

HRA Business Plan 2009/10
ACTION PLAN

Action	Corporate Housing Objective	Responsibility for Achievement	Target Date	Progress (as at 1 st March 2010)
Housing General				
Analyse the information obtained from the census of Council tenants	HO 2	Principal Housing Officer (Information/Strategy)	Sept 2009	<p>Achieved – Data from the Census is now available (for those who provided information).</p> <p>A further survey of tenants is now required to obtain information relating to equalities, which will be undertaken in 2010/11.</p> <p>This has been added to the Action Plan for the HRA Business Plan 2010/11.</p>
Complete the Customer Perspective Programme for the whole of the Housing Directorate, examining the all interfaces between Housing and customers	HO 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5	Director of Housing	Sept 2010	<p>Ahead of Target – 26 out of 28 separate housing functions have been examined, leading to 93 individual (mainly small) improvements through the Action Plan, most of which have been actioned. It is envisaged that the Programme will be completed by the end of April 2010, and the Action Plan will be reported to the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, in accordance with the Charter Mark Assessor's recommendation.</p>
Investigate the implications of the proposed withdrawal of support for the OHMS integrated housing system, but the new supplier, Northgate	HO 1 / 2 / 3 /	Asst. Director of Housing (Private Sector & Resources)	Dec 2009	<p>Achieved – In 2008, Northgate announced that it would be withdrawing its support for the OHMS System in 2013. Following representations from the Council and other Northgate clients, the date of the withdrawal of support was put back to 2015. However, Northgate has recently announced that it will now continue to support OHMS indefinitely. An appraisal has been undertaken by the Housing Directorate on whether the Council should continue with OHMS, or procure a new system. This concluded that, for the foreseeable future, OHMS should be retained and developed further.</p>

Housing Management				
Continue the Home Ownership Grants Scheme in 2009/10, enabling tenants to purchase their own home and vacate their Council property for occupation by a housing applicant	HO 1	Housing Resources Manager	April 2010	Achieved and in progress – The Scheme has been continued into 2009/10. A good response was received, with the Scheme oversubscribed. One of the 5 selected applicants for the £34,000 grant has completed, a further completion is imminent and the remaining three are still seeking properties to purchase on the open market. The Cabinet has agreed that 6-12 Home Ownership Grants of £28,000 each should be made available in 2010/11.
Agree a policy for the approach to be taken on the enforcement of unauthorised parking estates, taking account of the difficulties encountered.	HO 2	Asst. Director (Operations)	April 2009	Achieved – Following lengthy deliberations by the Housing Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet an approach has been agreed, whereby each location will be considered on its merits, in consultation with ward members.
Introduce a facility for tenants to apply for the Housing Register on-line	HO 2	Housing Options Manager	Sept 2009	Not Achieved – It has been established that the Northgate OHMS Housing System is not capable of accepting Housing Register applications on-line (although interested applicants are able to download a hard copy application form to complete and return). Discussions have now commenced with Locata, the Council's choice based lettings (CBL) agency, and other councils in the CBL Consortium to consider the possibility of an on-line housing application being added to the choice based lettings system. This has been added to the Action Plan for the HRA Business Plan 2010/11.
Tenant Participation				
Facilitate the formation of two additional recognised tenants associations within the District	HO 4	Tenant Participation Officer	April 2009	Not Achieved – Attempts have been made to establish tenants associations and/or tenants panels throughout the District, and it has been concluded that the Tenant Participation Officer should now only respond to interest from tenants and members, rather than further attempting pro-active action. However, the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation now has a good range of members.
Undertake a more detailed and focussed survey on the information provided to tenants and their future needs	HO 4	Principal Housing Officer (Information / Strategy)	Sept 2009	No Longer Required – This was originally included in response to a previous Tenants Satisfaction Survey. However, the most recent Tenants Satisfaction Survey suggests that this is no longer an issue.

Investigate the publication of a calendar for tenants, promoting the activities of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation	HO 4	Tenant Participation Officer	Dec 2009	Not Achieved - It has been concluded that this is not the best use of resources allocated for tenant participation and is no longer being pursued.
Introduce "Tenant Talkback Panels", providing fora to provide qualitative feedback on housing services	HO 2 / 3 / 4	Tenant Participation Officer	April 2010	<p>In Progress – A list of tenants interested in taking part in different panels has been formulated, and arrangements to hold Panel meetings are in progress</p> <p>Four Talkback Panels (TPs) are planned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Disability TP has been established and has met. • A Repairs and Maintenance TP has been established and its first meeting will be held in March 2010. • A Reading TP (which will comment on draft leaflets and documents for tenants) has been established and its first meeting will be held in early 2010/11. • An Allocations TP will be formed and meet around May 2010. <p>Consideration is being given to the formation of a Housing Management TP.</p> <p>These have been added to the Action Plan for the HRA Business Plan 2010/11.</p>
Supporting People and Supported Housing				
Implement the findings of the Review of the Council's Careline Service undertaken in 2008	HO 1 / 2	Asst Director of Housing (Operations)	Sept 2009	<p>In Progress– The review concluded that the Careline Service should continue to be provided in-house, but that consideration should be given to increased use of the Careline centre, with an enlargement of the Careline premises. Works to enlarge the Careline Centre into a vacant adjacent house are in progress, and the Careline Centre is currently in temporary accommodation. Discussions have been held with Harlow DC, which intends to tender for the provision of Careline Services, and EFDC will be submitting a tender. After the Careline Centre has been enlarged, the Centre will undertake active monitoring of EFDC's CCTV cameras throughout the District.</p>

				These latter two tasks have been added to the Action Plan for the HRA Business Plan 2010/11.
Seek accreditation of the Council's Careline Service from the Association of Social Alarm Providers (ASAP)	HO 2	Housing Manager (Older People's Services)	Sept 2009	In Progress – Good progress has been made, with the assistance of a consultant. It is envisaged that TSA accreditation will be achieved around September 2010, once the Careline Centre expansion has been completed.
Consider the future of Jessopp Court, the Council's scheme for frail elderly people in Waltham Abbey	HO 1 / 2	Housing Manager (Older People's Services)	April 2010	In Progress - Discussions are being held with Essex County Council Adult Social Care on the future of Jessopp Court. Essex CC is of the view that Jessopp Court is not suitable as an extra care scheme for older people, so other options will need to be considered The Housing Portfolio Holder has agreed to a Strategic Review of the Council's Older People's Accommodation being undertaken, and a Consultant's Brief is currently being drafted. The Housing Portfolio Holder has also agreed to the Council working in partnership with Essex CC on a PFI Bid to the Department of Health for the provision of an Extra Care Scheme in the District. If this is successful, one outcome of the Strategic Review may be that Jessopp Court is remodelled into a sheltered housing scheme.
Housing Repairs and Maintenance				
Implement a programme for repairs and maintenance expenditure over 5 and 30 years	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	Ongoing	Achieved – A new 30-year programme has been created, based on detailed stock condition data collected in-house and from actual works completed under the Decent Homes Programme. The new 30-year programme forecasts expenditure needs over the same period based on an extended "Remaining Life" of each building component.
Implement an upgrade to the latest version of Codeman software	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	July 2009	In Progress - Stock condition data has been saved to an Excel spreadsheet until a new stock asset database has been identified and implemented.

Publish clear service standards for planned maintenance, Decent Homes, repairs, Right to Repairs and Leaseholder responsibilities, which are available in printed leaflet form and on the web site.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	July 2010	In Progress - This is included as part of the "Repairs Refresh Programme", which commenced in July 2009, with the appointment of a specialist procurement consultant, who's role is to assist the Council in specifying the targets and responsibilities of the Repairs Management Contractor. A Repairs and Maintenance Tenant Talkback Panel has been arranged in March 2010 to discuss and agree tenant expectations.
Publish the Voids standards on the website and issue a copy to all tenants in advance of them undertaking an accompanied viewing or a void offer.	HO 3	Customer Repairs Manager	July 2010	Delayed progress - This is included as part of the "Repairs Refresh Programme", which commenced in July 2009, with the appointment of a specialist procurement consultant, who's role is to assist the Council in specifying the targets and responsibilities of the Repairs Management Contractor.
Undertake a review of the repairs responsibilities to ensure they dovetail with other service strategies ie ASBO, introductory tenancies, demoted tenancies	HO 3	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	Dec 2010	Delayed progress - This is included as part of the "Repairs Refresh Programme", which commenced in July 2009, with the appointment of a specialist procurement consultant, who's role is to assist the Council in specifying the targets and responsibilities of the Repairs Management Contractor.
Relocate the Housing Repairs Section from the Civic Offices to the Epping Depot to operate alongside, and in conjunction with, the Building Maintenance Works Unit	HO 1 / 3	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	Sept 2009	Achieved - at the end of October 2009.
Timetable at least one meeting each year with the Tenants & Leaseholders Federation to discuss the repairs and maintenance expenditure programme.	HO 3 / 4	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	Ongoing	Achieved- This is undertaken as part of the Business Planning process at the beginning of each financial year. The Business Plan was issued and then agreed by the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation in March 2009. The Federation will be consulted in March 2010 for the 2010/11 programme.
Introduce Asbestos record cards in all properties, and maintain the records for contractors' and tenants' use.	HO 3	Customer Repairs Manager	Sept 2010	Delayed progress - This is included as part of the "Repairs Refresh Programme", which commenced in July 2009, with the appointment of a specialist procurement consultant, who's role is to assist the Council in specifying the targets and responsibilities of the Repairs Management Contractor.

Undertake periodic reviews of the outcome of difficult to let properties and seek ways of enhancing the services provided to these dwellings.	HO 3	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	Dec 2009	Achieved – This has been undertaken as part of the Voids Working Party meetings throughout the year.
Explore options whereby an emphasis is put on “fix first time” for responsive repairs	HO 1 / 3	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	Dec 2009	Partially Achieved – Craftworkers are now undertaking inspections, which allows them to fix the repair at the first call. The systems are being developed to allow a better understanding of the materials that need to be carried on the vans so that targets can be set and monitored.
Seek through the Essex Hub a framework agreement with specialist contractors for asbestos removal, door entry installations and maintenance, drainage clearance and renewals, PVCu window installations and maintenance as well as ad-hoc repairs where necessary	HO 1 / 3	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	Mar 2010	Partially achieved –Framework agreements have been tendered and let for PVCu window maintenance and replacement. A Maintenance and installation of door entry systems is currently out to tender. Asbestos removal tender documents have been drawn up ready to tender. Other framework agreements are yet to be tendered.
Continue feasibility studies into alternative fuel sources for properties in rural communities where mains gas is not available.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	Mar 2010	Partially achieved – 4 properties in rural communities now have solar panels installed as part of the re-roofing programme linked to the energy efficiency programme. Electric boilers have been trailed successfully and are being installed in areas without mains gas. Grant funding is being sourced for external wall insulation.
Review all projects with a contract value in excess of £1m on completion to identify any lessons learnt.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	On-going	Achieved – This is undertaken in accordance with Contract Standing Orders. The next contract to be reviewed is the Springfields Improvement Scheme.
Report on the outcome of future tenant satisfaction surveys for all void properties let.	HO 3	Housing Repairs Manager	Apr 2009	Achieved – Void Property surveys have now been introduced. The results are being monitored and will inform decision making as part of the “Repairs Refresh Programme”
Hold training sessions at empty properties to enable officers to gain a common understanding of specification requirements. To be undertaken annually.	HO 3	Housing Repairs Manager	On-going	Achieved – Generic Officers (Repairs and Voids Officers) are being introduced as part of the Repairs Service Restructure under the Repairs Refresh Programme. Former Repairs Officers will be trained on void property standards.

Seek to reduce the target response times for routine non-urgent repairs from 8-weeks to 4-weeks	HO 3	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	Oct 2010	Partially achieved – The target was reduced from 8-weeks to 6-weeks in April 2009. However, the move from 6-weeks to 4-weeks is included as part of the “Repairs Refresh Programme”, which commenced in July 2009, with the appointment of a specialist procurement consultant, who’s role is to assist the Council in specifying the targets and responsibilities of the Repairs Management Contractor.
Introduce generic repairs and voids officers.	HO 3	Housing Repairs Manager	Dec 2009	Achieved – Generic Officers (Repairs and Voids Officers) are being introduced as part of the Repairs Service restructure under the Repairs Refresh Programme.
Hold site visits at blocks of flats with tenant representatives to monitor repairs to, and condition of, communal areas	HO 3	Housing Repairs Manager	Apr 2010	Delayed progress - This is included as part of the “Repairs Refresh Programme”, which commenced in July 2009, with the appointment of a specialist procurement consultant, who’s role is to assist the Council in specifying the targets and responsibilities of the Repairs Management Contractor.
Appoint an External Management Contractor to oversee the combined Building Maintenance Works Unit and Repairs Team as agreed by the Cabinet in March 2008.	HO 1 / 3	Assistant Director of Housing (Property)	August 2010	In progress – 15 expressions of interest were received as a result of the OJEU advert. These will be vetted as part of the pre-qualification process, and tenders will be sought in April 2010. The Repairs Advisory Group is overseeing the appointment.
Seek to include at least one local business on the list of tenderers for all future contracts.	HO 3	Housing Assets Manager	On-going	Achieved – This is now undertaken as part of all tender opportunities.

Key to Corporate Housing Objectives

- HO 1 - Value for Money
- HO 2 - Housing Management
- HO 3 - Repairs and Maintenance
- HO 4 - Tenant Participation
- HO 5 - Housing Finance

