

Housing Strategy Key Action Plan 2011-12
(as at February 2012)

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Report as at February 2012
1	Housing Market	Produce a Strategic Housing Land Assessment (SHLA), to provide an assessment of the potential capacity for new house-building in the District	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	July 2012	On Target – Consultants have been appointed to undertake the SHLA. Their draft report is expected around April 2012.
2	Housing Market	Review the target for the number of new homes to be provided within the District between 2011-2031, and the proposed locations, following the proposed revocation of the East of England Plan	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	July 2012	<p>In Progress – The Localism Act states that the East of England Plan will be revoked. However, the required secondary legislation has not yet been passed.</p> <p>Essex County Council is currently working on behalf of all local authorities in Essex to provide revised household and population estimates for each district, up until 2031. This will include different scenarios for the Epping Forest District. When this information is received, the Council will translate the population and household figures into an assessment of the number of new homes required in the District. A potential range of new home figures will be included within the Issues and Options Paper.</p>
3	Housing Market	Progress the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy to the Issues and Options Stage	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	July 2012	In Progress - The LDF Core Strategy has now been replaced with the proposed Local Plan. The Issues and Options Paper is due to be published for consultation in August/September 2012.
4	Regeneration	Undertake a public consultation on a proposed Development and Design Brief for the St Johns Area of Epping, including market and affordable housing	Director of Corporate Support Services	December 2011	In Progress – The public consultation exercise is due to commence on 24 th February 2012 for around 4 weeks, seeking views on four options.

					The aim is to publish the final version of the Brief by 30 th April 2012
5	Affordable Housing	<p>Work with housing associations and developers to provide 98 new affordable homes for rent and shared ownership in 2011/12 and around a further 120 new affordable homes by March 2014, at the following sites with detailed planning permission:</p> <p>(a) Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey (b) Station Approach, Ongar (c) Jennikings Nursery, Chigwell (d) Zinc (Gt. Stony), Ongar (e) Manor Road Garden Centre, Chigwell (f) 12-30 Church Hill, Loughton (g) St Johns School, Epping</p>	Director of Housing	March 2012	<p>Unlikely to Achieve – The target of 98 homes included the anticipated completion of the final phase of 29 affordable homes at Sewardstone Rd, Waltham Abbey. However, these have been delayed until 2012/13, due to problems with the provision of utility services. However, it is anticipated that 81 new affordable homes will be completed in the District in 2012/13, as follows:</p> <p>Zinc, Ongar - 9 Station Approach, Ongar - 6 Sewardstone Rd, W/A - 66</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total - 81</p> <p>The completion of further developments at the other stated locations are planned for future years.</p>
6	Affordable Housing	Review the possible re-introduction of the Home Ownership Grant Scheme (enabling existing Council tenants to purchase in the private sector) in 2012/13.	Housing Resources Manager	Sept 2011	<p>Achieved – The Cabinet reviewed, in September 2011, whether to not to reintroduce the Scheme, and agreed to suspend the scheme for a further year.</p> <p>A further review will be undertaken by the Cabinet in September 2012.</p>
7	Affordable Housing	Complete Phase 1 of the Open Market Home Ownership Scheme with Broxbourne Housing Association (BHA) - to enable first time buyers in the District to purchase a property of their choice from the open market through shared ownership, funded jointly by the Council, BHA and the applicant – and consider whether to undertake Phase 2	Director of Housing	March 2012	<p>In Progress – All the bespoke legal agreements have been drafted and signed.</p> <p>BHA has undertaken a marketing campaign amongst all of the Council's housing applicants and tenants, as well as those registered with the Essex Homebuy Agent. A number of applicants have been accepted onto the scheme as a result, with many sourcing properties and awaiting exchange of contracts.</p>

					It is anticipated that the Cabinet will review the success of Phase 1, and consider whether to proceed to Phase 2, around June 2012.
8	Affordable Housing	Investigate the feasibility and viability of the Council building social housing for rent itself, on Council-owned sites, including difficult-to-let garage sites	Director of Housing	March 2012	Achieved – In December 2011, the Cabinet agreed to undertake a Council Housebuilding Programme and also agreed the approach. A Development Agent is currently being appointed.
9	Affordable Housing	Implement the proposals of the Development and Design Brief for The Broadway, Loughton relating to the Council's land-holdings, to provide significant levels of affordable housing	Director of Housing	July 2012	In Progress – At the request of the Council's Management Board, the Director of Housing has established and chairs a Broadway Redevelopment Working Party, which has drafted an Action Plan to implement the proposals within the Development and Design Brief that are controlled by the Council, and to monitor progress by third parties.
10	Affordable Housing	Undertake a "Planning for Real Exercise" to consider the options for the development/conversion of Council-owned Leader Lodge, North Weald and, if development is agreed, select one of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners through a competitive process to implement the agreed option	Director of Housing	February 2012	In Progress – The Exercise has been completed and the Cabinet is due to consider the future use of the site at its meeting on 12 th March 2012.
11	Affordable Housing	Work in partnership with one of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners to convert 20 unpopular bedsits for older people at Marden Close, Chigwell Row into 10 self-contained rented flats for families	Director of Housing	July 2012	In Progress – Following a decision by Trust for London (the charity that owns the freehold of Marden Close) not to provide a sufficient period of lease to a housing association to convert the properties, discussions have been held between the Director of Housing, Trust for London and Chigwell Parish Council on an alternative approach. As a result, a new way forward has emerged, which will be reported to the Cabinet in the Spring 2012 for approval.

12	Affordable Housing	Formulate a specific District-wide Nominations Agreements for shared ownership properties, with each of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners, following consultation with the Partners	Director of Housing	Dec 2011	No Progress – Due to workload and other commitments
13	Affordable Housing	Following the enactment of the Localism and Decentralisation Bill, formulate a Strategic Tenancy, possibly in partnership with the other West Essex Councils	Director of Housing	July 2012	In Progress – The three West Essex local authorities have agreed to work together to produce one Tenancy Strategy for West Essex. Following a competitive exercise, an experienced housing consultant has been appointed to produce the strategy.
14	Affordable Housing	Following a competitive exercise, work with one of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners to develop the Council-owned site at Roundhills, Waltham Abbey for an affordable rented housing scheme	Director of Housing	July 2012	Action updated – In January 2012, the Cabinet agreed that the Council should develop the site at Roundhills itself, as part of its Council Housebuilding Programme, rather than it be developed by a housing association. Once the Development Agent for the Housebuilding Programme has been appointed, it will undertake a detailed development appraisal of the site.
15	Affordable Housing	Following the enactment of the Localism and Decentralisation Bill, consider the possible introduction of "flexible secure" Council tenancies for fixed periods	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Sept 2012	In Progress – A planned Information Session for Members has had to be re-arranged due to low numbers registering. Following the Information Session, Cabinet members will consider the general approach to be taken and the Housing Scrutiny Panel will then be asked to consider and recommend the detailed Tenancy Policy for adoption by the Cabinet.
16	Affordable Housing	Complete and review the Council's Pilot Social Housing Fraud Scheme, and determine whether or not the scheme should continue permanently	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2012	Achieved – The Housing Scrutiny Panel reviewed the success of the Scheme in January 2012, and has recommended to the Cabinet that the Scheme continues on a permanent basis, with additional officer hours provided. The Cabinet is due to consider the

					<p>Scrutiny Panel's report and recommendations at its meeting on 12th March 2012.</p> <p>The Housing Scrutiny Panel also agreed to consider whether a Senior Housing Officer (Social Housing Fraud) should also be appointed, when it considers the list of proposed housing improvements and service enhancements at its meeting on 5th March 2012.</p>
17	Affordable Housing	Introduce an on-line housing registration system	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2012	In Progress – The Council's Housing IT Team have developed a bespoke on-line Housing Application Form that is currently being tested. It is envisaged that the on-line Application Form will go live around April 2012.
18	Homelessness	Review and revise the Homelessness Strategy for a further three-year period	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	August 2012	In Progress – The Homelessness Strategy is currently being updated by officers, and is due to be considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 13 th March 2012.
19	Diversity	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2012	Not yet required – The annual report will be considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel in July 2012.
20	Diversity	Review and update the Customer (Equality) Impact Assessments of the Housing Strategy & Development, HomeOption Scheme, Homelessness, and Private Sector Housing functions	Director of Housing	July 2012	Not yet required.
21	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Through the LDF Core Strategy, seek to introduce a requirement that all new housing developments in the District should meet the Lifetime Homes Standard	Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning)	July 2012	In Progress – The LDF Core Strategy has now been replaced with the proposed Local Plan. It is still intended to include such a requirement in the Issues and Options Paper to be published for consultation in August/September 2012.

22	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Following Essex County Council's decision to withdraw 24-hour staffing for the scheme at Jessopp Court, Waltham Abbey for frail older people, work with Essex Adult Social Care to remodel the scheme to a sheltered housing scheme	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	Dec 2011	Achieved – Following the decision by Cabinet, the scheme was remodelled to a conventional sheltered housing scheme in December 2011, and a new Scheme Manager has been appointed.
23	Supported Housing – Older and Other Vulnerable People	Following consultation with the CARE Advisory Group, safeguard the future viability of the Caring And Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Service, by increasing project management fees for disabled facilities and other grants to 15%	Private Housing Manager (Grants & CARE)	October 2011	Achieved – The CARE Advisory Group agreed to increase project management fees by 15%, which has now been implemented.
24	Empty Homes	Bring at least 20 long-term empty properties back into use by Council intervention, including the continued use of the PLACE Scheme	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2012	On Target – Despite the Empty Property Officer post being vacant for a number of months, 16 empty homes were brought back into use by the Council in the first three quarters of 2011/12.
25	Empty Homes	Enter into an agreement with Pathmeads Housing Association to manage vacant properties in the District served with an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	October 2011	In Progress – The legal process to implement the Council's first EDMO is in progress. If the EDMO is approved by the Court, an agreement will be entered into with Pathmeads Housing Association to manage the property on behalf of the Council.
26	Rural Housing	Continue to work with Hastoe Housing Association and Parish Councils to investigate the development potential for rural housing schemes in villages, through the Council's Rural Planning Exceptions Policy	Director of Housing	July 2012	No Progress – Since the last rural housing scheme was completed in Summer 2011, no further opportunities for new rural schemes have arisen. However, Hastoe HA remains prepared and ready to work with any Parish Council wishing to support a scheme in their village.

27	Decent Homes – Public Sector	Undertake programmes of work to ensure that all the Council's homes continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard	Housing Assets Manager	July 2012	In Progress – In December 2011, the Cabinet agreed to increase the amount of resources invested in the Council's housing stock by around 50%, to enable properties to be maintained to a full, modern standard – a much higher standard than the Decent Homes Standard.
28	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Complete the Private Sector House Condition Survey, to provide information on the most up-to-date estimate of the number and location of non-decent homes in the private sector.	Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector and Resources)	Sept 2011	Achieved – The Private Sector House Condition Survey has been completed, and the results will be presented to the Housing Scrutiny Panel on 5 th March 2012.
29	Decent Homes – Private Sector	After completion of the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, produce a new Private Sector Housing Strategy	Assistant Director of Housing (Private Sector and Resources)	January 2012	Achieved – The Private Sector Housing Strategy has been drafted, and will be considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel on 5 th March 2012, with a proposal that its adoption be recommended to the Cabinet in April 2012.
30	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licences for existing residential park home sites in the District and report progress on implementation to the Council's Housing Scrutiny Panel	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	October 2011	Delayed – All sites have now been comprehensively surveyed, ready for licences to be issued. However a number of issues have arisen that require consideration and determination by members before the licences can be issued. The Housing Scrutiny Panel was due to consider a report on all the issues at its meeting in January 2012. However, the meeting was postponed to enable the Fire Authority to provide more comprehensive written guidance. This is expected by the end of February 2012, following which a special meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel will be arranged to consider the issues.

31	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce new licence conditions for existing and new holiday park home sites in the District, following consultation with site owners, park home residents association and statutory agencies	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	July 2012	Not yet required – This will follow-on, once the licences for the permanent residential sites have been issued.
32	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Establish and support a Park Homes Consultative Group to consult and brief representatives of park home residents on issues of interest	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2012	Achieved – A useful meeting of site owners and representatives from residents associations was held in December 2012, to discuss issues relating to site licences. It is envisaged that future meetings will be held as required.
33	Decent Homes – Private Sector	Introduce and support a Landlord Accreditation Scheme within the District	Private Housing Manager (Technical)	March 2012	In progress – A Scheme has been agreed by the Housing Portfolio Holder. However, delays are currently being experienced with the University of Essex, which will assist with the administration of the Scheme.
34	Energy Efficiency	Work with Hastoe Housing Association to obtain planning permission and commence the first affordable housing development by a housing association in the country constructed from straw bales at Millfield, High Ongar, significantly improving energy efficiency	Director of Housing	June 2012	In Progress – Hastoe has submitted the detailed planning application for the proposed development. This was due to be determined by the Area Plans Sub-Committee in February 2012. However, the matter was deferred to allow a site meeting to take place. The planning application is now expected to be determined on 7 th March 2012.
35	Energy Efficiency	Investigate the use of the Government's Feed-in Tariff Scheme to fund the installation of photo-voltaic (solar) panels on the roofs of Council properties, in order to reduce energy costs for tenants and to produce an income stream for the Council	Asst. Director of Housing (Property)	March 2012	In Progress – The Housing Scrutiny Panel considered a detailed report on this issue in October 2011, and agreed in principle to recommend the installation of PV panels on the roofs of sheltered housing schemes. However, in the meantime, the Government decided to reduce the tariff by over 50%. A further report on this issue will be presented to the Housing Scrutiny Panel on the 13 th March 2012 for further consideration.