



Ipswich Housing Strategy 2010/11-2015/16



IPSWICH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Ipswich Housing Strategy 2010/11-15/16

A vision for the future

Our current Housing Strategy spans 2010 to 2015. Given the changing national and local picture since the strategy was developed we will keep the Strategy under review and update it where and when appropriate.

We will review the 2010-15 strategy, when the outcomes of the Suffolk-wide Housing Needs Study, due to take place in early 2014, are known.

Armed with this information we will produce a strategy that will help deliver the provision of suitable housing for the future that will support the economic growth of Ipswich and Suffolk.

Below is a summary of what has changed since the 2010-15 strategy was created and what any review or future strategy will take into account.

Some of the changes that have occurred since the 2010-15 Strategy was developed are:

- 1 A change in political leadership which has made 'the economy' and housing the council's main focus
 - u It has initiated an ambitious Council House building programme.
 - u A new set of corporate values and themes were introduced in February 2012.
 - u The values are:
 - n **We Deliver** - putting customers first, respecting and supporting people, inclusively and fairly.
 - n **We Innovate** - embracing change and new ways of working, with a "can-do" approach.
 - n **We communicate** - working as one team, honestly and openly, and recognising each other's contributions and success.
 - u These values are underpinned by the principles of fairness and value for money service delivery.
 - u The main corporate theme that drives the Housing Strategy will now be "Quality Housing for all"
 - u Any housing strategy review will also look at how it can support and link in to all the corporate themes, in particular housing's link to the economy.
- 1 The 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been introduced and replaces the previous Planning Policy Statements.
- 1 New national schemes such as affordable rents and the help to buy scheme have been introduced
- 1 Welfare reform and changes in the national economy has had a significant impact on the type, size, tenure and affordability of properties that are needed to meet the demand of the housing market.
- 1 An update to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment was undertaken in 2012 and this shows revised Housing Need figures.
- 1 Ipswich Borough Council has moved to be self financing for Council Housing which gives us greater control over our housing stock and budget.
- 1 A new national housing strategy; Laying the foundations: A housing strategy for England was introduced in November 2011. This aims to increase housing supply, get the housing market moving and in turn boost the economy.

A revised Housing Strategy must:

- 1 Strengthen the links between housing and the economy and housing and health.
- 1 Take account of the funding streams that these links provide access to.
- 1 Look to the future and create a strategy which is flexible and able to adapt to changes and new challenges that lie ahead.
- 1 Be built on the new corporate values, priorities and themes, and be mindful of the role housing plays in the wider aims of Ipswich.
- 1 Be a document that the 'Housing Service' can work to and mean something to those people who deliver Housing Services.
- 1 Be reviewed and monitored on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose

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Ipswich Housing Strategy 2010/11-2015/16 Map

Vision

Everyone in Ipswich should have the opportunity to rent or buy a decent home at a price they can afford, in a sustainable community where they want to live and work.

4 Priorities

Improving housing supply	Improving housing quality	Supporting and including people	Doing the basics better for less
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Getting the right information and improving strategic links. 2. Ensuring supply of new affordable homes. 3. Balanced sustainable communities. 4. Meeting Gypsy and Traveller pitch needs 5. New housing meets the needs of all communities 6. The right mix of new market, affordable and specialist housing for older people. 7. New homes for people with care and support needs. 8. New homes for students in balanced communities 9. Environmental sustainability. 10. Improved housing supply through best use of existing stock. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decent homes in the private sector. 2. Decent homes and neighbourhoods in the social rented sector. 3. Good quality self-contained accommodation for statutorily homeless households. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective housing and neighbourhood management through partnership working. 2. The housing needs of all communities are met. 3. Preventing homelessness and helping vulnerable households. 4. The needs of those with chaotic lifestyles and multiple needs are met in partnership and no one in Ipswich is forced to sleep rough. 5. Older people remain independent and included. 6. Vulnerable people remain independent and included and have opportunities to enter employment, education and training. 7. Young parents are supported and children are safeguarded. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Excellent housing services based on excellent customer care. 2. All housing services represent good value for money. 3. Tenants and residents are involved in decision making.

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Part 1. Vision, Context and Evidence

Why have a Housing Strategy?

Housing plays a key role in government agendas for the Big Society, regeneration and sustainable communities, health and wellbeing, community cohesion, local decision making and community empowerment. At the time of writing, the UK economy is making a weak recovery, but the housing market remains depressed. Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) continues to work with partners to help those threatened with job losses whose homes may also be at risk, and to mitigate a projected decrease in the numbers of new affordable homes being built.

Ipswich Housing Strategy 2010/11–15/16 has been developed in dialogue with a range of stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Its purpose is to explain how the council's housing services will contribute effectively to meeting the needs and aspirations of Ipswich's local communities, as well as the council's role in relation to wider community strategies, sub-regional, and national strategies and plans.

The Strategy sets out the council's approach to housing over the next 5 years in full.

Consultation on the Strategy took place from 1 February 2010 to 28 March 2010. We would like to thank the following organisations for responding to the consultation:

- Suffolk County Council (SCC) Adult Care Services.
- Friends, Families and Travellers and Traveller Law Reform Project
- Audit Commission
- Papworth Housing Trust
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Suffolk New College
- Ipswich Hostels Liaison Group
- Greater Haven Gateway Housing Sub-region
- Ipswich Housing Management Board
- Ipswich Area Forums
- Crest Nicholson
- Chinese Welfare Association
- Suffolk Mental Health Partnerships
- Lawson Planning Partnership Ltd on behalf of Suffolk Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust and Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust
- Suffolk Supporting People
- Energy Saving Trust

Changes to Ipswich Housing Strategy 2010/11-2015/16 since the consultation

Since we consulted on the Draft Housing Strategy there has been a change of government and cuts to public spending on housing including cuts to short-term funding initiatives to mitigate the effects of the collapse of the housing market. There is now a renewed emphasis on better use of existing housing, in particular bringing empty properties back into use and dealing with under-occupation, improving the flexibility of social housing and promoting homeownership. Regional government structures are being dismantled along with regional housing targets and regional

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targets for new Gypsy and Traveller pitches. As well as this, the full implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2010 and the Localism Bill, particularly those relating to housing and welfare reform, remain to be assessed. IBC will work with partners to respond to new initiatives such as 80% market rents for new housing association properties and diminished grant funding for new affordable housing, and to continue to help those threatened with job losses whose homes and livelihoods may also be at risk

Over the summer of 2010, IBC and its public sector partners engaged in a Local Investment Planning (LIP) process with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to agree a Local Investment Plan (LIP) for Ipswich, focusing on key housing and regeneration priorities.

The final Ipswich Housing Strategy takes account of these changes as well as the consultation comments received. In particular Outcome 1.2: Ensuring the continued supply of new affordable homes, has been substantially rewritten to focus on achieving the priorities of Ipswich LIP rather than short term measures in response to the economic downturn. Whilst IBC considers all the outcomes identified to be important, the council will need to focus on key outcomes. Core housing services outcomes are identified at the end of sections covering each priority.

As well as the final Ipswich Housing Strategy 2010/11-2015/16 we have produced a short Ipswich Housing Statement 2010/11-15/16 of our vision, housing priorities, key outcomes, how we will achieve them and the resources and partnerships that will help us do so. The Statement is the council's working document, which will be reviewed every 6 months and updated annually throughout the lifetime of Ipswich Housing Strategy.

Contributing to sub-regional, local and communities strategies

Where possible the government prefers Housing and Homelessness Strategies to be incorporated into local Communities Strategies. But due to the two-tier nature of local authorities in Suffolk and Ipswich, as well as differences in the timing of strategy development, we have chosen to develop a separate Housing Strategy. It is crucial, however that the Housing Strategy helps achieve the objectives of both Ipswich and Suffolk Community Strategies, as well as county-wide strategies such as Suffolk Supporting People 5-year Strategy, Suffolk Dementia Strategy and the emerging Suffolk Flexicare model for older people's services.

Ipswich Community Strategy: Everybody Matters.

<http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/oneipswichCommunityStrategy200810.pdf>

The Community Strategy for Ipswich was published in July 2008 by the local strategic partnership, one-ipswich. The Everybody Matters vision is set out below.

“Everybody Matters - we want Ipswich to be a vibrant, prosperous and thriving place. We will address deprivation and inequality in neighbourhoods and develop an economically dynamic and enterprising society so everyone in Ipswich can:

- be prosperous and have a place to live
- be healthy and stay well
- achieve their potential and enjoy life
- keep safe
- have a greater say and better choices
- live in friendly and supportive communities.”

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Everybody Matters seeks to manage and plan for growth and change and to build social infrastructure through the delivery of the following six outcomes:

1. Everyone should have a decent roof over their head.
2. People enjoy good health.
3. There is work for all.
4. Create a better environment for people in Ipswich.
5. People keep safe.
6. People live in friendly and supportive communities and have a greater say.

Ipswich Housing Strategy directly addresses the first of these outcomes, and contributes to the others.

Much of the work of one-ipswich has been focussed on meeting the needs of homeless people with chaotic and complex lifestyles. Specific objectives include: -

- Link existing housing and homelessness strategies.
- Set up a night centre.
- Provide appropriate housing for people with complex support needs.
- Develop a 'Move On' project to support independent living.
- Improve access to GPs, dentists and pharmacies.
- Map services that already exist and increase the efficiency of the way partners work to improve health and care services.
- Audit what is already happening to pool expertise.
- Direct intervention into preventing mental ill health.
- Support activities to address issues of Class A drugs and related issues, particularly the local impact of criminal gangs outside Ipswich/Suffolk.
- Promote positive management of the nighttime economy.
- Provide ongoing work-related support to ex-offenders and those with drug and/or alcohol dependency by ensuring appropriate agencies work together.
- Tackle low-level crime through prevention, cohesion and addressing broader social issues.

These issues are picked up in Ipswich Homelessness Strategy and under Priority 3 of this Housing Strategy: supporting and including vulnerable adults, hard to reach groups and all communities.

Suffolk Community Strategy: Transforming Suffolk 2008-2028

http://www.transformingsuffolk.co.uk/files/comm_strat/suffolkstrategic.pdf and the **Suffolk wide local area agreement, LAA2.** <http://www.transformingsuffolk.co.uk/vision-and-priorities/laa2-2008-2011>

The ambition of Transforming Suffolk is:

“By 2028 we want Suffolk to be recognised for its outstanding environment and quality of life for all; a place where everyone can realise their potential, benefit from and contribute to Suffolk’s economic prosperity and be actively involved in their community.”

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Transforming Suffolk has 4 themes:

- A prosperous and vibrant economy.
- Learning and skills for the future.
- The greenest county.
- Safe, healthy and inclusive communities.

Affordable housing for all is one of the cross cutting principles of Transforming Suffolk.

The Housing Strategy must also be in accord with council's Corporate Plan, *Transforming Ipswich* http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/Transforming_Ipswich.pdf and Ipswich's Local Development Framework (LDF) <http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents.php?categoryID=856>.

Ipswich Housing Strategy actively supports the council's Single Equality Scheme and Community Cohesion Policy.

Ipswich is 1 of 8 local authorities that make up the Greater Haven Gateway (GHG) housing sub-region. As such we contribute to meeting the objectives in the GHG Sub-Regional Housing Strategy <http://www.haven-gateway.org/themes/housing>.

The GHG housing sub-region works closely with the Haven Gateway Partnership, the economic development and planning sub-region, to link housing with economic development and the growth agenda.

Key partnerships and partners:

Greater Haven Gateway Housing Sub-region.
Ipswich Suffolk Gypsy and Traveller Forum.
Hostels Liaison Group.
Housing Equality and Diversity Group (EERA).
Haven Gateway Partnership.
one-ipswich.
Housing Management Board.
IpCom.
Ipswich Area Forums.
Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership.
Suffolk Forum for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants.
Suffolk Supporting People.
Ipswich Anti-Social Behaviour Network.
Suffolk Racial Harassment Initiative.

And many public, private and 3rd sector partners including; Ipswich Housing Action Group, Ipswich Women's Aid, Ipswich Umbrella Trust, Citizens Advice Bureau, Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality, Kurdish Women's Group, Bangladeshi Support Centre, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Primary Care Trust, Registered Providers, private landlords and house builders.

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Evidence of Housing Need and Demand

Ipswich Housing Strategy is informed by recent pieces of research and service monitoring, including: -

- Ipswich Housing Needs Assessment 2005.
http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=263&categoryID=868
- Ipswich Stock Condition Survey 2005.
<http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/IpswichStockConditionReport.pdf>
- Suffolk 5 District Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2007. http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/Suffolk_Cross-Boundary_Gypsy_and_Traveller_Accommodation_Assessment_-_Final_Report.pdf
- Ipswich Housing Market Area Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 (SHMA).
http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?categoryID=1004&fileID=348
- The draft Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009 (SHLAA).
https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=1004&documentID=629
- SHMA update January 2010
http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=1516&categoryID=10007
- Ipswich Housing Market Area Sites Viability Report June 2009.
http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/Final_Ipswich_et_al_Viability_Study.pdf
- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Suffolk 2008-2011.
<http://www.sccpolicies.info/downlaod.php?view.1108>
- Housing Services statistical monitoring of people seeking advice and using or requesting services.

About Ipswich

Ipswich is the largest town in the county of Suffolk, a key employment centre with a new university and a growing population, which is slightly younger than in the surrounding rural areas. Ipswich is an urban centre with urban opportunities and challenges.

At the time of the 2001 census Ipswich's population was 117,069. The 2009 Office of National Statistics (ONS) population estimate for Ipswich was 126,600.¹ Ipswich's population is projected to rise to 138,700 by 2021.²

Although Ipswich has a younger demographic profile than many parts of Suffolk, its population is ageing in line with national trends.

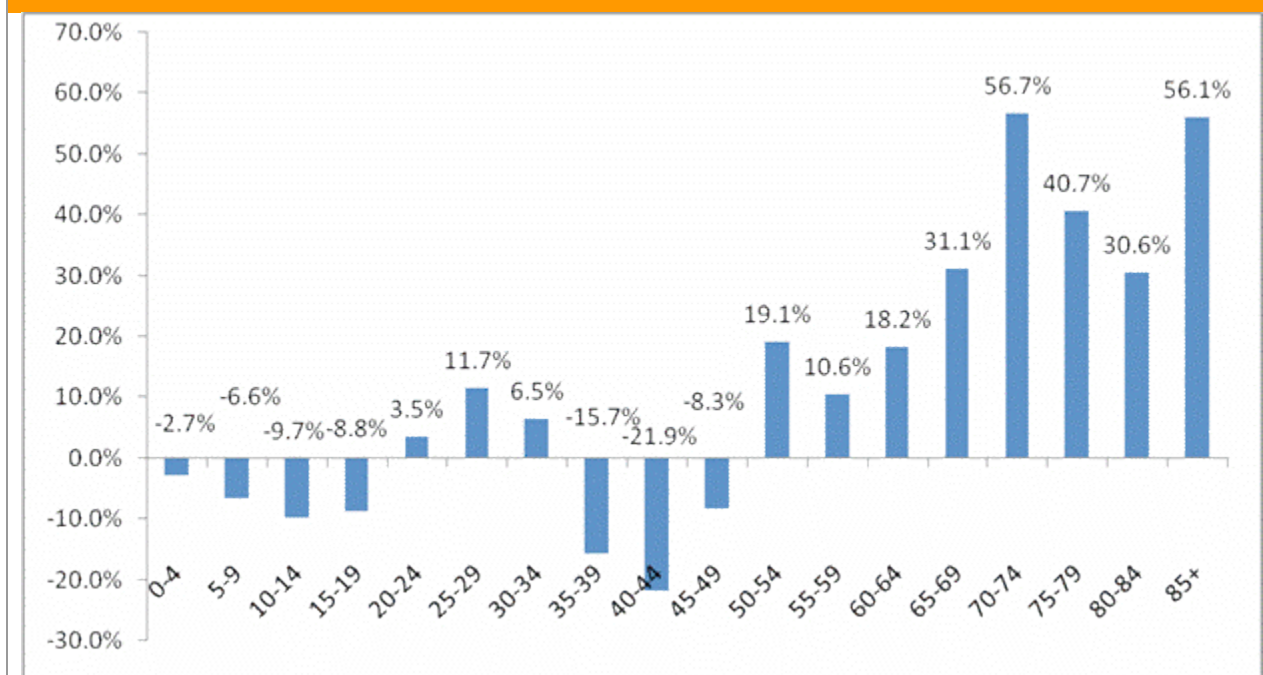
The table below shows trends across the Ipswich, Babergh, Mid Suffolk and Suffolk Coastal council areas.

¹ ONS website

² JSNA for Suffolk 2008-11 Table 2.1 page 17

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Figure 10.18 Population changes by age in the study area 2006-2021



Source: ONS Population Projections, 2004³

2001 census data shows that 33.1% of households (18.1% of the local population) in Ipswich contain someone with a limiting long-term illness (LLTI). As elderly people are more likely to develop a LLTI, this proportion will increase in the future.

At 1 April 2010 there were 58,414 homes in Ipswich; 8184 social rented council homes, 4483 homes owned by Registered Providers (RPs), 160 homes owned by other public authorities (for school caretakers, nurses, police etc) and 45,587 private sector homes for rent and sale.

Our last housing needs study 2005 found a net annual need for 798 additional affordable homes in Ipswich. Our more recent SHMA 2008, which relied on secondary data only, found a similar order of need at 708 new affordable homes per year. Because of falling house prices our 2009 SHMA update found a reduced level of need for affordable housing of 256 new affordable homes per year. This is 37% of our proposed target of 700 new dwellings per year. Unfortunately the SHMA update relied on prices and wages alone to assess affordable housing needs, and did not take account of the lack of access to mortgages, which prevented those on modest incomes from taking advantage of the falling market. For this reason the figures in the 2009 SHMA update for net need for new affordable homes must be regarded as an underestimate.

Our target for delivery of affordable homes is currently 245 per year i.e. 35% of our total delivery target of 700. This may change in line with our emerging LDF policy to be adopted in 2011.

The SHMA 2008 found a substantial need for smaller 1-2 bedroomed homes in Ipswich to meet the needs of smaller households and an ageing population, as well as a continued need for smaller 2-3 bedroomed family homes. But we also know that

³ Fordham's, 2008, Ipswich housing Market Area, Strategic Housing Market Assessment, page 219

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some local Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) households require larger affordable homes, so there is also a continuing need for a small number of larger 4+ bedroomed homes. Much of recent housing development in Ipswich, however, has been in the form of 1 and 2 bedroomed apartments and in the present economic climate there is an oversupply of flats.

University College Suffolk (UCS) is a new rapidly growing urban university. UCS is working in partnership with the private sector developers, landlords and the council to enable the development of 2,500 student bedspaces by 2014. As well as UCS, Ipswich has a new further education college, Suffolk New College and a new learning centre for 16-19 year olds, Suffolk One.

At the time of the 2001 census, 9.19% of people living in Ipswich were from a BAME backgrounds. By 2007 the percentage of BAME people in Ipswich was estimated to have risen to 14.3%.⁴ Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE) believes these to be underestimates of the true numbers of BAME people living in Ipswich.

Ipswich's population is expected to continue to grow and the proportion of people from BAME backgrounds to increase. Our housing studies show that people from some BAME backgrounds, are more likely to be overcrowded, and that people who have recently arrived in this country such as refugees and migrant workers from Europe have difficulty accessing housing options advice and housing services due to language difficulties.

Our GTAA revealed a need for 1-3 new residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers as well as a need for 10 transit pitches.

Other Indicators of housing need

In 2009/10 there were:

- 189 homelessness presentations (down from 285 in 2009/10) and 99 acceptances (down from 147 in 2009/10).
- 62 households in temporary accommodation on 1 April 2010 (142 on 01/04/2009).
- 4900 households on the housing register.

Supply of new homes

- 707 affordable homes for rent were let to new tenants in 2009/10
- 275 new affordable homes were built in 2008/9, 201 for rent and 74 shared ownership. But due to the economic downturn only 65 new affordable homes were completed in 2009/10, 36 for rent and 17 shared ownership.

Private sector homes

Category 1 hazards are a risk to the health and safety of an occupier. Local authorities must take action to address Category 1 hazards. Category 2 hazards are less serious and can be dealt with through a range of responses.

- Our Stock Condition Survey 2005 found that 13.9% of private sector homes have a Category 1 hazard.
- The estimated cost of tackling Category 1 hazards in Ipswich is £13M

⁴ ONS website

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Issues emerging from the last Housing Strategy 2006-2009.

A number of outstanding issues emerged at the end of the last Housing Strategy, along with those raised by stakeholders during consultation on the SHMA and changes due to regional and national government policy. These include: -

- Short-term responses to the credit crunch to maintain the affordable housing programme, and to help those facing unemployment and at risk of losing their homes.
- Keeping the SHMA up to date in rapidly changing market conditions.
- Developing an increased range of housing options for older people.
- Meeting the pitch needs of Gypsies and Travellers.
- Aligning CBL and enhanced housing options more closely to include private sector options, improved access to support and employment advice.
- Ensuring that housing services contribute to wider anti-poverty, community cohesion initiatives and place-shaping.
- Reviewing our approach to providing temporary accommodation to statutorily homeless households to improve standards and meet government targets.
- Continued investment to ensure delivery of Ipswich Standard.
- Further work with partners to ensure everyone's care and support needs are met.
- Ensure the housing needs of all communities in Ipswich are met and that all communities are consulted and engaged.
- Tackle harassment and discrimination and promote community cohesion.

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Part 2. Strategic vision and priorities

Strategic vision

‘Everyone in Ipswich should have the opportunity to rent or buy a decent home at a price they can afford, in a sustainable community where they want to live and work’.

Strategic priorities

These have been developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders in the public, private and 3rd sectors as well as members of the public.

We have 4 strategic priorities: -

- Priority 1 Improving housing supply and improving neighbourhoods through a mix of high quality, environmentally sustainable homes for sale or rent.
- Priority 2 Improving housing quality and environmental sustainability.
- Priority 3 Supporting and including vulnerable adults, hard to reach groups and all communities.
- Priority 4 Doing the basics better for less.

Core housing service outcomes are listed at the end of sections covering each priority.

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Priority 1. Improving housing supply and improving neighbourhoods through a mix of high quality, environmentally sustainable homes for sale or rent.

Outcome 1.1. Getting the right information and improving strategic links.

Ipswich Housing Needs Survey 2005 and Ipswich Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2008 both found a net need for over 700 new affordable homes per year in Ipswich. Affordable homes are for people who cannot afford to buy or rent a suitable home on the open market.

Both studies also found that approximately 20% of those needing affordable homes could afford shared ownership/shared equity housing, the most common form of intermediate housing. Intermediate housing may be of any tenure, but must cost more than a social rent and less than a home of equivalent size for rent or sale on the private market. As well as shared ownership or shared equity, there are other intermediate options such as sub-market private renting (also known as intermediate rent) i.e. rents above a social rent but below market rents.

Although our housing study 2005 and SHMA 2008 indicated that an affordable housing target of at least 90% could be justified on the basis of need, our Sites Viability Study 2009 found that few developments in Ipswich could support an affordable homes target above 40%.

Because of falling house prices, our latest SHMA update 2009 found a reduced net need for only 256 new affordable homes per year. Unfortunately the 2009 SHMA update relied on prices and wages alone to assess affordable housing needs, and did not take account of the difficulties experienced by people on modest incomes in accessing mortgages. For this reason the 2009 SHMA update must be regarded as an underestimate. Nevertheless it evidenced a need for at least 37% of all new homes to be affordable, and showed that in the current economic climate there is a need for sub market private renting.

In order to set realistic targets and aspirations for affordable housing we will maintain up-to-date information about the housing markets and housing needs, and we will also assess the viability of individual sites accurately.

We would also like to improve links between Ipswich Housing Strategy and both the Suffolk and Ipswich Communities Strategies, Everybody Matters and Transforming Suffolk.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Ensure the Housing Strategy supports the community strategy.
- Keep the evidence base up to date.
- Demographic and housing needs information for BAME communities and older people needs to be much more robust

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Communities' impact:

- It is important that housing studies investigate the needs of all communities including older people, those with disabilities, vulnerable adults and people from BAME backgrounds.

Action:

- Re-evaluate the weekly costs of different types of housing (housing market thresholds) on a quarterly basis, and update secondary information in the SHMA annually. Work with GHG housing sub-regional partners to assess the value for money and need for a new SHMA, and, if necessary, plan a new SHMA in 2013, once data from the 2011 census is available.
- Use Three Dragons sites viability assessment tool to take account of the impact of our affordable housing policies on individual sites, and to evidence the need for grant funding.
- Continue to work with partners in the GHG housing sub-region, public, private and voluntary sectors to improve market intelligence and research the housing needs of vulnerable groups.
- Update our primary information on stock condition and housing needs including the needs of Gypsies and Travellers by 2015 and in such a way as to take advantage of joint working efficiencies as well as new census information and/cross boundary efficiencies. Our next housing needs study will include vulnerable people, older people, and people from BAME backgrounds including Gypsies and Travellers and is planned for 2012/13 as census 2011 information emerges.
- Continue to work sub-regionally to joint commission data collection and research so that comparable information is available across districts to identify and evidence the need for joint projects. This may include community mapping across the sub-region.
- Develop a Housing Market Partnership for the Wider Ipswich area
- Improve links between Ipswich Housing Strategy and the two communities strategies, Everybody Matters and Transforming Suffolk.
- Monitor and review Ipswich Local Investment Plan in the light of new information with partners, and changes to the housing market and government policy.
- Use census 2011 to produce baseline data for the 6 equalities strands in Ipswich so that housing services can be improved for everyone in Ipswich.
- Assess the impact the CSR 2010 with respect to funding for new housing delivery and welfare reform on housing need and the delivery of new affordable homes.

Affordable housing policies and targets

The Council's current practice requires affordable housing to be provided on sites of 0.5 hectares or more, or 15 units or more.

The amount of affordable housing to be provided is 35% and a minimum of 65% of this must be provided as social rented housing.

Within the Waterfront area the requirement is for 15% on site and 10% off site.

The presumption is for on-site provision. Off-site provision will only be considered in situations where it offers a better opportunity to meet housing need and/or when viability testing (see section 7 below) has shown on-site provision to be unviable.

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Commuted sums in lieu of off-site provision will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and where the developer has satisfactorily demonstrated that it was not possible to achieve direct provision, or off-site provision within the required timeframe.

Our order of preference therefore is for

1. On-site provision, then
2. Off-site provision, then
3. A commuted sum

These policies will be amended in line with the Draft Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy to be adopted in 2011.

Our approach is set out in more detail in our Affordable Housing Statement. <http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/AffordableHousingProvisionPositionStatement.pdf>

We are not consulting on our basic affordable housing policies here, as there has been extensive consultation on our LDF policies. Our Affordable Housing Statement has also been subject to consultation with Registered Providers and HCA.

Outcome 1.2. Ensuring the continued supply of new affordable homes through the delivery of Ipswich LIP.

Ipswich LIP identifies 5 challenges for Ipswich.

Challenge 1: Stalled sites on the Waterfront, which blight the town centre and deter further development.

Challenge 2 Continued supply of new affordable housing in the current housing market, and in particular, balancing the current oversupply of flats with more family homes, and meeting the needs of all communities.

Challenge 3 Meeting the needs of a growing number of very elderly people and others with support needs and dealing with under occupation.

Challenge 4 Tackling deprivation, unemployment and poor skills levels.

Challenge 5 Assisting in site preparation to unlock land for development.

The LIP prioritises fourteen sites for intervention in order to address these challenges.

Start on site year	Scheme	Score	Challenge site responds to	Affordable housing total	Market housing total	Intervention funding needed/£M
2010	Hayhill Allotments	106	2. Affordable family homes, some 4 bed+	106	197	2.2 ⁵
	Cranfields Mill	25	1. Stalled site on Waterfront 4. Employment in	0	126	5.0

⁵ Comprising current bids for £1.77M SHG, £341,000 Kickstart, and a previous allocation for £65,574.

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Start on site year	Scheme	Score	Challenge site responds to	Affordable housing total	Market housing total	Intervention funding needed/£M
			commercial elements			
	Small Sites 2	21	2. Affordable family homes, some 4 bed+. 3. Bungalows, some adapted for older people and others needing adapted property.	13	0	0.8
2011	Ravenswood UVW	49	2. Family homes including affordable family homes, some 4 bed+. 3. Bungalows, some adapted for older people and others. 4. Employment during phased development	23	54	1.2
	Newnham Court	37	2. Self contained temporary family homes for homeless households	19	0	1.2
	611-615 Bramford Rd	30	2. Affordable family homes, some 4 bed+.	12	0	0.8
	411-417 Bramford Rd	25	2. Affordable family homes, some 4 bed+.	34	0	3.4
	178-184 Hadleigh Rd	24	2. Affordable family homes, some 4 bed+.	18	0	1.9
	Albion Wharf/Regatta Quay	21	1. Stalled site on Waterfront 4. Employment in commercial elements	33 onsite representing 10% the other 25% as commuted sums or offsite	259	11.0
2012	Small Sites 3	39	2. Affordable family homes, some 4 bed+. 3. Bungalows/some adapted for older people and others	20 est.	0	1.4
	Stoke Quays	38	1. Waterfront regeneration 2. Family homes including affordable family homes, some 4 bed+. 3. Affordable VSH for older people 4. Employment in commercial elements	130	266	10.0
2013	Felixstowe Rd	99	5. Unlocks land for development 4. Tackles deprivation and unemployment 3. Provides VSH for older people	28	82	1.2
	Cranes	40	5. Unlocks land for development 4. Tackles deprivation and unemployment	0	0	4.1
	St Peters Warehouse	29	1. Stalled site on Waterfront 4. Employment in commercial elements	16	48	1.7

We are taking a number of steps to maintain the supply of new affordable homes during the economic downturn. These include: -

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Actively encouraging and supporting bids to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) including taking advantage of the Kickstart programme.

Kickstart is a government programme targeted at stalled sites to support the construction of high quality mixed tenure developments.

The council has been working with RP and private sector partners to unblock a number of stalled sites including bidding for Kickstart money.

Balancing the need to achieve affordable housing on S106 sites, and site viability.

The current market threatens the viability of many new developments, and some flexibility regarding S106 may be required. This may include: -

- Arrangements, whereby the level of affordable housing can be reduced if social housing grant is unavailable to ensure scheme viability.
- Flexible arrangements to allow for review of site viability during the development of a site and consequent adjustments to the provision of affordable housing, particularly where a reduced level of affordable housing is accepted at initial planning approval because of viability issues.
- Development deadlines, where reduced S106 contributions are accepted for a clearly defined period.
- Sympathetic consideration of requests for tenure changes and reduced integration of affordable housing in existing S106 agreements.

Assessing scheme viability.

The council follows the Greater Haven Gateway Housing Sub-region's procedure for site viability testing. The Council's preferred toolkit is 3-Dragons, but any recognised toolkit may be used. We will work with developers to assess and re-assess individual sites as market conditions change.

Supporting bids to the HCA.

£11.5m social housing grant was allocated to affordable housing schemes in Ipswich in 2008-09.

Bringing forward council owned land.

The council has a programme for bringing forward small sites on its own land for 100% affordable housing developments.

As well as the small sites programme, the sale of council land for the final phase of the Ravenswood development is now underway.

Using IBC funding.

The council has used £1.2M commuted sums money to support schemes within the capital programme, while £460 000 remains to be allocated. A further £1M is now available from the disposal of small sites.

Regular engagement with partners to encourage innovation.

We continue to meet with RP partners to review schemes and look for new ways to ensure delivery. We are also in discussion with the HCA regarding wider regeneration issues and to actively engage in the LIP process.

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Action

- Deliver Ipswich LIP priorities and create sustainable communities in partnership with HCA, RPs, house-builders, private sector partners, sub-regional and other public sector partners.
- Actively encourage and support bids to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) including those taking advantage of the Kickstart programme.
- Use Three Dragons sites viability assessment tool to take account of the impact of our affordable housing policies on individual sites.
- Adopt LDF policies in 2011.
- Bring forward council owned land particularly the small sites programme and Ravenswood.
- Use IBC funding to help deliver affordable family housing, bungalows and adapted properties and temporary housing for homeless households.
- Agree appropriate tenure switches.
- Engage with partners, including sub-regional partners, on a regular basis to share expertise and encourage innovation, and to respond to changes to the funding regime for new affordable housing announced in the CSR 2010.
- Most importantly we aim to be ready for when the housing market begins to pick up again, with the right information, the right policies and the right resources in place to ensure that the affordability problems of the last housing boom are not repeated.

Outcome 1.3. Balanced, sustainable communities.

We are seeking a balance of small and larger affordable homes. Our target is for at least 65% of new affordable homes to be for rent. Although individual sites will vary, we are seeking the following mix of affordable properties by size and type: -

1	Bed Flat	15%
2	Bed Flat	15%
2	Bed House	35%
3	Bed House	25%
4+	Bed House	10%

We also believe that communities work best when they contain a mix of people of different ages, backgrounds and incomes. For this reason, wherever possible, we seek to integrate affordable homes across sites. We want to encourage well-designed, visually attractive, safe and friendly neighbourhoods.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Some older people prefer to live among other older, quieter people than in mixed neighbourhoods.
- The Strategy should include keyworker accommodation

Communities' impact:

- It may be necessary to assess the impact of the aspiration for mixed neighbourhoods for a number of communities, including older people. There is evidence to suggest that housed Gypsies and Travellers are also happier living near other members of their community.

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Action:

- Prioritise development of 2 and 3 bedroomed family houses and a small supply of larger family homes of 4 or more bedrooms, bungalows for older people and others needing adapted properties, including larger adapted properties.
- Work with developers and RPs to ensure that smaller houses and flats are attractive to older people and that a mix of market, intermediate and affordable houses and flats are developed to encourage downsizing, for instance by providing small easily managed gardens or roof terraces, good security, lifts and concierge systems.
- Ensure a continued supply of smaller properties to meet the needs of single people.
- Assess the impact of the aspiration for mixed neighbourhoods in the context of specific developments and consider grouping to encourage inclusion and feelings of safety among vulnerable groups of people.
- Promote Place Making principles in order to ensure social inclusion of all groups and communities such as people on low incomes, vulnerable people, older people, people from BAME backgrounds including Gypsies and Travellers and migrant communities, people of different faiths, people with disabilities and young people.
- Ensure PCTs and Health Authorities are aware that keyworker accommodation is accessed via Homebuy Direct.

Outcome 1.4. Meeting Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Needs

Ipswich has 43 residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers. 41 of these are on large local authority site; West Meadows, and 2 are privately owned. West Meadows was refurbished in 2009/10 with Gypsy Sites Grant of £1.384 M and approximately £0.5 M raised by Suffolk County Council who owns the site.

To meet the needs identified in our GTAA, Ipswich must enable the provision of 1-3 new residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers by 2011. After that, the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers should be mainstreamed and included in growth targets. The GTAA also evidenced a need for 10 transit pitches between Ipswich and Felixstowe.

Our draft LDF Core Strategy Policy for meeting Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs, **Policy CS12 Gypsies and Travellers**, sets out site criteria and our strategy for delivering new pitches in partnership with neighbouring authorities.

We are exploring a number of possible sites in and around Ipswich in partnership with neighbouring authorities, as well as working with local Gypsies and Travellers to establish need. We will work with local communities, both Gypsy and Traveller and settled, to ensure high quality accommodation and community cohesion.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Apart from the residential pitches mentioned there is a requirement for transit provision amounting to some 20 pitches across Suffolk.
- Ongoing provision should also be made for family formation. This is currently assessed at a 3% compound growth rate and should be planned for.
- There will need to be a new GTAA in 2011 to further inform the evidence base beyond 2011. In our view (Friends, Families and Travellers and Traveller Law Reform Project) needs assessed by the current GTAA for Ipswich understated needs because full cognisance was not taken of the

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needs for sites by Gypsies and Travellers in social housing with a psychological aversion to housing.

- Gypsies and Travellers are the largest single ethnic minority in the East of England and more than half are in conventional housing. The problems faced by them must be considered, and a first priority must be establishing their numbers and the problems they face.
- There are long waits for adapted homes for people with disabilities living in large families, as there are very few large adapted properties.

Communities impact

- Racist attitudes toward the Gypsy and Traveller Community are widespread. Councillors and officers need support and a clear policy framework to deal with racist objections to the development of new sites, as well as training.
- It will be important to ensure that the needs of all communities are considered when new sites are developed and that good communication takes place.

Action

- Continue to work with neighbouring districts, Gypsies and Travellers and RPs to enable a small family sized site of 3-6 pitches in the next 5 years in or close to Ipswich.
- Work with SCC and other partners to enable transit pitches on the main road network.
- Work with Gypsies and Travellers to establish need, choose sites and develop and design new accommodation.
- Work with all communities towards community cohesion.
- Develop policies to deal effectively and fairly with racially motivated objections to developments, and to guide Gypsies and Travellers through the planning system.
- Review the GTAA from 2011 and include investigation of the needs of housed Gypsies and Travellers.
- Hold annual training for Councillors and officers on the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and the council's statutory duties.

Outcome 1.5. New housing that meets the needs of all communities.

The 2007 ONS population estimates show that 17,300 (14.3%) of Ipswich people are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. There are 103,700 White British people living in Ipswich making up the other 85.7%. BAME communities in Ipswich are small and very diverse. The largest groups are Asian and Asian British at 5,700 people, Other White at 3,800 people, Asian or Asian British Indian at 3,700 people, and Black or Black British at 2,600 people, but this masks much greater diversity. ISCRE considers these figures to be underestimates.

Key findings from the SHMA

- There are not enough larger social rented homes for BAME communities.
- Ipswich must enable the provision of 15 new residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers by 2011, but as regional targets no longer apply this reverts to our GTAA finding of a need for 1-3 new residential pitches by 2011.
- Many people from BAME backgrounds rely on private rented sector accommodation.
- Some people from newly arrived communities, and in particular women, may be experiencing language difficulties and problems accessing housing information.

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Local authority staff sometimes do not have the resources to explain procedures clearly enough to people with a limited grasp of English.

Issues raised by stakeholders – these are listed under outcome 3.2

Communities impact

- Development of specific housing for particular groups of people raises community cohesion issues. It will be important to equip councillors and officers with the skills and policies necessary to allay unjustified fears, address real problems and to deal with racist objections.

Action

- Seek a small supply of larger 4+ bedroomed new affordable homes including larger adapted homes.
- Help build the capacity of BAME communities to influence relevant organisations and agencies so that their housing needs are addressed more appropriately.
- Annual training for councillors and officers to equip them with the right knowledge, skills and policies to address community cohesion issues.
- Ensure that all housing studies include the needs of BAME communities including Gypsies and Travellers and migrant workers.

Outcome 1.6. The right mix of new market, affordable and specialist housing for older people.

We estimate that Ipswich will need another 262-431 Very Sheltered Housing (VSH) bedspaces by 2029 to meet the needs of older people in Ipswich. Growth in numbers of people aged 75 and over is predicted to be relatively slow to 2017 and then to rise more sharply.

SCC has started a consultation process to review the future of options for its residential home estate in Ipswich, which currently provides 90 places for frail/elderly and older people with dementia. The County Council is committed to working with IBC to find the best long-term viable solution for the older people of the town.

In the light of this we propose a provisional target of 80 additional very sheltered bedspaces (1-2 schemes) in the next 5 years, including VSH for people with dementia.

We are also aware that many older people who own their own homes wish to downsize, and we aim to encourage house builders to develop attractive smaller homes for older people. Because new homes cost more than older homes, there may be an untapped market for good quality shared ownership homes among older people.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Many older people would like to move to a 2 bedroomed bungalow but these are in short supply and limited land is available in Ipswich.
- To be attractive to older people flats should: -
 - Have 2 bedrooms.
 - Be accessible by lift if they are above the ground floor.
 - Have good security and entry systems.
 - Have a small private garden or patio area.

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- Be in safe, friendly, well-lit, well-landscaped neighbourhoods near to shops and other facilities.
- Several older respondents said that they would prefer to live in a mixed community rather than a community of old people. But many also felt it was extremely important that the local neighbourhood was safe and friendly.
- Some older people may prefer to live with other older people rather than in mixed communities.
- Sale of a second-hand 3-bed property may not generate enough money to buy a new build 2 bedroomed home, indicating that there may be a market for shared ownership for older people.
- It is essential to work with partners in Adult Care Services (ACS), Health and representative agencies services to meet the housing needs of older people.
- Frail older people and those with dementia must be among the priorities.

Communities impact:

- The needs of older people from all communities must be taken into account. Older people remaining with their families may need large adapted homes.
- While some older people wish to live in mixed communities, others feel more secure living among people of their own age.

Action:

- Work with developers and RPs to ensure that smaller houses and flats are attractive to older people and that a mix of market, intermediate and affordable houses and flats are developed to encourage downsizing, for instance by providing small easily managed gardens or roof terraces, good security, lifts and concierge systems.
- Support and contribute to the emerging Suffolk Flexicare model for older people through the development of 1-2 (80 bedspaces) new very sheltered schemes for older people by 2015. This should include VSH provision for people with dementia.
- Work with partners in Adult Care Services (ACS), Suffolk PCT and representative older people's agencies to ensure a range of housing options for older people.
- Where possible, encourage the development of bungalows, including larger adapted bungalows.
- Explore affordable leasehold sheltered/VSH options for older people.

Outcome 1.7. New homes for people with care and support needs, and adapted homes.

We continue to work with partners in Suffolk Adult Care Services, Suffolk Supporting People, Suffolk PCT and health trust, voluntary sector agencies, service users and carers to commission new specialist supported housing for those who need it.

Issues raised by stakeholders: – please see those raised under priority 3

Communities impact:

- Development of specialist schemes for some client groups sometimes attracts objections from local people. It will be important to equip councillors and officers with the skills necessary to allay unjustified fears, address real problems. Specialist schemes should not be developed unless appropriate support is also guaranteed.

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Action:

- Work with partners in Supporting People, ACS and Health to enable supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities currently living in unsuitable housing or inappropriately in residential care or NHS accommodation.
- Work with partners in Supporting People, ACS and Health to enable supported housing for people with severe mental health needs that cannot at present be accommodated within Suffolk, and review the type of support provided.
- Work with partners in Supporting People, ACS and Health to enable further specialist accommodation for frail older people with mental health needs.
- Work with partners in Supporting People, ACS and Health to enable housing with support for people with learning disabilities.
- Work with partners in Supporting People, ACS and Health to ensure re-commissioning of mental health supported housing schemes to be undertaken in a way that is sensitive to the position of small voluntary sector providers, and delivers the best outcomes for customers.
- Work with one-ipswich, Ipswich Umbrella Trust and 3rd sector agencies to address the needs of homeless people with chaotic lifestyles through the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.
- Encourage homes built to lifetime homes standards, and full wheelchair standard in line with Suffolk design requirements.
- Enable provision of self-contained temporary accommodation for statutorily homeless households with access to floating support when needed.
- Work with partners in ACS, Health and representative agencies to enable the provision of appropriate housing and/or support for younger people with dementia in line with Suffolk Dementia Strategy.
- Work with partners in public, private and 3rd sectors to share information on housing needs, find appropriate sites and develop housing schemes.

Outcome 1.8: New Homes for Students in balanced communities

Housed in an impressive new building on Ipswich waterfront, University Campus Suffolk opened in 2008 with around 3000 full time equivalent higher education students. By 2014 UCS hopes to be at full capacity with about 7500 full time equivalent new students. UCS aims to have 2500 new purpose built student bedspaces in place by 2014. Other students are expected to live in shared houses in the private rented sector or at home. In October 2009 there were 260 accredited bedspaces for students in Ipswich

The council works in partnership with UCS to make sure student accommodation is of high quality and does not impact negatively on local neighbourhoods. An accreditation scheme has been developed which applies the same standards to both new purpose built student accommodation and house shares in the private rented sector. In October 2009 there were 260 accredited bedspaces for students in Ipswich

Issues raised by stakeholders – none

Communities impact:

- It is important that student housing in the private rented sector does not become so concentrated that it impacts adversely on other communities.

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- It is important that all Ipswich communities benefit from the new university and its facilities.

Action

- Help meet the UCS target of 2,500 new purpose built bedspaces for students by 2014.
- Use the accreditation scheme to ensure that shared houses for students in the private rented sector are safe, well managed and do not reach too high a concentration in any one neighbourhood.
- Work in partnership with UCS to ensure that local communities are strengthened and enhanced by the presence of students.

Outcome 1.9. Environmental sustainability.

Affordable Housing should be designed to HCA Design and Quality Standards including the appropriate level of the Code for Sustainable Development (currently Level 3). Detailed sections on sustainability and the built environment can be found in our Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Sustainability and space standards are important.
- Policy DC1 of the LDF states that by 2013 all new build must be at least Code Level 4, and Code Level 5 for developments of more than 250 or more dwellings.
- There is no mention of renewable heat and energy for new homes. Policy DC2 of the LDF requires that for all new build developments of 10 or more dwellings at least 15% of their energy must be from decentralised and renewable low carbon sources.
- Gas, electricity and oil are expected to rise in price, and the choices about heating systems made now may impact during the life of the strategy locking tenants into fuel poverty.
- In the longer term homes will need to be adapted to cope with changes in climate and a 5-year housing strategy should contain some discussion of this issue.
- All new homes, not just publicly funded ones, should be built to required Sustainability Code Standards.
- The Strategy should incorporate more substantive retrofit policies in order to attract Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) funding to Ipswich.
- Fuel poverty must be taken seriously.
- The housing Strategy, Environmental Strategy and LDF should be fully integrated.

Communities impact:

- Fuel poverty impacts most heavily on older people and lower income groups living in un-modernised homes, and who cannot afford new, sustainable homes.

Action:

- Require all publicly funded new affordable homes to be built to Code Level 3 with an aspiration for Code Level 4 to 2013, and from 2013 support the LDF requirement for all new homes (including affordable homes) to be built to Code Level 4, and Code Level 5 for developments of 250 homes or more, by 2013.

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- Seek further advice with regard to the kinds of affordable homes the council should seek to develop in the light of future climate change.
- As well as the requirements of the Code for Sustainable Development, consider whether further measures are needed with respect to heating and water systems in new and existing homes to help tenants and residents avoid fuel poverty in the future.
- Require all affordable homes to meet up to date HCA Design Standards.
- Ensure that all development partners understand the necessity of affordable service charges, and do not seek to transfer the costs of good design and sustainability standards to end users.

Outcome 1.10. Improved housing supply through best use of existing stock

As well as enabling the development of new affordable homes to meet housing need, the council must also make sure it uses existing affordable housing stock as efficiently as possible. This means helping people in housing need to access affordable homes of the right size, tenure and type and in the right locations, as well as helping them to transfer between homes to meet changing circumstances and needs.

The Greater Haven Gateway Choice Based Lettings (CBL): Gateway to Homechoice. <http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/cblpolicy.pdf>

The new Gateway to Homechoice (CBL) went live in Ipswich in May 2009, replacing the old district level housing register and allocations system. CBL is a new way of allocating council and partner housing association properties for rent across 7 of the local authority areas in the Greater Haven Gateway Housing Sub-region; Babergh, Braintree, Colchester, Ipswich, Maldon, Mid Suffolk and Suffolk Coastal.

The scheme is designed to make the allocation of social housing more transparent and offer greater choice. Since 28th May 2009 all social rented properties have been advertised across the sub-region.

Needs are assessed against the same clear set of criteria regardless of where people live in the sub-region and people are able to bid for any properties they would like to live in. Offers are made in line with the new policy, first looking at priority bands, followed by effective dates (roughly the length of time people have waited).

The review of the Ipswich Housing Strategy coincides with the 6-month review of the new CBL scheme and the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the new allocations policy across the six equality strands and socio-economic circumstances i.e. faith, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, income. Gateway to Homechoice is also seeking to align CBL and enhanced housing options more closely to include private sector options, improved access to support and employment advice.

Using council stock for vulnerable people.

The council also uses its own stock for a range of initiatives aimed at helping vulnerable people maintain their independence and has housing staff whose roles focus on special needs, community care, mental health and vulnerable single people. Initiatives include special arrangements for people moving-on from supported housing, as well as leasing houses to RPs to deliver supported schemes. We are

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currently working with mental health commissioners to deliver a floating support scheme in our own stock for young people recovering from their first psychotic episode, and we are also considering designating some blocks of flats for use by older residents. These are described more fully under Priority 3.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Vulnerable adults, for example those with substance misuse issues, or physical disabilities, and those without computers or phones can find it difficult to bid through CBL.
- Vulnerable adults are prone to building up rent arrears and other debts, partly because the housing benefit system does not cope well with changes of circumstances. These debts mean that many vulnerable adults who are attempting to lead less chaotic lifestyles are prevented from gaining settled accommodation.

Communities impact:

- A full communities impact assessment is being undertaken for CBL.
- The council has raised concerns that households who are overcrowded in the private rented sector are placed in Band C, while overcrowded households in the social rented sector are placed in Band B.

Action:

- Assist in the completion of EqIA and review of CBL scheme and implement action plan resulting from these. (Completed 2010)
- Ensure the EqIA takes account of the difficulties some communities and clients have in accessing CBL due to language difficulties, or lack of access to new technology and ensure that robust systems are in place to improve access for these groups. (Completed 2010)
- We will contribute to further Equalities work identified in the sub-regional housing strategy to map communities, establish population baselines for the 6 equalities strands and to continue to monitor both the housing register and lettings against these baselines.
- Ensure that all agencies working with vulnerable adults are aware of the automatic bidding facility.
- Consider policies for dealing with vulnerable adults who have past histories of debt who are now attempting to stabilise their lives.
- Continue to use council owned stock for initiatives aimed at helping vulnerable people maintain independence.
- Work closely with RPs considering stock rationalisation in the Ipswich area to ensure the best strategic fit with the council's priorities.
- Explore whether private sector leasing would meet the needs of statutorily homeless households.
- Develop a sub-regional landlord accreditation scheme and link private sector accommodation to the enhanced housing options provided through the Trailblazer project.

Encouraging people whose families have become smaller to downsize.

Gateway to Homechoice gives the highest priority to existing social housing tenants wishing to move to smaller homes, as their housing needs change. Older tenants wishing to downsize are also offered practical help with the daunting task of moving.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

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- The effect of CBL on older tenants wishing to downsize must be closely monitored.

Communities impact:

- Under-occupation of affordable homes by older people blocks the supply of family sized homes, however it is important that older people are helped and encouraged to move to more appropriate homes in a sensitive fashion.
- There is a concern that only 'younger' older people will choose to downsize through CBL, and that people who are frailer may find the system too difficult.

Suggested action:

- Monitor and review moves by older people to smaller properties through CBL.

Making use of empty homes in the private sector.

The council has less control over homes left empty in the private sector. Private sector homes are often empty for short periods during the normal process of buying and selling, or for longer while probate is concluded. But sometimes homes remain empty for long periods for no good reason, representing not only a waste of much needed accommodation but blight on whole neighbourhoods. On 1 April 2009 there were 567 private sector homes in Ipswich that had been empty for more than 6 months.⁶

Ipswich Borough Council has an Empty Homes Strategy for tackling this problem. http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?category1D=10027&documentID=220. The council aims to bring 60 empty properties back into use each year, 30% (18) of which will be long term empties i.e. those that have been empty for 2 years or more. The other 70% will be private sector homes where the landlord agrees to house a person or family in need through our rent deposit scheme.

Grants are available to landlords and to first time buyers as part of the council's Empty Homes Policy, and the council has a range of powers to bring long-term empty properties back into use, including:

- Empty Dwelling Management Orders
- Voluntary Purchase
- Enforced Sale
- Compulsory Purchase

As well as this, the council has received a grant of £53 000 to facilitate the occupation of empty homes on the Waterfront without causing anti social behaviour. The plan, which is still at an early stage, is to work in partnership with stakeholders and local businesses to advertise the Waterfront as a place to live, work, study and socialise. Alongside this we are meeting with lettings agents to discuss the plan to find a landlord who will purchase 100 empty units

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Several respondents raised issues about long-term empty properties.
- Respondents asked whether many newly built flats were empty, and felt these should be used in some way to ease homelessness.

Suggested action:

⁶ HIPSSA 2009

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- Continue to use empty dwelling management orders, voluntary purchase, enforced sale, compulsory purchase as well as support and advice to owners in order to reduce the number of long-term empty properties.
- Bring 60 long-term empty properties back into use each year.
- Enable the occupation of up to 100 empty homes on the Waterfront.

Resources and partnerships for Priority 1

- Capital programme and commuted sums for new affordable homes.
- Council owned land.
- Capital programme for empty homes of £500k, which is re-circulated.
- National affordable housing programme.
- S.106 and planning grants.
- Annual contribution to GHG housing sub-region for Gateway to Homechoice.
- District contributions toward joint housing studies.
- Proposed housing market partnership.
- GHG housing sub-region.
- Ravenswood partnership.
- Small sites partnership.
- Suffolk housing officers group.
- Suffolk Supporting People and core strategy group.
- HCA.
- Suffolk County Council Adult Care Services.
- Health services.
- Suffolk LSP and LAA2.

Core housing service outcomes for Priority 1:

Outcome 1.1. Getting the right information

Outcome 1.2. Ensuring the continued supply of affordable homes.

Outcome 1.4. Meeting Gypsy and Traveller pitch needs.

Outcome 1.6. The right mix of market, affordable and specialist housing for older people.

Outcome 1.10. Improved housing supply through the best use of existing stock.

Cross cutting outcomes

Outcome 1.5. New housing that meets the needs of all communities.

Outcome 1.9. Environmental sustainability.

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Priority 2. Improving housing quality and environmental sustainability.

Outcome 2.1. Decent homes in the private sector.

The Council's 2005 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey found:

- 36.9% private sector homes in Ipswich do not meet the decent homes standard, the main reason for failure being thermal comfort.
- 13.9% of private sector homes have a Category 1 hazard requiring a mandatory response, costing £13M to remedy.
- 47.8% of vulnerable households live in non-decent homes.
- The average SAP⁷ rating for private sector homes in Ipswich is 51 i.e. the same as the national average.
- Highest levels of homes not reaching the decent homes standard and with low energy efficiency were among those that were:
 - Private rented
 - Built before 1919
 - Vacant
 - Occupied by a single pensioner
 - In the central area of Ipswich

The council must focus on the 36.9% of private sector homes, which fail to meet the decent homes standard, and in particular those occupied by vulnerable people, many of whom are single pensioners.

The council offers a range of means-tested grants to people needing to repair or improve their homes. These include help towards the cost of work to improve energy efficiency, and Disabled Facilities Grants for aids and adaptations. The council runs a licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) to ensure these are managed properly and meet fire safety standards.

The council runs a **Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme** in partnership with University Campus Suffolk (UCS), which ensures that all student accommodation, whether it is newly developed halls of residence or shared houses in the private rented sector, meets the requirements for all HMOs and is managed according to good practice guidelines.

Home Improvement Agency (HIA) and Handy Person Services (HP) aim to help vulnerable people to carry out essential repairs and improvements. Orbit Housing Group delivers these services. Vulnerable people may access these services directly or through a range of agencies including Ipswich Borough Council's Private Sector Housing team. The service is available for those assessed as eligible for a renovation grant or a disabled facilities grant (DFG).

DFGs are accessed via the Council's Private Sector Housing Team and require assessment by an occupational therapist. There are similar arrangements for aids and adaptations for council tenants.

Issues raised by stakeholders

- The system for accessing DFGs is difficult for people to understand and hard to negotiate.
- The Strategy should consider how to tackle the increasing levels of fuel poverty in Ipswich, particularly in the private rented sector.

Communities impact

- Many people from newly arrived migrant and refugee communities rely on the private rented sector as well as people from Ipswich's Bangladeshi

⁷ SAP is the government's recommended system for home energy rating. It works on a scale of 1-120 with higher ratings equating to higher energy efficiency.

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community. It is important that advice and information is provided to these communities in appropriate formats.

Suggested action

- Continue to monitor and improve our response to customers contacting the council for advice, including the provision of information to all communities through appropriate media and formats.
- Achieve budgeted renovation grant expenditure.
- Achieve budgeted DFG expenditure
- Continue to assess and tackle fuel poverty using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, and increase the percentage of people receiving income-based benefits living in homes with high-energy efficiency (NI 187 current target 11%).
- Investigate whether further measures are needed with respect to heating and water systems in new and existing homes to help tenants and residents avoid fuel poverty in the future.

Outcome 2.2. Decent homes and neighbourhoods in the social rented sector

By April 2009, 85% of council homes reached the Ipswich Standard, which incorporates the Decent Homes Standard. The council achieved the government's target for Decent Homes in its own stock in 2010, and we are on target for all council homes to reach the Ipswich Standard by 2014.⁸

This includes measures such as insulation and energy efficient heating, for instance we estimate that lagging of pipes and valves in our sheltered units save 182 tonnes of carbon in the last year.

We are exploring the possibility of council house building and we are awaiting the outcome of the government review of the Housing Revenue Account subsidy arrangements before we make a final decision as to whether we should build new council homes.

In 2009 we re-organised our repairs services, set new performance and efficiency targets and opened our new repairs centre. In 2010 we further improved services to council tenants by refocusing our work so that estate officers spent more time 'on the beat'. We opened a customer focussed contact centre dealing more effectively with tenant telephone enquiries, and area housing offices closed.

We have a team of community caretakers offering a rapid response to neighbourhood problems such as graffiti, smashed glass, dog mess, abandoned vehicles and litter including syringes. The team works to enhance the local environment, and we have a tenancy support and enforcement team also working to increase independence among vulnerable tenants and to tackle anti social behaviour. Both teams work to increase the sense of security and safety people feel in their local neighbourhoods.

We aim to ensure that our tenants have a say over the running of their homes and neighbourhoods through our tenant management board and tenants' forums, each

⁸ Achievement of standards cannot be 100% because some tenants prefer not to have their homes improved, and decent homes become non-decent again towards the end of replacement programmes.

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with a budget for expenditure. We have a specialist housing support worker for Bangladeshi tenants to help them stay involved, and an annual Bangladeshi tenants drop-in event.

We have a refurbishment programme for our sheltered housing schemes and plans in place to ensure continued services in the face of a reduction in funds from Supporting People.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Although our housing stock currently compares well with the private sector for energy efficiency, there is no discussion about the affordability of traditional fossil fuels over the coming years. Gas, electricity and oil are expected to rise in price, and the choices about heating systems made now may impact during the life of the strategy locking tenants into fuel poverty.
- It should be noted that the energy efficiency and possible use of renewable energy in housing stock contributes for NI 182: community emissions of CO₂, and so the council is expected to take a lead in its own stock.
- In the longer term homes will need to be adapted to cope with changes in climate and a 5-year housing strategy should contain some discussion of this issue.
- Dual flush systems are not routinely used when replacing toilets and this causes higher water consumption and means that those on water meters have no choice but to pay more than they need to.

Communities impact:

- A full EqlA was conducted before the closure of area housing offices, and procedures were put in place to ensure that vulnerable adults did not become excluded from housing services, consultation and involvement.

Suggested action:

- Continued investment to ensure delivery of Decent Homes and the Ipswich Standard.
- Take forward the tenant participation strategy and tenants delivery plan.
- Continue to build on positive action to ensure participation of tenants from all communities.
- Take forward plans to improve and restructure sheltered services including the conversion of a further 10 bedsits to 1 bed flats.
- Bring in introductory tenancies.
- Hold housing management board elections, and continue with tenant led estate improvements.
- Publish a leaseholder guide and set up a leaseholder panel.
- Continue to improve the repairs centre and repairs service.
- Review the Ipswich Standard (post decent homes) and other standards for service delivery in consultation with tenants by 2011, in line with the principles and standards set by the TSA.
- Continue to improve services for our tenants through an increased estate officer presence, repairs centre and customer contact centre, and take forward the findings from the EqlA to ensure vulnerable tenants are not excluded from services or involvement.
- Consider the environmental impact issues raised by stakeholders in relation to reliance on fossil fuels for heating systems, and dual flush toilets.

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Outcome 2.3. Good quality self-contained accommodation for statutorily homeless households.

We are reviewing the effectiveness of our hostels for statutorily homeless households in the light of proposed cuts to Supporting People budgets and government targets. In the long run we would like to accommodate all statutorily homeless households in self-contained accommodation until they can be permanently housed.

Suggested action:

- Explore opportunities for a sub-regional private sector leasing scheme as well as temporary lettings to homeless households in the council's own stock.
- Explore extension of rent deposit scheme for statutorily homeless households to take advantage of private sector rented accommodation.
- Ensure homeless households in self-contained temporary accommodation receive appropriate support.

Resources and partnerships for Priority 2

- Capital programme for Ipswich Standard
- Community support funded by Suffolk Supporting People.
- Capital programme and government grants for Renovation Grants, Disabled Facilities Grants and Compulsory Purchase.
- Housing Management Board, with IpCom and 3 Area panels.
- Private sector landlords forum.
- One-IPSWICH area forums.

Core housing service outcomes for Priority 2:

Outcome 2.1. Decent homes in the private sector.

Outcome 2.2. Decent homes and neighbourhoods in the social rented sector.

Outcome 2.3. Good quality self-contained accommodation for statutorily homeless households.

Priority 3. Supporting and including vulnerable adults, hard to reach groups and all communities.

Outcome 3.1. Effective housing and neighbourhood management through partnership working

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Ipswich Borough Council works closely with Suffolk Supporting People, and colleagues in Health, Adult Care Services (ACS), Children and Young People's Services (CYP) and the voluntary sector to help vulnerable people and families live independently. The council contributes to a wide range of initiatives and partnerships aimed at strengthening community sustainability, from family intervention to encourage better parenting, to specialist supported housing and community support.

Tenancy support and enforcement

The council takes a two-pronged approach to tenancy sustainment in its own stock, combining floating support with swift action to address anti-social behaviour. In 2009/10 the council's tenancy support and enforcement team dealt with 33 cases of anti-social behaviour, and arranged or provided support for 241 tenants having difficulty in sustaining their tenancies. The council continues to house people on low incomes who are most affected by the credit crunch. Tenancy Services, and in particular the Tenancy Support and Enforcement Team, provide:

- Comprehensive information in Tenant Times on how to maximise income.
- A range of responses to reports of Domestic Violence including:
 - Sanctuary Scheme to provide extra security within the homes.
 - Provision of extra locks.
 - Support to victims in-house and/or referral to external support agencies.
 - Relocating victims in extreme circumstances.
 - Other safety measures such as safe letterboxes.

The council is part of the Suffolk-wide Racial Harassment Initiative set up to tackle instances of racist harassment and share information through a common reporting format. The initiative has recently expanded to include work to tackle other hate crime.

Family intervention

The council supports a number of government-funded projects focusing on Family Engagement and the 'whole family' approach. These include: -

- The Challenge and Support Programme, which targets support and enforcement towards young people involved in anti-social behaviour. The Programme is delivered by the Youth Offending Team in consultation with the council's Anti-social Behaviour Network Manager.
- The Family Intervention Project is aimed at families involved in serious anti-social behaviour who are at risk of eviction, anti-social behaviour orders or criminal proceedings. The project is delivered by Anglia Care Trust in consultation with the council.
- The Respect Parenting Practitioner works with the council's Anti-social Behaviour Manager to support parents involved in the programmes mentioned above and to help them develop good parenting skills.

Move-on planning

The council also works with a variety of agencies to help plan moves from institutions such as prisons and hospitals, as well as from hostels and supported housing schemes. This work includes attendance of multi-agency forums to assess risks, and plan safe re-housing of people with a history of violent offences, as well as helping to plan resettlement support and appropriate housing for people moving from a variety of specialist housing schemes. The council works in partnership with Anglia Care

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Trust to house Persistent and Prolific Offenders (PPO) safely. Generally, people moving—on who are entitled to a programme of care and support under the NHS and Community Care Act will be given high priority (Band A) on the housing register, so that the timing of their move can be managed as well as possible. Single people moving from hostels are initially given lower priority (Band C), but if this fails to secure permanent housing within a reasonable period, they too will be given high priority to prevent hostel accommodation in Ipswich from silting up. The council is also working with partners on a county-wide Supporting People Move-On Strategy, and action plan.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Enforcement of tenancy agreements must be kept under review. This must take account of family intervention projects and working with those involved in anti-social behaviour.
- Training on domestic violence should be mandatory for all front line staff.
- There should be spy holes as well as door chains and locks for all new front doors.
- Injunctions should be used to protect victims pending further court action.
- There should be more joined up working and training with environmental health officers, so that housing officers may be considered professional witnesses in noise cases.
- Stop grouping like offenders together in lettings terms. This makes certain streets hot spot areas that are impossible to manage and are ultimately setting people up to fail. The actual need is extra support and positive role models as neighbours, not similar people who will lead them astray.
- Are housing options staff aware of the Supporting People funded county-wide Domestic Violence Pilot Project? There is evidence that this project is preventing victims of Domestic Violence from becoming homeless.
- Vulnerable adults placed in bed and breakfast hotels need support. The council should have a policy of referring them to Central Access and Referral Agency (CARA) for holistic floating support.
- Housing options could play a greater role for people moving on from short stay supported housing schemes such as hostels, so that options in the private rented sector could be considered. This approach would necessitate a review of the rent deposit scheme.

Communities impact;

- Anti-social behaviour and hate crime have a negative impact on all communities.
- Often victims rather than perpetrators are forced to move.
- People with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health needs and those from BAME communities can become the victims of vexatious complaints by neighbours. At the same time, lack of appropriate support for people in times of crisis may lead to inappropriate behaviour and genuine difficulties for neighbours.

Suggested action:

- Continue the two-pronged approach to helping people sustain their tenancies combining tenancy enforcement with appropriate support.
- Work with a range of agencies to ensure appropriate community support/floating support is available to those who need it, including homeless households placed in temporary housing.
- Take effective action to deal with anti-social and criminal behaviour while directing initiatives such as the Challenge and Support Programme and Family Intervention Programme toward the causes of anti-social behaviour.

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- Use introductory tenancies, combined with appropriate support for households with a previous history of anti social behaviour.
- Continue multi-agency work to ensure the safe re-housing of people with histories of violent offending, and continue the PPO scheme with Anglia Care Trust.
- Continue to monitor the effects of CBL on people moving from hostels and supported housing schemes to ensure that supported housing schemes do not become silted up.
- Support victims of domestic violence through the Sanctuary Scheme, injunctions and other target hardening measures, only moving victims as a last resort and at their request, as well as making them aware of support services such as Ipswich Women's Aid and the Suffolk-wide Domestic Abuse Project.
- Ensure all front line staff are trained in domestic violence issues.
- Continue to work in partnership with Suffolk Racial Harassment Initiative to tackle hate crime.
- Work with the GHG housing sub-region's Trailblazer initiative to explore and enhanced options approach, which may include linking with the Supporting People move-on strategy aimed at, a helping people moving on from short stay supported housing schemes such as hostels to explore private rented options.

Outcome 3.2. The housing needs of all communities are met

BAME communities now make up 14.3% of Ipswich's population and are very diverse. Gypsies and Travellers have lived in the area for at least 500 years, and there has been a small Polish community in Ipswich since the Second World War. Many African Caribbean and Bangladeshi people settled in Ipswich in the 1960's. More recently arrived communities include refugees settling in the area as a result of the government's dispersal programme, and migrant workers from other parts of the European Union.

Key findings from the SHMA:

- There are not enough larger social rented homes for BAME communities.
- Ipswich must enable the provision of 1-3 new residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers by 2011.
- Many people from BAME backgrounds rely on private rented sector accommodation.
- Some people from newly arrived communities, and in particular women, may be experiencing language difficulties and problems accessing housing information. Local authority staff sometimes do not have the resources to explain procedures clearly enough to people with a limited grasp of English.

What is the council doing to address need?

Although the predominant need within Ipswich is for smaller affordable homes, the council is aware of the need for a steady supply of larger family homes as well. This

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is reflected in our Affordable Housing Provision Position Statement, which aims for 15% of new affordable homes to have 4 or more bedrooms.

The council is working with Suffolk County Council and colleagues in neighbouring districts to identify suitable sites to provide 3-6 new residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers by 2011, as well as a transit site.

The council is aware of the reliance of some communities on the private rented sector and we work with private sector landlords to maintain and improve health and safety, and to set good standards of housing management. We are also monitoring housing allocations to households overcrowded in the private rented sector to assess the impact of Choice Based Lettings (CBL) on different communities.

The council will arrange for the translation of leaflets and other written material, such as tenancy agreements, on request and these are kept on file for future use. In many cases, however, we find that people's circumstances are so complicated that it is better to use an interpreter. Also, as the language profile of newly arrived communities most in need of translation is constantly changing, routine translations prior to request would not represent value for money.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

General issues

- The strategy should contain strong messages around the race equality duty.
- Equality of access to housing is important.
- Neighbour disputes. Sometimes the complainant is using complaints to harass someone. How is this dealt with?
- Race hate crime is perceived to be getting worse.
- BAME statistics are underestimates. There are probably twice as many BAME people in Ipswich than are picked up in census and other stats.
- The starting point should be why discrimination occurs.
- Anti discrimination should be an explicit strategic aim.
- There is HCA funding for specialist BAME housing schemes.
- Should we refresh BAME housing statement?
- All proposals must be discussed with representatives of minority ethnic groups.
- IBC should get accurate information on the numbers and needs of migrant workers.
- Ipswich Community Radio broadcast in other languages and this might be a good way of getting key information across.
- What about people with "no recourse to public funds"?
- CBL information should be translated. People do not understand the allocations system for social rented housing and therefore cannot make informed decisions about seeking other housing options.
- There are not enough ESOL classes. People do not understand important letters and throw them away.

Migrant communities

- There are hidden inequalities and hidden homelessness particularly among refugee and other migrant communities, who often rely on the private rented sector.

Gypsies and travellers

- Should there be a separate Gypsy and Traveller Strategy?

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- Gypsies and Travellers in conventional housing suffer isolation from relatives and their communities, as well as hostility from neighbours. For some there is a cultural aversion to living in bricks and mortar housing.
- Gypsy and Traveller owner-occupiers of bungalows with space to park trailers are happiest in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- Apart from the residential pitches mentioned there is a requirement for transit provision to be put in place in the Ipswich/Felixstowe.
- Ongoing provision should also be made for family formation. This is currently assessed at a 3% compound growth rate and should be planned for.
- There will need to be a new GTAA in 2011 to further inform the evidence base beyond 2011. In our view (Friends, Families and Travellers and Traveller Law Reform Project) needs assessed by the current GTAA for Ipswich understated needs because full cognisance was not taken of the needs for sites by Gypsies and Travellers in housing with a psychological aversion to housing.
- Gypsies and Travellers are the largest single ethnic minority in the East of England and more than half are in conventional housing. The problems faced by them must be considered, and a first priority must be establishing their numbers and the problems they face.

Large families

- There are long waits for adapted homes for people with disabilities living in large families, as there are very few large adapted properties.
- Bangladeshi people find it difficult to understand and negotiate CBL due to language difficulties, and/or not being literate in their first language. This is compounded if there are additional needs such as learning disabilities.
- Bangladeshi Support Centre and the Bangladeshi support worker (employed by IBC but based in the centre) deal with a lot of people trying to access CBL.
- Overcrowding is a serious issue in the Bangladeshi community.
- CBL doesn't give information about room sizes and this is important for large families.
- Often 'large 4 bed' means there are 2 downstairs reception rooms, and some families need 5-6 bedrooms – there are few of these in the social rented sector.

Action:

- Assist in the completion of the EqIA for CBL and take forward actions arising from this to address inequalities.
- Work towards compliance with CRE code for rented housing and support corporate work to achieve level 2 of the Local Government Equalities Framework.
- Re-establish and update Ipswich Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Housing Statement of Intent and action plan by end 2011, in order to tackle all forms of discrimination in housing and develop anti-discriminatory housing practice.
- Continue to work with neighbouring districts, Gypsies and Travellers and RPs to enable a small family sized site of 5-6 pitches in the next 5 years in or close to Ipswich.
- Work with Gypsies and Travellers to establish need, choose sites and develop and design new accommodation.
- Work with all communities towards community cohesion.
- Consider whether specific policies are needed to ensure fair access for Gypsies and Travellers to housing and planning services.
- Enable a small supply of larger 4+ bedroomed new affordable homes including larger adapted homes.

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- Include BAME housing needs in housing studies to complete by 2012 and enable partnership working to secure HCA funding to meet BAME housing needs.
- Establish the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in conventional housing and agree an action plan with them and relevant agencies to address the problems they face.

Outcome 3.3. Preventing homelessness and helping vulnerable households.

Tackling homelessness

Ipswich Homelessness Strategy Review 2008-2013 and Action Plan deals in detail with the council's approach to preventing and addressing homelessness. http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?categoryID=10105&fileID=235

Surviving the credit crunch

The council is working to support those in housing difficulty as a result of the credit crunch.

Mortgage rescue

The government's mortgage rescue program offers 2 options for homeowners facing repossession; shared equity where the household continues to own a share in the property, and Government Mortgage to Rent where the household becomes a tenant of a Registered Provider (RP).

The council is working in partnership with CAB, IHAG and Orbit Housing Association to deliver the scheme. All organisations involved may make referrals of clients in mortgage arrears to the housing options team for consideration under the scheme.

Housing options

As well as participating in the government's mortgage rescue scheme, the council continues to provide housing options advice to all those in danger of losing their homes. This includes referring people for debt advice, and we are working with sub-regional partners to enhance our housing options approach through the Trailblazer initiative. A key feature of Trailblazer will be access to advice about training, education and employment.

Housing options work includes: -

- Advice on renting a room to maximise income.
- Benefits advice.
- Negotiation with lenders to ensure they have exhausted all options available to them.
- Advice on welfare benefits and interest only mortgages.
- Attendance at court to either halt repossession or ask for an extension in accommodation.
- Referral to money advice services.
- Use of Prevention Fund money where appropriate.
- Advice on accessing all types of accommodation.

As well as this the council: -

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- Is working on a joint referral process for money advice with CAB and IHAG money advice team.
- Supports the rent deposit scheme.
- Gives grants to bring empty properties back into use by households in need.
- Is working towards participation in a sub-regional private sector leasing scheme to provide high quality, self-contained temporary accommodation for statutorily homeless households.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Dealing with welfare benefit matters must be carried out as swiftly and accurately as possible. Partnership work with organisations such as CAB and IHAG is vital.
- The RPs and local authorities should lobby the energy suppliers to get rid of the disparity of charges between quarterly meter houses and key or prepayment meter households. These households are already fuel poor and to make them pay more is verging on the criminal.
- Priority need due to vulnerability is difficult for external organisations to interpret.
- A forum for partners to the Homelessness Strategy is needed, in order to develop initiatives for non-statutorily homeless single people.
- Homelessness prevention is a good example of 'invest to save'.
- An analysis of the numbers and needs of non-statutorily homeless people is needed.

Communities impact:

- People from some communities are over represented in homelessness statistics.

Action:

- Continue to work with voluntary sector partners to make money, housing and welfare rights advice available as widely as possible.
- Continue with mainstream housing options work to help households find appropriate solutions to their housing problems including consideration of the private rented sector.
- Develop Enhanced Housing Options including the sub-regional Trailblazer initiative to help people back into training, education and employment.
- Continue to support the rent deposit scheme.
- Develop a sub-regional private sector leasing scheme to provide self-contained temporary accommodation for statutorily homeless households.
- As part of enhanced housing options, consider introducing an options approach for people moving on from short stay supported housing schemes, including access to the private rented sector, rent deposits and referral to CARA for floating support as appropriate.

Outcome 3.4: The needs of those with chaotic lifestyles and multiple needs are met in partnership and no-one in Ipswich is forced to sleep rough

Ipswich Borough Council is working towards making it unnecessary for anyone to sleep rough in Ipswich, and to counter the detrimental effects of substance misuse in the community. Since 2003 the council has purchased 2 emergency direct access beds (EDABs) for Rough Sleepers at Wilbury House, a private bed and breakfast establishment. Monitoring of the EDABs showed that although many Rough

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Sleepers were able to take up housing advice options to address their housing issues, a significant number required more support to break the cycle of long-term homelessness.

The EDABsPlus pilot opened in April 2008, providing a further six beds and two staff offering intensive advocacy and support. The project was in a separate section of Wilbury House, and Coastal Homeless Action Group delivered the service. The project aimed to provide flexible, responsive intensive support to people with a history of Rough Sleeping. The pilot ended on 31 May 2009, having accommodated 111 people, of whom 83 were resettled into more secure accommodation. 53 of those resettled had managed to retain their accommodation after 6 weeks.

The council, one-ipswich and Ipswich Umbrella Trust are working with partners to support new initiatives and a joined up multi-agency approach to meet the needs of people with chaotic lifestyles and complex needs. We are aware that over the summer of 2009, since the closure of the EDABsPlus pilot, there has been an apparent increase in rough sleeping in the town centre. The council will monitor this to see if this trend continues.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Regular liaison with 3rd sector agencies dealing with these clients groups is vital.
- Priority need due to vulnerability is difficult for external organisations to interpret and advise upon.
- People on short sentences cannot get rent covered by housing benefit and can be found intentionally homeless.
- Some vulnerable adults have a difficult relationship with area housing offices.
- Support staff may have a poor understanding of housing issues and find it difficult to help their clients negotiate the housing system.
- A forum for partners to the Homelessness Strategy is needed, in order to develop initiatives for non-statutorily homeless single people.
- Homelessness prevention is a good example of 'invest to save'.
- An analysis of the numbers and needs of non-statutorily homeless people is needed.

Communities impact:

- Rough sleeping and other 'street culture' impacts on all communities.
- Women, young people, people with disabilities and people from BAME backgrounds find many direct access facilities unwelcoming as they are dominated by white men often with substance misuse issues.

Suggested action:

- Work with one-ipswich, Ipswich Umbrella Trust, ACS, Supporting People, and 3rd sector partners to support initiatives and a joined up multi-agency approach aimed at resettling people with chaotic lifestyles and complex needs.
- Work with one-ipswich, Ipswich Umbrella Trust, ACS, Supporting People, Children and Young People's Services (CYP), Suffolk County Council's Social Inclusion Team and 3rd sector partners to establish appropriate direct access accommodation and resettlement support for these clients and ensure that the project supports one-ipswich and Supporting People objectives by end 2012.
- Continue current EDABs and cold weather provision.
- Continue to monitor and report levels of rough sleeping in Ipswich.

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- Support Suffolk Supporting People Move-on Strategy with respect to improving housing options for people leaving prison and preventing homelessness.

Outcome 3.5. Older people remain independent and included.

Our ageing population

The number of older people in Ipswich will increase over the next few years. Currently there are 10,100 people aged 75 or over living in Ipswich making up just over 8% of the population. This figure will increase over the next 20 years as there are currently 22,500 people aged between 55 and 74 (or just over 18% of the population).⁹

Ipswich Housing Needs Survey 2005 found that 62.2% of older person only households were owner-occupiers most of whom no longer had a mortgage. This suggests that there is a potential market for equity release schemes in Ipswich.

The Housing Needs Survey 2005 also found that 37.0% of council tenants are older people, and there may be opportunities to free up under-occupied council homes for use by families with children.

At the time of the last census in 2001, a third of households in Ipswich contained someone with a long-term limiting illness. As the population ages, the proportion of these households is likely to increase.

Although many older people own their own homes, meeting the costs of heating and repairs may become increasingly difficult over time for people on fixed incomes. Ipswich Stock Condition Survey 2005 found that older person households were more likely to live in unfit housing and housing in a poor state of repair than any other household type and twice as likely to experience fuel poverty.¹⁰ Ipswich Housing Needs Survey 2005 found that 3.7% of all older person only households (481 households) in Ipswich lived in unsuitable housing.

Helping older people remain independent at home.

Home Improvement Agency (HIA) and Handy Person Services (HP).

These services aim to help vulnerable people to carry out essential repairs and improvements. Older people may access these services either directly or through a range of agencies including Ipswich Borough Council's Private Sector Housing team. The service is available for those assessed as eligible for a renovation grant or a disabled facilities grant (DFG).

DFGs are accessed via the Council's Private Sector Housing Team and require assessment by an occupational therapist. There are similar arrangements for aids and adaptations for council tenants.

Housing Support and Social Care.

⁹ ONS resident population estimates June 2008.

¹⁰ Fordham's 2005, Ipswich Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, chapter 12.

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Supporting People is working with partners in district councils, Health and ACS to deliver a tenure-neutral floating support service for older people. The service may also 'top up' low-level support delivered to tenants living in sheltered housing projects.

Older people requiring social care rather than (or as well as) housing related support must be assessed by a social worker (accessed via Customer First) who will help them plan the services they need. Contributions from older people towards social care costs are means-tested.

Emergency help and identifying people in need.

Assistive technology includes items such as pressure mats, smoke detectors, flood and falls detectors, medication dispensers and bogus caller buttons, which help older people remain independent and safe within their own homes. These technologies may be accessed via Suffolk County Council's website or through Customer First.

District and borough councils are the main providers of telecare services across Suffolk at present, and Ipswich Hears provides the service to older people living in Ipswich. Customers are provided with wall and pendant alarms, which allow them to summon help on a 24-hour basis. The service provides help and security to older people and reduces inappropriate use of emergency services.

The Assistive Technology and Telecare Board includes representatives from health, social care, districts and boroughs, fire service and others across Suffolk. The Board is seeking funding for a 24/7 Mobile Human Response service covering the whole of Suffolk. The preferred option is for the new service to use and complement existing community alarm services. This service will form part of Suffolk Flexicare currently being developed by ACS, Supporting People, Health and other partners. It is hoped that the new service will provide a 24/7 support service in response to identified individual needs. The service will be aimed at giving vulnerable people and their carers the confidence to continue living in their own homes and in their own communities.

Homeshield.

Homeshield is a Suffolk-wide partnership involving local authorities, police, pensions service and health services, and voluntary agencies. The aim is to support vulnerable older residents so that they can continue to live safely and securely in their own homes.

Homeshield acts as a clearinghouse. If frontline visiting officers from any of the partnership agencies notice that an older person is in need of assistance they complete a referral/assessment form and send it to the Homeshield co-ordinator. The co-ordinator then contacts the relevant agency(s) to resolve the older person's difficulties. The council responds to referrals from Homeshield.

Town and Bridge Project

Town and Bridge project was set up to tackle deprivation in the central and southern parts of Ipswich, in particular higher than average death rates among people under 75. Health and wellbeing of people aged 45-74 has been a key focus of the project, as well as tackling fuel poverty, welfare benefit take up, health awareness, community engagement, community safety and fitness. The project comes under the umbrella of the one-IPSWICH local strategic partnership and includes public authorities as well as a range of voluntary and community agencies such as Age UK. The council's private sector housing team works with Warm Front to tackle fuel poverty in this area.

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Moving to smaller accommodation

Some older people may choose to downsize as they get older, and there are a number of options available to people in this position: -

- Older social housing tenants wishing to downsize or who are interested in moving to sheltered housing are given priority under Choice Based Lettings (CBL).
- Private sector homeowners may choose to sell and move to smaller houses, flats or bungalows that better meet their needs. One of the problems they encounter is that new build accommodation may be more expensive than the house they are selling, and many new apartments have not been designed with the needs of older people in mind.

Moving to specialist accommodation

It is very difficult to assess how many older people will choose to remain in their own homes as their care and support needs increase, and how many will prefer to move to specialist accommodation with care and support built in. In the past specialist housing and care options have been limited to: -

- Sheltered housing for those with low care and support needs.
- Residential or nursing care homes for those with higher care and support needs.

This older model of provision has been challenged. Most importantly many older people with low care needs now choose to remain in their own home rather than moving to sheltered housing, and will not seriously consider moving until their care and support needs increase to the point when they can no longer cope. The concept of Very Sheltered Housing (VSH) has been developed in response to this.

Residential care

Demand for residential care accommodation is predicted to increase by 45% in Ipswich by 2029¹¹. Need for this level of care will not be met through care home replacement alone. Very Sheltered Housing (VSH) is seen as a better alternative to residential care offering greater autonomy and living standards, and many older people may opt for intensive home care packages.

Very Sheltered Housing (VSH)

SCC has started a consultation process to review the future of options for its residential home estate in Ipswich, which currently provides 90 places for frail/elderly and older people with dementia. The County Council is committed to working with IBC to find the best long-term viable solution for the older people of the town.

Growth in numbers of people aged 75 and over is predicted to be relatively slow to 2017 and then rise more sharply, so we propose a provisional target of 80 bedspaces in 1-2 new VSH schemes in the next 5 years, including provision for people with dementia.

Most VSH has been commissioned through one off developments with RPs rather than via a strategic approach, but there is a need to engage with private sector

¹¹ Laing and Buisson, 2007, Older People Care Demand Study in Suffolk.

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providers as well to generate a mixed economy of VSH and cross-tenure provision. This is especially important given the rising levels of owner-occupation among older people on modest incomes. The 2001 census found that around 64% of pensioner households were owner-occupiers suggesting that the 60:40 market to affordable housing split agreed for mainstream homes would also be appropriate for VSH. Given that the sale of a modest second-hand 3 bed roomed home may not generate enough money to pay for a new VSH home, there may be a considerable market for shared ownership VSH.

Sheltered Housing

Supporting People funding to sheltered housing schemes will be severely reduced by April 2013 at the latest.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- There is a need to increase awareness among older people and the public generally of the roles and differences between sheltered and very sheltered accommodation, and residential care and nursing homes.
- The fact that older people are more likely to live in houses in disrepair is significant and consideration should be given to addressing this issue.
- The council should acknowledge that improvements in the way Disabled Facilities Grants operate are necessary and should be addressed.
- Incentive schemes to encourage older people to move to smaller, more appropriate accommodation should be kept under constant review.
- It is not certain that an ageing community will automatically need VSH. The results of the review of residential care homes must be considered.
- Not all people with dementia are old.
- The views of people living in sheltered schemes should be key to any decisions on its future.
- The move to mixed use can meet with opposition from existing residents of sheltered schemes.
- Is there scope for some sheltered housing to be shared ownership?

Action

- Continue to support the countywide HIA.
- Work with Supporting People partners to support Suffolk Flexicare Strategy including tenure-neutral floating support service for older people and initiatives such as telecare and Homeshield for older people and carers.
- Continue to support the Town and Bridge Project, in particular work to tackle fuel poverty.
- Monitor the effects of CBL priorities and the availability of assistance on older social housing tenants wishing to downsize, and take a flexible approach to 'under occupation' as many older people require an extra bedroom for visitors or carers.
- Introduce age related blocks of council accommodation for older people preferring to live with others of a similar age group.
- Encourage developers and housebuilders to consider the needs of older people when developing smaller open market, and shared ownership homes.
- Promote the provision of reliable high quality money advice for older people considering shared ownership, or equity release.
- Support and contribute to the emerging Suffolk Flexicare model for older people through the development of 1-2 (80 bedspaces) new very sheltered schemes for older people by 2015. This should include VSH provision for people with dementia. (VSH target to be kept under review)
- Aim for mix of 60% market housing, 40% affordable housing, including shared ownership and leasehold options for older people.

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- Ensure development partners consider affordable service charges at an early stage.
- Work with Suffolk Adult Care Services (ACS), Suffolk Supporting People and Health to support Suffolk Dementia Strategy and Suffolk Adults Plan 2009-2011.
- Agree an action plan to maintain a high quality service to existing sheltered housing tenants in the face of SP cuts.
- Develop a joint strategy for hard-to-let sheltered accommodation in partnership with local Registered Providers (RPs) and Adult Care Services (ACS).

Outcome 3.6. Vulnerable people remain independent and included, and have opportunities to enter employment, education and training.

Housing for people with mental health needs

There are 101 bedspaces in supported housing schemes for people with severe and enduring mental health needs in Ipswich. These are run by voluntary sector agencies with long standing experience in the field of mental health aftercare. Most projects are funded through a combination of money from health, social care, Supporting People and housing benefit.

As well as supported housing, community support/floating support is provided to people with severe and enduring mental health needs living independently in the community, and there is a range of day centre provision. Community support and day care has recently been re-tendered in the Ipswich area and new arrangements are now in place. Contracts for supported housing services, however, are due to be re-tendered in 2010. The council is working with partners in health, Adult Care Services and Supporting People to ensure that any negative impact on voluntary sector providers is minimised, whilst achieving the best possible range of housing services for clients. Re-tendering of services will also take account of the move towards personalised budgets for clients.

The council is aware that there is an increasing number of people with mental health needs requiring either higher or a different type of support than is currently provided. These people are either accommodated outside Suffolk or remain inappropriately in hospital. New services to address this gap in provision are under discussion.

Housing for people with learning disabilities

There are over 100 bedspaces for people with severe to moderate learning disabilities in supported housing schemes and residential care homes in Ipswich. The council has been working with partners in adult care services (ACS) and health to re-provide modern homes for people living in outmoded ward-style accommodation, or who are inappropriately placed in residential care homes. In addition, there are people with learning disabilities living with parents or carers, who at some stage will need their own homes. ACS estimate that a further 42 people with learning disabilities will need accommodation with support in the community in the Ipswich area in the short to medium term. The council is working with partners to address this need.

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Housing for people with physical and sensory disabilities¹²

At the time of the last census in 2001, a third of households in Ipswich contained someone with a long-term limiting illness. As the population ages, the proportion of these households is likely to increase. The council wishes to see homes built to lifetime homes standards, and full wheelchair standard¹³.

Issues raised by stakeholders

- Appropriate support and housing is needed so that people with severe mental health issues, who then cause neighbour nuisance/anti-social behaviour, can be rehoused more quickly.
- What about people with acquired brain injury? Do we need separate provision for this group?
- Gypsies and Travellers should be included within any proposals. It is a fact that a large proportion of Gypsies and Travellers suffer with poorer physical and mental health.
- Adaptations and improved building specifications would help those with disabilities.
- Many people with learning disabilities and mental health needs can be housed in mainstream housing providing appropriate support is available when they need it. It is important that CBL, Options and Tenancy Services staff know how to help someone access Holistic Floating Support, and are aware that this is available to people who may not have a severe and enduring mental illness.
- Is there enough accommodation in Ipswich for single people, which can be accessed by vulnerable or disabled single people?

Action

- Continue to work with partners in Supporting People, ACS, Health and the 3rd sector to ensure that appropriate support is available in the community for those that need it, including people moving from supported projects to independent housing.
- Continue to work with partners in Supporting People, ACS and Health to re-tender supported housing services for people with mental health needs, and to provide housing for people with severe mental health needs that cannot at present be accommodated within Suffolk.
- Continue to work strategically with the Mental Health Accommodation Sub Group, the Mental Health Partnership Board of Suffolk Strategic Partnership and Supporting People to ensure housing issues affecting people with mental health needs are addressed, including those affecting young people.
- Support initiatives to provide specialist accommodation for frail older people with mental health needs.
- Support the countywide initiative to provide housing related support to Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- Work with partners in Supporting People, ACS and Health to enable housing with support for people with learning disabilities.
- Investigate whether separate provision is needed for people with acquired brain injury.
- Encourage the development of homes built to lifetime homes standards and full wheelchair standard.
- Work closely with the Physical Disability Partnership board to identify need.

¹² Please see separate consultation papers for older people and for affordable homes.

¹³ See Suffolk design requirements from the Suffolk County Council website

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Outcome 3.7. Young parents are supported and children and young people are safeguarded.

Ipswich Borough Council assists Suffolk County Council's Children and Young People's service (CYP) to ensure that all care leavers, and young people aged under 18 who present as homeless, are accepted as 'children in need' under the Children Act and accommodated appropriately.

There are a number of specialist schemes for young people in Ipswich including Ipswich Foyer aimed at housing young people and helping them find employment, education or training, Peppercorn lodge, a supported housing scheme for young vulnerable parents as well as a number of hostels focussed on younger age groups.

The council is working ACS and Richmond Fellowship to set up a scheme in its own stock for young people recovering from their first psychotic episode. It is hoped that up to 4 young people a year will take up introductory tenancies with floating support.

The council runs a floating support scheme in its own stock for young people recovering from their first psychotic episode in partnership with Richmond Fellowship and community mental health services.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Young parents and young people generally are important.
- The local housing allowance is paid direct to young people living in the private rented sector who are not used to budgeting.
- The single room rent does not apply to young people leaving care until they are 22 years old. Without careful planning these young people may find themselves in a situation where they cannot sustain their accommodation and would no longer be in priority need under the homelessness legislation.
- Outcome 3.7 will embrace a number of young people Studying at Suffolk New college. It might be helpful to an action point encouraging young people under 18 presenting as homeless to engage with education or training. The foyer is a good example of this.

Action:

- Continue to assist CYP colleagues to ensure that children in need are adequately supported and housed, through the revised protocol for homeless young people.
- Continue to support Ipswich Foyer and initiatives such as Trailblazer aimed at encouraging young people to take up education and training opportunities.
- Continue to support Peppercorn Lodge and other hostels working with exclusively with young people, as well as hostels working with young people as part of non age specific services.
- Ensure all staff receive training in the councils Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

Resources and partnerships for Priority 3:

- Suffolk Supporting People.
- Challenge Fund and Family Intervention money accessed through bids.
- NAHP BAME and supported housing funding themes.
- Gypsy sites grant.
- Contributions from ACS and Health toward supported housing and community support schemes.

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- Community cohesion strategy.
- Crime and disorder partnership.
- one-ipswich.
- Tenant participation strategy, Housing Management Board and IpCom.
- Suffolk Racial Harassment Initiative.
- Suffolk Gypsy and Traveller Forum and accommodation sub group.
- Suffolk new and migrant communities forum.
- Suffolk ACS and CYP.

Core housing service outcomes for Priority 3:

Outcome 3.3. Preventing homelessness and helping vulnerable households.

Outcome 3.4. No one in Ipswich is forced to sleep rough.

Outcome 3.5. Older people remain independent and included.

Cross cutting outcomes:

Outcome 3.1. Effective housing and neighbourhood management through partnership.

Outcome 3.2. The housing needs of all communities are met.

Priority 4. Doing the basics better for less

Since 2007 central government has required public sector agencies to make year on year efficiency savings. The current economic downturn made this even more pressing with greater savings to be found.

'Transforming and modernising customer access to services' and 'Doing the basics better for less' are underlying principles of the council's corporate plan 'Transforming Ipswich'. Since 2008 housing services have been working with an efficiency partner, Northgate Kendric Ash to make housing services more efficient, economic and effective.

Outcome 4.1. Excellent housing services based on excellent customer care.

Housing services are now kept under continuous review, and are being restructured and streamlined to make them fit for the 21st century. A new repairs centre was set up in 2009 and a new Choice Based Lettings Scheme implemented both focused on providing the best possible service to our customers.

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Our aim is to focus resources on frontline services and improve the quality and consistency of our service delivery.

We have improved value for money by closing area housing offices whilst improving services to our tenants and residents by getting more estate officers 'on the beat', and developing our customer call centre.

Our service improvement and performance improvement plans for housing services include clear targets and service standards for all our basic housing services.

Issues raised by stakeholders:

- Older or vulnerable tenants may miss the proximity of area housing offices. Hard to reach groups such as people with disabilities and people who cannot access computers or phones may find it harder to access housing services.

Communities impact:

- A communities impact assessment and action plan is necessary to identify and mitigate any adverse effects of the restructure on particular groups.

Action:

- We will continue to improve our services and performance through the Service Improvement Plan and Performance Improvement Plan.
- The impact of changes to housing services on all communities will be assessed and steps taken to mitigate any adverse effect.

Outcome 4.2. All housing services represent good value for money.

Housing services are subject to clear financial planning and service costing. We are seeking continuous improvement in service efficiency and economy without detriment to our customers.

Action

- Continue rigorous financial monitoring.
- Keep all housing services under continuous review so that savings opportunities are not missed.
- Work closely with HCA and housing delivery partners to ensure that new affordable housing provision represents good value for money to the benefit of the public purse.

Outcome 4.3. Tenants and residents are involved in decision-making

As well as our Tenant Participation Strategy, Housing Management Board, IpCom and Tenants Area Forums, we are keen to receive feedback from all our customers. We do this through a variety of mechanisms including: -

- Public consultations
- Satisfaction surveys
- Complaints procedures.

As part of the current restructure we are consulting our tenants on proposals to merge tenant area forums with our one-ipswich area forums. We hope in this way to

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align our tenant services more clearly with our community strategy and have a cross-tenure, more inclusive neighbourhood approach to tenants' and residents' concerns.

We are keen to improve community involvement in improving housing services in Ipswich.

Issues raised by stakeholders – pending consultation with tenants

Communities impact:

- It is hoped that a merger of tenant area forums and one-ipswich forums will aid assessment of the impact of any new proposals on all communities.

Suggested action:

- Improve tenant and resident involvement in line with TSA standards.
- Take account of tenant views with respect to the proposal to merge tenant area forums with one-ipswich area forums.

Resources and partnerships for Priority 4

- Housing management board.
- IpCom.
- Area housing forums and one-ipswich area forums.
- Tenant Services Authority (TSA)
- Ipswich LIP partnership.

All Priority 4 outcomes are cross cutting.

GLOSSARY

ACS

Adult Care Services.

Affordability

A measure of whether households can access and sustain the costs of private sector housing. There are two main types of affordability measure: mortgage and rental. Mortgage affordability assesses whether households would be eligible for a mortgage; rental affordability measures whether a household can afford private rental. Mortgage affordability is based on conditions set by mortgage lenders, usually 2.9 times a joint income or 3.5 times a single income. Rental affordability is defined as the rent being less than 25% of a household's gross income.

Affordable housing

This includes social rented and intermediate housing provided to specified eligible households whose needs cannot be met by the market. Affordable housing should cost less than similar sized housing on the open market and be available at a sub market price in perpetuity.

Bedroom Standard

This states that the following groups within a family should have separate bedrooms:

- A married or cohabiting couple.

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- Each pair of people aged 10-20 of the same sex.
- Each pair of children under 10.

Overcrowded homes fall short of this standard.

BAME

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic: people who would not describe themselves as being of White British origin.

Brownfield land

Previously developed land including both vacant and derelict land.

CARA

Central Access and Referral Agency: a Suffolk Wide Supporting People project providing a single access point for holistic floating support.

CBL

Choice Based Lettings: the aim is to allow households on the housing register to make informed choices regarding their future homes. Homes are advertised to eligible households people on the waiting list who bid for homes they would like to live in. Ipswich Borough Council participates in Gateway to Homechoice a sub-regional CBL scheme.

CYP

Children and Young People's Services.

Decent Homes Standard

A decent home meets four criteria:

- It meets the current minimum standard for housing, now the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) – see below
- It is in a reasonable state of repair.
- It has reasonably modern facilities
- It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

DFG

Disabled Facilities Grants: local council grants to people with disabilities to help towards the cost of adapting their homes.

Dwelling

A self-contained unit of accommodation where all the rooms and facilities available for the use of the occupants are behind a front door.

EDMO

Empty Dwelling Management Order: the Housing Act 2004 has given local authorities the power to serve EDMOs. An EDMO will enable the local authority to take over the management of the property to undertake repairs and rent the property out.

Floating support

Tenure neutral housing related support that helps people cope with problems related to their accommodation so that they can maintain their independence. Holistic floating support is generic i.e. not aimed at a particular client group.

GTAA

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment: a study of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs including new pitches.

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Haven Gateway Partnership

The Partnership brings together the ports of Felixstowe, Harwich, Ipswich, Mistley and the surrounding areas and focuses on promoting economic growth.

Haven Gateway Housing Sub-region

The Haven Gateway Housing Sub-region comprises 8 Councils: Ipswich, Colchester, Suffolk Coastal, Mid Suffolk, Babergh, Maldon, Braintree and Tendring. It focuses on the delivery of the Regional Housing Strategy.

HHSRS

Housing Health and Safety Rating System: In November 2005 the HHSRS replaced the fitness standard as the legal minimum standard.

HMO

House in Multiple Occupation: a house, which is occupied by persons who do not form a single household.

Household

One person living alone or a group of people who have the address as their only or main residence and who either share one meal a day or share a living room.

Housing Associations

Independent not for profit organisations registered with and regulated by the Housing Corporation. Also known as Registered Providers or RPs

HCA

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA): the single national housing and regeneration agency for England.

Housing need

The situation in which households lack their own housing or are living in housing which is inadequate or unsuitable and are unlikely to be able to meet their needs in the housing market without some assistance.

Housing Register

A database of all individuals or households who have applied to a local authority or RP for a social tenancy or access to some other form of affordable housing.

IBC

Ipswich Borough Council.

Intermediate housing

A generic term for a number of different types of housing which lie between social rented housing and market housing in terms of costs to the householder. Shared equity, sub market rent and low cost homes for sale are examples of intermediate housing.

Ipswich Standard

A standard for Ipswich Council homes developed with Council tenants and other stakeholders, which goes beyond the minimum criteria for the Government's decent homes standard – see above.

LAA

Local Area Agreement: a three-year funding arrangement between central government and a local area, as represented by a local strategic partnership.

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LDF

Local Development Framework: a portfolio of development documents which collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area. Ipswich's LDF will replace the local plan in 2010.

LTLI

Long term limiting illness.

LSP

Local Strategic Partnership: a non-statutory partnership of the public sector, private sector, business, community and voluntary sectors. It provides an over-arching co-ordination framework within which other partnerships can operate and is responsible for communities strategies.

Net annual need

The difference between the annual housing need and the expected annual supply of available affordable housing units (e.g. from the re-letting of existing social rented dwellings).

One-ipswich

Ipswich local strategic partnership.

One-suffolk

Suffolk Strategic Partnership

Private Sector Renewal

A range of measures aimed at achieving decent homes in the private housing sector.

PSA 16

Public Service Agreement 16: supports adults who are at risk of social exclusion and seeks to increase the proportions of at-risk individuals in settled accommodation and employment, education or training. It focuses on care leavers, adult offenders under probation supervision, adults in contact with secondary mental health services and adults with moderate to severe learning difficulties.

RP

Registered Provider: a landlord who has met Housing Corporation registration requirements – usually a housing association.

Relets

Social rented housing units which are vacated during a period and become potentially available for letting to new tenants.

SAP

Standard Assessment Procedure: the Government's recommended system for home energy rating. It works on a scale of 1-120, with higher ratings equating to higher energy efficiency.

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Shared equity

A means of helping people into home ownership. The buyer purchases a share of their home, with the remaining share being held by another party, usually a housing association. The other party will redeem their share when the home is sold.

SHLAA

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

SHMA

Strategic Housing Market Assessment

Social rented housing

Decent homes provided to rent at below market cost for households in need by Local Authorities or Registered Providers (RPs).

SNAP

Holistic floating support service covering a number of Suffolk districts including Ipswich. Access is via CARA.

Supporting People

Supporting People is a partnership programme that was set up in April 2003 to fund, commission and monitor the quality of existing housing-related support services for vulnerable adults.

Sustainable communities

Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse need of existing and future residents, are sensitive to the environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe, inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Temporary Accommodation

Accommodation arranged by the local authority in order to meet a homelessness duty.

UCS

University Campus Suffolk

Under-occupation

An under-occupied dwelling is one which exceeds the bedroom standard by two or more bedrooms.