



Private Sector Housing Strategy - Progress Report

Presented by:

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Housing Strategy Action Plan 2013-14

**“To review the implementation of the
new Private Sector Housing Strategy
2012 to identify any required
refinements and report to the
Scrutiny Panel on the outcome”**





Epping Forest District Council

Private Sector Housing Strategy - Progress Report

Questions?

Housing DIRECTORATE



Private Sector Housing (Grants & C.A.R.E.)

Private Sector Housing Assistance
&
C.A.R.E.
(Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest)
The Council's Home Improvement Agency



A Decent Home.....!!??





C.A.R.E.

(Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest)

- | **A Home Improvement Agency managed and run by the Council,**
- | **Funded by Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council (Housing Related Support),**
- | **Assists vulnerable people to repair, adapt or improve their homes.**



Services provided by C.A.R.E.

- | **Advice and 'signposting'**
- | **Financial help;**
- | **Technical Support,**
- | **'Project Management'**
- | **Helping find trusted contractors**
- | **A Handyperson Service**
- | **A Gardening service**
- | **Safe and Well (Home from Hospital)**





Handyperson Service

- u Plumbing (e.g. tap washers, toilet cisterns, ball valves, overflow, provision of lever taps);
- u Remedial carpentry;
- u Minor electrical works (fitting smoke detectors);
- u Glazing;
- u Security works (window/door locks);
- u Curtain rails;
- u Minor tiling;
- u Falls Prevention and safety works (fixing carpets, lowering cupboards, putting up shelves);
- l Small roof and guttering jobs



New Charging from Oct 2013

- l Available to older people who are over the age of 60 and retired (or in the case of a couple, both over 60 and retired).
- l If the service user is on a means tested benefit (e.g. *Guarantee Pension Credit, Local Council Tax Support or Housing Benefit*) they will be charged a maximum fee of £30 each time they use the handyperson service, with the exception of falls prevention and home security work which will be free of charge.
- l If the service user is not on means tested benefit they will be charged a maximum of £50 for handyperson work and £25 each time they use the service for falls prevention and home security work.
- l Discretion can be applied where appropriate (e.g. applications from people with disabilities, who are on means tested benefits but under the age of 60).





Gardening Scheme

- | Run in partnership with V.A.E.F. (Voluntary Action Epping Forest) subject to on going funding
- | Available to private owners or tenants; over 60 and on means tested benefit or under 60 disabled and on a means tested benefit
- | Gardens must be overgrown, trees or bushes overshadow or restrict entrances
- | Fear of crime
- | Perception of unoccupied home



Safe and Well Project (Home from hospital)

- | Funded by the NHS West Essex Transformation Fund;
- | In partnership with Papworth Trust and Royal Voluntary Service;
- | Reduce admissions / re- admissions for older and disabled people and facilitate a timely discharge;
- | EFDC/ C.A.R.E. Handyperson to provide minor adaptations and equipment to ensure homes are safe on return from hospital.



Housing Assistance = ££££

- | Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) £30,000 max
- | Relocation Grants £10,000 max

New Policy 2012- 2015

- | Decent Homes Repayable Assistance £10,000 max
- | Small Works Repayable Assistance £ 3000 max
- | Empty Homes Repayable Assistance £10,000 max

- | Equity release option for private owners



Disabled Adaptations

Disabled Facilities Grants	<u>2012/ 13</u>	<u>2013/ 14</u>
Occupational Therapist Referrals:	Q1- 15	Q1- 33
	Q2- 17	Q2- 50
	Q3- 16	
	Q4- 30	
Total :	<u>78</u>	<u>83</u>



Disabled Adaptations




Gardening Scheme




Epping Forest District Council

Before...



Housing DIRECTORATE




UKAS
CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE
The Service Standard

Epping Forest District Council

Before...



Housing DIRECTORATE



UKAS
CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE
The Service Standard



Private Housing (Technical)

Sally Devine (Private Housing Manager - Technical Team))



Action Plan 2013-14

- | Feasibility study - fast tracking accredited properties
- | Empty properties
- | Essex Landlord Accreditation Scheme (ELAS)
- | Park home sites



Potential fast tracking (3)

- I Carry out a feasibility study on the potential for fast track procedures for accredited properties
- I Delayed due to Welfare Reform legislation



Empty Properties (4&7)

- I Target for 2012/13 was 40 long term empties back to use

Number of empty properties brought back to use annually						
2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
0	4	4	3	45	60	115

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Our approach

- | **Sausage machine**
- | **Carrots and sticks**
- | **Highlight advantages and disadvantages – Empty Homes Premium**
- | **Play the game and maximise the New Homes Bonus, concentrated visits July and August**



Going forward

- | **PLACE loan**
- | **National Empty Property Loan**
- | **Matchmaker Scheme**
- | **Risk assess for enforcement**





Introduce an Essex wide landlord accreditation scheme

- | **Action point 6**

- | **7 LAs have signed up to the Scheme**
- | **To promote good management practices and good property condition**
- | **At procurement stage**
- | **Ready to introduce summer 2014?**



Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site licence conditions (8)

- | **Draft site licence conditions being prepared**
- | **Consultation with interested parties**
- | **Consultation with Gypsy Roma Traveller community**
- | **Issue new licences and conditions**
- | **Inspection of sites and enforcement**





Holiday site licence conditions

- | **Action point 9**
- | **Review existing**
- | **Propose new standard site licence conditions**
- | **Consult**
- | **Produce new licences and issue**



Mobile Homes Act 2013 (10)

- | **Councils can charge for licensing from April 2014**
- | **Can charge for new applications, transfers, amendments**
- | **Can charge an annual fee**
- | **Need to prepare and publish a charging policy**
- | **Can make exemptions or different charges for different sites**
- | **We will consult with residents**





