

Building Altogether Better Lives

**A Housing Strategy for
County Durham 2010 – 2015
Delivery Plan**

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Index

Page 4	Introduction: the Housing Strategy in Context	
Page 6	‘Building Altogether Better Lives’: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015	
Page 8	Issues & Options Consultation Response	
Page 42	Locality Delivery Plan:	
	Central Durham	page 43
	North & East Durham	page 49
	South Durham	page 57
	West Durham	page 64
Page 69	Partnership Delivery Plan:	
	County Durham Housing Forum	page 70
	Homelessness Action Partnership	page 72
	Housing & Regeneration Partnership	page 80
	Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Group	page 90
	Durham Key Options Board	page 94
	Learning Disabilities Task Group	page 98
	Social Housing Task group	page 100
	Older Persons Task group	page 104
	DCC Housing Service	page 108

Introduction:

The Housing Strategy in context

Durham County Council is a new Unitary Local Authority, formed in April 2009 through the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process from the seven former District Councils and Durham County Council. Our Council is now the largest Local Authority in the North East Region, home to around 506,000¹ people. County Durham is a beautiful place with challenging economic, social and environmental contrasts. The economic history of the county has generated a spatially fragmented geography of around 250 settlements including rural villages, small and medium towns, and a historic City with World Heritage status. These settlements are spread across a large geographical area from our western boundary high in the summit ridges of the North Pennines to the limestone cliffs of the North Sea Coast, remote moorlands and pastoral dales, fertile farmlands and established urban areas. Across these settlements Durham has a housing offer with contrasts of accessible and desirable residential areas as well as some of the most deprived local communities in the Country.

At the heart of the North East, Durham City is an important population centre, employment location, visitor destination, transport hub and university city. It is a centre of economic and cultural activity and stands out as a key economic driver to the county. The former Regional Spatial Strategy identified Durham City as an asset for the region and acknowledged that the limited scale and offer of the City centre prevented it from realising its true potential. The city needs a critical mass of employment, population and visitors to become a city of regional, national and international significance. And it is important that the city's housing offer complements this economic growth to offer a mixture of housing to meet the needs of existing and new residents as it grows.

North and East Durham is closely connected to the Tyne & Wear City Region's economic, housing and learning markets. North Durham is served by the towns of Consett, Stanley and Chester le Street whilst the East contains the towns of Peterlee and Seaham. This part of the County contains some of the most deprived communities in the North East and there remains an impetus to tackle inequalities and narrow the deprivation gap in these places as well as maximising the opportunities for new housing and employment growth through the South and East Durham Growth Point initiative.

South Durham is closely connected to the Tees Valley City Region and the main commercial centres of Bishop Auckland, Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor and Shildon form an important southern gateway to the county. The area has strong labour, housing, transport and cultural connections with Darlington, affording opportunities for complementary economic growth. The area is a priority for housing market renewal activity in a number of settlements and is also part of the South and East Durham Growth Point, which proposes accelerated housing and economic growth in the triangle made up of the main towns of Newton Aycliffe, Bishop Auckland and Spennymoor.

West Durham is the most deeply rural area of County Durham, with a natural habitat and quality of life that creates a distinctive offer to residents and businesses. The market towns of Barnard Castle, Stanhope and Middleton-in-Teesdale are important rural centres where net population gains have caused housing affordability problems in many areas. Communication and transport links within West Durham present a

¹ [Source: Registrar general mid 2009 population estimates](#)

challenge, with only minor roads and irregular public transport links between the dales and valleys. Planned improvements in electronic communications such as Next Generation Broadband will encourage economic growth and improve the potential to connect vulnerable people to public service provision as at present there are large parts of this area with no mobile phone coverage and patchy broadband access. The development of mixed-tenure affordable accommodation is needed in both market towns and more remote rural areas to meet existing needs and ensure that key workers can be attracted and retained. Factors such as a low-wage rural economy, the take up of right to buy of existing social housing, and pressure from commuter and second-home markets have contributed to this need.

Prior to LGR in 2009 the people and organisations involved in Housing in County Durham already had a strong track record of working together to provide leadership and the strategic steer on a Housing Vision for the area to deliver against the challenges facing these places. The current County Durham Housing Forum, our Strategic Partnership for Housing, has developed through several evolutionary stages since 2003 and published Durham's first Sub-Regional Housing Strategy in 2007 in response to the Regional Housing Strategy and in recognition of the need to coordinate our activity across the County. This Strategy pulled together the priorities developed by the District Councils in consultation with their local communities and established key objectives of supporting the regeneration of existing communities; offering a wide choice of affordable housing; investing in the existing housing stock and supporting all sections of the community especially older persons and people with additional needs. Whilst we recognise the changes to the housing market and the economy over the last two years these high level objectives remain just as relevant in the post-LGR context and have been used as a reference point in the development of this new Housing Strategy for County Durham.

At the heart of our new Housing Strategy is the '*Altogether Better Durham*' Vision of our [Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-30](#) which the Council published in April 2010. In order to be '*Altogether Better*', Durham will need to be an '*Altogether Better Place*' and '*Altogether Better for People*' and the Council and its key Partners have agreed that this will be delivered through 5 priority themes of *Altogether: Wealthier; Better for Children and Young People; Healthier; Greener and Safer*.

The Council has put housing, regeneration and economic development at the forefront of our priorities for transforming our County and creating a wealthier society. We published the new [County Durham Regeneration Statement](#) in January 2010, setting out our ambition to create sustainable places where people want to live, work, invest and visit. Our vision for regeneration and growth in the County has been articulated further through the production of a [Local Investment Plan](#) in conjunction with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) through the 'Single Conversation' process. And it is because of our commitment to the central role of Housing in the delivery of this ambition that we seized the opportunity to participate in the national '[Total Place](#)' pilot process and chose 'Housing & Regeneration' as our theme, the only pilot Authority to do so. Emerging from this Total Place work, and our challenge to Government to rationalise capital & revenue funding as well as legislative and performance management processes for Housing and Housing related services, our Council's commitment to focussing on Places is still being developed through our work on Place-Based Regeneration and participation in the national 'Capital & Assets' pathfinder programme.

‘Building Altogether Better Lives’:

A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Our new Housing Strategy *‘Building Altogether Better Lives’* reflects a step-change in the strategic vision and delivery mechanisms to meet the challenging housing, economic, social and environmental needs of our communities. The three objectives of the Strategy – *Altogether Better Housing Markets*, *Altogether Better Housing Standards* and *Altogether Better at Housing People* - are also used to frame the Council’s Housing Service Plan, supplemented with an additional objective of an *‘Altogether Better Housing Service’* in which we set out how we will improve the way we develop and deliver the Council’s Strategic Housing role in delivering the Housing Strategy.

The County Durham Housing Forum, our Strategic Housing Partnership, has agreed to adopt this *‘Building Altogether Better Lives’* Strategy as its key focus and workplan. The Forum is aligned with the County Durham Partnership’s *‘Altogether Wealthier’* theme through the County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP), ensuring an integration between employment, transport, housing and economic development at this strategic partnership level. The Forum has recognised that the Housing Strategy impacts on the other thematic areas and meetings are rotated around these themes to ensure that our Partnership work is externally focussed on delivering wider Community Strategy objectives.

The Housing Strategy has been developed to meet the challenging aspirations of our Council and its partners to build an *Altogether Better Durham*. At the heart of this aspiration is the aim to focus on economic regeneration, particularly through facilitating challenging targets for housing growth and renewal around our main economic centres of Durham City and a number of our larger towns. This preferred option is reflected in both the [Housing Strategy](#) and [Local Development Framework](#) issues & options papers that have recently been out to comprehensive public & stakeholder consultation. A summary of the feedback from this consultation process is set out in the Issues & Options Consultation Response section of this Plan (pages 7-35).

We have taken a phased and project managed approach to developing this Housing Strategy to ensure support for and ownership of the Housing Vision by our Corporate & Political Leadership as well as our key delivery Partners and the wider community of County Durham. In the first phase we established the ‘strap-line’ branding of *‘Building Altogether Better Lives’*, reflecting the new Vision of an *‘Altogether Better Durham’* as well as the 2009 Audit Commission report on the Strategic Housing Authority role: *Building Better Lives*. In order to make sense of the Vision and brand we proposed a schema of three key objectives to rationalise the complex context of strategic housing issues facing the County:

Altogether Better Housing Markets - this is essentially about the role housing plays in regeneration & growth as well as affordability and includes the following outcomes: more new housing built, with a range of housing types and tenures to meet the economic and social needs of our County; more joined-up approach to regeneration and delivery and providing more ‘additionality’ from investment

Altogether Better Housing Standards - focuses on the role that housing plays in improving standards in terms of investment in, and use of, existing stock and includes the following outcomes: more decent homes; fewer empty homes; improved management standards in the private rented sector; enforcement taken against problem landlords; warmer homes and safer homes

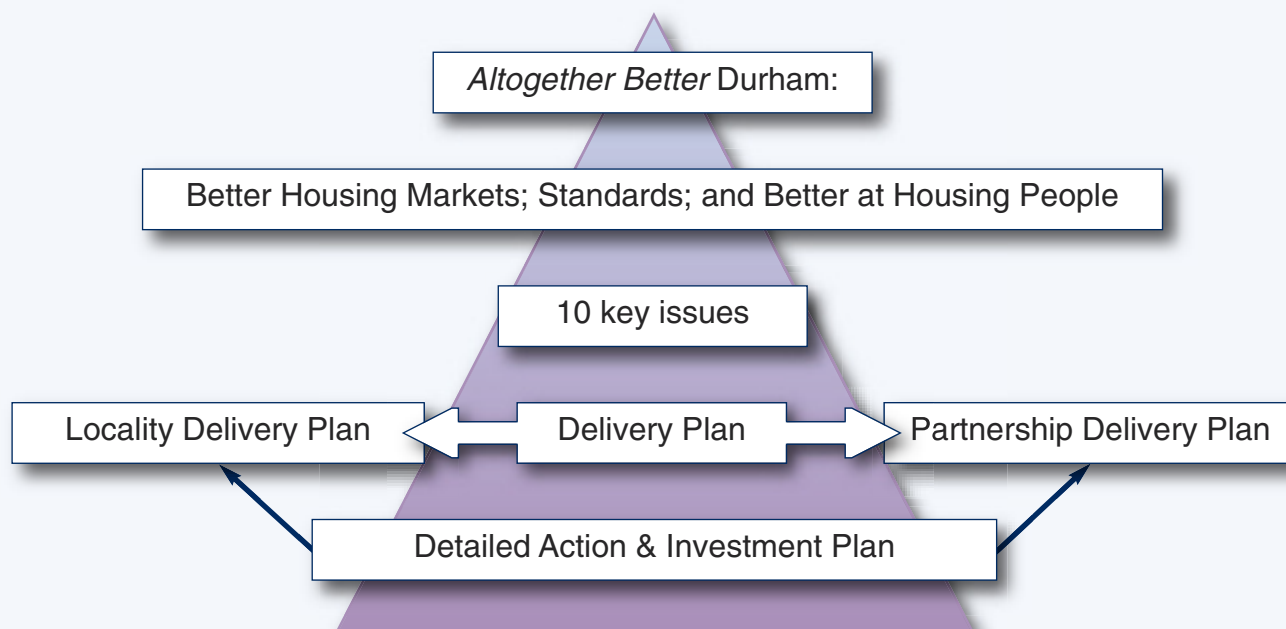
Altogether Better at Housing People - addresses the non 'bricks and mortar' elements of housing and includes outcomes that provide more and better support services for vulnerable groups such as older people, vulnerable adults & young people, gypsies and travelers, homelessness and housing options, care and support provision and the role that the provision of higher quality housing services in the public and private sectors plays in terms of wider benefits such as health, educational attainment, social, inclusion and reducing crime and antisocial behaviour.

This approach was presented to and debated with the County Durham Housing Forum, a number of its sub-groups, the County Durham Economic Partnership, the Council's Corporate Management Team, Economy & Enterprise Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet to ensure a strong sense of buy-in before embarking on a formal public consultation process.

The second phase was the production of a [Housing Strategy Issues & Options paper](#) which set out 10 key issues to be addressed to achieve these objectives and the various options available to address them. We have clearly identified why each issue is important for County Durham, what we are planning to do about it, and have invited challenge and feedback on available or alternative options for action. This phase involved extensive public and stakeholder consultation as well as reporting to the Council's Corporate & Political leadership and Scrutiny Committees.

The third phase involved the production of a Housing Strategy Action & Investment plan, essentially a compendium of all key activity by the Council and its partners to deal with these 10 issues. This is a live document that is available from the Housing Policy team by request.

The final phase of the development of the Strategy has been the production of this Housing Strategy Delivery plan. This document essentially re-frames the Action Plan into 2 perspectives: HOW we will deliver, and WHERE we will deliver, the actions required to address the issues that we have identified along with the resources and timescales required.



Issues & Options and Consultation Response

On 16th June 2010 we launched the [Housing Strategy Issues & Options Paper](#), a 90 page document that set out the 10 key issues and 4 cross-cutting issues that we believed needed to be addressed in order to achieve the objectives of *Altogether Better Housing Markets*, *Altogether Better Housing Standards*, and *Altogether Better at Housing People*:

Objectives	Issues
<i>Altogether Better Housing Markets</i>	1: Housing Growth - More Homes 2: New Affordable Housing – tackling affordability ‘hotspots’ 3: Rural Affordable Housing 4: Executive Housing 5: Better Balanced housing markets - regeneration & renewal
<i>Altogether Better Housing Standards</i>	6: Better existing homes 7: Better new homes
<i>Altogether Better at Housing People</i>	8: Better Housing Management 9: Better at Housing Vulnerable Groups 10: Better access to Affordable Housing
Cross-cutting Issues	11: Health Impact 12: Equality & Diversity 13: Social Inclusion 14: Value for Money

The consultation period ran for 8 weeks from 16th June to 24 August 2010, in parallel with the Issues & Options paper for the key planning document, the County Durham Plan, and we held a series of public drop in sessions and presentations to stakeholder organisations as well as launching an on-line consultation portal to enable as many people as possible to comment on the issues and options that we had identified.

For each of the issues we raised a series of questions, and the responses to these questions are summarised in this section of the Delivery Plan. We received over 4,000 comments from over 360 different respondents in total, and as such the following pages present a summary of the comments and our intended responses.

The summary of the responses to each issue is set out in the following pages 8 – 37, if you want to skip these and go straight to the Delivery Plans please turn to page 36 (Locality Delivery Plan) or page 67 (Partnership Delivery Plan).

Issue 1: Housing Growth - More Homes

In sections 5.2 – 5.10 (pp26-28) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need housing growth and more homes in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

Our Issues & Options papers set out the case for growth and change required to deliver a prosperous County Durham². In terms of Housing Development and Housing Growth, Government guidance advises local authorities to consider the implications of different levels of development taking place within the Core Strategy period and the Regional Spatial Strategy³ (RSS) housing requirements are acknowledged as ‘guideline figures [that] do not represent a ceiling; plans may make the case for higher figures as appropriate’.

The LDF Core Strategy Issues & Options paper considers two ‘options’ based on economic scenarios which effect the future provision of new house building:

Option A: Promoting Economic Development

This option is focused on delivering the economic growth priorities of the SCS and the Regeneration Statement. The Council believes that promoting economic development is the most effective way of building a sustainable and prosperous economy for the whole of County Durham and as such this is our preferred option.

This option, supported by an [economic business case](#), directs the majority of new development to locations that have been shown to be attractive to the market and have most chance of delivering the economic development the County needs. The Regeneration Statement and the SCS both identify Durham City as the primary location for new development in the County to enable the step change to the County’s economy that is required to bridge the gap with the economic performance of the rest of the North East and the UK.

Option B: Targeted Regeneration

This option directs the majority of new development to the more deprived parts of County Durham in order to aid their regeneration. Instead of expecting these areas to benefit from the general upturn in the County’s economic performance resulting from the directed economic development in Option A, this option would directly target those areas that have most suffered from deprivation in the past.

² [See LDF Issues & Options Paper Chapter 4: What do we need to deliver and where should it be?](#)

³ [See Regional Spatial Strategy](#)

The broad implications of OPTION A

The RSS identifies Durham City as an asset to the County and recognises that the limited scale and offer of the city centre prevents it from providing a wider sub-regional role. The Council believes that if Durham City was to become a city of regional, national and international significance that this would enhance the economic performance of the County as a whole. In order to do this it would need a critical mass of population, employment and visitors to build on its existing assets and a housing stock that complements economic growth and provides a mixture of housing for its population whilst meeting new demands.

It would not be possible or desirable to concentrate all future growth in Durham City. Therefore other towns need to be identified that will complement this growth and contribute to the regeneration of the County as a whole. In order to ensure the delivery of this growth it would seem sensible to direct it to those locations that have been attractive to the development industry in the past. These are the towns that have attracted more development and have therefore been more successful in regeneration than others. Following an assessment of house building and economic and retail performance it is considered that the towns that have been most successful in terms of regeneration and economic development, in addition to Durham City, are:

- Chester-le-Street
- Consett
- Seaham
- Bishop Auckland
- Barnard Castle

Whilst Durham City and the other priority towns will be the focus for this approach the other areas of the County must also be allowed to experience growth and prosperity. This will be both from benefiting from the overall uplift to the County resulting from the increased economic activity and from their own share of new development.

To reflect Durham City's central importance to Option A, the LDF issues & option paper proposes that it initially receives the largest share of the housing requirement. The towns of Chester-le-Street, Consett, Seaham, Bishop Auckland and Barnard Castle all receive a significant share. The rest of the requirement is distributed equally between the remaining towns and delivery areas. This distribution has then been adjusted to reflect constraints that would prevent delivery.

In order to give some flexibility in later periods of the Plan our issues & options papers proposed to distribute the first 15 years of the total housing requirement. The distribution by town and delivery area is given in the table below.

Option A -

Distribution of Housing Requirement 2012 to 2030

Main Town/ Delivery Area	Total	Net Housing Requirement
Durham City		5050
Remainder of Central Durham		1590
Chester-le-Street		1590
Consett		3180
Peterlee		1450
Seaham		2030
Stanley		1450
Remainder of North and East Durham		1300
Bishop Auckland		3180
Crook		1450
Newton Aycliffe		1450
Sildon		1450
Spennymoor		1450
Remainder of South Durham		1300
Barnard Castle		725
Remainder of West Durham		290
Total		28935

Option A - Housing Requirement by Delivery Area

For further detail of how the number of new housing units developed in each of these main settlements and areas are proposed under option A please see issues 4a – 4j from the LDF Issues & Options Paper⁴.

The broad implications of Option B

The direction of the majority of new development to the more deprived parts of County Durham in order to aid their regeneration would, in essence, require an emphasis on development in the towns of Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee, Spennymoor, Stanley and Sildon. The rest of the requirement is then distributed equally between the remaining towns and delivery areas. This distribution has been adjusted to reflect constraints that would prevent delivery. The housing distribution from the Growth Point, which allocates 100 houses to Peterlee, 400 to Bishop Auckland, 140 to Newton Aycliffe, 1260 to Spennymoor and 300 to the rest of South Durham, is included. The final distribution by town and delivery area is given in the table below.

⁴ [LDF Issues and Options Paper](#)

Option B -

Distribution of Housing Requirement 2012 to 2030

Main Town/ Delivery Area	Total Housing Requirement
Durham City	1940
Remainder of Central Durham	1550
Chester-le-Street	1420
Consett	1420
Peterlee	2420
Seaham	1420
Stanley	2840
Remainder of North and East Durham	1550
Bishop Auckland	1820
Crook	1550
Newton Aycliffe	2980
Shildon	1550
Spennymoor	3330
Remainder of South Durham	1850
Barnard Castle	775
Remainder of West Durham	520
Total	28,930

Option B - Housing Requirement by Delivery Area

For further detail of how the number of new housing units developed in each of these main settlements and areas are proposed under option A please see issues 5a – 5j from the LDF Issues & Options Paper⁵.

Your comments:

- Overall mixture of support across options A (Promoting Economic Development), B (Targeted Regeneration), C (A combination of the two).
- The chosen approach should be based on the consideration and robust evidence of local needs, sustainability, deliverability, environmental impact, views of the local communities and infrastructure requirements of particular settlements.
- Flexibility is required to capitalise on market opportunity and respond to the current economic circumstance and climate of reduced public resources.
- Consideration needs to be given to particular locations that aren't sustainable and existing schemes should be protected under the new strategy.
- Other issues raised included taking a 'Total Place' approach, consideration of the impact of Durham University on the housing offer within Durham City; and ensuring the right mix and location of housing to meet the needs of the whole community.

Our response:

- As part of the overall approach of the County Durham Housing Strategy, there is an emphasis placed on taking forward an area based approach in conjunction with our partners.
- The Housing Service will link closely with Planning to take forward the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and develop settlement profiles to ensure a robust evidence base and effective targeting of resources which takes account of current economic conditions.
- As part of the development of the settlement profiles consideration will be given to the sustainability of individual towns and villages in County Durham.
- Existing schemes will be taken into account when considering the future approach.
- The settlement profiles will consider and set out the housing needs of each settlement and will recommend the right mix and location of housing to meet that need.

Issue 2: New Affordable Housing

In sections 5.24 – 5.28 (pp34-35) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need new affordable housing in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

Actual delivery of new affordable housing units has been positive over recent times (despite the overall slow-down in the number of houses being built) rising from 12% of total completions in 2008/9 (170 units of affordable housing) to 19% of total completions in 2009/10 (223 units of affordable housing), although this was still below our 2009/10 target of 300 new units and almost half that of the 2008 SHMA low target of 551 units per annum.

Recognising the fact that the housing market has changed substantially since the 2008 SHMA was completed, the methodology and inputs are currently being reviewed by Planning and Housing Officers and a revised affordable housing target is expected by July 2010.

The 2008 SHMA also recommended that 80% of affordable housing should be social rented and 20% intermediate housing. While the reasoning behind this was sound – providing a wider range of ‘affordable’ housing solutions than the traditional 100% social rented provision option – the reality of the recent housing market situation and particularly the lack of availability of mortgages for first time and low-income buyers has resulted in a high proportion of intermediate housing schemes (particularly Low Cost Home Ownership) being ‘converted’ back to social rented properties.

As well as identifying the need for affordable housing we must also determine whether it can be delivered. To this end we have recently embarked on the development of a Housing Viability model which will be used to inform future policy. It will determine what proportion of new housing can be ‘affordable’ on a site by site basis without making development inviable. This is will be tested across the County as what is viable in different areas is likely to vary as land values and development conditions change. Consultation on the conclusions of the Housing Viability Study will be undertaken to inform the affordable housing policies in later versions of the Core Strategy.

Your comments:

- Overall agreement to the principle of a countywide target of affordable housing with specific targets for individual sites based on an Economic Viability Study and local affordability/housing market intelligence.
- There is no clear majority view regarding what the overall target should be however comments included that when setting the target consideration needs to be given to:
 - o local levels of demand and future need based on robust evidence
 - o house prices and projected low levels of growth to ensure that it does not discourage development
 - o setting targets based on the four delivery areas

continued

- o flexible targets that would enable local need to be addressed and enable adjustment depending on the development to maximise the number of affordable units from high value sites i.e. where green belt land must be used a higher percentage should be applied in recognition of the release of high value land.
- The target should not only consider the number of affordable units but also the type and size to ensure there is an appropriate mix of new housing development.
- General support for a mixed provision of the type of affordable homes (across social housing, intermediate housing and low cost market housing) as this would offer the range of choice required to meet current demand and it ensure a more sustainable mix of homes on new developments.
- In relation to intermediate housing the majority of support was for intermediate rent between social rent and market rent and other forms of intermediate rental options, over 'rent to buy' schemes.
- It is important that the range and mix of affordable housing is based on robust evidence of current demand and future need at a local level.
- To maximise provision of new affordable housing the Council should give consideration to making greater use of its assets through land sales at less than market value.
- Explore possible models to facilitate the provision of affordable housing such as a local regeneration companies, community land trusts, development partnerships etc.

Our response:

- The Housing Service will work closely with Planning to develop a County wide Affordable Housing Policy based on the Economic Viability Study.
- The Economic Viability Study will take into consideration local levels of demand and future need, current house prices and future projected growth; and will result in the ability to set flexible targets on a site by site basis.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan contains specific actions to identify mechanisms for maximizing the levels of affordable housing achieved on particular sites for example in rural areas or where land value is high.
- The Economic Viability Study will consider the mix and type of affordable housing required and the Housing Service will work closely with Planning to implement this as a site by site consideration.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes an action to identify the need (based on evidence) for intermediate housing products and increase the availability of the range of those products.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan looks to establish public/private partnerships and joint ventures as an alternative to traditional methods of land disposal.
- The Housing Service will work corporately to progress a strategy for the release of land to secure community benefits as well as receipts.

Issue 3: Rural Affordable Housing

In sections 5.33-5.37 (pp37-38) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need to address rural affordable housing issues in County Durham.

Your comments:

- Overall majority support that the best way of securing affordable housing within rural areas is through a rural exceptions policy across the whole of west Durham, although it was suggested that this could be made on a case by case approach based on an Economic Viability Assessment.
- The approach of community ownership models which utilise local authority land should be explored.
- Consideration should be given to the varying characteristics of rural settlements as these have implication for the delivery of rural affordable housing i.e. 'smaller' housing estates could be of a considerable size relative to the village they are located in.
- There is a need to ensure that rural housing is located where there are opportunities to live and work in an area without the need to commute huge distances because of the valuable contribution rural areas can make to the economy and culture of the region; and where there is infrastructure to ensure developments are sustainable.

Our response:

- The Economic Viability Study will take into consideration housing needs in rural areas and will help to deliver increased levels of affordable housing through the use of a rural exception policy.
- The Economic Viability Study will take into consideration the characteristics of the existing site proposed for affordable housing including the long term sustainability of an area and existing infrastructure.
- The Action and Investment Plan continues to support the Teesdale and West Durham Land Trust.

Issue 4: Executive Housing

In sections 5.39 – 5.40 (p39) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need more Executive Homes in County Durham.

Your comments:

- Support for the target of 1% of total new housing to be executive housing, although further consideration should be given to ensure the target is based on need to balance supply and demand (i.e. should the target be a figure rather than a percentage).
- There is a risk that certain communities become commuter towns to larger towns / cities outside of the County i.e. Tyne and Wear which can cause a feeling of resentment from local people and therefore impact on social cohesion.
- Consideration should be given to the design, build and setting of executive housing to ensure high quality as a distinctive selling point to attract inward investment.
- Support for executive housing to be dispersed over a larger number of locations which meet sustainability criteria as although the approach to locate executive housing in proximity to high quality employment sites has a clear rationale, consideration also need to be given to the proximity of other infrastructure such as good quality schools, transport, shops and services.

Our response:

- The Economic Viability Study will take into consideration the need for executive housing and will assist in identifying the levels of provision required taking into consideration local levels of demand and future need, current house prices and future projected growth.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes an action which will result in the identification and publication of strategic sites for the development of executive housing.
- The Housing Service will work closely with Planning, Economic Development and other stakeholders to ensure full consideration is given to the proximity of other infrastructure when identifying the location of executive housing.

Issue 5: Better Balanced housing markets - regeneration & renewal

In sections 5.43 – 5.48 (pp41-42) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we should use regeneration and renewal to deliver a better balanced housing market in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

The Durham Coalfields Housing Market Renewal Partnership, working with the former Government Agency English Partnerships and Jacobs Babbie Consultants, commissioned a Coalfield Settlement Study⁶. A number of settlements were identified as having old, obsolete housing stock with neighbourhoods declining and a need to re-balance the housing offer. A series of 'Area Development Frameworks', or regeneration plans, for 13 key settlements where substantial regeneration and housing market renewal activity were considered a priority. These settlements included:

- Easington Colliery
- Dawdon, Seaham
- Coundon
- Dean Bank
- Ferryhill Station
- Sacriston
- Chilton West
- Craghead
- New Kyo/Quaking Houses
- Bowburn

Existing priorities for regeneration and renewal activity included within the Council's Renewal & Improvement Team work plan and Capital Programme include Easington Colliery, Sedgefield, Thornley & Wheatley Hill, Coundon and Craghead with plans and projects ongoing in these areas to address local issues of low demand and abandonment of housing. The Local Investment Plan recently agreed by the Council and Homes & Communities Agency has set out the following priorities for housing renewal and regeneration activity:

Central Durham: Establish a programme of demolition and development in Esh Winning and partial demolition and new build in Sherburn Road.

North and East Durham: Commence clearance in Easington Colliery, Dawdon and South Stanley.

South Durham: Housing clearance at Dean Bank, Chilton and Coundon

West Durham: No current priorities for housing renewal activity

The Locality Delivery Plan set out on pages 38-67 contains more detail on this activity at a locality level

As part of the work on the LDF Issues & Options paper we have developed a 'Settlement Sustainability Assessment' through which we have attempted to capture the somewhat ethereal concept of 'settlement sustainability' into a more 'objective' review of our larger settlements, comparing them against a set of criteria that reflect the key concepts behind 'sustainable communities': health facilities; schools; shopping facilities; Post Offices; Pubs; built sports facilities; community centres; industrial estates; distances to larger towns; and public transport services.

The methodology for this assessment is used to allocate a score for each settlement that has enabled clustering into a series of groups or : small villages with limited or no facilities (<25 points); villages with access to some facilities (25-49 points); villages with access to more facilities (50-69 points); larger villages and small towns (70-89 points); and main towns (>90 points). While the absolute scores are somewhat arbitrary, and remain subject to consultation, they do provide a useful indication of relative sustainability of each settlement and should therefore be used to guide future housing renewal investment decisions.

As a final consideration, the future levels of public sector grant funding to housing renewal activity is uncertain and likely to reduce in the short-medium term. The 2010/11 allocation of Regional Single Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) funding for this work was reduced by 10.3% from £3,874,750 to £3,474,000 at the end of 2009/10, and future cuts are likely. To this end, the Council needs to consider its options for future housing market renewal activity, and where it should target it's (potentially dwindling) resources.

Your comments:

- Overall preference for Option B, 'Review previous priorities with a view to targeting settlements that are relatively sustainable through the settlement sustainability assessment' e.g. identified Growth Points of Bishop Auckland, Peterlee and Spennymoor. People in deprived areas need something to aim for to break the welfare dependency culture e.g. apprenticeships, education, training, health services or broadband; especially in rural areas to encourage business growth.
- Concerns that the sustainability assessment does not differentiate settlements on anything other than size; towns and villages could be scored similarly but be very different in reality. A main town, scored highly due to its high population, could mask areas of unsustainability (low demand) within it.
- Crude to rate areas as low demand if there are few or no local facilities; some areas only contain housing, with no facilities, but the demand for these is huge.
- Additional housing is good but need infrastructure alongside; town centres need regenerating with new shops and jobs to attract people to live in the area.
- Regarding renewal activity, it's important to consider the viability of schemes e.g. the opposition and potential cost of Compulsory Purchase Orders, the funding streams that will be available and how s106 monies could be used for regeneration.
- Document talks about clearance but there is very little on 'renewal'; situations where clearances have started but subsequently stopped due to lack of funds. Existing schemes should be protected under the new strategy.
- Market renewal activity needs to take account of property types as well as demand and the different needs of areas.
- Engagement with Registered Providers and private sector house builders via a regeneration partnership may allow opportunities to develop innovative solutions to housing market renewal by taking a 'Total Place' approach.

Our response:

- The Housing Service will work closely with Planning to further develop the sustainability assessment and settlement profiles.
- Existing schemes will be taken into account when considering the future approach.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan contains specific actions to take forward the previous legacy schemes and the Private Sector Housing Strategy, which is currently in development and will be completed in November 2010 will further consider and set out the approach to future housing market renewal; taking into consideration the current economic climate regarding public funding.

Issue 6: Better Existing Homes

In sections 5.58-5.74 (pp45-47) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need better existing homes in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

Decent Homes

Through our work on the 2010 Total Place⁷ pilot looking at 'Housing & Regeneration' we have mapped all 48,000 social rented properties across County Durham, identifying 32 different 'Registered Providers' of this housing offer (Housing Associations, Arms Length Management Organisations, the Council's Housing Department, and other social housing landlords). We are currently gathering information on the condition of this stock, and aim to be able to publish the plans and timescales to bring these homes up to the 'Decent Homes' standard by December 2010.

As part of the Total Place work we have identified a need to consider the rationalisation of Registered Providers as a potential option for increasing investment into social housing stock in County Durham⁸.

Alongside the consideration of social housing provision, the Council has also started work on commissioning a formal 'Stock Options Appraisal' to consider the options for the future provision of Housing Management and Investment services to the Council's 19,000 rented properties. We are working closely with the three existing managing agents, East Durham Homes, Dale & valley Homes, and Durham City Homes on this work and intend to come to a conclusion in early summer 2011.

In April 2010 the Council adopted a new Financial Assistance Policy⁹ which sets out the Council's approach to providing financial assistance to the owners and tenants of private sector housing. The Policy has been produced to reflect the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. This Order repealed much of the existing prescriptive legislation governing the provision of grants and replaced it with a more general power to provide a range of forms of assistance.

Arrangements to deliver financial assistance products have been developed in a method that is consistent others across the north east region. The North East Regional Loan Partnership (consisting of representatives of each of the sub-regions in the North East, Government Office for the North East, North East Assembly and Foundations, the Co-ordinating Body for Home Improvement Agencies) is currently considering how financial assistance can be delivered across the region in a way that will take advantage of scale, to facilitate the increased recycling and reinvestment of funds into remedying poor housing conditions.

⁷ [Total Place Initiative](#)

⁸ [Total Place Business Case: Rationalising across Social Housing Providers](#)

⁹ [County Durham Financial Assistance Policy](#)

Through effective joint delivery across the region, and the building of a worthy track record of the provision of loans assistance, it is envisaged that the Policy will become increasingly self-sustaining through the attraction of private finance.

The policy offers a range of assistance with the key objectives of,

- Improving and maintaining healthy living conditions, specifically helping homeowners on limited incomes to repair improve or adapt their homes and so facilitate independent living.
- Contributing to the regeneration of areas suffering from market vulnerability and to tackle poor housing conditions where there may be neighbourhood decline.
- Encouraging homeowners to undertake works that will make their homes more energy efficient and to reduce the number of people affected by fuel poverty.

In order to drive up standards in the private sector stock the Council work in partnership with the local Home Improvement Agencies to provide a range of advice and guidance and encouragement to homeowners to utilise their own funds to improve their homes and quality of life.

The financial assistance policy also provides funding in the form of Mandatory Disabled Facilities grants along with discretionary funding to adapt properties for people who find themselves living in a disabling environment.

The Policy offers assistance to tackle low confidence in an area by enabling problematic empties to be brought up to the decent homes standard and brought back into use; to encourage tenure change in areas where the number of rented properties is disproportionately high and where it is linked to poor perception of the area provision may be given to first time buyers; and to assist in the councils plans for property clearance to assist to relocate to a more suitable home.

Empty Homes

The Council's approach to empty homes in the private sector is to investigate and deal with those that have been empty for more than six months. There are many reasons why homes are empty and not all empty homes are problem homes or can be dealt with. Some will be on the market for sale, some subject to probate, others being repaired and in some cases the owner is absent from the property for good reasons.

Not all properties can be brought back into use. Some of the worst ones will be structurally unsound and should be demolished. Other properties may be in areas where expenditure on a property is not value for money as it is in an area where people do not want to live and/or repairs will cost too much.

Working with the Environmental Health Service we have produced an 'enforcement protocol' to make sure that the issues associated with empty homes such as rubbish, dilapidation, access etc. are addressed. We will set targets and monitor performance relating to actions taken on empty homes and numbers brought back into use.

Adaptations

The Countywide Review of Older Persons Accommodation & Support Services commissioned by the Council and Primary Care Trust in February 2010 will provide an evidence base for planning future accommodation and support service provision and is likely to indicate a need to review and improve the strategy and policies for adaptations and technological improvements to existing residential property.

The 2010 County Durham Total Place pilot recognised that social care and the housing parts of the existing aids & adaptations system needed to connect better with each other, and concluded with a preferred option of redesigning the system in order to remove injustice and improve the outcomes for clients¹⁰.

Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty

There are a number of initiatives in place to tackle fuel poverty some examples include Durham County Council's Warm Homes Campaign which has 700 local community venues promoting the full range of energy conservation grants and schemes currently available to residents, County Durham Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership which provides the coordination mechanism for countywide partnership working, the 2009/10 Warm Front report of which Durham County Council are the leading North East Authority having brought over £6.2million of funding into County Durham with over 5500 homes assisted and the 2009/10 Go Warm Report which involved the assessment of 101, 000 private homes and 11, 000 homes insulated using £2.95 million funding from utilities/owner occupiers.

Your comments:

- General support for aligning the Financial Assistance Policy with the preferred approach chosen under issue 1, i.e. option A promoting economic development, option B targeted regeneration or option C a combination of both.
- Empty properties should be prioritized by taking into consideration the condition of the property first, the need and demand for housing within an area, other regeneration activity within the area and the sustainability of that area; considering each on a case by case basis.
- A range of measures should be used in relation to empty properties including taking enforcement action, Compulsory Purchase Orders and working with Registered Providers and Housing Solution to develop other housing options.
- In relation to the climate change agenda, there was general support that the Housing Strategy should include measures to both tackle fuel poverty and energy efficiency.

Our response:

- The Private Sector Housing Strategy, currently in development and due for completion in November 2010, will consider and set out the future approach to the Financial Assistance Policy.
- The Council's Renewal and Improvement and Housing Solutions Teams are working closely together to identify and progress bringing back into use empty properties utilizing the Durham Key Options Scheme.
- When prioritizing bringing back empty properties into use, the Housing Service will consider the sustainability of an area to ensure resources are targeted effectively to achieve maximum impact; working with partners and using legislative powers where appropriate.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan contains a specific action to develop a County wide Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty Action Plan.

Issue 7: Better New Homes

In sections 5.92-5.99 (pp52-54) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need better new homes in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

The LDF Core Strategy will need to be ambitious in setting out a path to ensure that the carbon emissions from new development contributes to the Council's overall carbon reduction target. The Development Management DPD will focus on specific targets for new development and the means of bringing about significant improvements in energy and environmental performance.

New homes built with public sector funding through the Homes and Communities Agency is already required to meet or exceed 'Code 4' standards, but the code is currently voluntary in the private sector. We eagerly await the Government response to the recent code for sustainable homes consultation and any resulting targets for adoption of the relevant standards for new house building.

Climate Change Adaptation

As well as the Code for Sustainable Homes, consideration is also currently being given to how homes built to the BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method)¹¹ standard will have resilience built into them through the adoption of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) or reduced hard standing, etc..

Delivering Sustainable Development

We are currently proposing to include a broad strategic policy on Delivering Sustainable Development which will draw together environmental, social and economic issues into one over arching policy, which will then provide the context and justification for more detailed guidance in other County Durham Plan documents such as the Development Management Development Plan Document and the [Sustainable Design Planning Document](#). The purpose of the policy will be to improve the urban design and sustainability of new development in County Durham it will cover the following issues:

- Concentrating the majority of development within urban areas as set out in the settlement hierarchy and the 'option A' approach to economic development;
- Locating development to sites well served by all modes of transport, particularly walking, cycling and public transport;
- Linking development to the appropriate provision of infrastructure, including green infrastructure;
- Linking development to the appropriate provision of educational, health and other social facilities and services;
- Promotion of appropriate mix-used development, and the linking of housing and employment development

- The creation of well balanced and mixed residential communities;
- High quality, sustainable and locally distinctive design, including community safety considerations;
- Mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change/extreme weather on new development; and
- Protection and enhancement of the natural environment, including improving biodiversity from the landscape context of new development.

As well as overall targets, an additional consideration will be the 'extra-over' costs associated with the enhanced quality standards and that the way that this may effect the viability of development in County Durham. As an example a recent Government evaluation of the costs of meeting the various Code for Sustainable Homes standards¹² suggests the following indicative 'extra over' costs compared to the current baseline new build standards:

House Type	Code Level 3	Code Level 4	Code Level 6
Flat	£2,088	£5,281	£27,465
Semidetached	£2,645	£7,793	£36,735

Costs of meeting the various Code for Sustainable Homes standards

Source: Code for Sustainable Homes: A Cost Review (CLG 2010)

Any additional costs associated with this higher standard may result in competition against other 'planning gain' priorities such as affordable housing, play provision, and other community infrastructure or facilities.

¹² ([Department for Communities & Local Government, 2010](#))

Your comments:

- Slightly more respondents were in favour of option A, to apply the Lifetimes Homes standard to all new social housing by 2011 and private sector housing by 2013.
- Option A seen as having the potential to address cramped housing standards in the private sector, though conditions exist in special cases e.g. buildings with 10 or more flats.
- The effect on land values from Option B, may see some land owners deciding not to release their land in the short term.
- Lifetimes Homes should be delivered wherever feasible, although be mindful that the standard can drive up building costs and may affect the viability of a scheme. Provide grants to help social housing achieve the 'Barrier Free' standard, which is lower than Lifetime Homes Standard but achievable.
- The recent announcement that social tenancies may not be for life may affect the viability and contradicts the concept of building Lifetime Homes.
- In relation to planning gain on new housing sites, overall addressing climate change, making homes more sustainable and higher quality design were seen as the most important; followed by improving open spaces/recreational facilities and affordable housing.
- Assessment of new housing sites should be on a case by case basis, based on local need.
- Improved accessibility is of paramount importance to the success of sustainable housing opportunities. New roads should be provided as a last resort and improvements to sustainable access / public transport must be taken into account at the earliest stage of considering proposals.
- In city centre/city fringe locations, car sharing clubs should be part of s106 obligations.
- Monitor the Government's review of zero carbon homes, due to start in December 2010 and the new planning policy from April 2012.
- Consider Warm Front's Carbon Emissions Reduction Target.
- Major activity in the North East to ensure the region is the first to have a comprehensive electric vehicle charging infrastructure in place; document should have a reference to 'smart grids'; Government intends for every home in the country to be offered a smart meter before 2020. Housing developments with smart grids can be rolled out over the next 5 years.

Our response:

- The Housing Service will work closely with Planning to include provisions for specific conditions within Planning Policy in relation to Lifetime Homes, Building for Life, carbon emissions, homes for older people and sustainability.
- The other issues raised through the Housing Strategy and consultation will be discussed and taken forward by the Housing and Regeneration Partnership and Private Housebuilders Forum, in relation to specific implications of these standards on new schemes.

Issue 8: Better Housing Management

In sections 5.106–5.110 (pp56 - 59) and 5.113-5.114 (p60) of the [Issues & Options](#) Paper we set out the reasons why we believe that we need better housing management in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

Our Total Place Business Case for Rationalisation of Social Housing providers¹³ sets out our case for improving the management of this social housing stock where this complexity of provision results in poorer services to tenants at higher costs. economies of scale, duplicating infrastructure and fracturing ‘line of sight’ between RPs and other essential local service provision.

As part of the TSA’s Neighbourhood and Community standard Registered Providers are expected to demonstrate *“meaningful cooperation with Local Strategic Partnerships and the strategic housing function of local authorities”*¹⁴ and the proposals set out in our Total Place rationalisation report which have already been endorsed by the County Durham Housing Forum:

- Proposals to carry out a stock options appraisal review for the Council’s 19,000 homes, subsequently approved by the Council’s Cabinet in May 2010
- establishing and publicising a ‘Durham Benchmarking Club’ for social tenants, linked to the countywide Choice Based Lettings scheme
- identify priority area(s) where rationalisation of management functions may be of benefit and commission a feasibility study(s) to scope the potential

Following the recommendations set out in the Rugg Review, the Council is promoting professionalism in the private rented sector by providing advice and guidance to landlords operating across County Durham and taking enforcement action against poor quality Landlords where necessary.

There are three pilot Selective Licensing schemes in operation in County Durham, in Sedgefield and Easington. These Selective Licensing schemes involve the Council designating an area suffering from problems caused by private rented properties and requiring all Private Landlords operating in that area to apply to the Council for a license, including them passing a ‘fit and proper person’ test and also having their properties inspected for physical standards and amenities. The first scheme was introduced in Sedgefield in 2008 and we will be carrying out a full review of the effectiveness of the scheme and if it is proved to have been highly effective we will seek to replicate.

¹³ [See Total Place Business Case: Rationalising across Social Housing Providers](#)

¹⁴ [TSA Neighbourhood and Community Standard](#)

Your comments:

- Further discussion required regarding the definition, intentions and expected outcomes from rationalisation.
- One of the main drivers for rationalisation should be greater level of effectiveness (sustainability and customer outcomes); ensuring a shared standard of service delivery.
- General support for a formal Stock Options Appraisal of the Durham County Council Housing stock.
- Greater co-ordination required between Registered Providers to achieve a consistent policy approach in key service areas and service standards. This will help to provide a more cohesive service offer across the County and improve the quality of housing management standards.
- Benchmarking of services across providers (which involves tenants) would provide a platform to compare performance and standards; and enable Registered Providers to work together to share good practice.
- Further work is required to explore the contribution Registered Providers can make to agendas outside of their core business for example 'worklessness'.
- Greater awareness required by staff regarding the issues faced by vulnerable people, how these can be resolved in terms of access to services and the role housing managers have to play in this.
- General support for the approach of private landlord accreditation schemes and selective licensing but concern raised regarding the challenges associated with this in terms of being able to effectively engage and attract reluctant landlord.
- To be effective accreditation schemes and selective licensing needs to be backed up by appropriate and effective use of local authority powers where private landlords fail to meet their responsibilities; and this requires commitment and resources across a number of Council departments.
- Consideration needs to be given as to how issues of ASB will be tackled including the housing options of people with a history of ASB. This needs to be addressed through a joined up approach across all tenures in conjunction with the relevant organisations, private landlords (in terms of education and support) and communities.

Our response:

- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes specific actions to take forward a stock options appraisal of the Council's retained 19,000 housing units as the first stage of stock rationalization.
- The Housing Service will work closely with providers to undertake a review of 'added value' services to promote sharing and expansion of good practice. This will be reported to the County Durham Housing Forum by March 2011 and is included in the action plan for the Social Housing Group on page 99 of this Delivery Plan
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes specific actions to roll out a programme of training by the Housing Solutions Team regarding the advice and services available to vulnerable groups.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan highlights the need to improve housing management standards within the private rented sector and the Private Sector Housing Strategy, currently in development, will set out in more detail the approach to be taken to address this issue.
- Durham County Council, with its partners, are currently developing an ASB Strategy. The County Durham Housing Forum has contributed to the development of this strategy and will work closely with the ASB Subgroup to identify the relevant actions required to tackle issues of ASB in relation to 'housing'.



Issue 9: Better at Housing Vulnerable Groups

In sections 5.118-5.134 (pp61-65) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need to get better at housing vulnerable groups in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

Older People

The emerging findings of the current [Review of Older Persons Accommodation and Support Services](#) point to a range of issues to be addressed and these are currently subject to public consultation which ends on 15th October 2010, with a view of incorporation into the overall Housing Strategy Action & Investment Plan.

The 2010 Joint Commissioning Strategy sets out some health & support priorities in the meantime, with Housing related issues including:

- Undertaking reviews of Handyperson, Telecare and Community Alarm services in County Durham
- Gaining a better understanding of the needs of older prisoners & ex-offenders, older people with alcohol dependency and older people from the Gypsy, Roma & Travelling community
- Concluding the review of Older Persons accommodation and support services
- Concluding the review of Council Residential Care Home provision
- Review of Falls & Osteoporosis Services (links to Aids & Adaptations/DFG processes in Housing)

Adults with Learning Disabilities

The key priorities for housing and support provision set out in the JSNA and Joint Commissioning Strategy are:

- Resettlement of people currently in residential care
- Increasing the amount of emergency accommodation & support available to avoid the use of residential & nursing care use
- Expanding the range of housing options available to adults with learning disabilities and improve access to good quality housing options advice
- Increase the availability of floating support to enable people to continue to live independently

Older People with Mental Health conditions

The 2009 Joint Commission Strategy for Older People sets out a number of housing related issues to be addressed in County Durham:

- Developing extra care housing to delay or prevent admission to hospital
- Develop & integrate technology into care packages (eg Telecare & Telehealth)
- Extend floating support services to enable people to live in their own home

Adults with Mental Health Needs

The key housing-related priorities within the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Adults with Mental Health needs¹⁵ are:

- the need to work with hospitals on improved discharge pathways to ensure that people with severe mental health issues are provided with appropriate housing and support services
- tackling exclusion caused as a result of poor access to appropriate and affordable housing
- develop a housing & accommodation strategy for adults with mental health needs by April 2011

The County Durham Homelessness Strategy, currently being reviewed by the Homelessness Action Partnership (HAP) identifies the links between homelessness and mental health and includes key actions to address this including the development of a Vulnerable Adults Protocol. The Protocol aims to address the support and accommodation needs of vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes.

Young Single Homeless People

The 2010 Homelessness Strategy action plan sets out the following key priorities for preventing homelessness in young people:

- Continue to support the countywide 'Support to Talk' Family Mediation Service available to young people estranged or at risk of estrangement from their families.
- Review current provision of Family Mediation to assess the need to engage with younger age group (under 16s).
- Continue to enable the multi-agency Young People's Joint Protocol for 16/17 years olds

Domestic Abuse

The Safe Durham Domestic Abuse Strategy¹⁶ sets out a priority of providing consistent Housing Advice & Accommodation Services for individuals and families fleeing domestic abuse. The 2010 Homelessness Strategy action plan includes the following priorities:

- Continued roll out of the countywide cross-tenure target hardening 'Sanctuary Schemes' for anyone at risk of violence or harassment where homelessness is threatened
- Working with partnership organisations to develop perpetrator programmes to enable perpetrators to change behaviour.
- Work in partnership with organisations to deliver the 'Freedom Programme' to victims of domestic violence.
- Work with landlords to offer alternative housing to perpetrators to enable victims to remain in their home.
- Develop safe houses and partnership responses to enable victims to remain at home or access suitable alternative accommodation.

¹⁵ ([NHS County Durham, 2009](#))

¹⁶ ([Durham County Council, 2008](#))

Young/Teenage Parents

The Council has recently secured Homes & Communities Agency funding to develop another Young Parents accommodation scheme in Durham City, in conjunction with Fabric Housing Group. This scheme of 9 two bedroom apartments with communal areas for management, training, laundry, staff sleepover etc will be complemented by a number of family 'general needs' houses comprising with a mix of social rent and intermediate rent. Work is ongoing to locate a suitable site for a similar scheme in south Durham.

Offenders

Continuing our good work on innovation in dealing with housing and support issues for Offenders, the Council's Housing Solutions team has seconded a member of staff to the County Durham Offender Management Service to foster better working relationships and develop housing & support pathways for Priority & Prolific Offenders.

The Housing Solutions service also continues to provide access to the Bond Guarantee Scheme which can remove the barrier to private rented accommodation for offenders unable to accumulate a rent bond payment themselves.

Care Leavers

The County Durham CLASP is currently being refreshed and will be published in June 2010. As well as continuation of the protocol there are a number of additional housing priorities for Care Leavers that need to be taken into consideration:

- Increasing access to temporary accommodation & 'crash pads' to prevent Care Leavers from presenting as homeless if they experience a housing crisis
- Increased numbers of supported accommodation units where Care Leavers can receive support to gain the skills necessary to access and maintain training, jobs and housing
- Floating support services to enable Care Leavers to maintain some level of independence in their homes while receiving support

Gypsy, Roma & Travelers

The Council has established a Gypsy, Roma & Traveler Executive Group comprising senior Council, Health, Housing & Police representatives with a Sub-group dedicated to implementing the key recommendations of the 2009 action plan. The group is currently refreshing the action plan, and has recently appointed consultants to complete a Health Needs Assessment as well as an Accommodation Assessment that will establish numbers and locations for future site provision. A Capital programme for refurbishment of existing sites is underway, with the first site completed in 2009, a second currently underway and a forward programme for the 4 remaining sites subject to identification of capital funding. The Council's Traveler Liaison Service has also put in place a Training programme, being taken forward by the Sub-Group.

Your comments:

- Given the current financial climate consideration needs to be given to the future funding of support services currently funded by Supporting People and what approach will be taken to prioritise which service will be supported in the future.
- When identifying the location of new accommodation across all vulnerable groups, consideration should be given to ensure that they are located within the proximity of other service users; transport links and key services and facilities to avoid social isolation which can increase vulnerability.
- Further work is required regarding financial inclusion to ensure there is adequate advice and support available to vulnerable groups and the general population to build financial awareness and capacity. This should include the provision of advice on training and potential employment opportunities; and the approach taken across organisations to debt recovery and the knock on effect this can have of leading to an increase in rent arrears. This is particularly pertinent in the current financial climate and changes to the benefits system.
- Concerns raised regarding the operation of Durham Key Options and the barriers caused by this in terms of complicated forms, emphasis on access to information via the internet and use of Band F. Possible suggested solutions included extension of outreach work, raising awareness and understanding of the scheme amongst support agencies through shadowing and extensive publicity of the scheme.
- Large number of comments highlighting the need to ensure there is effective advice and support available to assist vulnerable groups in relation to all aspect of housing related support from advice and assistance on completing forms to maintaining a tenancy and independent living skills. Consideration needs to be given to the type of advice and support which should be offered and also the details of how it will be delivered.
- In general the issues and options outlined in the strategy were appropriate and comprehensive however particular gaps were identified in relation to the following:
 - o Access to mainstream supported accommodation for people with complex/multiple needs as often they are unsuitable or excluded because their support needs are too high i.e. Victims of domestic abuse with drug & alcohol dependency issues; single young homeless people with a history of offending.
 - o Careful consideration needs to be given to the provision of temporary seasonal stopover sites for gypsies and travellers which are conveniently located for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whilst respecting local residents.
 - o Suitable solutions for temporary accommodation need to be identified for a range of vulnerable groups (i.e. care leavers, people with learning disabilities) which provide a holistic multi-agency approach to service provision and promote independence.

Our response:

- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes specific actions to develop a protocol between the Housing Service and the Commissioning Team to direct the future approach to prioritizing funding of support service, to ensure it is based on robust evidence of need.
- In relation to identify the need for new accommodation for vulnerable groups, the settlement profiles will consider the location and proximity when identifying the location for such services.
- The Housing Service will contribute to the development of a County Durham Financial Inclusion strategy. In addition, the Action and Investment Plan contains specific actions in relation to older people and homeless young people regarding the provision of advice to enable them to maximize their income; and support and advice regarding access to employment and training opportunities.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes specific actions regarding raising awareness and monitoring the use of Band F to ensure effective use of the Letting Policy and increased access to social housing for those with a history of ASB.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes specific actions to extend the programme of 'Prevention Champions' training to create awareness amongst organisation regarding the support and advice available to vulnerable groups.
- The Housing Service will work closely with Voluntary Agencies and Organisations to develop and deliver a range of support and advice services for vulnerable groups.
- The Action and Investment acknowledges that some vulnerable groups have multiple needs that can not be considered and addressed in isolation; and therefore further research into those with complex needs will be carried out and recommendation for future courses of actions will be made to the County Durham Homelessness Action Partnership.
- As a sub strategy of the Housing Strategy, the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Action Plan will address the accommodation and support needs of the Gypsy Roma and Traveller community including temporary seasonal stop over sites.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan includes specific actions to explore the current provision of temporary accommodation and under take an options appraisal regarding future provision.

Issue 10: Better access to affordable housing

In sections 5.150-5.155 (pp70-72) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need to get better at housing vulnerable groups in County Durham.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

The Council's Housing Solutions Service provides housing advice and assistance to residents of County Durham and further promotion of the service is planned to continue to prevent homelessness and to raise awareness of the various housing options available to residents. Recent radio and digiTV adverts seem to have a positive impact on the number of households coming forward for advice and assistance for accessing affordable housing solutions.

The data and analysis of the information that is available from the CBL system will be used to inform a first full Annual Review of the scheme in September 2010 and in the meantime monthly analysis is being carried out to inform decision on Policy reviews and in terms of updating information on customer access, housing need and performance management of the CBL system.

In order to avoid those vulnerable people being housed in poor stock in the private rented sector, a joint initiative between the Council's Housing Solutions and Private Rented Sector teams and Accredited Private Landlords is currently being developed to promote better pathways for vulnerable people seeking housing in the private rented sector into decent quality & well managed properties. Further information on these proposals are contained within the Homelessness Strategy action plan 2010.

Your comments:

- Consideration needs to be given to the factors which impact on a tenant's ability to pay their rent i.e. current financial pressures, the impact of changes to Housing Benefit and level of single room rent.
- A lack of decent properties in the right areas with the right support impact on people's ability to access affordable housing.
- Issues around aids and adaptation such as a lack of suitably adapted properties, a lack of adaptable properties, waiting times for adaptations and inconsistencies in relation to funding of adaptations all act as barriers to access affordable housing
- The process for accessing affordable housing is complicated and greater awareness is needed of the services and support available.
- The voluntary sector can play a greater role in assisting people in accessing affordable accommodation.

Our response:

- The settlement profiles will consider and set out the housing needs of each settlement and will recommend the right mix and location of housing to meet that need.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan contains specific actions to ensure future support and services are based on evidence of need and demand.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan puts forward a proposal to develop an approach to making best use of existing adapted stock.
- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan contains specific actions to raise awareness and create understanding of access to Durham Key Options through a programme of training with external organizations.
- The Housing Service will work closely with the Voluntary Sector to take forward the specific action regarding ensuring greater access to affordable housing.



Issue 11: Health Impact

In sections 6.1-6.6 (p74) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the key health impact issues to consider in our Housing Strategy.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

Durham County Council's Housing Service and Housing providers across the County work in partnership to deliver a number of projects and initiatives that will improve the health of residents of County Durham. The Decent Homes Programmes delivered by the Registered Providers of the County's 48,000 social rented properties has levered in massive amounts of funding to improve the condition of the homes of some of our most vulnerable residents. The installation of Aids & Adaptations and Disabled Facilities Grants to enable people to stay at home and live independently play a massive role in improving quality of life for residents and saving health and social care providers money in reducing slips, trips and falls. Well over £8million was invested in making homes warmer and cheaper to run in 2009/10, preventing excess winter deaths and cold-related illnesses as well as freeing up household incomes to avoid the 'heat or eat' conundrum. And through the various housing related support services provided by a range of public, private and voluntary sector agencies tens of thousands of households receive advice and assistance to remain in their own homes.

A full Health Impact Assessment of the Housing Strategy is due to be completed in October 2010.

Your comments:

- Promotion of access to employment opportunities, services. Facilities and reliable transport will reduce deprivation and create sustainable communities.
- The outcome of the Health Impact Assessment is a key stage of the development of the strategy.

Our response:

- The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan highlights where it will make a contribution to improving outcomes in relation to health and a health impact assessment has been completed.

Issue 12: Equality and Diversity

In sections 6.9-6.11 (pp75-76) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that we need to consider equality and diversity issues in our housing strategy.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

In meeting our Equality & Diversity duties we must assess and monitor what impact our strategies, policies, procedures, services and functions will have on our customers by carrying out equality impact assessments (EIA).

An equality impact assessment has been completed as part of the development of the Housing Strategy to assess any risk of discrimination and ensure that what we are proposing to do will promote equality and make a positive difference for the people who live within County Durham. Evidence of our customer profile for across the county will need to be used to carry out the EIA. An action plan has been produced following the assessment, identifying where improvements can be made so that our services are inclusive and accessible to all.

Your comments:

- It will be interesting to see how the most vulnerable are affected by the lack of housing and access to it.
- Promotion of access to employment opportunities, services. Facilities and reliable transport will reduce deprivation and create sustainable communities.
- The outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment is a key stage of the development of the strategy.

Our response:

- A detailed Equality Impact Assessment of the Housing Strategy has been carried out and the results have been fed into the Housing Strategy Action & Investment Plan
- The new Housing Service Plan includes a full schedule of Equality Impact Assessment activity for 2010/11 and this activity will be monitored through the Council's performance management framework

Issue 13: Social Inclusion

In sections 6.15-6.16 (9976-77) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that social inclusion issues need to be considered in the development and delivery of our housing strategy.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

The Councils *Altogether Better Durham* vision is supported by two aims: *Altogether Better Place* and *Altogether Better for People*. All of the Issues identified in this housing strategy play a role in delivering social inclusion by addressing the key determinants of deprivation including increased opportunities for employment and training, reducing land incomes, impacting on peoples' health and reducing incidence of crime. We have also contributed to the development of the Council's new Social Inclusion Strategy

The Housing Strategy Action and Investment Plan highlights where it will make a contribution to improving outcomes in relation to social inclusion.



Issue 14: Value for Money

In sections 6.18-6.19 (p77) of the [Issues & Options Paper](#) we set out the reasons why we believe that value for money issues are of key importance in the way that we develop and deliver our housing strategy.

What are we doing about it, and what were the responses to the consultation?

1. Better Housing Markets and Value for Money

In the Issues & Options paper we outlined our case that the current shortage of executive housing in Durham required to attract high earners and wealth creators as well as a general need for more 'affordable housing' within the County warranted an increased supply of new homes. Following the recommendations of our 'Total Place' work in 2009/10, value for money in new house building could be achieved through the adoption of a more joined up partnership approach and maximising capital funding and assets to enable regeneration and delivery programmes to be successfully delivered. This comprehensive approach to regeneration, through a Housing & Regeneration Partnership, could result in savings and efficiencies through improved processes and supply chains as well economies of scale.

A County Durham social housing Benchmarking Club is in the process of being developed to compare specific service costs and to flag up areas of good practice and move towards sharing service expertise.

Combing data from the Choice Based Lettings scheme in relation to housing need and demand and the emerging viability study will enable the council to make informed decisions on the provision of affordable housing in specific settlements and on new development sites.

2. Better Housing Standards and Value for Money

A single programme for Aids & Adaptations is in under consideration including partner-registered providers again savings will be realised through more efficient working and economies of scale.

A new Social Housing Group has recently been set up to work as a joint forum to promote cooperation, joint working and to share expertise in particular relating to the Climate Change agenda.

Better at Housing People and Value for Money

County Durham has a high number of people classed as vulnerable mainly as a consequence of its industrial heritage and high levels of continued deprivation. A number of vulnerable groups have been identified in the Housing Strategy and all will require some form of assistance with accessing Housing and Housing related support.

Evidence has highlighted that the main issues of these vulnerable groups include securing appropriate accommodation including temporary, securing access to supported housing and support to sustain their tenancy.

In order to address these issues work has commenced to build up a detailed evidence base of the current availability of supported housing linked to demand to ascertain the numbers of specialist housing units required. Move on options are being explored with key partners and the possibility of housing higher numbers of vulnerable people into the social sector as opposed to the private rented sector is also being explored.

Value for money will be achieved through efficiency gains, targeting resources to specialised community groups and making successful bids to the Homes and Community Agency and via the Single Investment Pot.

A better case can be made for the Health and Social Care savings resulting from investment in housing conditions and support provision. This work will enable a better informed discussion within the County Durham Partnership as to the future allocation of public sector resources in County Durham.

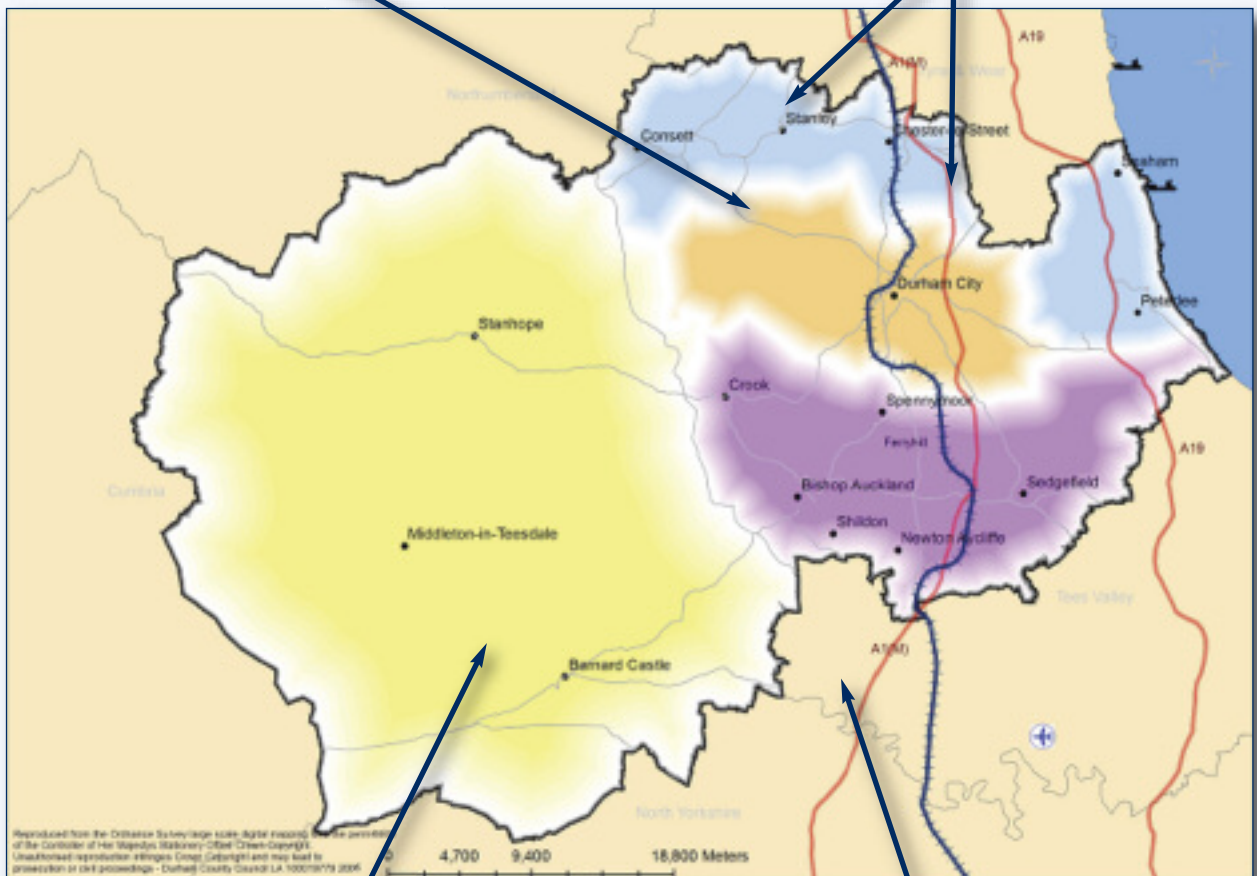


Locality Delivery Plan

The Housing Strategy Locality Delivery Plan is our first step towards a more comprehensive 'Place Based' Local approach to Policy & Strategy development. For this version of the Housing Strategy we have identified four localities for County Durham: North & East Durham; Durham City; South Durham; and West Durham. For each of these areas we set out the local housing & regeneration context and a Locality Action Plan, i.e. those actions that can be specifically identified for each locality area.

Central Durham - pp37-42

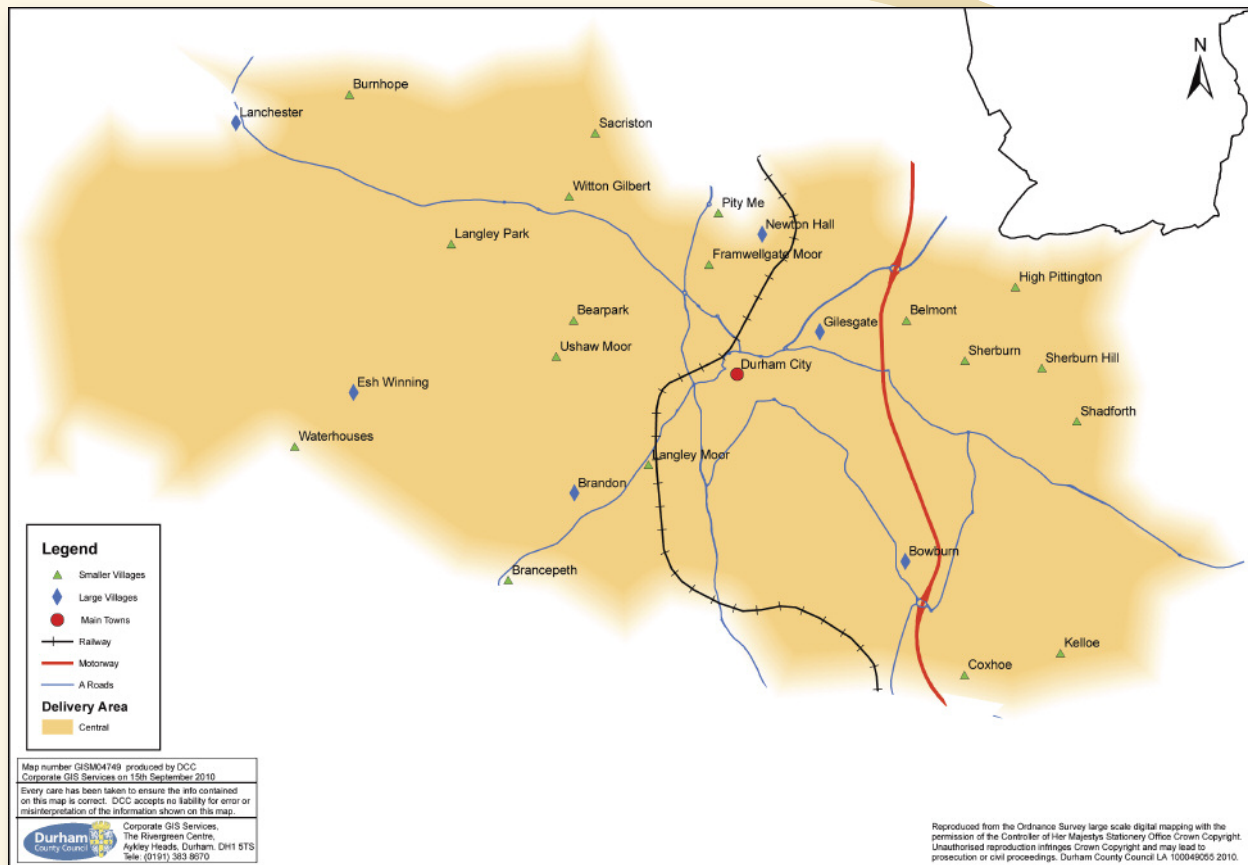
North & East Durham - pp44-53



West Durham - pp61-65

South Durham - pp54-60

CENTRAL DURHAM



At the heart of the North East, **Durham City and the surrounding area** is an important population centre, employment location, visitor destination and transport hub. The locality stands out as the key economic driver to the County and of regional importance; it symbolises the economic potential and opportunities available.

The RSS and RES recognise the potential of Durham City to become **a city of regional, national and international importance** but also acknowledges that the limited scale and offer of the centre itself prevents it from achieving this status. The city needs to:

- Develop a critical mass of employment, cultural and tourism facilities, population and visitors to capitalise on its inherent distinctiveness (but not threaten its historic character)
- Provide a balanced supply of new housing schemes to provide for both the existing population and new demands.

The population of Durham City and its surrounding area is about 100,000

Generally, the Index of Deprivation scores for areas in and around Durham City compare well against the County's averages

Average house prices in some parts of Durham City are three times the County average at over £300,000; though some surrounding villages have average prices nearer £100,000

Housing Markets

Housing sites near the centre are high value and properties within a mile of the city centre command some of the highest prices in the County. It is the only place in the County where apartments can be sold or rented in large numbers. The demand for high value, well designed larger houses has been proven through developments such as Sheraton Park, Nevilles Park and the redevelopment of the old Dryburn hospital site.

New housing sites are coming forward. The Grange development at Bowburn (funded in part by Kick-start monies from HCA) will deliver an additional 80 houses in its first phase (some of which will be to Code for Sustainable Homes 4 standard). Two further Kick-start schemes at West Rainton and Brandon (delivering 100 homes) are anticipated in 2010.

Of particular significance is the potential development of the Aykley Heads site focussing on the relocation of the Police HQ and County Hall, and the redevelopment of the Millburngate office complex. A master-planning process is currently underway.

Durham City's future growth must be seen within the context of **regeneration of surrounding settlements**. In contrast to the wealth within the city, there are deprived communities on the other side of the City's green belt that require public sector intervention in order for them to remain as viable places to live. These include places where Area Development Frameworks have been produced (Bowburn and Sacriston) or where masterplans have been developed (Esh Winning).

Durham City has benefited from a pioneering '**joint venture**' partnership between the Council and Keepmoat plc (the Durham Villages Regeneration Company (DVRC) which has delivered nearly 1000 houses and bungalows for sale and social rent since 2004.

Affordable housing remains a top priority for the city and surrounding villages. The affordability ratio, even after the credit crunch, remains at over 8, one of the highest in the region. Values inherent in land associated with new housing sites could be harnessed to deliver new affordable housing (both for rent and for low cost home ownership) – the outcome of the economic viability study is awaited though the Strategic Housing Market Assessment suggested in 2008 that ratios of up to 30% were achievable.

Activity in the **social rented sector** includes:

- The first tranche of local authority 'direct build' has started on 4 DVRC sites around Durham City providing much needed family housing and bungalows.
- A limited demolition programme, which has commenced at Esh Winning where council owned stock will be replaced by a mixed new build housing scheme. The completion of the first phase of work will be subject to funding being secured for the purchase of a limited number of owner occupier properties.
- An options appraisal of the two Council-owned sheltered schemes in the City, Oversteads House in Ushaw Moor and Brandon House in Brandon, has been completed to determine their future.
- Council housing within the footprint of a masterplan being consulted on the Sherburn Road estate, which includes proposals for some demolition.

Housing Standards

The County Council is the main social housing provider, through its retained housing function, Durham City Homes, and has been steadily investing its resources to deliver the **Decent Homes** Standard for 6,130 Council tenants. In recognition of the need to review the longer term investment needs of its stock and how these will be funded, an option appraisal (in conjunction with the remainder of the County Council's stock in East Durham and Wear Valley) is planned for later in 2010.

The **private rented sector** is greatly affected by the student population that place considerable demands on this housing despite the University's collegiate system. Older terraced housing in certain quarters (such as Gilesgate and Crossgate) is so dominated by rented housing for students to share (predominantly in term time) that it is likely that the supply of lower cost housing to other household groups has diminished; forcing first time buyers in particular to seek housing away from the city centre areas. Further work on how this element of the housing market can reconcile differing needs and demands is required and will be undertaken with our partners in higher and further education.

Housing People

The needs of **older people**, who comprise 20.5% of the population of Durham City and its environs, will be of paramount importance. As well as reviewing social housing sheltered schemes, there is a need to consider how mixed tenure apartment schemes can offer opportunities for older people who have equity in existing housing but require more suitable accommodation.

Other **special needs** groups who require assistance:

- A shared housing scheme for people with learning disabilities in Durham City (in conjunction with Three Rivers HA) has recently been completed. But other sites and properties for this needs group have been provisionally identified and require investment and an agreed management structure.
- People at risk of homelessness remain a high priority. A specialist scheme for young parents (with extra management resources on site) alongside a mixed scheme of social and intermediate rent for other families is being proposed in conjunction with Fabrick Housing Group for the Gilesgate area of the city and needs supporting through the planning process. The emergency service at Churchill Square, Durham is in need of better facilities and requires additional investment.
- The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community has a site at West Rainton that is in need of refurbishment and is scheduled for work to start in 2012 (subject to finance being confirmed).

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Central Durham Delivery Plan

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth - More Homes	Facilitate housing growth and mix in the wider Durham City ensuring appropriate sites are included in the LDF and Local Investment Plan.	Deliver Aykley Heads masterplan	To commence by 2012; complete by 2020	Durham County Council (DCC) / Homes & Community Agency (HCA) / & Private sector (50 affordable = £1.875m)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	500 new dwellings by 2015	More new housing built, with a range of housing types and tenures to meet the economic and social needs of our County.
		Develop Durham Villages Regeneration Company (DVRC) sites	2011	DCC/HCA/ & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	32 new dwellings	Affordable and market housing built to meet the needs of the locality and the wider County.
		Development of 'The Grange' site, Bowburn.	2015	DCC/HCA (Kickstart)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	250 new dwellings	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to aid economic growth.
		Green Belt review for areas around Durham City to consider suitable sites.	Review 2010-12	Within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	up to 3,860 new dwellings to 2030	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to aid economic growth.
		Monitor housing land supply through Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment within Durham City.	annual	Within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	2212 dwellings from suitable SHLAA sites over next 15 years.	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to aid economic growth.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth - More Homes	Review and amend Growth Point trajectories to reflect the outcome of the LDF process. Liaise with Planning in relation to over overall housing allocations.	Extend the scope of the Growth Point to reflect outcomes of the LDF.	2011	DCC/HCA	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	Revised Programme of Development	More housing choice in areas of economic growth.
		Develop a schedule of land disposals to accelerate housing supply.	Late 2010	Capital receipts	Durham CC NH/RR//IM	Priority list of key strategic sites for housing development	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale
Regeneration and Renewal	Deliver regeneration in areas where the Council owns housing stock.	Acquisition and demolition scheme at Esh Winning.	2010-2013	HRA and general fund. 2010-2011 - £570,000 2011-2012 - £300,000 2012-2013 -£130,000	Durham CC KH/DH Durham City Homes	78 properties demolished	Low quality homes demolished
		Stock condition survey required to properties in Bowburn.	2011/2013	HRA £85,000	DurhamCC KH/DH Durham City Homes	Stock condition survey completed	Residents are aware of what will happen to their home in the future.
		De-commissioning of sheltered units at Oversteeds and Brandon.	2011-2012	HRA £340,000	DurhamCC KH/DH Durham City Homes	Older persons units are decommissioned.	Existing residents are moved to more appropriate accommodation

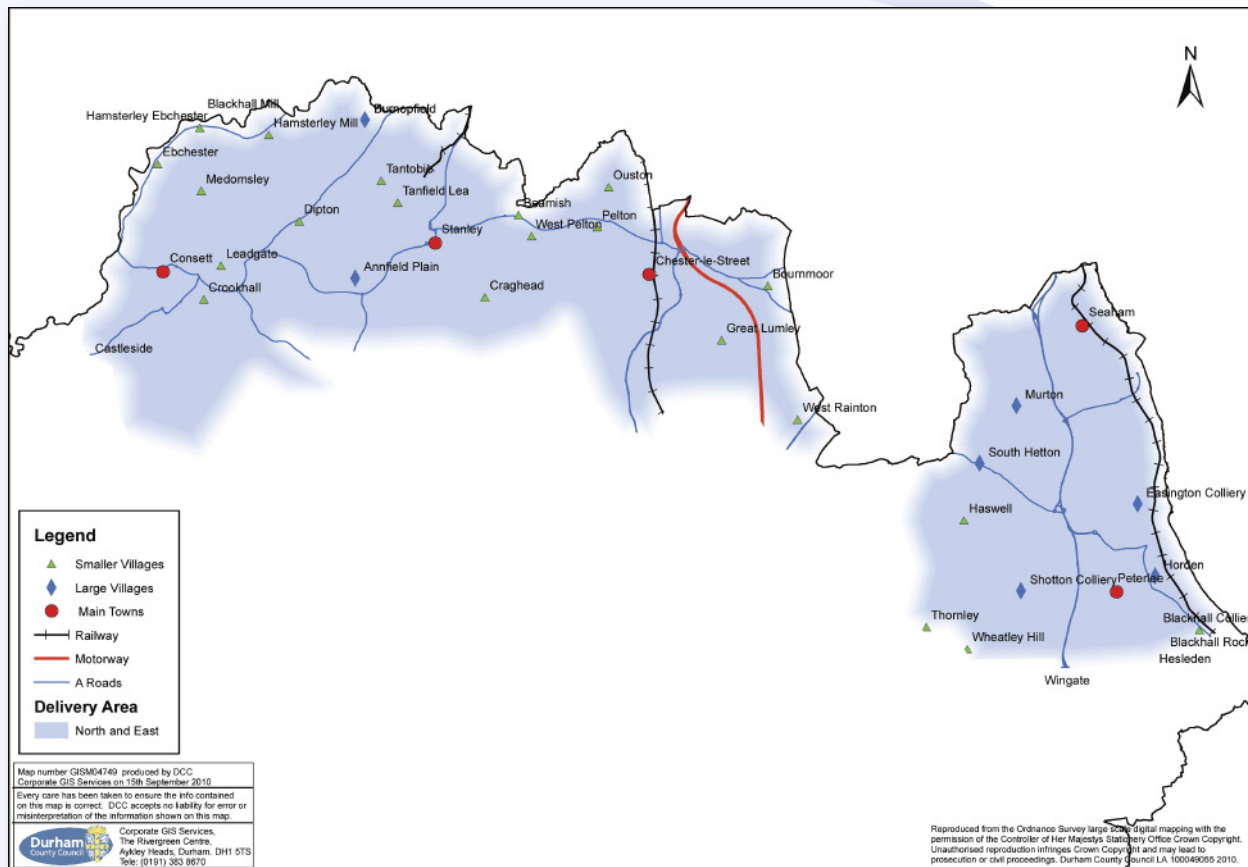
OBJECTIVE 2 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING STANDARDS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better Existing Homes	Bring existing social housing stock up to the decent homes standard	Continue Decent Homes investment programme for council owned housing stock	March 2011	£5.035million	Durham City Homes	675 homes made decent Decent Homes standard now 100%	Better housing standards; warmer homes; safer homes

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better Housing Management Services	Carry out a stock options appraisal of the Council's 19,000 retained social housing units	Include the housing management arrangements for the stock currently managed by Durham City Homes	November 2011	Within existing staffing/financial resources	Durham CC MR/GH	Option Appraisal report to Council; warranted stock condition survey; new housing management arrangements	More efficient and resourced management of the 19,000 social housing units managed by the Council; better services; higher levels of investment; maximising resources

NORTH AND EAST DURHAM



North and East Durham is closely connected to the **Tyne and Wear City Region** and forms part of wider employment, housing and travel to learn markets, supported through a transport infrastructure which includes major arterial roads and rail links to the East Coast rail network. North Durham is served by the towns of Consett, Stanley and Chester-Le-Street whilst the East contains the towns of Peterlee and Seaham, where the A19 forms a good connection between the two City Regions. This part of the County contains some of the most **deprived communities** in the North East and although progress has been made in recent years, much more remains to be done. The old industrial landscape has now been greened over and added to which it has some quite **outstanding natural scenery** including the Heritage Coast, Castle Eden Dene and the Derwent Valley

The population for N&E Durham is around 220,000

Employment is a concern, with over 90% of the populations in two areas being ranked in the worst 30% nationally. Unsurprisingly, income also compares poorly against the County averages, along with health, education and children index of deprivation ratings

Average house prices range from some of the lowest at £85,000 through to over £150,000.

Chester-le-Street is the main centre to the north of Durham City and the town has consolidated its role as a local retail centre in recent years. Although relatively prosperous, limited housing growth opportunities will curtail its development in future years.

Seaham is the gateway to Durham's coast and its growth and revitalisation, based around the regeneration of the town centre and the redevelopment of former colliery sites, is an emerging success story.

Peterlee is a former new town and is a significant residential and employment base within the County halfway along the coast between Hartlepool and Sunderland.

Housing Markets

Despite North and East Durham having some of the lowest **affordability ratios** in the country and some of the largest supplies of social housing (averaging around 23% of total stock with some neighbourhoods closer to 50%) the provision of additional social and other affordable housing remains critical to the well being of vulnerable persons and newly forming households.

The **low values inherent in housing land** in this area place additional emphasis on the public sector (either through investment by the HCA or through the local authority's land assets) to deliver the required range of good quality affordable housing to meet needs.

Housing growth, is anticipated in the following locations:

- In **Consett**, new housing will be focussed on the Genesis site and the Shotley Bridge Hospital site (the former owned by HCA). The former Maiden Law Hospital site (near Lanchester), also owned by HCA, may also be considered for development.
- On the former **Seaham colliery site**, housing and a new school were to be developed simultaneously, providing 400 new homes.
- The North East Industrial Estate in **Peterlee** (where Growth Point funding is being allocated to commence demolition works on redundant Industrial premises), could deliver 800 residential units. Saxon Park is also in Peterlee where further phases of new housing for rent and sale may be secured through HCA's Kick-start programme. The site requires ongoing momentum in order to ensure the vision for the neighbourhood is realised.

As part of the Coalfields Housing work, the settlements at Easington Colliery and Dawdon were identified as priorities for selective clearance. Further interventions may be required in places such as Horden, Blackhall, Shotton Colliery and Wheatley Hill/Thornley in East Durham and South Stanley, New Kyo, Quaking Houses and Craghead in North Durham.

Housing Standards

Existing housing in North and East Durham requires considerable new investment. In particular, the smaller communities that are situated on the fringes of the main centres of population often have poorer quality housing and a weaker infrastructure to support the communities that live there.

Public sector housing in the north is dominated by two Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) housing associations; namely Derwentside Homes and Cestria Housing, both of whom have well funded investment programmes that will deliver decent homes by 2013.

The main issue in the east is securing a means of bringing the Council's housing stock in East Durham up to the Decent Homes Standard:

- The ALMO East Durham Homes has secured its first tranche of decent homes funding, following its successful re-inspection by the Audit Commission but with over 90% below the standard a long term programme of funding is now essential to deliver the required improvements to the communities it serves.
- Where appropriate, alternatives to whole house improvements should be considered especially in areas of low demand or obsolete house types.
- In this respect, a limited scheme of selective demolition of East Durham Homes stock has already commenced in Wheatley Hill
- In addition active consideration is being given to options for the future of one bedroomed bungalows and one bedroomed flats in the area around Chester-le-Street by Cestria Community Housing. Derwentside Homes have re-designated their difficult to let sheltered scheme, Magdelaine House in Consett for luxury apartments.
- Cestria Community Housing is also reviewing disused and low demand garage sites and other in-fill sites with a view to providing extra family accommodation

Other major social landlords are considering their investment options. Accent Housing, who own 948 homes in East Durham are cautiously progressing an investment programme for their stock but need greater certainty about the area's long term future.

In the **private sector**:

- Non decency is a particular problem especially for marginal owner-occupiers, older persons on limited incomes and other vulnerable groups.
- Renewal areas are benefiting from limited group repair and environmental improvement schemes such as those at Dawdon (near Seaham), Wembley (Easington Colliery) and Craghead (near Stanley). However more extensive work to regenerate these communities is needed and therefore the Council must secure finance and recommit to clearance for those areas of housing where neither private nor public investment will deliver the necessary improvements.

Also, of concern is the welfare and living standards of those in the **privately rented sector** where absentee landlords do not provide an adequate management and maintenance service. Landlords in Wembley; an area within Easington Colliery; are now subject to compulsory licensing as part of an intensive neighbourhood management scheme. But further work is required to ensure the efficacy of the scheme.

Housing People

The SHMA made particular reference to the need to alleviate overcrowding in the social sector and therefore greater emphasis needs to be placed on the provision of larger family housing (4 bedrooms plus) alongside smaller house types. In the last five years the Affordable Housing Programme in Durham has delivered very few larger family homes – this is unacceptable.

The needs of **older people**, who comprise 22.5% of the population of North and East Durham, will be of paramount importance. Opportunities to alleviate under-occupancy to maximise the efficient use of stock should be taken while at the same time additional two bedrooomed bungalows should be procured in the right locations.

Other **special needs** groups require assistance.

- People at risk of homelessness remain a high priority.
 - o Funding for a scheme in Consett for women and their children at risk of domestic violence has recently been secured. An additional scheme for teenage parents is also required.
 - o An excellent service that provides training and accommodation in Seaham is hampered by a poor building with shared amenities and poor customer access – a new building is in the process of being acquired to enable a more fit for purpose service.
 - o In addition, Place for Change funds have been allocated to part fund the improvement of the Cyrenians direct access hostel at the Fells, Plawsworth just south of Chester-le-Street. Further funding is required to complete the overall plans for the site.

The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community occupy at Birtley and Stanley in North Durham which require refurbishment but there are currently no permanent sites in East Durham.



Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

North and East Durham Delivery Plan

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth - More Homes	Facilitate housing growth in key settlements by ensuring appropriate sites are included in the Local Development Framework (LDF) and Local Investment Plan (LIP)	Development of Saxon Park, Peterlee	2012	DCC/HCA/ & Private sector (40 affordable)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	90 (40 affordable for rent)	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create a mixed sustainable community.
		Development of North East Industrial Estate, Peterlee	2020	DCC/HCA/ Growth Point & Private sector (40 affordable)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	900 units in total over period to 2020 (200 units by 2015; 40 affordable)	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create a mixed sustainable community.
Housing Growth - More Homes	Facilitate housing growth in key settlements by ensuring appropriate sites are included in the Local Development Framework (LDF) and Local Investment Plan (LIP)	Development of Shotley Bridge Hospital Site	2015	HCA & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	279 new dwellings	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create a mixed sustainable community.
		Development of Network Space, Murton	2015	HCA & Private sector	DCC DS/IM/RR	180 new dwellings	Provide a mix of housing and commercial units to develop a sustainable community.
		Monitor housing land supply through SHLAA sites within North and East Durham Delivery area	Review annually	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	4567 dwellings from suitable SHLAA sites over next 15 years	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create a mixed sustainable community.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Regeneration and Renewal	Deliver regeneration in areas where the Council owns housing stock.	Acquisition and demolition schemes at Wheatley Hill and Thornley.	2010-2011	HRA and general fund £725,000	DurhamCC KH/DH East Durham Homes	50 properties demolished	Low quality homes demolished
		De-commissioning of sheltered units at South Hetton and Station Town.	2010-2011	HRA £165,000	DurhamCC KH/DH East Durham Homes	Sheltered Housing is decommissioned	Existing residents are moved to more appropriate accommodation
Regeneration and Renewal	Implement housing renewal schemes to contribute to the regeneration of County Durham.	Group repair and Environmental Improvement Scheme at Craghead.	2010-2012	Capital receipts, external funding £3,667,000	DurhamCC KH/DH	Group repair and environmental improvements carried out to 119 properties	Improved housing standards
		Group repair Scheme - Wembley Easington Colliery.	2010-2011	Capital receipts, external funding £1,378,000	DurhamCC KH/DH	Group repair scheme carried out to 195 properties	Improved housing standards
		Group Repair Scheme- Dawdon, Seaham	2010-2011	Capital receipts, external funding £3,180,000	DurhamCC KH/DH	Group repair scheme carried out to 420 properties	Improved housing standards
		Acquisition and demolition at Dawdon., Seaham	2010-2012	Capital receipts, external funding 2010 -2011 £2,800,000 2011-2012 £2,800,000 (subject to finance) SF	DurhamCC KH/DH	80 properties demolished	Low quality homes demolished

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Regeneration and Renewal	Implement housing renewal schemes to contribute to the regeneration of County Durham.	Acquisition and demolition at Easington Colliery.	2010-2013	Capital receipts, external funding 2010 -2011- £4,260,666 2011-2012 - £3,679,666 (SF) 2012-2013 - £3,679,666 (SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	166 properties to be demolished	Low quality homes demolished
		Interventions as identified in the Stanley area development framework at Southmoor.	2010-2013	Capital receipts, external funding 2010-2011- £3,272,666 2011-2012 - £3,272,666(SF) 2012-2013 - £3,272,666 (SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	Interventions complete	Low quality homes demolished
		Interventions as identified in the Stanley area development framework at New kyo.	2011-2013	Capital receipts, external funding 2011-2012 - £2,641,500(SF) 2012-2013 - £2,641,500 (SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	Interventions complete	Low quality homes demolished
		Interventions as identified in the Stanley area development framework at Quaking Houses.	2011-2013	Capital receipts, external funding 2011-2012 - £1,632,500(SF) 2012-2013 - £1,632,500(SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	Interventions complete	Low quality homes demolished

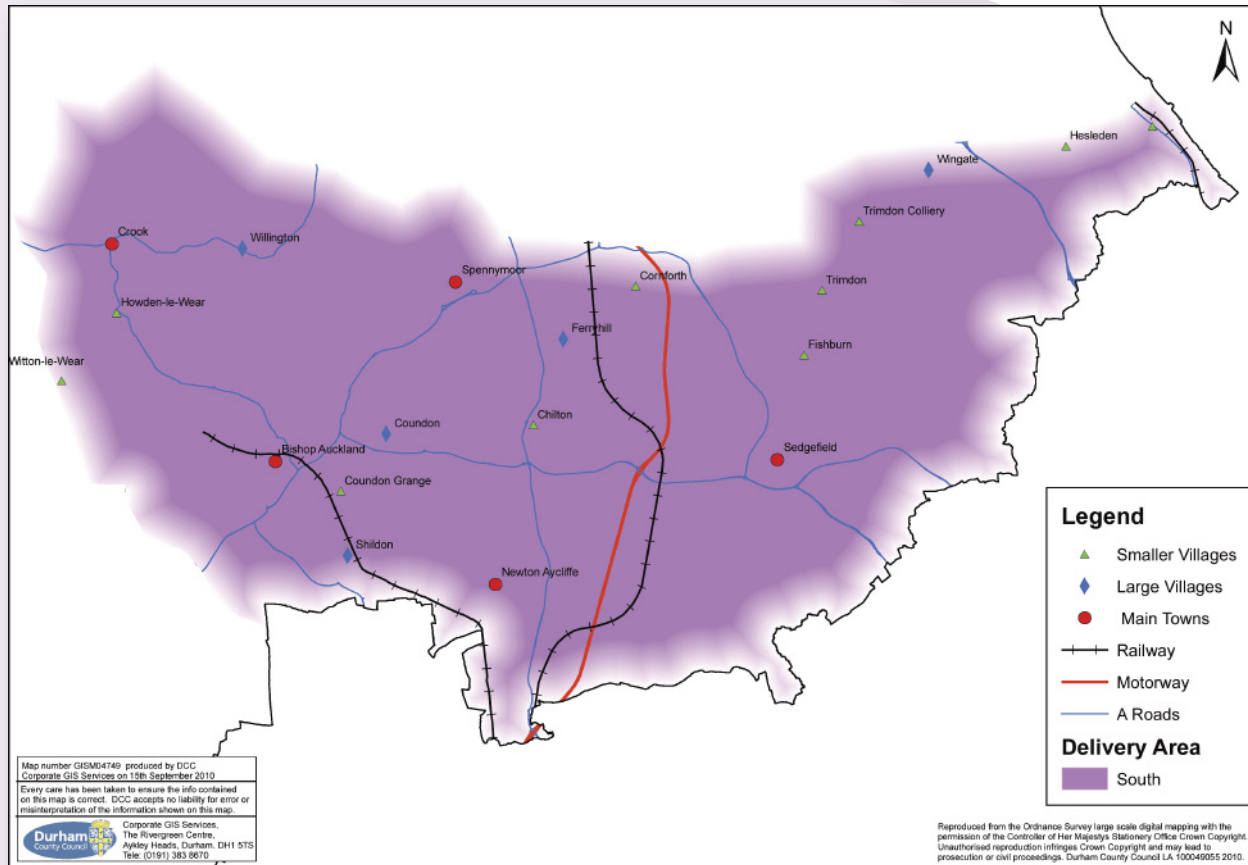
OBJECTIVE 2 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING STANDARDS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better existing homes - Decent Homes	Bring existing social housing stock up to the decent homes standard	North and East Durham	Continue Decent Homes investment programme for council owned housing stock including energy efficiency	March 2011	£16.75 million comprising £10M ALMO & £6.75M MRA	East Durham Homes Planned to make 600 homes decent. New doors & windows to 1675 homes. One off electrical and mechanical works as necessary.	Better homes including; Modern facilities, Improved security, Reduced energy charges.

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better Housing Management Services	Carry out a stock options appraisal of the Council's 19,000 retained social housing units	Include the housing management arrangements for the stock currently managed by East Durham Homes	Nov-11	Within existing staffing/financial resources	Durham CC MR/GH	Option Appraisal report to Council; warranted stock condition survey; new housing management arrangements	More efficient and resourced management of the 19,000 social housing units managed by the Council; better services; higher levels of investment; maximising resources
	Improve housing management standards in the private rented sector.	Review effectiveness of selective licensing designations Undertake evaluation of selective licensing designated areas	2011	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC MM"	Report to Cabinet	Improved housing management of the private rented sector.
Access to housing for vulnerable groups	Refurbishment of Gypsy Roma & Traveller sites	Refurbishment of Gypsy and Traveller site, Tower Road, Stanley.	2011-2012	Capital receipts, external funding £2,170,000 (subject to finance)	DurhamCC KH/DH	GRT site refurbished	Improved housing for GRT community
		Refurbishment of Gypsy and Traveller site, Adventure Lane, West Rainton, Drum Lane, Birtley	2012-2013	Capital receipts, external funding £4,800,000 (subject to finance)	DurhamCC KH/DH	GRT site refurbished	Improved housing for GRT community
		Effective direct access provision to Places of Change standards. Improve supported housing scheme at Chester le Street	2012/13	Places of Change (POC) Grant	Durham CC AB / HAP/ MW Third sector Partners	Council provide support to the Project	Increased access to high quality direct access supported housing.

SOUTH DURHAM



South Durham is closely connected to the **Tees Valley City Region** and forms part of a wider employment, housing and travel to learn market supported through a transport infrastructure which includes major arterial roads such as the A1(M), A19 and the A167 and rail links to Tees Valley. The main commercial centres of Bishop Auckland, Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor and Shildon form an important southern gateway to the County. The links with Darlington and Tees Valley, afford opportunities for complementary economic growth, to widen labour market catchments and extend the benefits of growth in Tees Valley to residents in the south of County. The area incorporates a **network of strategic employment sites** including Green Lane industrial estate, Newton Aycliffe Industrial Estate and NETPark.

The population of South Durham is around 155,000

Health is a major issue across South Durham, with between 65% and 92% of the populations of different areas being ranked in the worst 30% nationally. Education, employment and older person index rankings also compare negatively to the County averages

Average house prices vary from £70,000 in former coalfield settlements up to over £150,000 in the more rural areas

Given its location, connectivity and employment opportunities, South Durham has great potential.

Bishop Auckland in particular is a key retail and service centre with a population of 24,000 but a catchment area of over 150,000 people within 10 miles of the town. Bishop Auckland Further Education College is based in the town. There are strong public transport links to other settlements in the County; it has rail links to Darlington and will be connected to the Weardale railway in the future.

Newton Aycliffe is one of the larger towns in the County with a population of 26,725 and was the first new town in the North of England. It hosts the second largest industrial park in the region at Aycliffe Business Park, a major source of manufacturing-related employment for this and surrounding areas. A key issue for Newton Aycliffe is the vitality and potential redevelopment of the town centre and the strengthening of the Business Park.

Spennymoor, also a major town, was founded to service heavy and extractive industry but now requires significant investment in its town centre and the former Industrial Estate at Green Lane and Merrington Lane.

Chilton, Ferryhill and Coundon are smaller settlements which include housing renewal areas.

Sedgefield is host to the regionally important science and technology park of NETPark. It has ambitious expansion plans and is a key component of the County's strategy to make its economy more competitive. Recent private financing will boost the products being developed on the site. Sedgefield Community College, one of the first schools in County Durham to benefit from the **BSF programme** and work began on site on a 'state of the art' energy efficient building in July 2009.

The Council has worked with its partners to tackle the issues of deprivation in the area, especially around **providing employment and skills opportunities**. Significant investments having already been made in the physical core of the main centres, with ongoing programmes of work for Bishop Auckland and Newton Aycliffe. There are also processes under development to ensure opportunities for local people from the emerging food retail opportunities at Bishop Auckland and Newton Aycliffe, while opportunities to secure local employment as part of the South Durham BSF programme, Decent Homes Programmes and major Highways investments are also being progressed.

South Durham as a whole forms part of the **South and East Durham Growth Point** which will play a key role in delivering over 3000 homes over the period to 2017; 1887 of which are designated for Spennymoor, Bishop Auckland, Newton Aycliffe and Chilton.

Housing Markets

Housing growth, is anticipated in the following locations:

- The major new mixed development site at Durham Gate will be a key feature of the growth of **Spennymoor** and will provide a significant boost to employment in the surrounding area
- A growth point site to the north of the village of **Chilton** will be developed for mixed use and has the potential to be linked to a new combined heat and power biomass scheme on an adjacent estate
- In **Newton Aycliffe**, there are some important sites in public ownership in the Cobblers Hall neighbourhood (including a site owned by HCA at Eldon Whins) that could secure new housing of all tenures

- **Bishop Auckland** town centre has an important regeneration site at Bondgate that will receive Growth Point funding to aid site acquisition so that new housing for sale and rent can be delivered. Around 80 new homes will be built, including an element of affordable housing along with new employment opportunities.
- To the south east of **Bishop Auckland** there is scope for new housing along the rail line to Darlington including a new site at Auckland Park for around 400 houses and two sites close to Shildon rail station.

Mirroring the situation in North and East Durham, the need for **regeneration** is primarily focussed on places and settlements on the fringes of the main centres. Existing clearance and group repair funding has been concentrated on Dean Bank, Ferryhill Station and Chilton (to the south of Spennymoor) and to a lesser extent Coundon and the Dene Valley to the east of Bishop Auckland.

Housing Standards

Investment in the **public sector's housing stock**:

- Is being led by Sedgefield Borough Homes, a LSVT housing association established in 2009; and Dale and Valley Homes, an ALMO that has secured tranches of funding to deliver its decent home targets from 2008 onwards. Between them they plan to invest over £11m in 2010/11.
- A second round of local authority direct build funding has been secured to assist Dale and Valley to rebuild an outdated sheltered housing scheme for the elderly in Crook and build additional family housing nearby.

The challenges of **poor stock in the private sector**:

- Has been confronted through a long term commitment to clearance in some of the settlements south of Spennymoor (Dean Bank, Chilton and Ferryhill Station); though future funding to continue the programme beyond its current phases is not yet identified. The majority of recent clearance and rehousing has taken place in these communities and the positive impact that this has had must be sustained.
- Innovative rehousing products, including equity loans must form part of any future funding package.
- An integrated investment programme needs to be revived in Coundon and the Dene Valley where regeneration has halted. Market confidence can only be reinstated when a clear programme of work has been agreed – this will benefit private sector sites as well the public realm.
- A licensing scheme for private landlords has been established in Dean Bank and West Chilton where ongoing intensive neighbourhood management is helping to halt the decline of the community and its infrastructure.

Housing People

South Durham has much in common with North Durham in terms of housing need:

- It has some of the lowest **affordability** ratios in the country and yet some of the largest supplies of social housing (averaging around 22% of total stock) The 2008 SHMA shows that additional social and other affordable housing is still required for the continued well being of vulnerable persons and newly forming households.
- **Low land values** will mean that public sector support continues to be needed to deliver this and the local authority will work with the HCA, RSLs and developers to maximise opportunities to provide a range of good quality affordable housing to meet needs.
- There is a need to alleviate **overcrowding** in the social sector by providing larger family housing (4 bedrooms plus) for rent alongside smaller house types.
- The needs of **older people**, who comprise 22.5% of the population of South Durham, are of paramount importance. Additional two bedroomed bungalows are required in locations close to services as well as schemes for the frail elderly (including flexible-tenure options).
- Other **special needs** require assistance:
 - o People at risk of homelessness remain a high priority. A scheme for young persons at Newton Aycliffe is being proposed, but awaits revenue funding. The scheme would take the form of 8 one bedroomed supported housing apartments with 'crisis' /emergency accommodation for at least one homeless person.
 - o The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community has 3 sites at Auckland Park, Dene Valley, East Howle, near Ferryhill and Bishop Auckland in South Durham; two of which have benefited from funding from HCA for refurbishment.



Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

South Durham Delivery Plan

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth - More Homes	Facilitate housing growth in key settlements by ensuring appropriate sites are included in the Local Development Framework (LDF) and Local Investment Plan (LIP)	Development of Durham Gate, Spennymoor	2015	DCC/HCA/RDA/Growth Point & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	376 new dwellings	Provides market and affordable housing in close proximity to mixed commercial and leisure development.
		Development of Merrington Lane, Spennymoor	2015	DCC/HCA/ Growth Point & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	1000 new dwellings	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
		Development of Bondgate, Bishop Auckland	2013	DCC/HCA/ Growth Point/ Gentoo & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	80 new dwellings	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to regenerate town centre site.
		Monitor housing land supply through SHLAA sites within South Durham Delivery area	Review annually	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	3770 dwellings over next 15 years	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Regeneration and Renewal	Implement housing renewal schemes to contribute to the regeneration of County Durham.	Environmental Improvement scheme at Ferry Hill Station	2010-2011	Capital receipts £340,000	DurhamCC KH/DH	Environmental improvements complete	Environmental improvements
		Acquisition and demolition at Dean Bank.	2010-2013	Capital receipts, external funding 2010/2011: £2,356,666 2011/2012: £2,356,666 (SF) 2012-2013: £2,356,666 (SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	70 houses and 30 garages demolished	Low quality homes demolished
		Acquisition and demolition at West Chilton.	2010-2013	Capital receipts, external funding 2010-2011: £3,877,166 2011-2012: £3,347,166 (SF) 2012-2013: £3,347,166 (SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	114 properties demolished	Low quality homes demolished
		Acquisition and demolition at Coundon,	2011-2013	Capital receipts, external funding 2011-2012 - £2,745,000 (SF) 2012-2013 - £3,982,000 (SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	92 properties demolished	Low quality homes demolished
		Group repair scheme at Dean Bank	2010-2012	Capital receipts, external funding 2010-2011 - £3,360,000 2011-2012 - £1,876,000 (SF)	DurhamCC KH/DH	187 properties to be demolished	Improved housing standards

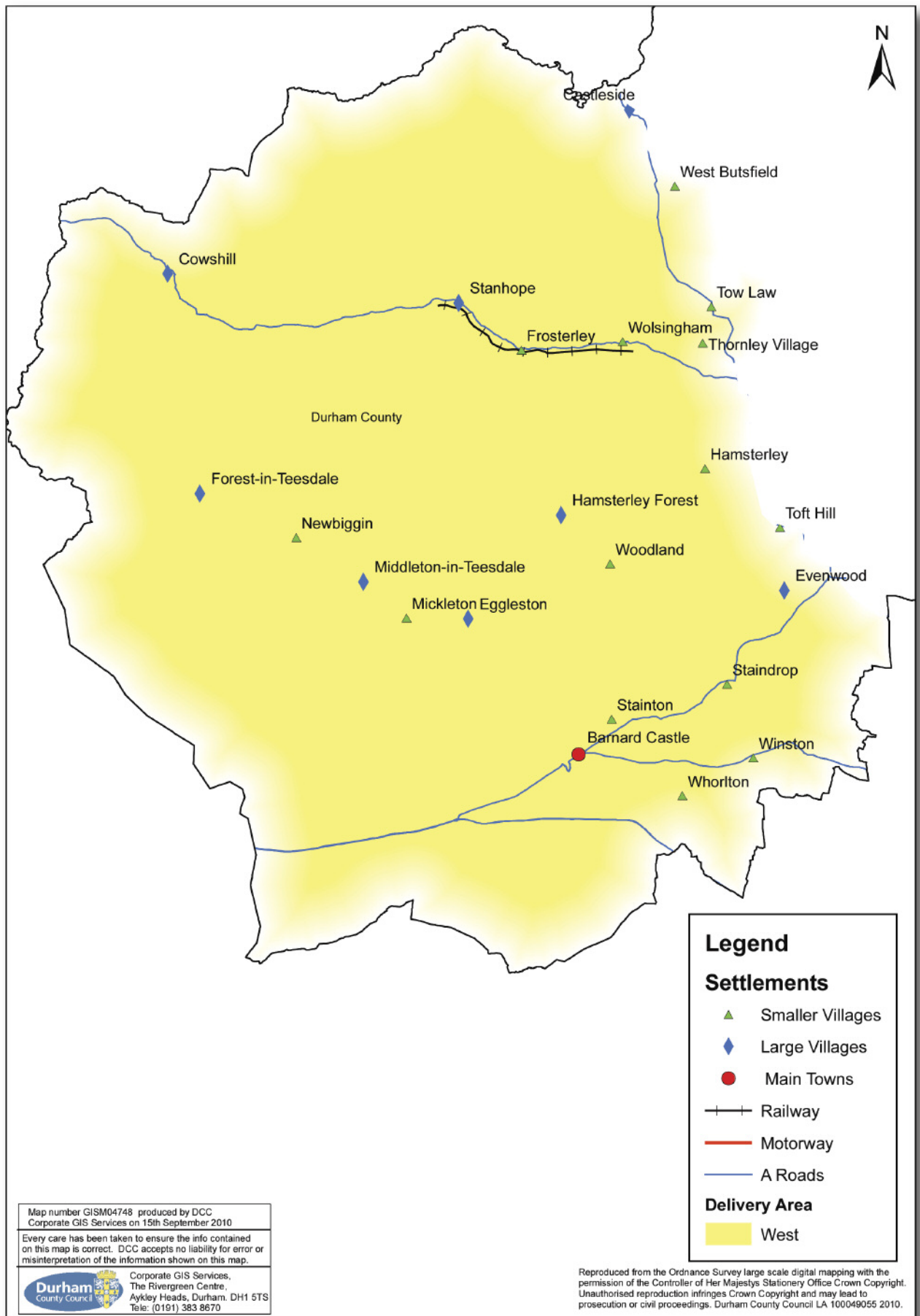
OBJECTIVE 2 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING STANDARDS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better existing homes - Decent Homes	Bring existing social housing stock up to the decent homes standard	Continue Decent Homes investment programme for council owned housing stock including energy efficiency	March 2012	2010/11 £8.486 2011/12 £7.650	Dale and Valley Homes	This year 2010-11 Dale and Valley Homes are to complete 866 homes to the decent homes standard and in 2011-12 Dale and Valley Homes need to complete the remaining 1285.	Better housing standards; warmer homes; safer homes

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better Housing Management Services	Improve housing management standards in the private rented sector.	Review effectiveness of selective licensing designations.	2011	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC MM	Report to Cabinet	Improved housing management of the private rented sector.
Access to housing for vulnerable groups	Refurbishment of Gypsy, Roma & Traveller sites	Refurbishment of Gypsy Roma & Traveller site at Green Lane, Bishop Auckland	2010-2011	Capital receipts, external funding £ 2,400,000 (subject to finance)	DurhamCC KH/DH	GRT site refurbished	Improved housing for GRT community

WEST DURHAM



County Durham is essentially a rural County with the West of the County displaying many '**deep rural**' **characteristics** due to its topography and remoteness. The natural habitat and the **quality of life** this area creates a very distinctive offer to residents and is attractive to small knowledge based businesses whose employment potential will be underpinned by the further development of the County wide broadband network. The quality of place offer reinforces the area's economy: attracting tourists and in-migrant entrepreneurs, supporting agriculture and renewable energy, particularly at the proposed Eastgate village scheme. The market towns of Barnard Castle, Stanhope, and Middleton-in-Teesdale are important **rural centres** serving their rural hinterland needs. However net population gains have resulted in **housing affordability problems**

The population of West Durham is around 32,000

Despite apparent higher standards of living in West Durham, housing and wider deprivation is a significant issue with 59.5% and 37.4% of the populations of Weardale and Teesdale respectively being ranked within the 30% most deprived areas for housing nationally in terms of the index of deprivation.

Average house prices range from £106,000 in isolated former mining villages in the east to over £200,000 in the more desirable market towns.

Barnard Castle is the main town within this area and attracts residents, visitors and businesses. Its 20 year regeneration plan, developed by Barnard Castle Vision, sets out objectives around improving the local economy through business growth and diversification; through developing the town as a visitor destination and enhancing its role as a rural service centre.

The village of **Eastgate** in Weardale is home to the disused LaFarge cement works; the site of which is seen as a development opportunity to provide modern well-serviced business accommodation, a hotel and other visitor attractions, and housing (including live/work units).

Housing Markets

The affordability ratio in Teesdale is the second highest in the County and the 2008 local housing market assessments for Teesdale and Wear Valley have shown that there is a continuing need for an affordable housing with recommendations for increased supply of at least 200 units per annum (for the two former districts combined). The high level of second home owners accentuates the housing shortage in these rural areas. Particular requirements exist for 2 bedroomed starter homes and accommodation for older people (both bungalows and apartments). The recommendation in the SHMA to secure at least 30% affordable housing on new market housing sites needs to be pursued in conjunction with the economic viability test.

It should be noted that outliers of the former coalfield area exist at Cockfield and Evenwood and the housing in these isolated communities would also benefit from some levels of regeneration and renewal.

Housing Standards

The housing exhibits relatively high levels of **non decency in the private sector** – mainly associated with poor thermal efficiency. The stock is older and less well heated and this is combined with many properties being off the mains gas network; the levels of fuel poverty in the area need to be brought down. Good practise examples such as the installation of ground source heat pumps in Teesdale HA's properties in Cockfield could be replicated.

The newly launched Challenge 100 (funded by EON to bring 100 households out of fuel poverty in 100 days in **Middleton in Teesdale**) could offer a good practise example that could be replicated elsewhere in West Durham.

The small social housing sector is represented primarily by the stock transfer housing association Teesdale Housing Association and part of the Dale and Valley homes stock in Weardale. Both organisations have funded programmes to secure Decent Homes standards in their housing stock.

A key area where housing stress is most acute is in the area of the lower Tees Valley, around villages such as Staindrop and Gainford. Initiatives such as the redevelopment of the Teesdale HA site at Broumley Court in Staindrop require prioritisation.

Despite a strong push for **more affordable homes** to be delivered through the National Affordable Housing Programme, West Durham has fared poorly compared with more accessible parts of rural Durham. The rural exception site policy has only yielded 17 additional units since 2003 and there is a need for a Rural Enabler to work with the Council, HCA, land owners, communities and other stakeholders to bring affordable homes forward to meet local needs.

New methods of delivery are being explored including the recent establishment of a **Community Land Trust** (based on a Community Interest Company (CIC) business model). The Teesdale West Durham CIC could herald a more strategic approach to site identification, land assembly and housing development.

Housing People

Rural homelessness is regarded as an issue and increasing the supply of housing for single persons and couples in particular is seen as a priority.

The percentage of older people at 28% is the highest in the County and **older people's needs**, particularly when staying put is an additional challenge in isolated rural communities require particular attention either through the Home Improvement Agency or through telecare products and services. Where rehousing is a more appropriate solution then new housing schemes should be pursued in main centres of population where services exist and access to them is acceptable.

The **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller** community do not have a permanent site in West Durham but do benefit from 'stopover' sites along the route to Appleby in neighbouring Cumbria. The needs of this group in May/June each year needs to be continually assessed and provided for.

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

West Durham Delivery Plan

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth - More Homes	Facilitate housing growth in key settlements by ensuring appropriate sites are included in the Local Development Framework (LDF) and Local Investment Plan (LIP)	Development of Eastgate, Weardale	2015	DCC/HCA/ & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	20 new dwellings	Provides market and affordable housing as part of a new employment growth centre in an isolated deep rural area.
		Monitor housing land supply through SHLAA sites within West Durham Delivery area Asses viability of development on small sites < 40 ha	Review annually	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	430 dwellings from suitable SHLAA sites over next 15 years	Provides market and affordable housing
New affordable housing - tackling affordability hotspots including deep rural areas	Increase the level of affordable housing in rural areas, especially 'deep rural' areas in West Durham, to enable local people to live and work in existing communities	Establish a rural exception policy in conjunction with the County Durham Plan. Utilise new delivery vehicles and support the development of the Teesdale West Durham Land Trust and potential expansion of community land trusts in other areas within the County.	2011-2015	Durham County Council Homes & Communities Agency	DCC RR/GP	Develop schemes of affordable housing in strategic sights.	Provision of additional affordable homes

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Regeneration and Renewal	Deliver regeneration in areas where the Council owns housing stock.	Demolition of Community Hall at Willington.	2010-2011	HRA £50,000	DurhamCC KH/DH Dale and Valley Homes	Community Hall demolished	Improved environmental appearance



Partnership Delivery Plan

The County Durham Housing Forum works through a network of delivery groups that have been commissioned to deliver the relevant sections of the Housing Strategy Action & Investment Plan.

In this section we set out the terms of reference, membership and action plan for each of these sub groups, which can be summarised as:

Task Group	Responsible for	Membership	Contact
County Durham Housing Forum	Contributing to the development and delivery of the overall Housing Strategy.	DCC Housing DCC Adult social care & Health Social Housing Providers Homes & Communities Agency	Glyn Hall, DCC Head of Housing 0191 383 5609
Homelessness Action Partnership	Better access to housing for vulnerable groups Access to affordable Housing	DCC Housing Housing Providers Shelter Community & Voluntary sector reps	Andrew Burnip, DCC Housing Solutions 0191 527 4518
Housing & Regeneration Partnership	More homes Regeneration & Renewal Affordable homes Executive housing	DCC Housing, Regeneration & Planning Homes & Communities Agency Private House builders Social Housing Providers	David Siddle, DCC Strategic Housing 0191 383 5627
Gypsy Roma & Traveller Sub Group	Better access to housing Better at maintaining housing	DCC Housing DCC Planning Council Adult social care & Health Social Housing providers	Norman Hunt , DCC Strategic Housing 0191 527 4513
Durham Key Options Board	Better access to housing for vulnerable groups Access to affordable housing	DCC Housing Social Housing Providers	Lynn Hall, DCC Housing Solutions
Learning Disabilities Housing Task Group	Better access to housing for vulnerable groups Better at maintaining housing for vulnerable groups	To be established October 2010	Gemma Wilkinson DCC Strategic Housing
Social Housing Group	Better existing homes Better housing management	Council Housing Social Housing Providers	Norman Hunt, DCC Strategic Housing
Older Persons Accommodation & Support Task Group	More homes Affordable homes Better new homes Better existing homes Better access to housing for vulnerable groups Better at maintaining housing for vulnerable groups	DCC Housing DCC Planning DCC Adult Social care Health Social Housing Providers	Norman Hunt, DCC Strategic Housing 0191 527 4513
County Durham Housing Service	Housing Service Plan	Strategic Housing Renewal & Investment Supported Housing Housing Solutions Durham City Homes	Glyn Hall, DCC Head of Housing 0191 383 5609

County Durham Housing Forum

Summary terms of reference

To act as the strategic partnership within County Durham for the consideration of housing and related policy issues; to assist the development of more sustainable communities and to support the well being of County Durham.

Provide a **strategic policy advice** function in relation to strategic housing issues

Provide a means to **secure consultation with partners and other stakeholders**

Contribute towards **the development of sustainable community strategies in Durham**

Work in partnership with each other (and in conjunction with AAPs) towards achieving and improving key local outcomes including:

- Contributing towards the development of local areas which are safe
- Contribute to strengthening the local economy through investment, procurement and worklessness initiatives
- Ensuring that tenants are healthy and safe
- Working towards the delivery of the decent homes standard
- Ensuring that open spaces and the natural environment is accessible and well managed and can provide attractive places in which people want to live and bring up their families
- Contribute towards ensuring climate change issues are addressed
- Support the development of cohesive communities
- Ensure housing needs are identified and met
- Ensure vulnerable client groups are well supported and adequately housed.

Undertake **an advocacy role** in promoting and discussing housing issues of importance to County Durham with other organisations and stakeholders operating at a city region, sub regional, regional and national levels.

Oversee the **co-ordination of sub-regional based programmes and strategies** for County Durham.

Commissioning of surveys, studies and other research to better understand strategic housing and related issues as they impact on the communities of County Durham.

Membership ¹⁷

Organisation	Name
Sedgefield Borough Homes	Colin Steel Alan Boddy
Durham County Council	Andrew Burnip (Housing Solutions) David Shipman (Adult Social Care) Councillor Clive Robson (Housing Portfolio) David Siddle (Strategic Housing) Glyn Hall (Head of Housing) (Chair) Kath Heathcote (Renewal & Improvement) Linda Ogilvie (Supported Housing) Lynn Hall (Housing Solutions) Norman Hunt (Strategic Housing) Simon Bartlett (Durham City Homes)
Northstar Housing Group	Angela Lockwood
Government Office North East	Barry Errington
Homes & Community Agency	Bill Carr Ali Lumley
Derwentside Homes	Geraldine Wilcox
DAHMA	Gordon Gray
Health (PCT)	Graeme Greig
Home Group	Graham Darby
Cestria Community Housing	TBC
Three Rivers (4 Housing Group)	Martin Knowles
East Durham Homes	Paul Tanney
Dale and Valley Homes	Peter Chaffer
Accent Group	Wanda Graham

The County Durham Housing Forum essentially 'owns' the whole Housing Strategy Delivery Plan

¹⁷ Correct as at September 2010

Homelessness Action Partnership

Summary terms of reference

To prevent and tackle homelessness and housing inequality by;

- Raising awareness and influencing Policy, Strategy, decision makers and commissioning,
- Genuinely involving service users to improve policy, strategy and delivery,
- Providing an effective voice for third and public sector providers of services in the wider strategic community structures in the County,
- Communicating a clear message about the impact good housing and services which address housing need have on people's lives,
- Promoting joint working between relevant agencies, at strategic and operational levels,
- Shaping and influencing service delivery by all providers,
- Monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the homelessness strategy,
- Exploring and considering joint commissioning and funding opportunities for new services and making recommendations for new commissioning to the relevant departments,
- Overseeing and developing relevant multi-agency initiatives (i.e. Joint Protocol, Enhanced Housing Support Protocol, Care Leavers Accommodation & Support Protocol, Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazer)



Membership ¹⁸

Organisation	Name
Durham County Council	Andrew Burnip (Chair)
Primary Care Trust	Anthony Prudhoe
Primary Care Trust	Eric Suddes
Primary Care Trust	Tim Wright
County Durham Constabulary	Allison Bowery
County Durham Constabulary	Ivan Wood
Durham Probation	Carina Carey
Durham County Council	Amy Nicholson
Durham County Council	Anne Delandre
Durham County Council	Bernie Malone
Durham County Council	Brian Kirkup
Durham County Council	Chris Graham
Durham County Council	Councillor Clive Robson
Durham County Council	Dave Summers
Durham County Council	Dorothy Alexander
Durham County Council	Fred Grand
Durham County Council	Ginny Younger
Durham County Council	Graham McArdle
Durham County Council	Julia Bates
Durham County Council	Laura Fisher
Durham County Council	Lee Pugalís
Durham County Council	Lorraine Walkden
Durham County Council	Lynn Hall
Durham County Council	Lynne Boyd
Durham County Council	Malcolm Elsbury
Durham County Council	Malcolm Mather
Durham County Council	Marie Smith
Durham County Council	Murray Web
Durham County Council	Pamela Twells
Durham County Council	Scott McNally
Dale & Valley Homes	J Dunn
Sedgefield Borough Homes	Cathy Slater
Jobcentre Plus	Jon Clapham
Durham Fire Service	Joy Nolan
Durham Fire Service	Paul Reay
Connexions	Tony Taylor
Government Office North east	Tony Moore
East Durham Homes	Pam Cox

¹⁸ Correct as at September 2010

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Partnership Delivery Plan

County Durham Homelessness Action Partnership

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Support the delivery of the homelessness and housing advice services and develop innovative solutions to housing need across County Durham through partnership working	Improve awareness and access to Durham County Council's Enhanced Housing Options (EHO) service.	January 2011	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC LH/AB/MW	Report to Homelessness Action Partnership (HAP); Comm's strategy produced	Residents are aware and can access Durham County Council's Enhanced Housing Options (EHO) Service.
		Strengthen links between LD/Mental Health Teams and Durham Key Options and Enhanced Housing Options Service.	October 2010	Proposed funding £40,000 per annum	Durham CC LH/AB/MW	Worker in place	Fair access via appropriate support to mainstream accommodation and services
		Develop current partnership working with jobcentre plus and employability providers	Annually	Within existing staffing/financial resources/ contributions from partners (subject to finance)	Durham CC AB Third Sector Partners	Partnership working is developed and arrangements in place	Improved housing and training opportunities for homeless people

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Work with partners to develop innovative solutions in response to the needs of people with learning disabilities, Care Leavers, Offenders and people with Mental Health problems.	Ensure returning prisoners and other vulnerable offenders have their housing and support needs assessed and addressed in partnership with support agencies and resettlement plans.	April 2011	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB/MW Housing Probation Service Third Sector Partners	Joint working protocols agreed by HAP	Tenancies terminated / safe guarded minimising rent arrears or future issues with applying for housing prevention of homelessness and increased access to services.
		Review and evaluate the Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Protocol.	2011	Within existing staffing / financial resources	DCC AB /GY Homelessness Action Partnership (HAP) / Children and Young People Services (CYPS)	Accommodation and support protocol for care leavers is reviewed and evaluated.	Prevention of homelessness and increased access to services.
		Develop robust working arrangement with acute mental health services / wards which include earlier identification of those with housing issues	Nov-10	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Increased access to appropriate housing for people with mental health needs.	Processes established	Appropriate housing for people with mental health needs
	Ensure vulnerable people threatened with homelessness leaving hospital have access to suitable accommodation	Develop a sub regional protocol for hospital discharge.	Apr-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB NHS.	Joint working protocols created / agreed Screening tools developed to identify customers with housing issues	Improved health and wellbeing.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Ensure sufficient appropriate affordable accommodation is available for people who are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness.	Develop and improve access to move on accommodation for those people leaving accommodation based services.	Nov-10	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB	Production of regular monitoring/ performance information; move on accommodation available in the private rented sector dedicated worker in place	Increased housing options.
		Evaluate whether current temporary accommodation is sufficient and appropriate.	Sep-10	Within existing staffing/financial resources	DCC AB	Option Appraisal Report produced.	Improved temporary accommodation options with support to those in housing need.
		Develop innovative approaches to increase direct access accommodation provision across County Durham.	Jan-11	Within existing staffing/financial resources	Durham CC SP Commissioning and Housing Third sector	Unmet needs are identified and recommendations made for future requirements	Increased housing options.
		To make effective use of the private rented sector as an appropriate housing option for homeless or vulnerable people.	2010/11	Bond Guarantee Scheme £40,000 Communities and Local Government (CLG) Grant	Durham CC AB/MM Environmental Health/Private Rented Sector./Third Sector	Increased provision of direct access accommodation	Increased housing options.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Address the housing needs of people who are chronically socially excluded.	Ensure the housing and support needs of priority prolific offenders, young offenders, people with drug and alcohol problems and victims of domestic abuse are identified and met through partnership working.	2011/12	Within existing staffing/financial resources	Durham CC AB Third Sector and Social Housing Providers	Report to HAP	Increased numbers of suitable housing for vulnerable people with complex needs.
		Invest in specific accommodation based support services.	Apr 11-14	£320,000 revenue funding for 3 years (subject to finance)	Durham CC AB/MW Third sector	New accommodation based services are developed	Increased numbers of suitable housing for vulnerable people with complex needs.
		Make better use of existing accommodation which is empty.	Apr-11	Within existing staffing resources, plus HCA capital	Durham CC Housing, Adults, Wellbeing and Health	New accommodation based services are coordinated.	Increase in the provision of supported accommodation.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better at maintaining housing for vulnerable groups	Support people who are at risk of homelessness	People at risk or in fuel poverty are supported to increase available income to remain in their home.	2010	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB	Assessment and referral process developed for those people in fuel poverty	Prevention of homelessness and increased access to services.
		Older people have access to housing options information.	2010	DKO Board and Area Based Grant (Subject to finance)	Durham CC AB	Digital TV services developed. Life Channel adverts. Prevention champions trained within Age Concern and support agencies.	Prevention of homelessness and increased access to services.
		People with mental health problems are prevented from becoming homeless.	2012	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB / HAP	Needs of client group established. Support Services available.	Prevention of homelessness and increased access to services.
		People with Learning Disability problems are prevented from becoming homeless and are able to make planned moves when needed.	2012	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB / FG	Needs of client group established. Support Services available.	Prevention of homelessness and increased access to services.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better at maintaining housing for vulnerable groups		Empty homes are used more effectively to provide an increased supply of accommodation.	2012/13	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB / HAP	Process in place and agreed by HAP to make best use of empty homes	Prevention of homelessness and increased access to services.
		Effective direct access provision to Places of Change standards. Improve supported housing scheme at Chester le street	2012/13	Places of Change (POC) Grant	Durham CC AB / HAP/ MW Third sector Partners	Council provide support to the Project	Increased access to high quality direct access supported housing.
		Develop joint working protocols with appropriate support agencies.	Jun-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC AB/MW Support Providers	Joint working protocols created / agreed	

Housing and Regeneration Partnership (HARP)

Summary terms of reference

- Own and endorse a programme of prioritised action to deliver the Durham Housing and Regeneration Strategies and the investment priorities and schemes within the Local Investment Plan and the associated Local Investment Agreement (as agreed with the HCA)
- Enable greater understanding of key issues of housing and regeneration policy and enable all involved to understand and recognise the strategic links between partners and contribute towards coordinated investment planning on housing and regeneration issues
- Establish appropriate investment contributions from partners to the housing and regeneration agendas
- Share good practice and experience and enable partnership working to deliver, through investment, projects on the ground

The identification of key areas for potential investment which will include:

- The spatial prioritisation of strategic growth sites
- The setting of targets for growth, affordable housing provision, levels of renewal, rural housing and meeting the needs of specific groups such as older people, disabled persons, vulnerable people and Gypsies , Roma and Travellers.
- The identification of both public and private sector land supply that can contribute to the delivery of objectives

The overseeing of how key objectives are being delivered which will include:

- The assignment and monitoring of delivery roles and responsibilities (including the sponsorship of new delivery vehicles)
- The approval and reviewing of the Local Investment Plan and Agreement
- The endorsement and monitoring of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- The assessment of risks and the endorsement of action to mitigate or eliminate risk
- Take overall responsibility and accountability for the strategic direction of the Growth Point and its remit to deliver sustainable communities across the Growth Point area

The alignment of its work with the delivery of social objectives which will include:

- The establishment of links between housing and regeneration investment and employment, training and apprenticeship initiatives
- Addressing equality and diversity within the context of demographic changes and cohesion
- Ensuring long term community engagement in the long term stewardship of places and strengthening local democracy

The alignment of work with environmental sustainability principles through:

- Securing investment that mitigates and adapts to climate change
- Delivering improvements to environmental performance to existing housing stock and create new benchmarks for new housing development
- Sponsoring and obliging developers to establish good standards of design

Membership ¹⁹

Organisation	Name
Durham County Council	Ian Thompson Cllr C Robson Cllr N Foster David Siddle
Homes & Communities Agency	Pat Ritchie Anne Mulroy
Government Office North East	Barry Errington
East Durham Homes (representing ALMOs)	Paul Tanney
4 Housing Group (representing 'traditional' Registered Providers)	Martin Knowles
ESH Developments (representing Private Sector House Builders)	Geoff Woodcock
Persimmon Homes (representing the Private Sector House Builders)	Simon Usher
Derwentside Homes (representing Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Registered Providers)	Angela Lockwood

¹⁹ Correct as at September 2010

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Action and Investment Plan

Actions for the Housing and Regeneration Partnership

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth More Homes	Facilitate housing growth and mix in the wider Durham City ensuring appropriate sites are included in the Local Development Framework and the Local Investment Plan.	Deliver Aykley Heads masterplan	To commence by 2012 (approx), ongoing to 2020 (approx)	Durham County Council (DCC) / Homes & Community Agency (HCA) / & Private sector (50 affordable = £1.875m)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	500 units by 2015	More new housing built, with a range of housing types and tenures to meet the economic and social needs of our County.
		Develop Durham Villages Regeneration Company (DVRC) sites	2011	DCC/HCA/ & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	32 Units	Affordable and market housing built to meet the needs of the locality and the wider County.
		Development of 'The Grange' site, Bowburn.	2015	DCC/HCA (Kickstart)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	250	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to aid economic growth.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth More Homes		Green Belt review for areas around Durham City to consider suitable sites.	Review 2010-12	Within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	up to 3,860 new dwellings to 2030	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to aid economic growth.
		Monitor housing land supply through Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment(SHLAA) within Durham City.	annual	Within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	2212 dwellings from suitable SHLAA sites over next 15 years.	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to aid economic growth.
	Facilitate housing growth in key settlements by ensuring appropriate sites are included in the Local Development Framework (LDF) and Local Investment Plan (LIP)	Development of Saxon Park, Peterlee	2012	DCC/HCA/ & Private sector (40 affordable)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	90 (40 affordable for rent)	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
		Development of North East Industrial Estate, Peterlee	2020	DCC/HCA/ Growth Point & Private sector (40 affordable)	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	900 units in total over period to 2020 (200 units by 2015; 40 affordable)	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
		Development of Shotley Bridge Hospital Site	2015	HCA & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	279	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
		Development of Network Space, Murton	2015	HCA & Private sector	DCC DS/IM/RR	180	Provide a mix of housing and commercial units to develop a sustainable community.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth More Homes		Monitor housing land supply through SHLAA sites within North and East Durham Delivery area	Review annually	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	4567 dwellings from suitable SHLAA sites over next 15 years	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
		Development of Durham Gate, Spennymoor	2015	DCC/HCA/RD A/Growth Point & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	376	Provides market and affordable housing in close proximity to mixed commercial and leisure development.
		Development of Merrington Lane, Spennymoor	2015	DCC/HCA/ Growth Point & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	1000	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
		Development of Bondgate, Bishop Auckland	2013	DCC/HCA/ Growth Point/ Gentoo & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	80	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to regenerate town centre site.
		Monitor housing land supply through SHLAA sites within South Durham Delivery area	Review annually	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	3770 dwellings from suitable SHLAA sites over next 15 years	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
		Development of Eastgate, Weardale	2015	DCC/HCA/ & Private sector	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	Provides market and affordable housing as part of a new	employment growth centre in an isolated deep rural area.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Housing Growth More Homes		Monitor housing land supply through SHLAA sites within West Durham Delivery area Assess viability of development on small sites < 40 ha	Review annually	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	430 dwellings from suitable SHLAA sites over next 15 years	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
	Review and amend Growth Point trajectories to reflect the outcome of the LDF process. Liaise with Planning in relation to over overall housing allocations.	Extend the scope of the Growth Point to reflect outcomes of the LDF.	2011	DCC/HCA	Durham CC DS/IM/RR	Revised Programme of Development	More housing choice in areas of economic growth.
		Develop a schedule of land disposals to accelerate housing supply.	Late 2010	Capital receipts	Durham CC NH/RR/IM	Priority list of key strategic sites for housing development	Increased choice and range of new housing for rent and sale to create mixed sustainable community.
	Market public sector land to accelerate housing supply.	Develop site specific initiatives which can accelerate housing supply.	2011	Within existing staff/financial resources	Durham CC IM/RR	A list of housing sites for disposal that enable both market housing and affordable housing to be delivered	More new housing built, with a range of housing types and tenures to meet the economic and social needs of our County.
	Establish public/private partnerships and joint ventures as alternative models to traditional land disposal.	Implement the preferred model for housing delivery.	2011	Revenue costs associated with completing a fully costed options appraisal.	Durham CC RR/DS/IM	Identification of a preferred viable delivery vehicle.	Increase in number of affordable homes, delivered in a coherent manner.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
New affordable housing - tackling affordability hotspots including deep rural areas	Produce a county wide policy to increase the provision of affordable homes and housing choices within our towns.	Use SHMA monitoring system plus viability assessment software to negotiate an appropriate percentage of affordable housing on a site by site basis	2010 - 2015	Revenue costs	Durham CC IM/NH	A completed Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as part of LDF process.	Increase in number of affordable homes, delivered in a coherent manner.
		Deliver new affordable housing in partnership with developers in order to create mixed tenure schemes.	2011	Revenue costs	Durham CC IM/RR	Deliver schemes of affordable housing to meet local need.	More affordable housing built in mixed communities to meet the needs of our County
		Deliver local authority new build schemes to increase Social Rent and intermediate market housing.	2010 - 2012	Revenue Costs and capital Land Value Receipts	Durham CC RR	Increased delivery of social and affordable housing.	More affordable housing built in mixed communities to meet the needs of our County
		Secure increased proportions of the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP)	2011-12	Within existing staff / financial resources and HCA Capital Grant	Durham CC RR/DS/IM	Increased share of the NAHP programme	Affordable housing built to meet the needs of our County
		Support innovative schemes which do not rely on public subsidy especially 'rent to buy'	2010-2012	Within existing staff/ financial resources	Durham CC GP/RR	Develop and support initiatives which ensure housing is delivered without the need for grant subsidy.	Affordable housing schemes and products developed to meet the needs of our County

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
New affordable housing - tackling affordability hotspots including deep rural areas	Promote mixed tenure schemes for older persons that use capital receipts to cross subsidise rental element.	Identify sites that are suitable for mixed tenure development either as high density 'extra care' or for bungalows.	2010-2011	Within existing staff / financial resources Registered Providers	Durham CC GP/RR/NH	Develop and support initiatives which ensure housing is delivered without the need for grant subsidy.	Wider choice of accommodation for older persons
	Increase the availability of intermediate housing options between social and market levels for example shared ownership, shared equity, rent to buy and Homebuy etc.	identify the various products available. Contact housebuilders when new sites are being developed and affordable Housing Is included.	01/04/2011 April 2010-2015	within existing staff / financial resources and HCA Capital Grant	DCC RR/NH	Housing Solutions for intermediate housing identified.	Increased access to affordable housing.
	Increase the level of affordable housing in rural areas, especially 'deep rural' areas in West Durham, to enable local people to live and work in existing communities	Establish a rural exception policy in conjunction with the County Durham Plan. Utilise new delivery vehicles and support the development of the Teesdale West Durham Land Trust and potential expansion of community land trusts in other areas within the County.	2011-2015	HCA/DCC	DCC RR/GP	Develop schemes of affordable housing in strategic sites	Provision of additional affordable homes

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better New Homes	Ensure all new developments meet required standards and are delivered in a sustainable way.	Reduce Carbon Emissions on new housing developments.	2015	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC DS	Minimising the carbon footprint for domestic properties	Lower utility bills, reduces fuel poverty and increased employment opportunities in low carbon and green industries
		Enable the delivery of the Lifetime Homes Standard.	2010 - 2015	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/DS	Better quality product for older people, young children, disabled people and carers.	People are able to live in their own homes for longer. Increased quality of life and well-being. Any future adaptations could be implemented easily to help meet a change in needs.
		Enable the delivery of sustainable developments	2010	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	Create environmentally friendly and sustainable communities	Better access to; all modes of existing transport; education; health and other social facilities and services
		Enable the delivery of building for life standards	2010	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	Improved quality of neighbourhoods	Improved quality of life for residents
		Enable the delivery of space standards	2010	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC GR/IM	Improved quality and size of new homes	Contributes to increased quality of life and well-being. Property adaptable to take account of family changing housing needs.



Gypsy Roma & Traveller Sub Group

Summary terms of reference

- Devise, develop, implement & monitor proposals/initiatives which will facilitate the delivery of the Gypsy, Roma & Traveller (GRT) Accommodation & Support Needs Assessment (GTRASNA) action plan
- To raise the profile of GRT accommodation and support needs and the GRTASNA Action Plan with stakeholders including other agencies and the general public
- Collectively consider policy and practice issues and work within a coordinated County-wide partnership approach to resolve GRT accommodation & support needs
- Ensure on-going consultation with GRT communities in relation to issues relating to GRT accommodation and support needs
- Take forward issues and discussions raised by the County Durham GRT Executive group in relation to the accommodation and support needs of GRT communities in County Durham
- Ensure the work of the GRTASNA Sub Group is in line with equal opportunities and human rights to specific areas of work as and when required.



Membership ²⁰

Organisation	Name
Durham County Council	Alan Curry (Adult Social Care)
Durham County Council	Debbie Shanks (Planning)
Durham County Council	Dianne Hedley (Renewals & Improvements)
Durham County Council	Duncan Mcphie (Planning)
Durham County Council	Marie Smith (Strategic Housing)
Durham County Council	John Wilkinson
NHS Net	Ken Ross
Durham Police	Leesa Bennison
Durham County Council	Nicole Quayle
East Durham Homes	Nigel Day
Durham County Council	Norman Hunt (Strategic Housing) (Chair)
Durham County Council	Ruth Scott (Traveller Liaison Service)
Durham County Council	Scott McNally (Traveller Liaison Service)
Durham County Council	Sue Green

²⁰ *Correct as at September 2010*

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Delivery Plan

Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Accommodation and Support Group

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Development of new sites for Gypsy, Roma & Travellers.	Carry out refresh of the Gypsy Roma & Traveller Accommodation Assessment	Dec-10	Within existing staffing/ financial resources.	Durham CC GR/IM	GTA assessment complete	Increased housing provision for Gypsy/Roma Travellers
		Identify sites as part of the Local Development Framework	2012	Within existing staffing/ financial resources.	Durham CC GR/IM	Sites identified	Increased housing provision for Gypsy/Roma Travellers
	Refurbishment of Gypsy Roma & Traveller sites	Refurbishment of Gypsy and Traveller site, Tower Road, Stanley.	2011-2012	Capital receipts, external funding £2,170,000 (subject to finance)	DurhamCC KH/DH	GRT site refurbished	Improved housing for GRT community
		Refurbishment of Gypsy and Traveller site, Adventure Lane, West Rainton, Drum Lane, Birtley	2012-2013	Capital receipts, external funding £4,800,000 (subject to finance)	DurhamCC KH/DH	GRT site refurbished	Improved housing for GRT community

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
		Refurbishment of Gypsy Roma & Traveller site at Green land Bishop Auckland	2010-2011	Capital receipts, external funding £2,400,000(subject to finance)	DurhamCC KH/DH	GRT site refurbished	Improved housing for GRT community
Better at maintaining housing for vulnerable groups	Ensure that Gypsy/Roma Travellers in County Durham have appropriate access to accommodation related health and welfare support.	Carry out a health needs assessment.	Dec-10	The total cost of the assessment is £45K and is funded by DCC and NHS.	Durham CC Housing and Adults, Wellbeing and Health AC	Health Needs Assessment completed.	Improved health and welfare.

Durham Key Options Board

Summary terms of reference

- To over see the operation and development of Durham Key Options in relation to the Lettings Policy and procedures, procurement and delivery of services
- To ensure Durham Key Options meets its aims and objectives and overall provides choice by enabling applicants to play an active role in choosing where to live while also continuing to house those in greatest need
- To ensure Durham Key Options increases choice and affordability by providing applicants with a range of a housing options incorporates registered social landlords, private sector rented properties, low cost home ownership options, mutual exchange and mobility schemes.



Membership ²¹

Organisation	Name
Cestria	Allison Carrahar -
Durham City Homes	Lynne Boyd
Sedgefield Borough Homes	Cathy Slater
Dale and Valley Homes	Ian Hornsby
Durham County Council	Marie Smith
Durham County Council	Andrew Burnip
Durham County Council	Christopher Simmonds
Dale and Valley Homes	Joanne Dunn
East Durham Homes	John Davidson
Durham County Council	Lynn Hall (Chair)
Derwentside Homes	Trevor Smith
Teesdale Housing Association	Nick Charlton

²¹ *Correct as at September 2010*

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Delivery Plan

Durham Key Options Choice Based Lettings Board

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Support the delivery of homelessness and housing advice services and develop innovative solutions to housing need across County Durham through partnership working.	Ensure vulnerable groups have a clear understanding and can access the Durham Key Options Choice Based Letting (CBL) scheme.	November 2010 & 6 monthly thereafter	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC LH/AB	Reports to DKO Board; Digital television services developed; applicants assessed as Band F are monitored	Vulnerable residents have an understanding of and can access the Durham Key Options CBL Scheme.
Better access to affordable housing.	Extend the Durham Key Options Choice Based Letting Scheme to include private rented properties and low cost home ownership	Identify key partners and develop project plan	Apr 11 Project plan produced April 12 Scheme extended	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC NH/MS/RM,	Project plan produced Scheme extended to include other tenures	Housing options are increased

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to affordable housing.	Identify the need for and promote intermediate housing products.	Confirm demand for intermediate products through the SHMA	Nov-10	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC ER/NH	Demand for intermediate products is clear and a report produced	Increased choice of housing tenure
		Implement a co-ordinated approach to raise awareness of homebuy products with Private developers, RSLs and Homebuy agents	Jan-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC RR/NH	A coordinated approach is implemented	Affordable housing schemes and products developed to meet the needs of our County.
		work with HomeBuy agent to promote their products	Apr-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC NH/RR	Homebuy products are promoted	Residents are aware of the schemes available

Learning Disabilities Housing Task Group

Summary terms of reference

- The Learning Disabilities Housing Task Group will have direct responsibility for delivering two key actions contained within the Housing Strategy under altogether better at housing people objective:
- Ensure those ageing tenants with learning disabilities in need of bungalows or low level access accommodation can remain in tenancy based accommodation.
- Develop floating support, or emergency accommodation options, for people with Learning Disabilities who live with elderly carers and are in danger of crisis or breakdowns.

The Learning Disabilities Housing Task Group would also feed into other Task Groups reporting to the County Durham Housing Forum where issues overlapped and our expertise would be beneficial (e.g. improving accessibility to 'in-house' housing services).

Membership ²²

Organisation	Name
DCC Commissioning	Fred Grand
DCC Commissioning	Alan Curry
DCC Strategic Housing	Gemma Wilkinson
DCC Strategic Housing	Sarah Keable
DCC Strategic Housing	Rachael McCoy
Housing Solutions	Andrew Burnip
DCC Integrated LD Team (West)	Pat Smith
DCC Operations LD/MH	Luke Mulcahy
Third Sector (MENCAP)	Joan Parker
Carer Representative	Jack Routledge
LD Parliament	Gary Wilson & Chris Colling

²² Correct as at November 2010

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Delivery Plan

Learning Disabilities Housing Task Group

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Work with partners to develop innovative solutions in response to the needs of people with learning disabilities, care leavers, offenders and people with mental health problems	Ensure those ageing tenants with learning disabilities in need of bungalow or low level access accommodation can remain in tenancy based accommodation.	Apr-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC Housing and Adults, Wellbeing and Health	Sustainability Assessments completed; empty property procedure in place	People supported in their own homes for longer and less reliance on institutional care
		Develop floating support, or emergency accommodation, for people with Learning Disabilities who live with elderly carers and are in danger of crisis.	Apr-11	Proposed £100,000 per annum.	Durham CC Housing and Adults, Wellbeing and Health	Funding for floating support scheme secured/ emergency accommodation available	Support in own home for longer, minimising disruption to lives and reducing costs to DCC of expensive emergency placements.

Social Housing Group

Summary terms of reference

- To act as a discussion forum between the Strategic Housing Authority, ALMOs, LSVTs, INMOs and RPs operating within County Durham.
- To develop as an expert group to share good practice in 'added value' housing services in order to benefit the social housing providers, their tenants and the wider community;
- To take the lead in enabling and monitoring delivery of the relevant actions relating to social housing in the Housing Strategy in areas such as domestic energy; achieving decent homes; maintaining decent homes; sustainability and specific regeneration projects in relation to social housing;

Membership²³ *(draft, to be reviewed by the Group)*

Organisation	Name
DCC Strategic Housing Service	Norman Hunt (Chair)
DCC Strategic Housing Service	Marie Smith
DCC Renewal and Improvement	Shirley Janes(Vice Chair)
DCC Renewal and Improvement	Cliff Duff
East Durham Homes	David Hodgson
Durham City Homes	John Potter
Dale and Valley Homes	Kevin White
Sedgefield Borough Homes	Ian Brown
Teesdale Housing Association	Nick Charlton
Cestria	Paul Stephens
Derwentside Homes	Trevor Smith

²³ *Correct as at November 2010*



Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Action and Investment Plan

Social Housing Group

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Regeneration and Renewal	Deliver regeneration in areas where the Council owns housing stock.	Acquisition and demolition scheme at Esh Winning.	2010-2013	HRA and general fund. 2010-2011 - £570,000 2011-2012 - £300,000 2012-2013 - £130,000	Durham CC KH/DH Durham City Homes	78 properties demolished	Low quality homes demolished
		Stock condition survey required to properties in Bowburn.	2011/2013	HRA £85,000	DurhamCC KH/DH Durham City Homes	Stock condition survey completed	Residents are aware of what will happen to their home in the future.
		De-commissioning of sheltered units at Oversteeds and Brandon.	2011-2012	HRA £340,000	DurhamCC KH/DH Durham City Homes	Older persons units are decommissioned.	Existing residents are moved to more appropriate accommodation
		Acquisition and demolition schemes at Wheatley Hill and Thornley.	2010-2011	HRA and general fund £725,000	DurhamCC KH/DH East Durham Homes	50 properties demolished	Low quality homes demolished

OBJECTIVE 2 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING STANDARDS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better existing homes - decent homes	Bring existing social housing stock up to the decent homes standard	Continue Decent Homes investment programme for council owned housing stock including energy efficiency	March 2011	£5.035million	Durham City Homes	675 homes made decent Decent Homes standard now 100%	Better housing standards; warmer homes; safer homes
		Continue Decent Homes investment programme for council owned housing stock including energy efficiency	March 2011	£16.75 million comprising £10M ALMO & £6.75M MRA	East Durham Homes	Planned to make 600 homes decent. New doors & windows to 1675 homes. One off electrical and mechanical works as necessary.	Better homes including; Modern facilities, Improved security, Reduced energy charges.
		Continue Decent Homes investment programme for council owned housing stock including energy efficiency	March 2012	2010/11 £8.486 2011/12 £7.650	Dale and Valley Homes	This year 2010-11 Dale and Valley Homes are to complete 866 homes to the decent homes standard and in 2011-12 Dale and Valley Homes need to complete the remaining 1285.	Better housing standards; warmer homes; safer homes

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Carry out a review of added value services provided by Social Landlords and to promote sharing and expansion of good practice	Map out all those initiatives currently in place. Produce a report for the Durham Housing Forum aligning the initiatives to the themes from the Sustainable Communities Strategy 2010-2030.	March 2011	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC IM/NH	Report to County Durham Housing Forum	Added value services provided by Landlords in relation to worklessness, health and ASB and are more widely available to tenants



Older Persons Accommodation & Support Task Group

Summary terms of reference

- To Commission and oversee the delivery of a County Durham Older Persons Accommodation and Support Strategy
- To act as an enabling group to ensure the actions of the older persons delivery plan are successfully delivered through a partnership approach.

Membership ²⁴ (draft, to be reviewed by the Group)

Organisation	Name
DCC Strategic Housing Service	Norman Hunt (Chair)
DCC Renewal and Improvement	Shirley Janes
DCC Adults Wellbeing & Health	Denise Elliott Jenny Warren
Registered Providers	Durham Aged Mine Workers and Homes association
Health	Graham Greig
DCC Supported Housing	Linda Ogilvie
DCC Planning	Debbie Shanks

²⁴ Correct as at September 2010



Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Action and Investment Plan

Older Persons Housing Task Group

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
tacking affordability deep rural areas	Promote mixed tenure schemes for older persons that use capital receipts to cross subsidise rental element	Registered Providers to carry out sustainability assessments of their housing stock for older people and to take action to replace those that are unsuitable.	Sep-13	within existing staff / financial resources	DCC NH/JW Registered Providers via Durham Housing Forum.	Sustainability Assessments completed.	Wider choice of accommodation for older persons
New affordable housing including hotspots		Produce a forward plan for the development of new housing for older people as part of the LDF.	Sep-12	within existing staff / financial resources	DCC NH/JW Registered Providers via Durham Housing Forum. CBL Board	Development of older persons housing is included in the LDF.	Wider choice of accommodation for older persons

OBJECTIVE 2 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING STANDARDS

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better new homes	Ensure all new developments meet required standards and are delivered in a sustainable way.	Ensure that developers are clear what is expected of them when providing new homes for older people.	Dec-11	within existing staff / financial resources	Durham CC NH/JW GR	Additional homes for older people	Increased housing options for older people

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups	Enable older people to have access to affordable, warm, safe and secure homes to enable independent living.	Carry out a review of older people accessing CBL, particularly those living in the private sector	Sep-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC NH/JW CBL Board and Social Housing Providers	Review completed and reported to CDHF	Older people can live independently.
		Provide support to those older people wanting to move who are currently under occupying a family home.	Sep-12	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC NH/JW Social Housing Providers.	A system is in place to provide advice to those older people currently under occupying a home	Older people can live independently.

Issue	Summary Activity	Key Actions	Timescale	Resources	Responsible Officer/ Partner	Outputs	Outcomes for Residents
Better access to housing for vulnerable groups		Ensure older people across all tenures have equitable access to adaptations.	Sep-12	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC NH/JW Social Housing Providers.	An equitable process is in place	Older people can live independently.
		Carry out a review of the use of adapted properties within the Social Sector.	Sep-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	DurhamCC NH/JW CBL Board	Review completed and reported to CDHF	Older people can live independently; better use of existing housing.
	Accessible and reliable information and advice is available to all older people across County Durham to maximise income and support choice and control.	Review the effectiveness of current information and advice provided to older people.	Sep-11	Within existing staffing / financial resources	DurhamCC NH/JW	Advice provision for older people is reviewed and improved.	A wide range of advice is available for older people.
	Identify and target those vulnerable people who require support to maintain independent living.	Enable older people to maximise their independence and wellbeing through access to support, practical assistance and socialisation.	Sep-12	Within existing staffing / financial resources	Durham CC NH/JW Housing Providers and Health and Wellbeing Partnership	Access to support and assistance is available.	Older people are enabled to maximise their independence and wellbeing.

Durham County Council Housing Service

Summary terms of reference

The Council's Housing Service sits within the Regeneration & Economic Development (RED) service grouping and includes the functional areas of:

- Strategic Housing
- Housing Renewal and Improvement
- Supported Housing
- Housing Solutions
- Durham City Homes

A full description of the structure and function of the Housing Service is included in the Housing Service Plan 2010-2013 and a copy of this plan is available from the Housing Policy & Strategy Team by request strategic.housing@durham.gov.uk (0191) 527 4534

Membership ²⁵

Organisation	Name
DCC Head of Housing	Glyn Hall
DCC Housing Renewal & Improvement	Kath Heathcote
DCC Supported Housing	Linda Ogilvie
DCC Housing Solutions	Lynn Hall
DCC Durham City Homes	Simon Bartlett
DCC Growth Point	David Siddle

The Detailed Delivery plan for the Council's Housing Service is set out in the Housing Service Delivery Plan 2010-2013.

A copy of this plan is available from the Strategic Housing Service email: strategic.housing@durham.gov.uk or telephone (0191) 527 4535 for further details. A summary of our contribution to the Housing Strategy Delivery plan is summarised on the following page

²⁵ Correct as at September 2010

Building *Altogether Better* Lives: A Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010-2015

Action and Investment Plan

Durham County Council Housing Service

OBJECTIVE 1 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING MARKETS

Issue	Summary Activity	Timescale
More new homes	Facilitate housing growth and mix through the Housing Growth Point, Local Investment Plan and associated plans	2013
More executive homes	Set up system to effectively define and monitor the delivery of executive homes.	2011 in line with LDF development
More affordable Housing	Establish a county-wide policy for Affordable Housing through the County Durham Plan process	2011
Regeneration and Renewal	Revenue Account (HRA) Strategic Asset Management Group	Q4 2010
	Implement housing renewal schemes to contribute to the regeneration of County Durham.	Various to 2013

OBJECTIVE 2 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* HOUSING STANDARDS

Issue	Summary Activity	Timescale
Better existing homes - Decent Homes	Develop services delivered by Home Improvement Agencies through the use of the Council's Financial Assistance Policy.	2011
	Improve social housing standards and conditions in Durham City Homes through the implementation of the Durham City Homes Delivery Plan	Various to 2013
Better existing Homes - Empty Homes	Reduce the number of empty homes which have been empty for more than six months.	Annually
Better Existing Homes - Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty	Reduce domestic carbon emissions by 40% and contribute to the eradication of fuel poverty in County Durham in line with Government and corporate targets	Various to 2015

OBJECTIVE 3 - *ALTOGETHER BETTER* AT HOUSING PEOPLE

Issue	Summary Activity	Timescale
Better Housing Management Services	Carry out a stock options appraisal of the Council's 19,000 retained social housing units	November 2011
	Improve housing management standards in the private rented sector.	Various to 2013
	Support vulnerable people to live more independently in their own homes.	Various to 2013
Better at housing vulnerable people	Support the delivery of core homelessness and housing advice services	Various to 2013



Hard Copies of this document are available from the Council's

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Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

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