future through better design and building techniques and the reuse and recycling of building materials. New developments must be encouraged to incorporate renewable energy generation whether on-site or remotely.

The Government has committed to reduce targeted emissions which cause climate change by 80% by 2050 (based on 1990 levels) including an interim target to reduce emissions by 26% by 2020. The Council has also signed up to the European Covenant of Mayors which commits it to reducing carbon emissions by more than 20% by 2020.

6. Priority 2: Making the best use of existing homes; improving quality, conditions and the environment

The benefits of improving the energy efficiency of existing homes includes reduced energy bills, reduced fuel poverty, warmer homes, health improvements and reduced carbon emissions.

Retrofitting existing homes to improve insulation levels, enabling them to generate their own electricity

and better cope with the impacts of climate change are all important parts of climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is vital homes continue to be healthy, comfortable places to live and wherever possible do not suffer from the effects of flooding, water shortages during droughts, or from over-heating.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 2

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Make best use of the existing housing stock;
- Utilise the broad range of tools to make the private sector more accountable;
- Improve housing conditions in the private rented sector through the use of all enforcement powers in accordance with the Enforcement Policy;
- Work to ensure decent, safe and healthy homes in the private rented sector;
- Introduce a managing agent scheme for landlords with occupied properties;
- Work with private landlords to improve quality by introducing a second Selective Licensing designation, Voluntary Landlord Scheme and General Register of Landlords;
- Continue to monitor and enforce licences generated under the first selective licensing scheme;
- Continue to gather data any supporting evidence required in order to consider any future selective licensing proposals;
- Continue housing liaison with all Registered

Providers and seek to achieve more effective local management;

- Achieve a high level of tenant satisfaction with the management of the council owned stock;
- Work in partnership with Community Safety to help make Hartlepool a safe place to live;
- Work in partnership with Community Safety to influence sustainability plans in vulnerable localities;
- Seek to provide an efficient, co-ordinated response to reports of Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Encourage tenants and home owners to take responsibility for their local living environment;
- Encourage investment into neighbourhoods;
- Support investment into areas that are adjacent to housing regeneration;
- Improve the energy efficiency of existing stock;
- Work to reduce levels of fuel poverty;
- Raise awareness of fuel poverty with agencies who visit residents in their homes; and
- Work with partners in the health and wellbeing sector to reduce health inequalities resulting from poor housing.

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to bring long-term empty homes back into use. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include balancing incentive and enforcement action, identifying funding to undertake empty homes work and supporting investment in housing regeneration.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- Reduced number of long-term empty homes;
- Work with partners to explore and access funding opportunities; and
- Increased level of funding drawn in to support empty homes initiatives.

Achievements during the Empty Homes Strategy 2010-2015

- Three Compulsory Purchase actions pursued, of which two were successfully completed and one was outstanding at 31st March 2015
- Two Enforced Sales pursued for unpaid Council Tax of which one owner repaid the Council Tax debt and brought his property back into use and the other sold to the Council as part of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme.
- Over 10% of long-term empty properties back into use each year between 2011 and 2014.

- 100 empty properties purchased by Hartlepool Borough Council as part of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme.
- 60 long term empty properties refurbished as part of the Empty Homes Lease Scheme which is operated in partnership with Housing Hartlepool.
- Four long-term empty residential properties purchased by Housing Hartlepool and refurbished and brought back into use.
- Two commercial premises purchased and currently undergoing renovation into six self-contained flat units.
- Development of policies and procedures for Compulsory Purchase Orders, Enforced Sales and Empty Dwelling Management Orders.
- Improvement of Empty Homes information and communication via leaflets and the Council's website.
- Membership of the Empty Homes Network.



7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

CASE STUDY 4 – 27 ALDERSON STREET

Legislation used – Threat of Enforced Sale (Unpaid Council Tax) Numerous complaints were received from local residents including several reports regarding rats coming from the

property – property labelled as “the rat house”. Charging Order and Enforced Sale pursued in respect of unpaid Council Tax. Owner paid Council Tax debt and signed up to the Empty Homes Lease Scheme and the property was refurbished and let at an affordable rent to a local family.



7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

CASE STUDY 5 – 36/38 PATTERDALE STREET

Legislation used –Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 215 Action. Several complaints were received from local residents of nearby properties. Properties were located directly adjacent to a Housing Market Renewal (HMR) site. A Section 215 Notice was served on the owner and the works in

default were due to be undertaken by Hartlepool Borough Council. The properties were purchased by Hartlepool Borough Council refurbished, rerendered and let as part of the Empty Property Purchase Scheme.



The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 7 below details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority.

Key Facts	Source
Vacancy Rates	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within Hartlepool the percentage of empty properties in the private sector exceed the national average. In 2014 the total vacancy rate was 4.6% which compared with 2.7% across England. Of these 1.8% were long-term vacant. 	Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As at April 2013 there were 753 properties which had been empty for more than 6 months in the private sector. 	HBC Council Tax data

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

Dwelling stock and occupancy by sub-area					Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Sub-area	Total Dwellings	Total Households	Total Vacant	%vacant	
Burn Valley	4107	3789	318	7.7	
De Bruce	3524	3446	78	2.2	
Fens and Rossmere	3985	3895	90	2.3	
Foggy Furze	3766	3605	161	4.3	
Hart	3616	3536	80	2.2	
Headland and Harbour	3966	3731	235	5.9	
Jesmond	3917	3737	180	4.6	
Manor House	4613	4484	129	2.8	
Rural West	2976	2894	82	2.8	
Seaton	3723	3617	106	2.8	
Victoria	4406	3897	509	11.6	
Total	42599	40631	1968	4.6	

Why is this a priority?

Empty Homes in the Private Sector

In order to make the best use of existing housing and complement Priority 2 of the Housing Strategy; efforts are focussed on bringing long-term empty properties back into use. As at April 2013 there were 753 properties in Hartlepool which had been empty for six months or more. Bringing empty homes back into use can be an effective method for increasing housing supply, whilst helping to reduce the need to build new homes.

Through the Housing Strategy it is important that there is a focus on linking housing need and demand strategically to existing homes and innovative solutions developed to bring these issues together. The Council will continue to help owners who want to bring empty properties back into use and it will utilise a wide range of enforcement powers where needed.

Tackling empty properties and the use of enforcement powers is a key challenge for the Council which will need to be sufficiently resourced during the lifetime of this Strategy if it is to make a significant impact and a real difference is to be made in local neighbourhoods.

Whilst tackling empty properties across all sectors is important, the biggest challenge for the Council is to concentrate its resources towards the private sector. Responding to empty properties in the social sector will be carried out in partnership with RPs.

The associated issues of the oversupply of pre-1919 terraced properties will continue to be tackled through housing regeneration.

The key aim of this Priority is, therefore, to bring private sector empty homes back into use and to acknowledge the concerns of the community about empty homes and the associated issues that relate to the image of the town. The intention is to bring appropriate empty homes back into use, using a range of flexible solutions and to reduce the number of empty homes by at least 10% each year until an accepted level of 3% vacancy is achieved. It is accepted that 3% of properties need to be vacant to allow a housing market to function effectively and facilitate residential mobility.

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

Reasons for tackling long-term empty homes

There are a number of strategic reasons why it is important to tackle the issue of properties remaining long-term empty in the town:

- Empty homes are a wasted asset where there is unmet need for certain types and location of housing.
- To maximise the use of the existing stock and minimise the number of new homes that need to be built each year. However, the mismatch between the existing stock and aspirations needs to be considered.
- To contribute towards neighbourhood sustainability and community well-being through:
 - o An increased stock of good quality housing;
 - o Reducing nuisance and negative environmental impact caused by empty homes i.e. crime, fly tipping, vandalism, vermin and arson;
 - o Safeguarding and protecting new build redevelopments in regeneration areas;
 - o Promoting regeneration and investment in affected areas;
 - o Reducing damp and other problems for neighbouring properties;
 - o Helping to meet local housing need, therefore reducing the need for new build homes and the potential reduction of greenfield land development;

- o Discouraging local property price devaluation;
- o Cutting carbon emissions by renovating and undertaking home improvements rather than building new homes;
- o Increasing health outcomes for people; and
- o Encouraging economic vitality through increased trade for local businesses and increasing employment opportunities.
- To reduce the direct and indirect financial costs borne by empty property owners, neighbours, and public services such as the local authority, police and fire services.

Why do homes become long-term empty?

Homes are empty for different reasons and we need to understand the causes in order to provide effective solutions. The main reason identified for the high number of empty private sector homes is the overstock of small, pre 1919 terraced homes in areas of low demand. Other reasons include:

- o Neglect by owners / abandonment due to lack of value;
- o Disputes over ownership;
- o Inability to sell e.g. negative equity;
- o Repossession / bankruptcy;
- o Deceased estate / probate disputes;
- o Ownership of the property unknown; and
- o Speculative purchase (buy to let/buy to leave).

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

An effective strategy for dealing with empty homes will ensure owners of these properties are informed of all the options available, the benefits of filling an empty home and the enforcement options available to Hartlepool Borough Council.

Existing Initiatives and Joint Working

A number of initiatives to encourage and promote the return of empty properties into occupation and promote sustainability have been identified:

- The Good Tenant Scheme
- Private Sector housing complaints service
- Compulsory Purchase Orders
- Selective Licensing within designated areas
- Development of measures such as the Voluntary Landlord Scheme, General Register of Landlords and Social Lettings Agency as previously mentioned within Priority 2

In addition, from 1 April 2012 there is no longer a 50% discount on an empty property with 100% council tax due after a property is empty for 1 month.

From 1 April 2013 a 150% council tax premium is due for properties which have been empty for 2 years or more.

Provision of Advice and Assistance

The Council will continue to engage owners and, where possible, work in partnership with them to find the right solutions through the provision of advice and assistance on:

- o Redevelopment/planning consents;
- o Finding a contractor/managing repairs;
- o Finding a tenant through the Compass Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme;
- o How to sell the property;
- o Renting/leasing the property or finding a letting agent such as the Council's Social Lettings Agency;
- o How to use the Council's Good Tenant scheme;
- o How landlords can provide effective management of both occupied and vacant properties;
- o Compliance with the Selective Licensing scheme conditions;
- o Encouraging private landlords to engage with and promote education and tenancy sustainment programmes; and
- o How to work with other organisations e.g. Community Campus 87 Ltd and Hartlepool NDC Trust to refurbish empty properties and bring them back into use.

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

Direct acquisition of properties – Empty Property Purchase Scheme

The Empty Property Purchasing Scheme involves the Council acquiring empty properties by agreement and refurbishing them, where necessary, in order to bring them back into use. These properties are subsequently owned and directly managed by Hartlepool Borough Council. The Council has received Homes and Communities Agency funding via the 2015-2018 National Affordable Housing Programme to acquire a further 60 properties over the next 3 years.

The Empty Homes Lease Scheme

The Empty Homes Lease Scheme is a partnership between Hartlepool Borough Council and Housing Hartlepool whereby owners of empty properties enter into a lease agreement with Housing Hartlepool for a period of years (usually between 5 and 10 years). This project is based upon a grant/loan approach in order to undertake the refurbishment works necessary to return an empty property back into use. Properties are subsequently managed by Housing Hartlepool (Thirteen Group).

Enforcement Options

- **Tackling security/nuisance issues - Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.** This is used to prevent unauthorised entry or for the purpose of preventing the property from becoming a danger to public health. Works can be carried out in default where an owner does not give a verbal agreement to carry out the works and costs are recharged back to the owner.

- **Tackling nuisance issues - Environmental Protection Act 1990.** Used to remove rubbish from empty properties and to carry out works to remedy the cause of the nuisance, e.g. dampness caused by a defect.

- **Tackling visual impact – Section 215, Town and Country Planning Act 1990.** Poor visual impact is one of the most common complaints about an empty home. The Council can serve notice on owners who fail to maintain their properties. It deals with the external appearance (the visual amenity) but does not deal with the internal aspects. It will not necessarily result in the property being returned to use.

- **Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)** – introduced by the Housing Act 2004 the HHSRS is a system which is used to assess residential properties based on the risks posed to health and safety and places a duty on Local Authorities to take action where Category 1 hazards exist.

- **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) – Section 17, Housing Act 1985** which removes ownership from the current owner to the Council. It may only be used if the Council can demonstrate that it has taken other measures to bring the property back into use and has a robust plan for the re-occupation / use / management of the property. This option shifts responsibility from the owner to the Council for bringing the property back into use and requires public resources.

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

- **Enforced Sale – Section 103, Law of Property Act 1925** which allows the Council to force the sale of a property subject to a local land charge following works in default action by the Council. The sale allows the Council to recover debt owed by the owner and also costs incurred as a result of the enforced sale. This tool may indirectly prompt the new owner to return the property to use.
- **Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) – Section 132 Housing Act 2004** The Council can apply to a Residential Property Tribunal to take over a property and to repair, let and manage it on behalf of the landlord for up to seven years. Costs can be recouped from the rental income. However, it may mean that only properties with relatively low repair costs will be financially viable.

Prioritising Action

A targeted approach will be used to bring properties back into use in areas that have been identified for proactive action. Empty homes will be brought back into use, using a range of flexible solutions appropriate to the property.

Figure 3 outlines the options available and the flowchart that will be followed to determine the course of action that will be taken.

A key action is to bring 10% of all long-term empty properties back into use and to identify properties suitable for enforcement action where engagement with the owner(s) has failed. In order to demonstrate this ongoing work a table of the “Top 20” empty properties has been developed and this monitors progress and assists in implementing the most appropriate form of enforcement action. The table includes properties which have been empty for the longest time and those in key strategic locations or

have caused greatest concern to the local community through complaints. Each individual case is assessed on its merits and appropriate informal action taken followed by enforcement action if necessary.

Empty properties are assessed for action using the Empty Property Assessment Form which is a points based system. The Form is used to gauge the most appropriate enforcement action for a particular case. The intention is to return properties to meaningful use based on consistent and transparent criteria and policy. This takes into account factors such as:

- Condition/environmental impact/number of complaints received
- Time empty
- Number of empty properties in the same street

Although most of the proactive work will be within the identified areas it must be recognised that on occasion there will be the need to deal with empty homes outside of these areas and also the need to deal with non residential dwellings.

The appropriate course of action for any individual property will depend upon whether the owner can be located and if they are willing to bring it back into use.

7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

End Use of Properties

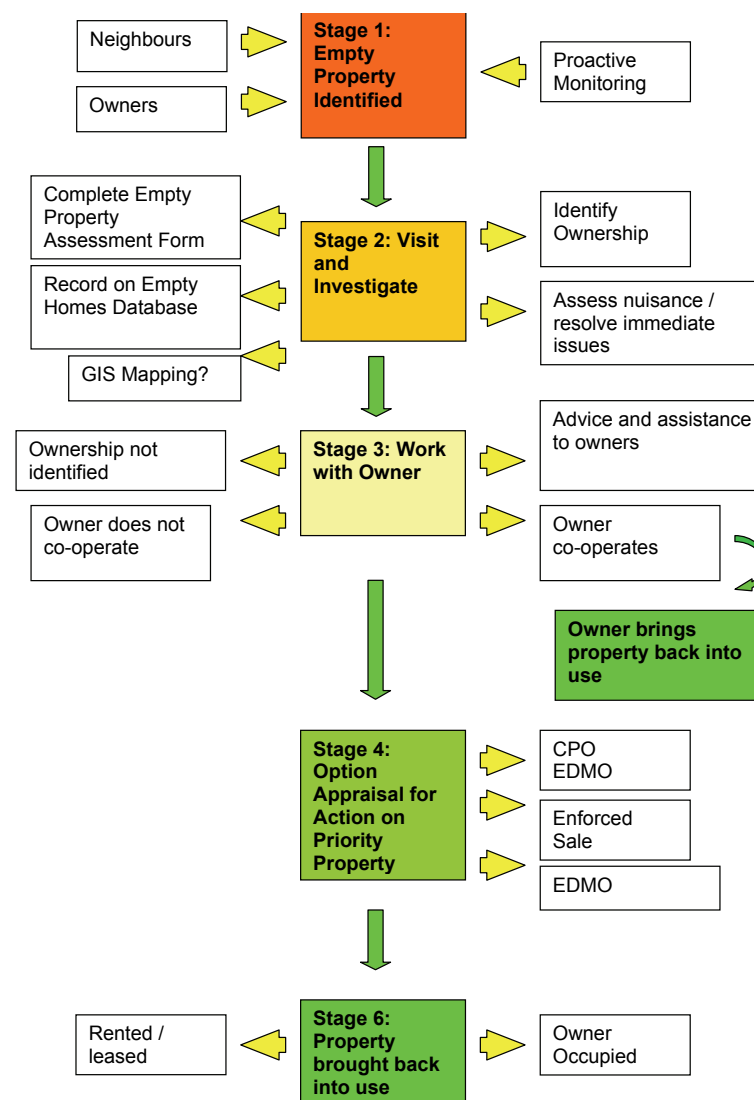
The location and type of property brought back into use will be important in deciding what residential use is appropriate.

Options for end use include:

- Retained ownership – Council Empty Property Purchasing Scheme
- Leasing with Registered Providers e.g. Empty Homes Lease Scheme
- Disposal of Compulsory Purchase Order properties to Registered Providers
- Properties advertised for rent on Compass Choice Based Lettings Scheme
- Properties managed by the Council's Social Lettings Agency
- Disposal of Compulsory Purchase Order properties on the open market

Empty homes brought back into use through this Strategy will be delivered and monitored according to the demand for that property type and location.

Figure 3 - Options Appraisal Framework



7. Priority 3: Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 3

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Bring 10% of the total number of long-term empty homes back into use annually;
- Proactively use flexible solutions and appropriate enforcement action to bring long-term empty homes back into use;
- Where empty properties present a risk to adjoining properties or neighbourhoods, continue to work with residents, landlords and agents to encourage them to be brought back into use;
- Support investment in housing regeneration and adjacent areas through the reduction of long-term empty homes;
- Increase the amount of available good quality and affordable rented housing;
- Work with partners to prevent homes becoming long-term empty; and
- Bring empty commercial properties back into use by converting them into residential accommodation where appropriate.

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs



8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to meet the specific housing needs of vulnerable people to support independent living.

The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there is a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are particular pressures for finding suitable housing solutions for people with learning and other disabilities, as well as housing for a growing older population, addressing Black and Minority Ethnic housing needs and funding housing adaptations to enable independent living.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- People with specific housing needs will have improved housing options;
- There will be increased supported housing options for vulnerable people, including the provision for older people and people with dementia;
- The needs and aspirations of the minority ethnic groups will be clearly understood in order to ensure services are responsive to their needs.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011 - 2015

Homelessness

- Review of the Compass Allocation Policy in 2012;
- Procedure put in place to inspect the private rented sector on order to discharge the Council's homelessness duty;
- Rose House opened with accommodation and support for young people between 16 and 24 working with social services;
- Rough sleeper count undertaken in October 2011 which found no rough sleepers in Hartlepool.

Independent Living

- Production of The Housing Care and Support Strategy in 2012;
- Increased use of assistive technology by RPs;
- Review of the Adaptations Policy and evidence updated in 2013;
- Monthly housing allocations meetings established specific to the housing needs of people with a learning disability;
- Improved range of information and advice for people with a learning disability and their carers on housing related issues;
- Evaluation of the extra care housing provision in 2013;
- 608 major adaptations undertaken via Disabled Facilities Grant; and
- 4159 low level adaptations undertaken such as grab rails.

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

CASE STUDY 6 – ADAPTATIONS PANEL

The 2010 Adaptations Policy introduced an Adaptations Operations Panel. The purpose of this panel is to bring together appropriate responsible officers from the Council and its partners involved in the process for adapting privately owned and socially rented properties in Hartlepool to meet the needs of residents with physical impairment or disability. The panel meets to discuss referrals when a registered provider has refused to fund an adaptation to their property or where it is a complex case such as an extension, multiple adaptations or changes in circumstances to previous applications. It is responsible for deciding what is reasonable and practicable according to current legislation and guidance in approving applications to provide funding for adaptations to properties.

The panel has successfully dealt with a complex case that has been ongoing since 1995 and has resulted in a positive outcome for the client. This case was brought to the panel in July 2012. It involved a client who needs a wheelchair and who is an owner-occupier. At this time a request had been made for an extension to the front of the property, through floor lift, level access shower and alterations to all the upstairs internal walls. The reason for the referral was due to the cost of the works involved – estimated at £30,000. But, in addition to this it was also deemed that with these alterations the first floor of the property would still not be manageable in a wheelchair and meet the long term needs of the client. Over the previous years adaptations had been made to the property as a compromise and keep the client in their own home, such as the installation of a stair lift and ceiling track hoist. Re-housing had been discussed and the clients applied to the housing waiting list in 2010. However, they were reluctant to move into rented accommodation and use up their equity on rent.

The panel discussed the case in July 2012 and decided that one of the options would be to liaise with developing registered providers to ascertain if any of the bungalows currently being built could be done so on a shared ownership basis and, if so, would the client be interested. The Occupational Therapist and Special Needs Housing Manager contacted the clients and a bungalow which was being built by Housing Hartlepool at Cecil Court was identified as being an attractive option to the client. Liaison took place with Housing Hartlepool and it was decided that the property could be built as a shared ownership unit. The clients have purchased 75% (the maximum amount allowed) and moved into the property in June 2013. The council purchased new laminate flooring and offered to pay for removals for the clients as an incentive for them to be re-housed. In addition Housing Hartlepool purchased their existing property.

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

CASE STUDY 7 – HOUSING PATHWAY FOR VULNERABILITY

Mr A is 52, has an autistic spectrum condition, a moderate learning disability and other diagnosed conditions including bi-polar disorder and OCD. He finds it difficult to cope with certain aspects of everyday life, for example, interacting with other people, and this has had a negative impact on his quality of his life.

When he lived with other people in a residential home, sharing communal areas and tasks proved difficult for Mr A. Due to his anxieties about things 'being right', his behaviour could sometimes be physically challenging to those around him. Mr A also lived in a warden-controlled building, but his need to be liked and please people became an issue with his neighbours as he would visit them uninvited and would be forceful to gain entry. Mr A is 6ft 3in tall and speaks very loudly, and some of his elderly neighbours felt intimidated and complained to the local authority.

Eventually his support provider, which did not specialise in supporting people like A, felt they could no longer support him and he was admitted to a treatment and assessment centre.

In 2012 Dimensions, a national not-for-profit support organisation for people with autism and learning disabilities, was asked to provide an individualised package of support for Mr A.

Dimensions' Behaviour Support Team focused on autism training and put in place a person-centred Positive Behaviour Support Plan which aimed to eliminate or minimise challenging behaviour and enhance quality of life.

This approach allows for positive outcomes for individuals, and can also reduce costs. The technique allows people to move away from treatment and assessment centres to personalised support in the community.

Dimensions is committed to providing personalised services and tailoring packages of support around people's individual needs, including for people with the most challenging behaviours and complex conditions. The progress Mr A has made demonstrates how a positive behaviour approach can change people's lives, and why it is important to move away from institutional settings.

Since Mr A began being supported by Dimensions there has been some incidents deemed as challenging behaviour. The staff team that he personally recruited still work with him. They have helped Mr A to replace negative experiences, which gained him a reputation for being aggressive, with a more positive view that Mr A is a friendly, happy and caring man.

He is also proud to say he now has his own permanent home and tenancy with Four Housing.

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

BME Housing Needs

- Regular monitoring through Compass of housing applications and lettings to minority ethnic groups; and
- Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriages (HALO) project established to support victims.

The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 8 details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority

Table 8 – Priority 4: Key Facts

Key Facts				Source
Population Changes				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over the next few decades there is expected to be an increase in the number and proportion of residents aged 65 and over which will increase by 50.6%, from 17,000 in 2014 to 25,600 in 2037;In the same time period the proportion of residents aged under 65 is expected to fall 5% from 75,600 in 2014 to 71,800 in 2037.				Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015
Dementia Rates				
The numbers of people in Hartlepool who will have dementia is projected to increase considerably:				HBC Child and Adults Department
	2014	2020	2030	
aged 65+	1,171	1,358	1,811	
aged 85+	492	629	894	
Waiting List				
As at March 2015 there were 18,655 active applicants on the Tees Valley housing register, of which 3,092 were registered in Hartlepool. 1,012 were banded in Priority Bands 1-3.				Compass Housing Register
Across the Tees Valley the age profile of active applicants is:				
Under 25	13%			
25 – 59	63%			
60+	24%			83% of current applicants are registered as White British.
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Funding since 2010/11 has increased for DFGs with additional funding identified from health and from social care.During 2013/14 116 DFGs were completed and The average waiting time for referral from Occupational Therapy to a DFG application was 195 days.RPs continued to fund adaptations for tenants in their own stock. However 24% of the Council's budget in 2012/13 was spent on RP properties.				Hartlepool Housing Adaptations Policy Review 2013
Ethnicity				
White British	97.6%			Census 2011
Other Ethnicity	2.4%			
Mixed	0.8%			
Black	0.1%			
Asian	1.1%			
Other Ethnic Group	0.4%			
BME Households				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The two most ethnically diverse wards are Victoria (5.6% of heads of household have an ethnicity other than White British) and Burn Valley (3%).35.5% are owner-occupiers, 29.4% rent privately and 35.1% live in affordable housing (social rented or intermediate tenures).40.8% have a gross income of less than £200 each week.17.5% are in some form of housing need (mobility impairments, other special needs, sharing facilities).40 people with Gypsy and Traveller ethnicity living in 12 households.				Hartlepool Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

Why is this a priority?

Supporting People to live independently

In 2013, the Council reviewed the way housing adaptations, Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and rehousing options are utilised to enable people to live independently in their current or future homes. The Housing Adaptations policy aims to deliver the vision of supporting people to live as independently as possible in homes that are safe and comfortable. This Strategy reinforces the key principles of improving services for people with disabilities and improving the standard of living, health and well-being of communities.

Changes to the funding regime now mean that the DFG budget is included in the Better Care Fund. Housing Services will continue to work in partnership with social care and health to look for new opportunities for meeting the housing needs of people with physical disabilities that might arise from the integration of services through the Better Care Fund.

The Council recognises that health, housing, social care and support are inextricably linked. Appropriate support and care services can help people to remain independent and enjoy living in their homes for as long as possible. Well maintained, warm, secure and suitable housing can help prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital or institutional care.

It is recognised that the Council has a valuable contribution to make to this priority through the provision of new housing appropriate to the needs of vulnerable people, an effective advice service and housing related support. The Council can also help by assisting people to maintain their current home, or making it more suitable for their needs.



Housing Related Support provided by the Council's Child and Adult Services department offers vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by giving them access to the support they need to live more independent lives. The ongoing delivery of Housing Related Support services is therefore vital to the strategy's aim of improving housing options and supporting independent living.

The housing needs of vulnerable people have to be balanced against other priorities. However, the Council supports people to remain in or work towards independent living, helping them to participate in mainstream society and make a contribution to the local economy. This will be achieved through looking at a range of opportunities to help improve access to different types of housing, delivering services to people's homes and where appropriate developing purpose built specialist accommodation to meet needs. In the future, work will be focussed on assisting people to live independently with support. Affordability issues for people to move into appropriate accommodation will also need consideration.

The challenge is to meet the needs of individuals by providing greater housing choice. To do this the focus will be on developing new homes where feasible but primarily making best use of the existing homes available. A number of options will be utilised to support this approach, ranging from carrying out home adaptations to providing low level support to people to help them maintain independent living. This needs to be considered in the context of what future funding will enable the Council to do.

The Council works with partners to ensure the housing needs of people with disabilities are addressed. When available, affordable rented accommodation that has been specifically designed or adapted is prioritised for people with disabilities. This is achieved through

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

Compass CBL where vacancies are advertised specifically for people with a mobility problem.

A challenge for the Strategy is to work towards ensuring the Lifetime Homes Standard is applied to all suitable housing sites. When new homes are built the Council will, where there is identified need on a site by site basis, encourage that a percentage of all housing is capable of being adapted for households with a disability.

Supporting People with Learning Disabilities

Approximately 1.5% of Hartlepool resident are living with a learning disability, a number that is predicted to remain steady in the years to 2020. Since the last Strategy the number of people with a learning disability in Hartlepool who live in settled accommodation such as the family home, own tenancy, etc has increased from 65% to 72%. The aim over the next 3 years is to improve this figure to 75%. In Hartlepool there has been a reduction in residential care as the housing model of choice.

In 2009 a local needs analysis was undertaken and this informed the Housing, Care and Support Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities and this was approved by the Disability Partnership Board. The analysis identified 6 key recommendations and these were used to develop the Housing Care and Support Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities' Action Plan.

While residential care is the most appropriate option for some people, it is not the solution for everybody. Promoting choice and independence are key themes in national and local priorities, and reflect what many people with learning disabilities want.

Comprehensive planning for housing need is integral to the Housing Strategy. Work will continue to ensure that a variety of options, including different forms of supported and shared living, exist. This will enable people to live as independently as possible, if that is the option they choose.

The Council will continue to work with partners to improve housing options for people with learning disabilities. However, it is recognised that there is still work to be done to ensure that people with learning disabilities do not face unnecessary barriers in accessing homes that meet their needs.

Supporting People on the Autistic Spectrum

In Hartlepool, 1% of the population is identified on the autistic spectrum. In 2015 a self-assessment was undertaken in line with the recommendations from the Autism Act 2009. The Department of Health¹¹ identified essential quality outcomes for local delivery. For people in this client group the design of light and sound within the property is an important issue and through the Housing Strategy the housing needs of people with autism needs to be considered.

Supporting People with Mental Health Needs

In 2015, there were 9000 people aged 18-64 in Hartlepool with a common mental health disorder, this is expected to decrease slightly to 8,943 by 2018. In 2014 Hartlepool hosted a day-long event to gather the views of people (and their families) who use mental health services. These consultations confirmed the view that accommodation is a significant issue for people with mental health issues.

¹¹ Towards "Fulfilling and rewarding lives", Department of Health, 2010

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

Housing Related Support

Housing related support and services provided by RPs can have a significant impact on the physical health and mental well-being of their tenants. The homes and services they provide can help to tackle health inequalities, work to prevent re-admissions to hospital and speed up hospital discharge. The Council has responsibility for contracting with providers and monitoring performance through individual outcomes monitoring.

Supported housing providers in Hartlepool provide support to older people with support needs, offenders, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, people with alcohol problems, single homeless people, teenage parents, women at risk of domestic violence and young people at risk.

Since the last Housing Strategy, the Council has re-commissioned the following:

- supported housing for young people at risk;
- supported housing for offenders;
- alcohol service; and
- floating support service for complex needs.

The Council has a structured process for commissioning supported housing services going forward. The Council will continue to work with supported housing providers to assist the most vulnerable in communities to access the correct services and to ensure that such services are able to react to change.



Older People

(including supporting people with dementia)

The Council aims to ensure that older people are enabled to remain in their own home if that is what they choose, including specialist accommodation such as extra care housing. There is an emphasis on moving from commissioning residential and nursing care and instead providing home based support and preventative work to enable people to live at home for longer. It is recognised that a greater number of support services will be required to achieve this. Investment will be required in a range of innovative solutions and services including aids and adaptations.

Over the next few decades the older population in Hartlepool will continue to rise and this will present ongoing challenges in terms of ensuring access to housing choice. The Council will seek to identify and deliver a range of alternative accommodation and support models, in order to improve the housing options available to older residents. Providing older people with sufficient information and advice to make informed choices about their housing, care and support needs is critical.

The last Strategy identified that 457 units of extra care accommodation had been developed in Hartlepool and over 105 units of bedsit accommodation have been decommissioned in the town by Housing Hartlepool and Anchor Trust.

It will also be encouraged where there is identified need and on a site by site basis that a percentage of all new affordable houses, bungalows and ground floor flats are built to mobility standards. This will help

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

to ensure that the Council can focus on helping people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible and ensure those who cannot, have access to a suitable home to meet their needs.

Increasing life expectancy means more people will reach older age. As life expectancy rises it is expected that dementia related illnesses generally associated with older age will also rise.

The numbers of people in Hartlepool who will have dementia is projected to increase considerably over the period to 2030. In March 2012 the Government launched 'challenge on dementia' which set out a series of commitments, including creating dementia friendly communities. The Council recognises that the traditional support systems that see people with dementia as an 'exception' will not be able to cope and that the best option is for people to live in the community.

Access by people with dementia or cognitive impairment to mainstream physical support, and accommodation can be problematic. The North Tees Dementia Collaborative has started to make inroads into some of these issues as is the "Working to Build a Dementia Friendly Hartlepool" project. In terms of accessing alternative accommodation, the ability of a person with dementia to adapt to a new environment is critical. Changes are best made as early as possible so that they can learn and orientate themselves to the new environment. This is acknowledged in the extra care allocation procedure. Through this Strategy we aim to work in partnership with social care to develop the role housing can play in meeting the challenges of creating dementia friendly communities.

A recent investigation by the Council's Audit and Scrutiny Committee working party into the support available to people with dementia reported to full Council in March 2015. Their conclusions include:

- One of the key messages regarding dementia is that 'people can live well with dementia' and it is important that people understand this. There is also a need for appropriate support to be provided to people with dementia to help them live at home for as long as possible;
- Services for dementia have improved over the years and this progress now needs to be built upon with all sectors and organisations;
- Hartlepool as a dementia friendly community was supported by the group; and
- Regarding early diagnosis, it is essential that people have knowledge of the signs / symptoms of dementia and also the services available in order to help the individual person.

Dementia therefore needs to be addressed in all settings including housing and appropriate accommodation.

It is recognised, however, that meeting the housing needs of older people cannot happen only through new provision. A greater understanding is needed of what housing and related support provision will be required.

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

Priority through the Allocation Policy

For people whose housing conditions have a detrimental impact on their health, priority is given through the allocation policy to ensure that their housing needs are appropriately met. Medical priority will be awarded according to the extent to which the health of the applying household is affected by their housing conditions and the expected benefit of providing suitable alternative accommodation. Welfare priority may also be awarded to applicants who cannot be expected to live in their current accommodation without suffering detriment, such as: people assessed as ready for independent living who need to move as part of an agreed plan to re-integrate into the community; people with learning disabilities who are assessed as having to move in order to receive care and support; or where their current housing is having a detrimental effect on their quality of life and ability to live independently; or people leaving local authority care following a referral from social services e.g. people leaving rehabilitative care to return to independent living.

Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Needs

During the Housing Strategy 2011-2015 monitoring has taken place regarding the number of lettings to applicants from the BME community in Hartlepool. The percentage of applicants on the Compass CBL waiting list has remained consistent at 1.4%. During 2013-14, 4.3% of all lettings went to BME applicants, which was an increase from 1.27% during 2012-13.

The 2011 BME Housing Study identified the following:

- BME groups still desire to be homeowners;
- Shared ownership schemes are an option for the younger, working aged community (20-44);
- There is a lack of understanding of eligibility for social housing and a negative image of the CBL system;
- There is limited knowledge of available housing products, eligibility and access;
- The options for social housing are limited due to size and location of properties;
- There are poor standards of accommodation for participants in the study who are living in private rented accommodation;
- Overcrowding issues among BME communities are evident in the private rented sector and in owner-occupation;
- Neighbourhood problems exist in relation to anti-social behaviour and racial harassment.

Work will continue during the lifetime of this Strategy to respond to these issues.

Gypsies and Travellers

In 2014, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was carried out in Hartlepool which found a hypothetical need for five Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Hartlepool between 2016 and 2031. In theory, demand for four of those pitches is likely to occur over the next five years, with the remaining

8. Priority 4: Improving health and wellbeing; promoting sustainability by supporting people with specific housing needs

pitch being required at some time in the following five year period. The assessment found that there was no requirement to carry out an analysis of plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople because none are living in Hartlepool.

Taking all the evidence into consideration the report suggests that in the first instance, the provision of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site in the Borough, whether permanent or stop-over, may not offer the best solution to meeting the small theoretical housing need established through the accommodation

assessment. The report concludes that no actual demand to live on a dedicated site is ever likely to be forthcoming and therefore the Council has committed to proactively supporting any member of the Gypsy and Traveller community needing re-housing, to explore their housing options, and does not seek to provide a dedicated site for Gypsy and Travellers in the new Local Plan. Support from the Council will include access to currently available bricks and mortar housing, with referral to support agencies if necessary, as well as awareness-raising about the full range of accommodation options and how to pursue them.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 4

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Improve the range of housing options and support for vulnerable people;
- Improve the range of housing options and support for older/disabled people;
- Maintain people in local communities to avoid unnecessary admission to long-term residential and nursing care;
- Promote the health, wellbeing and independence of older and disabled people through housing related services;
- Monitor the needs of the BME and gypsy and traveller communities via Choice Based Lettings;
- Understand the needs and aspirations of the local BME (including gypsy and traveller) population and ensure services are responsive to their needs;
- Manage our Disabled Facilities Grant budgets to ensure that we can help as many people as possible by working with partners to ensure that adapted properties remain adapted in perpetuity;
- Work with partners to develop integrated services that meet the housing needs of people with physical disabilities through the Better Care Fund; and
- Work in partnership with social care to develop the role of housing in creating a dementia friendly town.

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options



9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

This chapter details how the Council will work with partners to deliver improved early intervention and homelessness prevention services to residents in Hartlepool who find themselves homeless, threatened with homelessness or in a housing crisis. The challenges faced in achieving this priority include ensuring that there is a variety of housing options to meet different needs. There are also challenges in addressing the wider areas of health, employment and developing skill capacity for people to be independent. Mitigating the impact of welfare reforms on vulnerable households' ability to obtain and sustain affordable housing are also important issues to be addressed.

Summary of Planned Outcomes:

- A joined up multi agency approach to homeless prevention in place;
- High quality advice, assistance and early intervention in place to prevent homelessness;
- There is minimal impact of welfare reform on residents; and
- Improved access to social housing.

Achievements during the Homelessness Strategy 2010-2015

- Expansion of the eviction protocol to all RPs.
- Implementation of No Second Night Out and provision of a crash pad at Scott Grange.
- Protocol developed for homeless 16/17 year olds.
- Supported Housing Panel continues to facilitate successful move on.

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

CASE STUDY 8 – EVICTION PROTOCOL

A registered provider had a long standing tenant who had been with them for 10 years. However, in 2014 the tenant ceased making rent payments and received a letter from the landlord to advise them that they would be evicted as the arrears had reached over £1,000.

The tenant was being charged for under occupation of their three bedroom house and also had an overpayment of benefit to be paid back. The landlord had previously helped by awarding the tenant £9 each week from their own discretionary housing fund but the tenant did not keep up their side of the arrangement. The tenant's son would turn 18 soon and will be entitled to JSA but up until then the tenant had not had any income for him.

Investigations by the Housing Advice Team identified that the tenant suffered from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, her ex-partner and siblings suffered from mental health issues and she did not have anyone to support her.

The Housing Advice Team applied for assistance from the local welfare support team to support a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) claim and also to pursue match funding (up to £300) for any financial support that the tenant might be able to receive from her parents.

Following more discussions the tenant admitted a gambling problem which they insisted was over but had caused obvious issues in the past.

Intervention via the Eviction Protocol resulted in the tenant being assisted with a successful DHP application which paid out £400. The tenant also received £300 from the Preventing Repossessions Fund. The warrant for eviction was suspended for 28 days on the condition that the tenant paid £10 weekly and the Housing Advice Team assisted a further DHP application in April 2015. At present the tenant continues to be supported to sustain their long-term tenancy and is being assisted with the other underlying issues which were identified during the eviction protocol process.

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options



The Evidence and Challenges for the Housing Strategy

Table 9 below details the specific challenges associated with delivering this priority

Table 9 – Priority 5: Key Facts

Key Facts					Source										
Homelessness decisions and acceptances															
In 2013/14 homelessness acceptance figures increased to 35 from 9 the previous year. Homelessness acceptances are highest amongst young people.					CLG P1E Returns										
People seeking housing advice															
<table><tr><td>People seeking housing advice</td><td>2011/12</td><td>2012/13</td><td>2013/14</td><td>2014/15*</td></tr><tr><td>Number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team</td><td>3,516</td><td>3,171</td><td>3,416</td><td>2,526</td></tr></table>					People seeking housing advice	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*	Number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team	3,516	3,171	3,416	2,526	CLG P1E Returns
People seeking housing advice	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*											
Number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team	3,516	3,171	3,416	2,526											
<p>*These figures were collected until the Housing Advice Team moved out of the Housing Options Centre in June 2014</p> <p>The number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team has increased considerably from 1,755 in 2010/11 to over 3,000 in subsequent years.</p> <p>These figures relate to everyone who accessed the service from one off advice queries to completing a housing or good tenant scheme application.</p>															

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

Key Facts					Source
Homelessness prevented and housing advice					
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15*	CLG P1E Returns
Homelessness	331	277	322	297	
Prevented					
Housing Advice given	1,371	1,125	1,059	1,136	
These figures relate to active casework where intervention is required.					

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

Homelessness Strategy Review

A review of homelessness in Hartlepool was undertaken to inform this priority of the Housing Strategy. This review identified that:

- Homelessness is prevented for approximately 300 households each year;
- Demand for services has increased since the introduction of welfare reform with the number of people seeking help from the Housing Advice Team almost doubling;
- Resources have reduced during the 2010-2015 Homelessness Strategy with cuts in Housing Related Support and a number of schemes decommissioned;
- Demand for family sized accommodation in some areas of the town has decreased and bidding activity on Compass has reduced with certain properties being advertised on multiple bidding cycles;
- There has been a reduction in the number of under 25's approaching the Housing Advice Team for assistance;
- Clients with chaotic lifestyles, substance misuse and mental health problems continue to have limited housing options;
- Hartlepool has the second highest level of re-offenders across England;
- At March 2015 there were 612 clients in drug treatment, of these 51 presented to treatment as no fixed abode and many more have become homeless at some point during their treatment journey;
- No clients have used the crash pad at Scott Grange through the No Second Night Out initiative, however

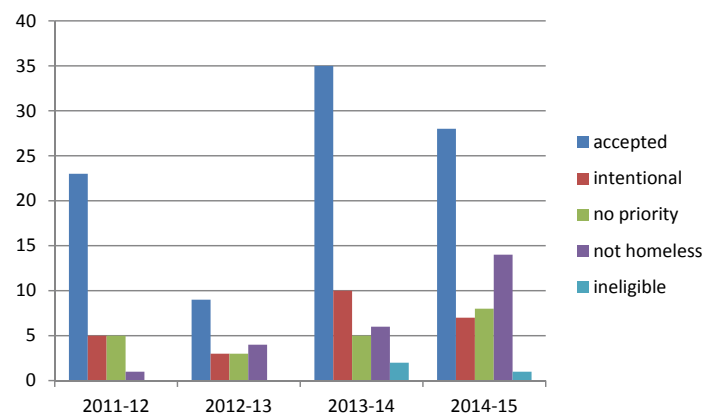
15 people have occupied it as emergency accommodation, which were mainly prison leavers;

- Just half of clients surveyed during February 2015 knew the Housing Advice Service existed at the Civic Centre;
- Two thirds of clients surveyed thought there were barriers to being rehoused, the biggest barrier being their past housing history;
- One third of clients surveyed admitted to having mental health issues;
- Agencies identified the following main issues:
 - o Lack of properties with support for 16-18 year olds
 - o Impacts of welfare reform
 - o Access to a bond for the private rented sector
 - o Need for support for people with mental health issues
 - o Lack of independent living skills to sustain a tenancy
 - o Family and relationship breakdowns
 - o Social exclusion for people leaving institutions or with mental health issues
 - o Benefit sanctions
 - o Lack of information about all services
 - o Access to services via the phone and internet

Levels of homelessness continue to be low in Hartlepool, however it can be seen that since the Welfare Reform Act 2012 that homeless acceptances have increased with a peak during 2013-14.

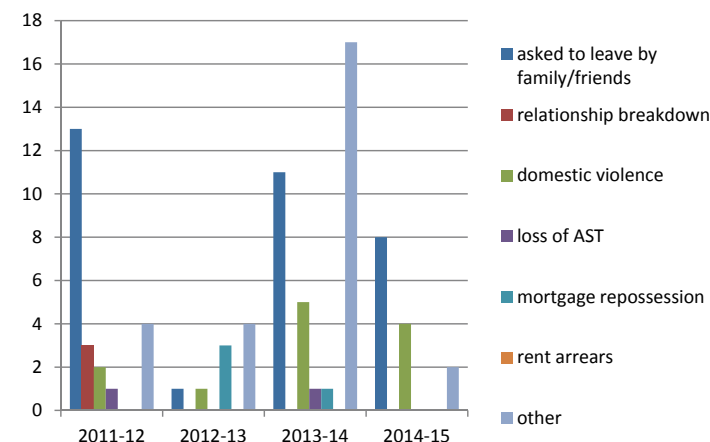
9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

Figure 2 - Homeless Acceptances



Traditionally the main cause of homelessness in Hartlepool has been 'asked to leave by family and friends'. This and other main causes have reduced through timely and effective housing advice. Since the introduction of Welfare Reform there has been an increase in 'domestic violence' and 'other' as a reason for homelessness. Other includes issues such as asylum seekers and people seeking assistance specifically as a result of Welfare Reform.

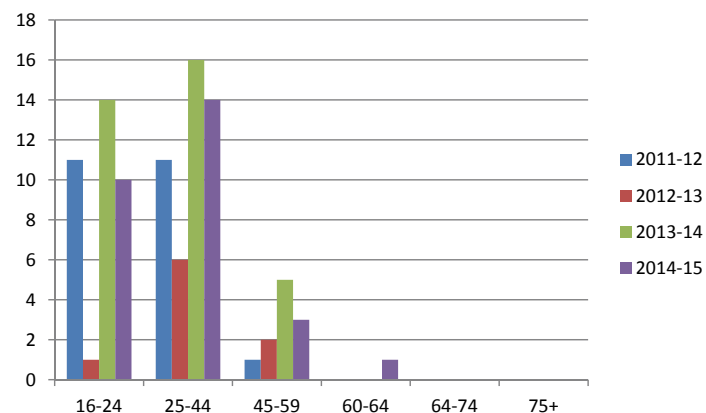
Figure 3 - Reasons for Homelessness



Since the 2010-15 Homelessness Strategy homeless acceptances have mainly come from applicants in the 25-44 age category rather than from the under 25 age groups as was the trend previously. This reflects successful mediation with families to avoid relationship breakdown. The impact of welfare reform on working age people unable to afford their homes is reflected in the older client group. These clients will not be engaged with any services but have elements of mental health issues and are therefore 'falling through the net'. There has also been an increase witnessed in younger people with learning disabilities who have not received a statement of special educational needs.

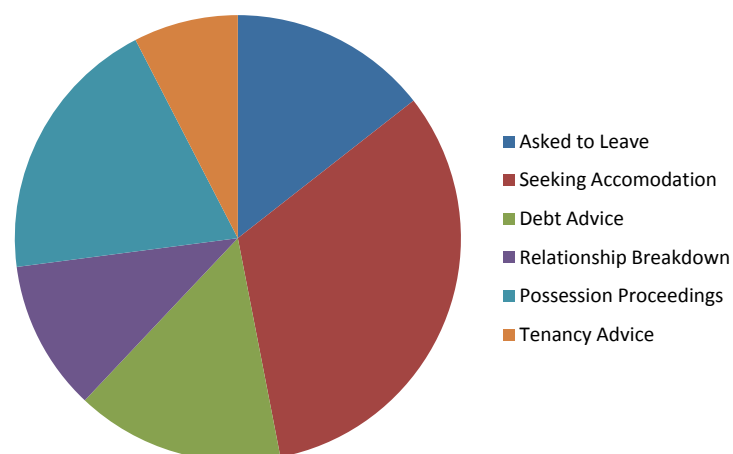
9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

Figure 4 - Age Range of Homeless Acceptances



During 2014-15 the Housing Advice Team have provided casework for 1,504 clients offering a range of advice and assistance to help people resolve their housing problems. The main presenting problems are illustrated below.

Figure 5 - Main Presenting Problems



Provision of Supported Accommodation

Stonham provides:

10 units of supported housing accommodation, one emergency 'crash pad' facility and 28 units of floating support for 16 to 25 year olds at Gainford House.

11 units of accommodation for ex-offenders and 8 units of floating support at Scott Grange.

11 units of accommodation for single homeless people at Avondene and 42 units of floating support within community services

Thirteen Care and Support provides:

7 units of supported housing accommodation, one emergency 'crash pad' facility for 16 to 24 year olds and one unit for a looked after child who has gone to university returning to Hartlepool during the break at Rose House.

6 units of supported housing accommodation for young parents aged 16 to 24 years old and 20 units of floating support at Anna Court.

Sanctuary Supported Living provides:

6 units of supported housing accommodation and floating support for people with alcohol dependency issues.

Richmond Fellowship provides:

8 units of supported housing accommodation for people with mental health needs at Eamont Terrace.

Accent in partnership with Cornerstone provides:

6 units of supported housing accommodation and 2 'crash pad' facilities for 18 to 35 year olds with low support needs.

Community Campus 87 provides:

A range of accommodation based and outreach support for people recovering from substance misuse.

A range of floating support and general and supported housing accommodation.

The Supported Housing Panel, a multi-agency partnership, continues to assist people with appropriate and timely 'move on' when people are ready to sustain an independent tenancy.

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options



CASE STUDY 9 – GAINFORD HOUSE SUPPORTED HOUSING

Gainford House provides 10 units of supported housing accommodation, an emergency 'crash pad' facility and 28 units of floating support to young vulnerable people living in Hartlepool. The support can last up to two years within supported accommodation and a further two years for floating support.

Jess was 16 years old when she was referred to the service in February 2011. Jess had issues with self-harm and was involved with mental health services. She had been found statutorily homeless at the time of the referral (due to a breakdown in relationships with her mother and step-father) and was being supported in temporary accommodation with family members as the host by Children's Services. Jess had reported a safeguarding issue around sexual abuse within the wider family. In addition Jess also struggled to mix with her peers, although attending school every day and gaining her qualifications she identified herself as an 'outsider' and had strong feelings of isolation.

Jess moved into Gainford House in March 2011, was allocated a key worker and was supported by a wider staff team to offer guidance, support and advice around the clock.

Jess felt unable to address her mental and emotional health issues initially and would question how meeting with a stranger and discussing what she was struggling to deal with could possibly help. For the first few months of her tenancy link working was done in the lounge to encourage her to leave her flat. Jess found this very difficult and felt as though she had no control. In order to support her through this time, a person centred support plan was developed in which only a few goals at a time were listed and time frames were generous. Throughout the time Jess was determined to complete her AS levels at college and her main motivation spanned from this.

By June 2011 Jess felt able to start to address some of her mental and emotional needs. Her key worker supported her to visit her GP and discuss a re-referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

In August 2011, Jess experienced a setback; she had not scored highly on her AS exams. Gainford Staff worked in partnership with Jess's college to explore her options. It was agreed that she would return to repeat her first year at college. Monthly meetings were arranged between Gainford House, the college and Jess to discuss her progress, any issues and all work together so she received the support she felt was appropriate.

During the rest of the year, Jess improved so much she began to get actively involved in the service delivery of Gainford House and set up a 'buddy' system which meant new residents were matched up to current residents in order to settle in better and feel part of the 'community'. This also helped Jess with the requirements for her Health and Social Care NVQ.

By March 2012, Jess had made positive steps with her self-harming behaviour and was discharged from all statutory services. Jess's main aim then turned to securing a place at university to study to become a mental health nurse.

In August 2012, she moved from an inside flat to an external flat giving her more independence and preparing her for independent living. She also received her AS level results - a distinction and 2 A's.

In January 2013, commissioners granted permission for Jess to continue to live at Gainford House beyond the two year time frame due to staff supporting her to go on to university. From January to April, Jess was supported to attend open days, visit student accommodation and eventually decided on the University of Lincoln. Staff supported Jess with the student loan application process, securing accommodation, investigating further funding streams and liaising with university support services to ensure Jess was well supported.

In August 2013, Jess moved out of Gainford House and into student accommodation in Lincoln. Jess continues to stay in touch with the service and will visit when she is in Hartlepool. Jess is doing very well and is expected to graduate in June 2016.

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

Why is this a priority?

National Context

The Government's current thinking in relation to developing effective homelessness prevention, housing advice and options services is set out in its strategy, 'Making Every Contact Count, A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness.'¹² The approach to preventing homelessness is the promotion of joined up services and of a modern homeless response where a preventative approach takes precedence. No single agency can eradicate homelessness but partnership working can make a significant impact.

The Government has asked the sector to adopt its 'Gold Standard', a ten point challenge encouraging local authorities to develop strong local leadership and partnerships, and ensure essential links are made between services:

The Gold Standard is:

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy- in across all local authority services;
2. To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs;
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice;
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative;

5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support;
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord;
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme;
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness, reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs;
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation; and
10. To not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.

Through the delivery of the Housing Strategy the Council and its partners will work towards achieving these standards. As detailed in Chapter 2, the Government has introduced a range of policy and legislative changes to reform welfare with the aim of improving work incentives, simplifying benefits and tackling administrative complexity. These ongoing changes present challenges to both private and social sector housing providers, support services, the voluntary sector and to vulnerable people.

¹² Making Every Contact Count, A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness August 2012 DCLG

9. Priority 5: Preventing homelessness and providing options

Preventing and Tackling Homelessness

The Council is working towards its long term vision to end homelessness within Hartlepool and to ensure all residents have access to a safe, secure and suitable home.

The Council prevents homelessness by providing advice and help to people when they are at risk of becoming homeless, including referral to specialist agencies which may enable them to stay where they are living, and debt advice to avoid eviction through arrears.

The Council has a strong record in tackling and preventing homelessness in Hartlepool. An important priority of the Strategy is to focus on prevention measures, where possible, to enable people to remain in the homes they already occupy, either through negotiation with private landlords and Housing Benefits team, or through negotiation with mortgage lenders or families. Close working will continue with the private sector to secure alternative accommodation for clients. As detailed in Priority 2 the Council is in the process of setting up a Social Lettings Agency. This aims to provide a lettings service to those who may not be able to access private rented accommodation without help whether it is through homelessness, low income or with an immediate housing need.

Homelessness prevention depends on good partnership working, and on organisations sharing information. Severe budget pressures and cuts to Housing Related Support will continue to impact on homelessness in Hartlepool. There is a significant challenge faced in improving homelessness prevention. Young people continue to be represented

amongst those presenting as homeless and often have complex needs that require additional and on-going support. Young people leaving care and those aged 16 or 17 will also be assisted by joint working within the Council.

The Council's Housing Advice Service has been challenged by the economic recession and by welfare reform measures. This has had repercussions for people dealing with personal debt and in affordability for housing costs. In extreme cases this has led to people facing homelessness when they have no longer been able to keep up rent or mortgage payments.

During the 2010-2015 Homelessness Strategy the Council extended its Eviction Protocol to all RPs operating in Hartlepool and this acts as a final safety net to try and avoid homelessness wherever possible for social housing.

Further challenges for the Council include improving access to housing and services for people with offending or substance misuse issues and addressing the complex issues of socially excluded adults.

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Impact of Welfare Reform and Digital Inclusion

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 has brought about the biggest overhaul of the benefits system since the 1940s, impacting upon local people on low incomes as well as housing providers. With the Government committing to austerity measures until 2018 at least, further reforms to welfare benefit are expected. As around 70% of social housing tenants rely on some form of welfare benefit, social housing providers are already feeling the impact, as rising rent arrears result in reduced income streams.

The housing sector has seen an increase in rent arrears as household incomes have reduced and their outgoings have increased. Housing providers and other partners are working closely together to monitor the impact of Welfare Reform and ensure that people are being supported to cope with the effects.

Implications which we will need to ensure that we take into account when planning services for the future include:

- Decreasing demand for family size accommodation in certain areas;
- Increased demand for one and two bedroom properties;
- Need for budgeting, computer skills and internet access for all households;
- Need to safeguard advice and support services in the face of funding pressures in the public and voluntary sectors;
- Need to understand and remove barriers to downsizing, whether through help to find a suitable property, practical help to move, or support with the cost of moving;

- Reduction in the funds available for Discretionary Housing Payments.

In 2014 the National Audit Office stated that there were 7.4 million people who had never been online and 16 million people with low levels of digital literacy. As the Government shifts towards a 'digital by default' stance, with welfare benefits being delivered online since October 2013 in the form of Universal Credit, tackling digital exclusion has emerged as a challenge for this Strategy.

Through the lifetime of this Housing Strategy we will need to monitor any adverse impacts from the move towards digital services. Providers across Hartlepool are increasingly making public access points available for people to make on-line applications for housing and benefits. However, this is not generally accompanied with support for people who may have difficulty and are not computer literate.

Housing Related Support

Issues concerning to housing related support are detailed in the previous chapter.

Working with the Private Rented Sector

The majority of private rented accommodation is let on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy basis (usually for 6 months) and offers far less security of tenure than social housing tenancies. The standard of accommodation and management within the private sector can vary widely and there is a far higher turnover of tenants than within the social sector.

We will continue to develop effective working relationships with private sector landlords and their

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agents to improve management standards and tenancy sustainability. The Council is also working towards new initiatives (as detailed in Priority 2) which aim to ensure decent, safe and well managed homes in the private rented sector.

Reducing Re-Offending

From a probation perspective homelessness and the lack of suitable accommodation can be a significant factor leading to reoffending. Offenders and ex-offenders are a group for who access to housing and support to maintain a tenancy can help prevent re-offending.

The Council has produced a Reducing Re-offending Strategy in response to figures which illustrate that Hartlepool has the second highest rate of re-offending nationally. Improving pathways out of re-offending through the provision of local services is an important issue for this Strategy.

Work undertaken by the Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust during 2012/13 showed that re-offenders have a different criminogenic profile to those who do not re-offend with accommodation, employability, drugs and alcohol and financial managements being the key factors addressing their offending behaviour.

Through this Strategy we will continue to work with the Safer Hartlepool Partnership and Probation to identify appropriate support, accommodation and resources for specialist services and provide local solutions to re-offending.

We will also continue to be involved in the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements to help offenders resettle and reduce the risk of re-offending with targeted solutions to ensure there are accommodation options available for these client groups.

People with complex and multiple needs

There are increasing numbers of vulnerable households, particularly single people with mental health issues, who are becoming homeless as a result of their inability to maintain their home.

As part of the Make Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach, Community Campus has secured funding for a part-time coordinator within Hartlepool, assisted through the Regional Homeless Forum. A worker was put in place in January 2015 and aims to introduce a different way of working through agencies. People with at least two needs will be identified and assessed through a nationally recognised audit system. Up to eight people will be worked with at any one time and these will mainly be people whose contact with services has been ineffectual in the past where no one service is meeting their needs effectively. MEAM sits within the Supported Housing Panel to identify and work with those people who cannot go into supported living.

People with substance misuse problems often have housing problems and can find it difficult to access and maintain suitable accommodation, additionally poor housing and homelessness can have a major impact on a person's ability to address their substance misuse problems.

Currently 51 clients in the Hartlepool Action Recovery Team (HART) presented to treatment as 'no fixed abode' and many more have become homeless at some point during their treatment journey. We will work in partnership with local agencies and housing providers to ensure advice and support is available for people with substance misuse problems to enable them to access and sustain suitable accommodation.

In addition, where appropriate, we also work in partnership with the Troubled Families Programme to

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support families in complex situations who are on the programme and have identified housing needs.

Emerging support services and providers

As a result of the reforms to social housing and welfare benefits there has been the emergence of new support services and providers within Hartlepool during the lifetime of the 2011-2015 Housing Strategy.

HAPEN (Hartlepool Advice Partnership Evolving Network) was established in 2014 as an on-line referral system to bring different support agencies together, managed by the West View Advice and Resource Centre. It is used to share information between providers, including housing

Hartlepool also opened its first foodbank in 2013 and this is increasingly used by Council departments to refer people who are in crisis.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE PRIORITY 5

During the five years of this strategy we will:

- Tackle the barriers to permanent housing;
- Improve and promote access to social housing;
- Maintain preventative services for all client groups;
- Ensure good quality private sector accommodation for homeless households;
- Provide suitable and specialist accommodation for young people;
- Assess the impact of Universal Credit on the affordability of the rented sector;
- Work with those most affected by welfare reform to mitigate the negative impact it has on their lives;
- Improve our homeless prevention service and achieve the best practice Homelessness Gold Standard;
- Work with partners to help people overcome digital inclusion barriers which prevent them from finding or keeping a home;
- Work with partners in Mental Health Services and Probation to achieve better housing outcomes for those leaving institutional care;
- Improve engagement from key statutory agencies in service delivery; and
- Work with partners to help offenders resettle and reduce the risk of reoffending.

10. Monitoring and Resourcing the Housing Strategy



10. Monitoring and Resourcing the Housing Strategy

This chapter considers how the strategic priorities will be achieved, how progress will be monitored and the work resourced. An action plan has been produced that details how the aims and objectives of the Strategy will be achieved.

Achievements during the Housing Strategy 2011-2015

- The Housing Service relocated to the Civic Centre to deliver all services from a single location.
- The Terms of Reference for the Housing Partnership was updated to reflect the role of the Partnership in monitoring the Housing Strategy.
- The Tees Valley Tenancy Strategy was adopted.
- Charges for appropriate enforcement work have been introduced.
- Clusters of Empty Homes funding was secured to purchase empty properties.
- Housing Market Renewal Fund Transitional funding was secured and match funded by the Council.
- A works in default budget was established.
- There has been a significant growth in new build social housing stock.

Performance and Monitoring

Delivery of the actions set out in this Housing Strategy will be managed and monitored quarterly, overseen by the Housing Partnership. The action plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that progress is being achieved as well as to ensure that it is kept up-to-date with any changes in national or local policy.

Resources

There are considerable pressures on the amount of resources that are available to deliver the aims of the Strategy and resource and budgets are limited as the Council has to achieve considerable savings. To maximise resources it will be important to work with partners, sharing expertise and good practice, avoiding duplication, jointly funding or procuring projects and identifying opportunities to combine resources and bid for any available funding streams.

The key sources of funding for the Strategy have been identified as:

- Developer contributions delivered through a Section 106 Legal Agreement;
- Affordable housing on-site provision through Section 106 Legal Agreement;
- HCA funding for affordable homes through National Affordable Housing Programme;
- HCA funding for empty homes through National Affordable Housing Programme;
- Better Care Fund - Disabled Facilities Grant for adaptations;
- DCLG funding for housing advice and homelessness activity;
- DCLG funding for housing-related support;
- Registered Provider (RP) investment to continue improvements in social housing stock;
- The sale and efficient use of Council assets and prudential borrowing subject to income streams to cover repayments;
- Income achieved through the Council's Social Lettings Agency; and
- Any other national funding that becomes available during the lifetime of the Strategy (usually on a bid for funding basis).

GLOSSARY

Affordable Housing	Housing options available to residents who cannot afford to rent or buy a home in the private market. Includes social rented housing, affordable rented housing and intermediate housing solutions such as shared ownership. The Council will be widening this current definition to include the Affordable Rent Model.
Affordable Rent	Homes made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and allocated in the same way as social housing is at present. Registered Providers (RPs) will have the freedom to offer Affordable Rent properties on flexible tenancies tailored to the housing needs of individual households.
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	Activity that impacts on other people/communities in a negative way.
Better Care Fund	The Better Care Fund is a pooled budget that shifts resources into social care and community services for the benefit of the NHS and local government.
Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)	A term to describe someone who is said to belong to an 'ethnic minority'. Most often used to refer to groups or policies that affect people from non-white-UK ethnic backgrounds.
Brownfield Land	A site which has previously been developed.
Category 1 Hazard Failures	Hazards identified using the method of assessment as set out by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System upon which the local authority has a duty to act.
Choice Based Lettings (CBL)	Scheme for the allocation of social housing designed to offer more choice and involvement for customers in selecting a new home. Social rented housing is advertised allowing customers to 'bid' (register an interest) for those homes.

Compass	The names of the CBL scheme in Tees Valley.
Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)	The process that a public authority (such as the council or a central Government department) can use to take land and/or property from the owner. The owner is paid, but cannot refuse to sell.
Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG)	The UK Government department for communities and local government in England and has responsibility for housing policy.
Decent Homes	Homes which meet or exceed specified minimum standards and state of repair.
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	Government funding provided to local housing authorities to provide adaptations and other facilities to disabled people enabling them to live independently.
Energy Efficiency	The energy output of a product, e.g. a house, at a given point in time.
Extra Care Housing	Housing for elderly and disabled people, where individual care needs are provided for on-site.
Flexible Tenancy	A new power for Registered Providers to offer a new 'flexible' tenancy with a minimum term of two years that ends the automatic 'home for life'.
Fuel Poverty	Where a household cannot afford to keep adequately warm at reasonable cost.
Good Tenant Scheme	A service for prospective tenants to obtain references to enable them to access private rented accommodation in Hartlepool.
Greenfield Land	Grassed or previously undeveloped land.

Appendix 1

Hartlepool Housing Partnership	A group of public, private and voluntary agencies that work in partnership together to ensure that there is access to good quality and affordable housing in neighbourhoods and communities where people want to live.
Help to Buy	Help to Buy is an umbrella term for a range of government funded schemes designed to help people to get onto the property ladder. There are several options available, including equity loans, rent to buy and shared ownership.
Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	The national housing and regeneration agency for England. A non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It provides funding for affordable housing and is the social housing regulator.
Homelessness	The 1996 Housing Act states that a person is homeless if: there is no accommodation that they are entitled to occupy; or they have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy this accommodation.
Housing Benefit	An allowance to people on low or no income to meet whole or part of their rent.
Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)	A risk based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in residential dwellings.
Housing Needs	The requirements that individuals and households have for housing.
Housing Related Support	The system for funding the support that is provided for people with care needs to go alongside their housing needs.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation	A defined set of indicators used to measure the level of deprivation in an area.
Intermediate Tenure	<p>Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rent. This can include shared equity, shared ownership, other low cost homes for sale, and intermediate rent.</p> <p>Shared equity - a new form of joint ownership/joint mortgage that the Government is promoting as a way of helping first time buyers to get on the property ladder.</p> <p>Shared ownership - Where a person buys part of the value of a house from a Registered Provider and pays rent on the other part, and the Registered Provider keeps part ownership.</p> <p>Intermediate rent - new build homes to rent at 80% (or less) of typical market rents.</p>
Lifetime Homes	Homes fit for a lifetime by virtue of design, enabling easy adaptation as required.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	A raft of local development documents that together form the Development Plan for the Borough.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	The Local Housing Allowance is used to work out how much Housing Benefit is received for renting from a private landlord. The amount of Benefit will depend on the area, property type and household size.
Localism	This concept aims to give local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.
Private Landlord	A company or individual (e.g. not a local authority or registered provider) who owns and lets properties for an income.

Property Developer	A company or individual who secures planning permission for the development of residential property.
Registered Provider (RP)	Also known as Housing Associations / Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). They are not for profit organisations that provide social housing and are regulated through Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
Section 106 Agreements (S106)	An agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regarding the use or development of land. Such planning obligations are often used as a legally binding agreement between a local authority and developer to deliver a percentage of affordable social housing within a development.
Selective Licensing	A compulsory scheme where an area has been designated under part 3 of the Housing Act 2004, as a licensing area for privately rented dwelling houses. Local Authorities have discretion to adopt a scheme subject to meeting one of two sets of conditions: that the area is, or is likely to become an area of low demand; or, that the area is experiencing a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour.
Social Housing	A general term for subsidised rented and intermediate tenure housing provided by Registered Providers (RPs).
Social Lettings Agency	Social lettings agencies work in a similar way to conventional lettings agencies. They manage houses on behalf of landlords and rent them out to tenants.

Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)	The Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for energy rating of dwellings.
Sustainable Communities	Communities that can meet the needs of existing and future residents, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice in areas such as housing, health, education and jobs.
Tenure	Type of property a person resides in. There are three main types of tenure; owner-occupied, private rented and social rented.
Universal Credit	Universal Credit is set to replace the present benefit structure and it will simplify the benefits system by bringing together a range of working-age benefits into a single streamlined payment.

