

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

No	Category	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Report as at July 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	Achieved – The SHLA has been produced and is being published alongside the Issues and Options Paper.
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 working on behalf of all local authorities in Essex and has provided revised household and population estimates for each district, up until 2031. This includes different scenarios for the Epping Forest District.</p> <p>These household/population estimates have been translated into different assessments of the number of new homes required in the District. A range of new home figures has been included within the Issues and Options Paper, together with the numbers of new homes that would be provided in different settlements.</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 has been approved and is due to be published for consultation at the end of July, with an 11 week consultation period.

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	<p>Achieved– The public consultation exercise has been completed and the responses have been analysed by the Council’s consultants. The feedback was considered by the Cabinet on 23rd July 2012.</p> <p>It is proposed that a draft Design & Development Brief is presented to the Cabinet and full Council in September 2012.</p>								
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>Target Not Achieved (by March 2012) – The target of 98 homes included the anticipated completion of the final phases of 67 affordable homes at Sewardstone Rd, Waltham Abbey. However, these were delayed until 2012/13, due to problems with the provision of utility services. However, 43 new affordable homes were completed in the District in 2012/13, as follows:</p> <table data-bbox="1417 730 1843 898"> <tr> <td>Zinc, Ongar</td> <td>- 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Station Approach, Ongar</td> <td>- 6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewardstone Rd, W/A</td> <td>- 28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>- 43</td> </tr> </table> <p>The completion of further developments at the other stated locations are planned for future years.</p>	Zinc, Ongar	- 9	Station Approach, Ongar	- 6	Sewardstone Rd, W/A	- 28	Total	- 43
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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 required bespoke legal agreements have been drafted and signed.</p> <p>Following a marketing campaign by BHA 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.</p> <p>One completion took place in March 2012. A further two completions have taken place since March 2012 and another is close to completion. Four further applications have been approved and the applicants are sourcing properties. A further eight applications are on the Reserve List.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Cabinet will review the success of Phase 1, and consider whether to proceed to Phase 2, at its meeting in September 2012.</p>
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	<p>Achieved – In December 2011, the Cabinet agreed to undertake a Council Housebuilding Programme and also agreed the approach.</p> <p>A Development Agent is currently being appointed - six applicants have been shortlisted to submit detailed tenders, which are due for return in September 2012.</p> <p>The Cabinet considered a report on potential development sites at its meeting on 23rd July 2012 and agreed a list of sites to be passed to the Development Agent (when appointed) to undertake Development and Financial Appraisals.</p>

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	<p>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 is drafting 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.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Draft Action Plan will be considered by the North Weald and Asset Management Committee in September 2012.</p>
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	<p>Achieved – The Planning for Real Exercise has been completed.</p> <p>In March 2012, the Cabinet considered the outcome of the exercise and decided that Leader Lodge should be sold on the open market for private housing, with tenderers requested to state their intention to either retain or demolish the building.</p> <p>The sale is being undertaken by the Council's Estates and Valuations Division within Corporate Support Services.</p>
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	<p>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 and Trust for London and Chigwell Parish Council on alternative approaches. However, the Trust continues to have reservations about the potential effect on the Trust's ability to develop its adjacent land in the future, which is currently in the Green Belt.</p>

					The Director of Housing is continuing to seek a resolution for this issue and it is hoped that an agreed way forward can be reported to the Cabinet in the Autumn.
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	<p>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 Tenancy Strategy.</p> <p>Two consultation events have been held with private registered providers of housing (housing associations) and “stakeholders” (e.g. CAB, homelessness groups, Social Care etc) on the proposed approach.</p> <p>A draft West Essex Tenancy Strategy has subsequently been produced and a formal consultation exercise is being held in July/August 2012. The Housing Scrutiny Panel considered the Draft Strategy at its July meeting and made one minor comment.</p> <p>It is hoped that the Cabinet will be able to adopt the final version of the Tenancy Strategy in October 2012.</p>
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	<p>In Progress – An Information Session for Members was held in June 2012 on the housing elements of the Localism Act, which included details of flexible tenancies.</p> <p>Following the Information Session, the Housing Portfolio Holder intends to make a Portfolio Decision on the approach that officers should take to the drafting of the required Tenancy Policy, which the Housing Scrutiny Panel will be asked to consider in detail and make recommendations to the Cabinet for its adoption.</p>
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	<p>Achieved – The Housing Scrutiny Panel reviewed the success of the Scheme in January 2012, and recommended to the Cabinet in March 2012 that the Scheme continues on a permanent basis, with additional officer hours provided – which was agreed.</p> <p>The Cabinet also agreed the Scrutiny Panel’s recommendation that a Senior Housing Officer (Social Housing Fraud) should also be appointed, when it considered the list of proposed housing improvements and service enhancements at its meeting on 5th March 2012. As a result the senior officer post was filled in July 2012.</p>
17	Affordable Housing	Introduce an on-line housing registration system	Asst. Director of Housing (Operations)	March 2012	<p>In Progress – The Council’s Housing IT Team have developed a bespoke on-line Housing Application Form that is currently being tested.</p> <p>In addition, discussions are being held with Locata Housing Services, the organisation that runs the Council’s choice based lettings scheme, to consider its scheme.</p>

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 has been updated by officers, and was considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel on 13 th March 2012. A consultation exercise will be undertaken shortly, following which the Housing Portfolio Holder will be asked to adopt the final version.
19	Diversity	Compare the ethnicity of applicants provided with Council accommodation with the ethnicity of Housing Register applicants	Housing Options Manager	July 2012	Achieved – The annual report was considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel on 24 th 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 progress – Due to workload and other commitments
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. This issue has been raised within the Issues and Options Paper, which is due to be consulted from the end of July 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	Achieved for 2011/12 and On Target for 2012/13 – Despite the Empty Property Officer post being vacant for a number of months, 60 empty homes were brought back into use by the Council in 2011/12 and 23 empty homes brought back into us in Quarter 1 of 2012/13.
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 – An Interim EDMO was approved by the Residential Property Tribunal. Officers are now seeking the owner to bring the property back into use, who has responded by undertaking works to the property. However, if this doesn't come to fruition a Final EDMO will be made by the Council and Genesis Housing Association (the successor to Pathmeads HA) will complete any outstanding works and let the property to a household on the Council's Housing Register.
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	Achieved – All the Council's homes continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard. 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 were 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 – Following completion of the survey, a new Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy was considered by the Housing Scrutiny Panel on 5 th March 2012, which was recommended to (and agreed by) the Cabinet for adoption 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 arose, that required consideration and determination by members before the licences can be issued. The Housing Scrutiny Panel considered a detailed report on all the issues at a special meeting in June 2012 and made recommendations to the Cabinet, all of which were agreed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 23 rd July 2012.
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	<p>Achieved – A Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme has been introduced in partnership with East 15 Acting School (part of the University of Essex), which encourages good practice among landlords and provides good quality private rented accommodation for these students.</p> <p>It also gives official recognition to those landlords whose properties achieve the agreed standards and allows students to select their accommodation with confidence.</p> <p>The property is inspected by an officer from the Private Sector Housing Team, who carries out a full survey of the property including a Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme (HHSRS) assessment. Once the property meets the accreditation requirements, the owner is issued with a certificate that can be displayed in the premises. The accreditation will last for 5 years.</p>
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	<p>Achieved – Hastoe obtained detailed planning application and the site was conveyed to them at the end of August 2012 and a start on site has been made.</p> <p>Due to the level of national interest in the project, a television documentary is being made, following the construction process.</p>
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	<p>Not pursued – 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, the Government then significantly reduced the tariff and it was agreed not to implement a scheme as a result.</p>