

**Epping Forest Local Supporting People Strategy 2006-2010  
Six Monthly Progress Report on Key Action Plan  
(As at 1 October 2006)**

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**General Strategic**

1. Re-introduce the new Supported Housing Needs Index to identify and assess applicants for supported housing.	July 2007	Epping Forest District Council	<b>No Longer Being Pursued</b> - It has been established that most other councils in Essex are not using the revised SHNI and that it does not easily fit with EFDC's Allocations Scheme. EFDC also intends to implement choice based lettings from July 2007.
2. Ensure that at least 4 meetings of the Epping Forest Supporting People Core Strategy Group are held every year.	Ongoing	Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council SP Team	<b>On Target</b> – The Core Strategy Group has met twice within the 6 months since adopting the Strategy.
3. Hold an Inclusive Forum meeting to comment on the next draft version of the Epping Forest Local Supporting People Strategy.	February 2007	Epping Forest District Council and Epping Forest Core Strategy Group	<b>Amended</b> - The decision was made by the LCSG to update the Epping Forest Local Supporting People Strategy every three years rather than annually. The Inclusive Forum meeting will then also be held every three years. The Epping Forest Local Supporting People Action Plan will still be reviewed and updated annually and will be sent out for consultation.

**Older People**

4. Transfer the Council's sheltered housing scheme at Wickfields, Chigwell to Warden Housing to enable a major improvement programme to be undertaken.	December 2006	EFDC	<b>Achieved</b> – Formal tenant consultation was successfully completed in Summer 2006. The application for consent to transfer has been submitted to the Secretary of State. DCLG officials have confirmed that the application is in order and consent can be given. Legal agreements are being finalised and transfer is planned for mid-October 2006, with improvement scheme commencing by the end of October 2006.
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5. Seek funding through the Local Delivery Plan 2005/6 for a Mental Health Liaison Post to support inpatient areas, Intermediate Care, A&E Diversion and NHS Funded Nursing Care.	September 2006	EF PCT	<b>Achieved</b> - The funding has been secured, the job description is completed. The Mental Health Trust are recruiting on behalf of the PCT.
6. Ensure the successful implementation of the Case Finding Initiative across Epping Forest to reduce unnecessary hospital admission.	Completed	EF PCT	<b>Achieved</b> - The implementation of the case finding initiative/case managers has been successful. The Audit is showing positive changes in the community regarding hospital admissions and discharges. The PCT are now in the process of recruiting Associate Practitioners to support the Case Managers.
7. Implementation of the Local Trades Scheme through the production of a list of contact details for local tradesmen that have undergone a number of safety checks.	Ongoing	Epping Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	<b>Ongoing</b> – A working group has been formed and a process and body of people for vetting traders has been developed and agreed.
8. Consider the outcome of the Sheltered Housing / Community Support Service for Older People pilot in Harlow, undertaken by Harlow DC and in Springfield, undertaken by Chelmer Housing Partnership (CHP).	Ongoing	EFDC and ECC SP Team	<b>Not yet due</b> – The pilots have not yet been completed or assessed by the pilot organisations.
9. Review the Council's Grants Policy in light of the 2005 Private Sector House Condition Survey.	December 2006	Epping Forest District Council C.A.R.E.	<b>In progress</b> - The draft Housing Assistance Policy 2006-2010 is to be presented at Cabinet in October with a view to being implemented in December 2006. The Policy includes the replacement of Home Repairs Assistance with Small Works Assistance and Renovation Grants with Decent Homes Assistance which extends the repayment period from 5 to 20 years. The Policy also includes some new types of Assistance; Thermal Comfort Grants, Empty Homes Grants, Conversion Grants and Relocation Grants.

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			It is envisaged that this Policy will remain in force while negotiations take place on the introduction of systems of assistance based on Equity Release and/or loans.
<b>Home Improvement Agency</b>			
10. Work with the Supporting People Team to ensure cross-boundary collaboration where appropriate.	Ongoing	Epping Forest District Council Essex County Council SP Team Other Essex HIAs Other Essex Authorities	<b>In progress</b> - Working on an Essex Strategy for HIAs in order to reflect the position post 2010 when there will have been another round of re-commissioning and further changes in ECC and the PCTs.
11. Assist in the review of the Council's Grants Policy, in relation to the assistance that can be provided to HIA clients.	December 2006	Epping Forest District Council	<b>In progress</b> - The draft Housing Assistance Policy 2006-2010 is to be presented at Cabinet in October with a view to being implemented in December 2006. This includes the replacement of Home Repairs Assistance with Small Works Assistance and Renovation Grants with Decent Homes Assistance which extends the repayment period from 5 to 20 years. The Policy also includes some new types of Assistance; Thermal Comfort Grants, Empty Homes Grants, Conversion Grants and Relocation Grants. It is envisaged that this Policy will remain in force while negotiations take place on the introduction of systems of assistance based on Equity Release and/or loans.
12. To consider ways of attracting client contributions to the Handyperson Service.	Ongoing	Epping Forest District Council C.A.R.E. Advisory Panel	<b>Ongoing</b> - A voluntary contributions scheme has been devised but it is felt that this may not be cost effective. Additional funding of £3,000 was made available by the Council for 2006/2007 which made the issue less pressing but it is still under consideration.

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<p><b>13.</b> Particularly in the light of the uncertainty over funding for C.A.R.E after March 2005, maximise existing funding and consider ways of attracting additional funding in order to meet market demand.</p>	Ongoing	Epping Forest District Council Essex County Council Supporting People Epping Forest PCT	<p><b>Ongoing</b> - A five year SLA has been signed with Essex County Council for the Handyperson service and a three plus two year SLA for the Core Service. The consideration of ways to maximise existing funding is an ongoing exercise. The increase in demand for Disabled Facilities Grants has resulted in an increase in fee income.</p>
<p><b>14.</b> To consider ways in which the Small Loans Scheme can be reinstated.</p>	Achieved	EFDC and C.A.R.E Advisory Panel	<p><b>Achieved</b> - Council has agreed the terms for the Small Loans Scheme and this will be implemented early in 2007.</p>

**Mental Health**

<p><b>15.</b> Improve the discharge arrangements for people in hospital due to mental illness. Through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tenancy retention for people who are placed in hospital.</li> <li>- Crisis resolution</li> <li>- Early intervention</li> <li>- Alternatives to hospital admission, including rehab for people who do not need to be in an acute ward.</li> <li>- Crisis housing.</li> </ul>		North Essex Mental Health Partnership Trust and Epping Forest PCT	<p><b>In progress</b> - Crisis resolution and home treatment services, and early intervention for psychosis services are now in place across Epping Forest and will help early discharge from and prevent admission to hospital. Closer working with housing helps tenancy retention for people in hospital. Changes in management structure in NEMHPT earlier this year mean that the associate director for Epping and Uttlesford also has Trust wide responsibilities for rehabilitation, which will lead to a more streamlined approach across the area.</p>
<p><b>16.</b> Review the future use and purpose of the residential rehabilitation and longer-term care unit at Regent Road, Epping following its closure. Carry out an option appraisal.</p>	Ongoing	North Essex Mental Health Partnership Trust	<p><b>Ongoing</b> - A review of NEMHPT services across West Essex will be starting shortly. This will include Regent Rd, and the nature of it's future use as part of the MH services in the area</p>

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<p><b>17.</b> Await news from Supporting People regarding the expression of interest for the expansion of the floating support service from 12 to 18 units and the additional part-time floating support worker.</p>	<p>April 2007</p>	<p>Swan Housing Association And Essex County Council SP Team</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b> - This has been incorporated into the Value Improvement Programme (VIP) for Floating Support which will reconfigure floating support services across Essex.</p>
<p><b>18.</b> Continue to increase and improve mental health services for older people through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joined up working and improved communication between the Community Mental Health Team for Older People, the Primary Health Service (PCT) and Social Care Teams.</li> <li>- The Single Assessment Process (SAP), which, promotes and encourages multidisciplinary working.</li> </ul>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Community Mental Health Team for Older People, Epping Forest PCT and Social Care Teams</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> - The CMHT for older people now includes a senior social work practitioner and support worker employed by Essex County Council. There are regular meetings between the team managers of the hospital and community social work teams and the CMHT manager, both on a formal and informal basis to facilitate joined up working. Recruitment to the PCT funded post mentioned in point 5 is underway. The post holder will be based in the CMHT for older people and provide a very valuable practice and educational link between the PCT and MH services, ensuring the MH needs of older people are addressed in a variety of settings. The CPA/SAP process has been linked and piloted throughout the CMHTs for older people in North Essex and will be operational shortly.</p>

**Learning Disabilities**

<p><b>19.</b> Complete the construction of six, eco-friendly, self-contained flats and the provision of 24-hour support for people with learning disabilities on District Council-owned land at Cripsey Avenue, Ongar, with capital funding allocated by the Housing Corporation.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>East Living</p>	<p><b>Achieved</b> – The construction was completed in Summer 2006. All but one of the properties are occupied. A difficulty has arisen with the letting of the last property, since Essex Adult Social Care has been unable, in the light of their budgetary difficulties, to nominate a suitable applicant from the Epping Forest District, whose care needs cost less than their current care. Essex Social Care and the Housing Association are therefore seeking</p>
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			to allocate the property to a person with learning difficulties from outside the Epping Forest District. This is being strongly resisted by EFDC's Housing Services.
<b>Physical Disabilities</b>			
<p><b>20.</b> In the light of the reduction in the DCLG contribution towards the Disabled Facilities Grants, reconsider the priorities in the Council's Grants Policy.</p>	Ongoing	Epping Forest District Council	<p><b>In progress</b> - The Council agreed to increase the DFG budget by £200,000 in 2005/2006 to take account of the additional demand and a request has been made to the Council for this level of funding to be sustained. Changes in legislation and government targets have also made the reconsideration of priorities essential. GO-East have made available an additional £445,000 in 2006/2007 and £223,000 in 2007/2008 to help meet the Decent Homes (PSA 7) target. See above.</p>
<p><b>21.</b> Hold a public enquiry on the proposed alterations to the Local Plan to include the development of 100% lifetime homes.</p>	Completed	Epping Forest District Council	<p><b>Completed with Partial Achievement</b> - The proposal was included within the Council's proposed Alterations to the Local Plan. However, following the Public Inquiry, the Planning Inspector reduced the requirement to at least 10% of homes on developments comprising 10 or more properties must be built to the Lifetime Homes Standard.</p>
<p><b>22.</b> Seek capital funding from the Housing Corporation to commence the construction of 3-4 self-contained flats for people with physical disabilities, on land primarily owned by the District Council at Mason Way, Waltham Abbey.</p>	Autumn 2006	Ability Housing Association	<p><b>Achieved</b> – Capital funding was sought for 5 bungalows and successfully allocated by the Housing Corporation. The lease between EFDC and Ability Housing Association has been completed and the development of 5 bungalows is planned for Autumn 2006.</p>

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23. Liaise with the Essex Supporting People Team to re-configure the residential support provided at Lakeside Close, Chigwell to floating support across the two schemes.	Completed	Ability Housing Association and Essex County Council SP Team	<b>Agreed</b> - Supporting People have agreed to the reconfiguration of support across the 2 schemes. This will be budget neutral.
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<b>Single Homelessness</b>			
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24. Review the possibility of an additional part time Homelessness Prevention Officer in light of the successful bid to the DCLG's Homelessness Innovation Fund for additional funding.	Completed	Epping Forest District Council	<b>Achieved</b> – The Council has appointed a new full-time Senior Homelessness Prevention Officer, with the funding received from the DCLG (previously the ODPM)
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25. Increase the number of properties leased to East Thames under the Epping Forest Fresh START Scheme from 10-20 to accommodate homeless people, including single applicants.	Ongoing	East Thames	<b>In Progress</b> – Nearly all of the additional 10 properties have been identified and leased by East Thames.
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26. If the planning application is approved for the development of the two former Hostel Managers' flats at Leader Lodge, North Weald, investigate the best from of procuring the development needs to be investigated.	Ongoing	Epping Forest District Council	<b>Not Achieved</b> – Despite an planning officer recommendation for approval, the Council's Area Plans Sub-Committee refused planning permission. Consideration is therefore currently being given to the most appropriate way forward.
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27. Investigate the feasibility and cost of additional chalets at Norway House	On hold	Epping Forest District Council	<b>No Progress</b> – It is not intended to progress this until the future of Leader Lodge (see above) is determined.
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<p><b>28.</b> With the introduction of Choice Based Lettings, investigate the need for issuing priority cards for bidding, as a way of achieving a quota of vacancies for single applicants.</p>	Ongoing	Epping Forest District Council	<p><b>In Progress</b> – A draft specification for the implementation and operation of a choice based lettings scheme by the Council has been produced. EFDC officers are intending to recommend an amendment to the Allocation Scheme to give homeless families in supervised homeless accommodation priority for a specified “bidding” period when the choice based lettings scheme is introduced.</p>
<p><b>29.</b> Continue negotiations between EFDC and Kings Church Brentwood Furniture Exchange on the lease of the Town Mead Depot, Waltham Abbey as the base for the Kings Church Brentwood Furniture Exchange in Epping Forest.</p>	Completed	Lighthouse Furniture Project and Epping Forest District Council VAEF	<p><b>Achieved</b> – EFDC entered into a lease with the Lighthouse Project for accommodation at Town Mead Depot in September 2006.</p>
<p><b>30.</b> Produce a business plan setting out the need and proposed provision for a foyer in the District, providing accommodation and employment for young people.</p>	Abandoned	Epping Forest Foyer Project and YMCA	<p><b>No Longer Being Pursued</b> – A feasibility exercise undertaken by East Thames has established that a foyer would need to provide in excess of 100 properties for it to be financially viable and attract supporting people funding. However, there is not this extent of need in the District. Therefore, it has been decided not to pursue the foyer project any further.</p>
<p><b>31.</b> Identify a suitable site for the possible development of a foyer within the Epping Forest District.</p>	Abandoned	Epping Forest Foyer Project and YMCA	<p><b>No Longer Being Pursued</b> – See above</p>



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**People with Drug and Alcohol Problems**

<p><b>32.</b> Await news from Supporting People regarding the expression of interest for the expansion of the floating support service from 12 to 18 units and the additional part-time floating support worker.</p>	<p>April 2007</p>	<p>Cygnets Housing Association And Essex County Council SP Team</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> - This has been incorporated into the Value Improvement Programme (VIP) for Floating Support which will reconfigure floating support services across Essex.</p>
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**Ex-Offenders**

<p><b>33.</b> Develop target measurement and risk measurement systems in relation to the provision of accommodation for ex-offenders.</p>		<p>Probation Service - Essex</p>	<p><b>No progress.</b></p>
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**Women at Risk Of Domestic Violence**

<p><b>34.</b> Investigate the need for a Sanctuary Scheme in Epping Forest to provide a security measure to the homes of domestic violence victims, as an alternative to the provision of temporary accommodation.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>EFDC and Essex Police.</p>	<p><b>Limited Progress</b> – EFDC officers are currently reviewing the operation and success of schemes introduced by other local authorities.</p>
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**Teenage Parents**

<p><b>35.</b> Investigate with Brentwood Borough Council and Uttlesford District Council the possible introduction of a cross-boundary young parent scheme, comprising 8-10 self contained flats with access to some communal facilities, together with associated support. Seek capital funding from the Housing Corporation and revenue funding from Essex Social Care and the Essex Commissioning Body.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Epping Forest District Council, Essex Social Services, Essex County Council SP Team, Epping Forest PCT, Estuary Housing Association.</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b> – Extreme difficulties have been experienced identifying a site, resulting in a capital allocation allocated by the Housing Corporation having to be returned. A potential site has now been identified and East Thames is in discussions with the landowner.</p>
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**Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups**

<p><b>36.</b> Work in partnership with the Essex Housing Officers Group, to progress the Facing the Facts action plan for the Essex Equality and Diversity Project (EEDP), through The BME Action Group and recently appointed Development Worker.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Essex Housing Officers Group</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> - The Development worker is currently working towards the tasks in the action plan. Work to date includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing an Essex wide BME Citizens Panel. There will be 3 launches, 1 covering each housing sub region. The first launch is for the LCB on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October and will be held in Harlow.</li> <li>- A database of BME Groups in Essex has been set up.</li> <li>- Work is being carried out on updating the EEDP website</li> </ul> <p>Informal advocacy work relating to housing issues is also being provided.</p>
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**Service Monitoring and Reviews**

37. Complete all service reviews in line with DCLG requirements.	Completed	Essex County Council SP Team	<b>Completed</b> - All service reviews were completed and outcome reports sent out by the end of March 2006.
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