

Putting the **HEART** into Housing

HHealth & Wellbeing

EEconomic Growth & Development

AAffordable Housing

Reducing Fuel Poverty and promoting energy efficiency

Tackling Homelessness



South Cambridgeshire District Council HOUSING STRATEGY 2012 - 2016



South Cambridgeshire District Council

South Cambridgeshire Hall

Cambourne Business Park

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Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Housing Strategy for 2012-2016.

The Housing Strategy sets out our overall vision and key aims for the housing service over the next 5 years. **Putting the HEART into Housing** encapsulates the key themes of the Housing Strategy:

HHealth & Wellbeing

Economic Growth and Development

Affordable Housing

Reducing Fuel Poverty and promoting energy efficiency

Tackling Homelessness



Councillor Mark Howell
Housing Portfolio Holder

The last few years have seen unprecedented change in the housing sector, with social housing reform, welfare reform, proposed changes to Planning and the Localism Agenda. With these changes, brings challenges and opportunities and the Strategy aims to give clear direction and leadership as to what is needed over the coming years, as well as working towards the Government's key priorities published in its Housing Strategy for England.

In particular, we are entering into an exciting era following the HRA self-financing regime that will enable us to plan investment to improve our Council stock and have the potential to start building Council homes again. This is a welcome change that will put us at the forefront to achieving our aim of being the best landlord in the District, as well as providing much needed new affordable homes.

On the downside, I am gravely concerned with the increasing number of households facing homelessness and the increased use of bed & breakfast as temporary accommodation. Changes to the Local Housing Allowance has had an impact on the availability of private rented accommodation in the District that people can afford and high house prices continues to be a huge affordability issue for those trying to get onto the property ladder. Actions within the Strategy identify what we are doing to help address these issues as well as planning for future housing growth, especially for an older population.

Following a recent private sector housing survey, we are in a position to better understand the profile of homes in the District and how we can target investment and priorities to those areas most in need, such as tackling fuel poverty and improving housing conditions through promotion of energy efficient solutions.

I hope you will find the Strategy both informative in painting a picture for housing in the District and useful in identifying how we plan to meet the challenges and opportunities over the next 5 years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Officers working across the Council, and our key partners for their assistance in developing the new district-wide strategy and their commitment in helping us to deliver a housing service that we can all be proud of.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following points below summarise the main challenges facing strategic housing during the lifespan of this Housing Strategy:

Planning for an appropriate level of housing growth to support the local economy, with an increasingly ageing population.

Contribute to national carbon reduction targets and introducing measures to manage sustainable living.

Severe pressure on affordable housing due to high house prices and the lack of private rented accommodation.

1% of housing in the District has been empty for 6+ months – demand for housing a key driver to bring empty homes back into use.

Ability to find suitable accommodation and maintain tenancies following impacts to the Welfare Reform and changes to housing benefit – anticipate increased pressure on the housing advice service

Increased homelessness applications and lack of temporary accommodation resulting in the need to use bed & breakfast

Accommodation needs for Gypsy & Travellers who are the District's largest ethnic minority group

Private Sector Housing - 21.5% fail the Decent Homes Standard, with 8.5% with Category 1 hazards, 11.3% in disrepair and 8.8% with inefficient heating and ineffective insulation

High levels of elderly households living in non-decent homes

Slightly above average levels of overcrowding in the private sector, especially those in the private rented sector

Some Houses in Multiple Occupancy undetected and unlicensed – some issues of overcrowding, safety measures and poor management especially in relation to migrant workers and disadvantaged groups

Managing increasing energy costs and improving energy security – 7.1% of private sector occupants identified as being in fuel poverty and 12% of survey respondents within Council homes. The more rural villages are affected most due to being off-grid and having less choice in heating sources.

Managing the 30-yr HRA Business Plan for our Council stock to maintain the Decent Homes Standard and further improve homes following implementation of self-financing regime

High levels of disability within the Council's housing stock

Reduction in the level of Supporting People funding available for Cambridgeshire resulting in the need to review housing support services provided to vulnerable residents in the District

Operational changes following implementation of the Localism Act and the HRA Subsidy Reform

The Council's overarching vision for housing in South Cambridgeshire is:

Housing Vision

To be the best housing service by providing good quality housing across all tenures that is accessible to all – that enhances residents' quality of life, their health and wellbeing, that supports economic growth and social opportunities, alongside improved energy security and reduced carbon footprints.

In essence, we want to promote and brand our Council's Housing Service as **putting the HEART into Housing**

HHealth & Wellbeing

Economic Growth and Development

Affordable Housing

Reducing Fuel Poverty and promoting energy efficiency

Tackling Homelessness

To work towards this vision, the Affordable Homes Service has identified key aims for the main areas that the Council needs to focus on in order to achieve its objectives and vision for housing.

Affordable Housing Provision

Our Aim: To deliver a range of homes that are affordable to all and where people want to live that will support economic growth and economic activity

We will:

- Ensure planning policies remain viable and achievable for the provision of affordable housing as part of the Local Plan Review.
- Work with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) to help prioritise funding allocations in South Cambridgeshire.
- Undertake further modeling of the HRA Business Plan to investigate the potential for a future Council house new-build programme.
- Aim to ensure that all affordable housing is built to the HCA Design & Quality. As a minimum all affordable homes should reach Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Ensure homes are built to accommodate older people and people with disabilities and where possible homes meet the Lifetime Homes Standard.
- Continue working with local people, parish councils and local landowners to develop rural affordable housing, in the villages where a need has been identified.
- Work in partnership with the HCA and registered providers to look at new ways in which the Council can assist in bringing large-scale developments forward.
- Promote new Government initiatives once the Localism Act is implemented.
- Pilot the co-housing initiative at Orchard Park that will inform future projects.
- Work with key partners in health and social care and registered providers to bring forward housing provision for households with specific needs, with Extra Care housing identified as a priority.
- Identify a potential public Gypsy & Travellers Site in partnership with Cambridge City Council and seek a development and/or management partner to take forward by 2015.
- Publish a Tenancy Strategy by June 2012 to inform and influence registered providers on the allocation and renewal of tenancies.
- Work towards establishing a Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

Better Homes

Our Aim: To improve the living conditions across all tenures, to help make homes more energy efficient and to reduce fuel poverty

We will:

- Publish a Private Sector Housing Action Plan following key actions identified through the Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2011.
- Promote progress against the HRA Business Plan, Warm Homes Strategy and Asset Management Strategy in relation to Council housing.
- Progress sites that are earmarked for redevelopment within the Council's own stock – working in partnership with registered providers where necessary.
- Review the Asset Management Strategy in 2013 and establish a replacement programme for properties identified through the Council's stock-profiling project.
- Improve the Council managed Gypsy & Traveller Site at Whaddon to improve the infrastructure to the site, including energy efficiency measures and utilising renewable energy sources.
- Reduce CO2 production by 0.28 tonnes per annum for the Council stock and achieve an average SAP rating of 70 (Energy Rating C).
- Ensure owner-occupiers and private rented tenants secure their full share of the increased help available through the new Green Deal and other programmes which help to address fuel poverty.
- Continue to access grants to improve the thermal efficiency in the Council stock and introduce innovative sustainable energy efficient heating solutions.
- Investigate the potential for partnerships to maximise the benefits of funding and ensure tenants are encouraged to seek the best priced energy supplier for their needs.
- Install solar photovoltaic panels to approximately 500 Council homes by March 2012 that will generate free electricity for tenants during the day and reduce electricity bills.
- Investigate how fuel poverty impacts on the gypsy and traveller community following funding secured through LEAF (Local Energy Assessment Funding).
- Support local volunteer groups across the District to help communities and residents cut energy costs and become less dependent on increasingly expensive fossil fuels through the South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership.
- Take an active role in delivery of the new 'Green Deal' to improve energy efficiency in homes and other buildings.
- Over a period of 2 years, monitor the Retrofit Project at Rampton Drift, Longstanton to see what difference cutting edge 'green' technologies are making.
- Publish an Empty Homes Strategy that sets out actions for bringing empty homes back into use, including promotion of the Empty Homes Grant Initiative.

Making Best Use of Existing Stock

Our Aim: To promote safe and sustainable communities, ensuring people are living in the right homes at a time that is right for them

We will:

- Work in partnership with King Street Housing Society to investigate options for releasing some sheltered stock in return for family homes, possibly through the Private Rented Sector Leasing Scheme to tackle under-occupation in the private sector.

- Be pro-active in providing support and advice to help social tenants to transfer to smaller accommodation that will better meet their needs. We will look at the options to joining the Huntingdonshire Under-Occupation Partnership Agreement or establish a similar scheme by 2013.
- Develop a Tenancy Fraud Policy and take a more pro-active approach in raising awareness of the consequences of tenancy fraud, including subletting.
- Publish a Tenancy Policy by April 2012, explaining how we manage tenancies in a way that makes the best use of homes to meet local needs, including the use of Flexible tenancies for a minimum period of 10 years and introductory tenancies.
- Work towards signing up to the Respect Charter, which will demonstrate our commitment to providing a high quality Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) service for our Council tenants.

Securing housing with specialist support

Our Aim: To promote fully inclusive communities and to work with partners to provide support and assistance to enable independent living

We will

- Publish an Ageing Well Strategy, which will include actions to encourage independent living and support community health schemes.
- Work towards developing a 'one-stop shop' within the District Council to enable easier access for older people to receive services and information.
- Continue to promote the Exceptions Site policy providing affordable housing for local people to enable them to stay in the village, maintaining a support network for both young and old.
- Bring forward Extra Care Schemes as part of the affordable housing contribution and in accordance with the Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care Sheltered Housing in Cambridgeshire 2011-2015
- Remodel the Sheltered Housing Service in view of the reduction in Supporting People (SP) funding and in preparation for the competitive tendering process, with the new contract due to start in April 2013.
- Support mechanisms through existing and new village warden schemes to provide a wider range of personal services that help to maintain independent living.
- Monitor through a Service Level Agreement the performance of the newly established shared Home Improvement Agency service.
- Ensure sufficient resource is provided for disabled adaptations in our Council Homes as soon as possible when needed as part of the HRA Business Plan – as identified as a top priority for funding by tenants.
- Work with the Cambridge Community Service to raise awareness of Assistive Technology through training and publicity to other professionals involved in care and support, as well as to the wider public.
- Work with our contractors Mears to develop and provide a Handy Person Service for our Council tenants.

Preventing and Tackling Homelessness

Our Aim: To reduce homelessness through being proactive in preventative measures and ensuring there is sufficient suitable accommodation available to people who are, or who may become homeless

We will

- **Monitor the impact of the Local Housing Allowance (Housing Benefit)** – in partnership with King Street Housing Society maintain an affordable private sector leasing scheme and maximize use of the private rented sector.
- **Money advice services** - work with Cambridge Citizens Advice Bureau to provide a money advice service within the Housing Advice and Options Team each week.
- **Home-Link developments** – this includes a new web site which provides applicants with information on housing options targeted at their specific needs and circumstances, and a new scheme to advertise affordable private rented properties on the Home-Link website.
 - Work with Sanctuary Carr-Gomm to redevelop the hostel site at Waterbeach to provide new provision in the form of self-contained units whilst still providing a supportive environment for homeless families and single people.
 - Promote the Empty Homes Grant Initiative to attract further private sector housing to be used for rental through the private sector leasing scheme.
 - Work with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) over the coming months to look at options available to ensure homes at Waterbeach Barracks are not left empty following the Army's relocation.
 - Review the Homelessness Strategy during 2012 for publication in 2013.
 - Work with county partners and support agencies, such as CDIP Addaction, to establish the provision of training flats. This enables chronically excluded individuals, to have a settled environment in which to receive the support they require from other services.
 - Work in partnership with the City and other districts (including Peterborough) to recruit a fixed term post that will work with Rough sleepers who have no recourse to public funds.
 - Review the allocation of housing grants to voluntary organisations for 2013 onwards.
 - Monitor take-up and performance following the new arrangements with Circle Support for the Floating Support Service that helps residents sustain their tenancy/home.
 - Develop an Income Maximisation and Financial Inclusion Strategy with the aim to assist households to successfully manage their income and other debts so that they are able to sustain their tenancy.

Improving housing options and extending choice

Our Aim: To work in partnership to provide housing advice so that people understand their housing options, help them to sustain their current home or access alternative suitable accommodation

We will

- Continue to work with King Street Housing Society to maintain the provision of affordable private rented accommodation.
- Develop the private rented sector module to allow individual landlords to advertise properties for rent through Home-Link, offering landlords incentives to join.

- Review the Allocations Policy during 2012/13.
- Promote the Government's Homebuy schemes, such as Firstbuy through the South Cambs Magazine and other forms of publicity.
- Investigate the potential for new initiatives, such as equity models and working with high street banks to help first time buyers access mortgages
- Work with King Street Housing Society to provide more single person accommodation in the private sector following a successful bid for funds from Crisis.

Monitoring and Performance

Our Aim: To provide an Affordable Homes Service that is transparent and accountable, that is developed in consultation with our tenants, partner agencies and the wider public and demonstrates value for money

We will

- Ensure key actions from the Housing Strategy are captured in the Annual Service Plan for Affordable Homes or monitored through individual Action Plans
- Take into account the comments of individuals and organisations in the development of the Housing Strategy and any supporting documents.
- Review the governance requirements for housing once the self-financing regime has been established.
- Continue to learn from our successes and failures and from other sources of good practice to improve our services and processes.
- Review the Value for Money Strategy in 2013.
- Implement the Affordable Homes 'Your Service' project – enhancing information through the Council's website, establishing neighbourhood teams and providing area-based hub offices.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Strategy is the overarching housing-related strategic document for South Cambridgeshire. The Council's strategic housing role includes the delivery of affordable housing, including supported/adapted accommodation, assessing housing needs, allocations and housing choice, preventing homelessness and providing housing advice; as well as housing in the private sector, such as understanding the condition of homes in the district, energy efficiency, empty properties and tackling fuel poverty.

Local authorities are required to have a Housing Strategy, which sets out a clear vision for housing in its area for providing leadership, planning and delivery to:

- Assess and plan for the current and future housing needs of the local population across all tenures
- Make best use of the existing housing stock - ensuring council homes maintain a high decent homes standard and encourage maintenance of private homes
- Plan and facilitate new supply
- Plan and commission housing support services which link homes to support and other services that people need to live in them; and
- Work in partnership to secure effective and neighbourhood management

The Housing Strategy for South Cambridgeshire needs to support and inter-relate with both the Council's Planning and Environmental Health policies to ensure that our key aims for the District can be realised and fit within the wider agenda for the Cambridge Sub Region.

Many challenges facing South Cambridgeshire in developing this Strategy are familiar. House prices and private sector rents are prohibitively high, demand for affordable housing exceeds supply, and homelessness in the district is beginning to increase, whilst availability of funding is reducing. This Council needs to work in partnership with others, be innovative and forward-thinking to overcome these challenges, work better together to fulfil our strategic housing role.

Our Vision

The Council recognises the importance of good housing and how this has an influence on people's quality of life, their health and wellbeing and the economic and social opportunities available to them. The local economy will only continue to thrive if people who work, or want to work, in an area can find the right housing within reach of their jobs.

In consultation with key partners, (see page 80), we have developed a vision that seeks to embrace this:

Housing Vision

To be the best housing service by providing good quality housing across all tenures that is accessible to all – that enhances residents' quality of life, their health and wellbeing, that supports economic growth and social opportunities, alongside improved energy security and reduced carbon footprints.

In essence, we want to promote and brand our Council's Housing Service as **putting the HEART into Housing**

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What have we done so far?

Since the publication of the last Housing Strategy 2007-10, some of the key achievements during that time have included:

Delivering homes that are affordable and where people want to live

- 1273 affordable homes have been built since April 2007 up to December 2011 – including 215 built on exception sites specifically to meet local needs.
- Completion of Extra Care Schemes for the elderly at Moorlands, Melbourn and Flaxfields, Linton – providing 75 specially designed homes with on-site support and state of the art facilities.
- Redevelopment of bedsit scheme to provide 14 units of special needs housing for people with mental health problems completed in August 2008 in partnership with BPHA. The scheme has integrated well within the community.

Improving Existing Homes

- Phase 1 of the redevelopment scheme at the Windmill Estate, Fulbourn completed – providing 120 new homes, including 40 for shared ownership and 52 for rent. Planning application submitted for Phase 2 to provide a further 172 homes – expected completion Winter 2014.
- From April 2007 – March 2011 assisted 230 households with a Disabled Facilities Grant through the Home Improvement Agency.
- Undertaken a stock condition survey in the private sector and for our Council housing stock.
- Offering grants to private sector owners for solar panels (Solar hot water heating and Solar PV) and offering grants to vulnerable people over 60 for replacement boilers.

More Choice – Greater Opportunity

- Implementation of the Home-Link Choice Based Lettings Scheme – 1587 households have successfully been allocated housing through Home-Link since April 2008.
- Prevented 440 households from becoming homeless between April 2008 and March 2011 through pro-active work to help families remain in their home or find alternative accommodation.
- Due to the increased focus on homelessness prevention, there has been a year on year decrease in the number of homeless acceptances from 101 in 2007/08 to 72 in 2010/11.

Monitoring and Performance

- On a scale of zero to three stars, South Cambridgeshire District Council was awarded a 'Good' two star rating with 'promising prospects for improvement' following the Audit Commission Inspection of the Council's strategic housing service in December 2010.

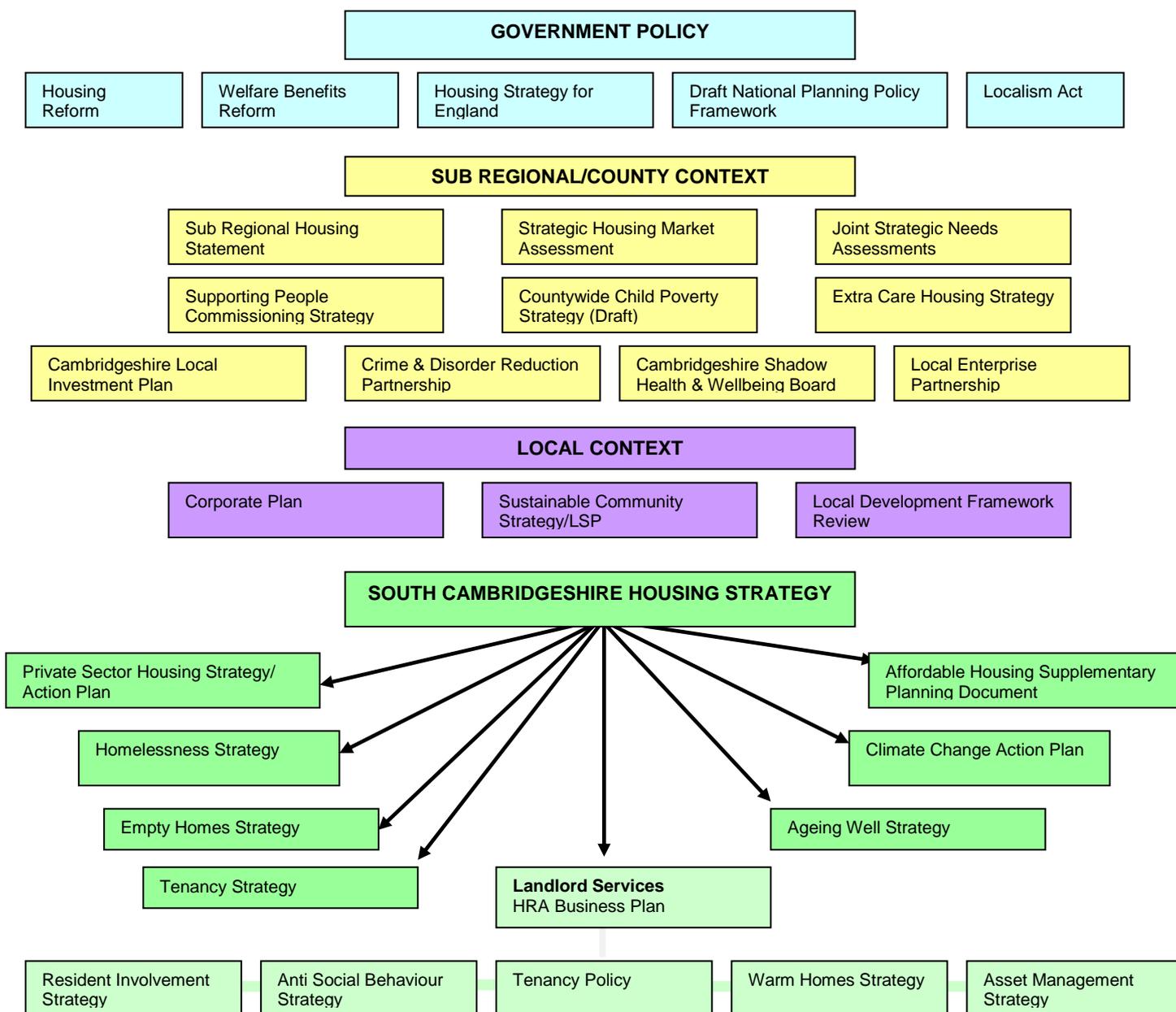
CHAPTER 2

NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

The strategic vision for housing for South Cambridgeshire needs to take into account and contribute to the wider housing agenda nationally and for the sub region.

The Housing Strategy forms a central part of the strategic framework for South Cambridgeshire and forms the link between Government policy on housing and the local strategic approach towards addressing a range of housing-related issues.

The diagram below highlights some of the key national and local drivers for housing in our district and demonstrates the relationship between these and the Housing Strategy. Further details can be found at Chapter 11 – Reference Links (page 85).



National Context

The Coalition Government published its Housing Strategy for England in November 2011 with the aim to reignite the housing market and get the nation building again. It recognises that housing is crucial to social mobility, health and wellbeing and that getting house building moving again is crucial for economic growth – for every new home built up to two new jobs are created a year.

The key priorities include:

- Increase the number of homes available to rent, including affordable homes, and the opportunities for people to own their home, whether through access to mortgage finance or by reinvigorating Right to Buy
- Improve the flexibility of social housing (increasing mobility and choice)
- Protect the vulnerable and disadvantaged by tackling homelessness and support people to stay in their homes
- Make sure that homes are of high quality, sustainable and well designed

Prior to publication of the Housing Strategy for England, the Government have been working towards housing reform that has seen fundamental changes to social housing. These include:

The introduction of Affordable Rents from April 2011. Providing higher rents than social housing, set at 80 per cent of local market rents. The additional revenue received to be invested back into the provision of new affordable housing

The ability to convert existing social rented housing into the new Affordable Rent tenure upon change of tenancy

The introduction of new flexibilities that allow landlords to offer fixed-term tenancies in the social housing sector

A national mobility scheme to improve tenants choice and greater flexibilities to assist transferring tenants

A new duty for local authorities to produce a ‘Tenancy Strategy’ which sets out the broad objectives to be taken into consideration by registered providers when setting out their own tenancy policies

Amendments to legislation that relate to homelessness and housing allocation. Under the proposals, local authorities will be permitted to discharge its homelessness duties through the private sector, and will no longer be required to hold ‘open’ waiting lists allowing local authorities greater flexibility to meet local circumstances

Plans to financially incentivise local authorities to bring long-term empty homes back into use

Changes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Subsidy System to a new locally controlled system

Reform of social housing regulation to provide social tenants with stronger tools to hold their landlords to account through tenant-led panels. This will follow the abolition of the Tenant Services Authority with its remaining functions transferring to the Homes & Communities Agency

These reforms are being brought into statute through the Localism Act that is currently being passed through Parliament. Other measures being introduced with housing-related implications include:

- The abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies and a new local level of planning which will give new rights for communities who wish to draw up Neighbourhood Development Plans that will help shape the future of where they live. These plans will sit beneath the Local Plan but the two plans will work together.
- Changes to the existing planning obligations system (commonly referred to as Section 106 agreements) with the introduction of a new Community Infrastructure Levy that will collect a consistent level of contribution from new developments for strategic infrastructure and allow local communities to choose how they wish to spend some of the revenue raised from developers through planning permissions.
- The Community Right to Build which will enable communities to give full or outline planning consent to housing, business or community facility developments which they believe to be in the local interest, thus sidestepping the normal planning process.
- New Community Right to Bid powers, which will grant communities the chance to draw up a register of local assets that are of importance to local people (a register that local authorities will be required to maintain by law). When listed assets come up for sale, community groups will have the opportunity to formulate a bid to take ownership.

In parallel with this, Government is also simplifying national planning policy guidance with the replacement of planning policy statements with a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

At the time of preparing this Strategy, Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) remains national policy. It is a major policy document that sets out how the Government implements its strategic housing objectives nationally through the planning system. The PPS sets out the Government's four key policy aims for housing:

- To achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community.
- To widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need.
- To improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing.
- To create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural.

However, in June 2011 as part of the social housing reforms process, the Government revised the existing definition of affordable housing as set out in PPS3 to include the new Affordable Rent tenure: 'Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.'

The criterion for affordable housing remains unchanged. PPS3 still states that affordable housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

The draft NPPF carries forward the majority of affordable housing policy from PPS3 Housing including the priority to set policies to meet identified need for affordable housing. However, it amends the exceptions sites policy to provide for an element of market housing to help cross subsidise affordable homes.

The implications of the new NPPF and the Affordable Rent form of affordable housing will be considered in the review of the LDF.

Changes to Housing Benefit and Welfare Reform

There are some significant changes proposed to the Housing Benefit System over the next four years, which will affect both those renting in the private sector and those in council and housing association properties. Some of these changes have already been implemented, such as

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates capped and set at the 30th percentile of local rents,
- increased non-dependant deductions
- £15 weekly excess removed where the tenant's rent is less than their LHA
- shared room rate used to assess housing benefit for most single private sector claimants under the age of 35 (it currently applies only to those under 25)

Other changes have also been proposed in the approach to Universal Credit, but the final details may change during the parliamentary process. They include:

- proposals that housing benefit will be restricted for some people who are living in social housing that is larger than their household size. This will apply to working-age tenants only
- cap on benefit payments for most working-age claimants

The Localisation of council tax benefit, which is being introduced from April 2013, will reduce significantly the amount of council tax benefit paid to working aged claimants (pensioners will be protected). For South Cambridgeshire it is estimated that council tax benefit paid to working aged claimants will need to be reduced overall by 22% and this may have a significant impact on residents' ability to afford rent and council tax.

In Summary, the proposed changes to national policy have a huge influence and impact in the development of the Council's own housing strategy. The pace of change over the last 2 years has been unprecedented, bringing with it both opportunities and challenges. In an ever-changing world, we will continue to develop and implement new initiatives that are consistent with wider government policy whilst ensuring that they meet the needs of our local communities and that we continue to support and plan for the potential impacts national policy will have on our local residents.

Local Context – Sub Regional/Countywide

Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Board

Cambridgeshire is an extremely popular place to live and work. The economic success of Cambridge and its surroundings in particular has brought prosperity to the county, but growing numbers of inhabitants and commuters have increased demand for housing and placed a strain on the existing infrastructure. To ensure that we are best placed to meet economic growth, the sub-region works together to develop joint, collaborative approaches to strategic housing issues. To do this, a board of senior officers from each of the seven local authorities and partner agencies meet monthly through the Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Board.

A Sub-Regional Housing Statement was published in July 2011 to set out the sub-region's key priorities to ensure we work together effectively to deal with the new challenges arising. In brief, the key priorities are:

- Deliver new homes which support economic success
- Create mixed, balanced, sustainable communities
- Improve standards in existing homes
- Meet housing needs and tackle homelessness
- Enable better health through housing and support

Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership

The government has set up the Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Its goal is to create an economy with 100,000 major businesses and create 160,000 new jobs by 2025, in an internationally significant low-carbon, knowledge-based economy balanced wherever possible with advanced manufacturing and services.

The LEP board comprises directors from businesses, local authorities, further and higher education and the voluntary sector.

The key aim for the LEP is to help drive forward sustainable growth in our area.

Cambridge Sub Regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment

As part of the sub-regional work, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was first published in June 2008. This is a 'live' document which is continuously updated and brings together a wealth of information about housing markets, housing needs, past delivery of homes and plans for the future across the seven districts in our housing sub-region. For South Cambridgeshire it identifies the need for an additional 1372¹ affordable homes to be built per annum over the next 5 years if we were to meet demand. The draft National Planning Policy Framework identifies Strategic Housing Market Assessments as an importance aspect of the evidence base for housing need when local authorities develop their Local Plans.

Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan

The Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan seeks to identify the investment required in the sub-region, demonstrating how growth, housing and regeneration projects can come forward and that the collective priorities of the local authorities within Cambridgeshire inform funding discussions with the Homes & Communities Agency.

New Health Structures in South Cambridgeshire

Housing plays an important role in the health and wellbeing of its residents. It is therefore essential that there are appropriate links between housing and health. The Health and Social Care Bill introduced to Parliament in January 2011 is central to the Government's vision to modernise the National Health Service (NHS). The Bill

- From April 2013, creates a statutory duty for Cambridgeshire County Council to establish a Health & Wellbeing Board to 'join up' healthcare, social care and public health commissioning and prepare a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Health and Wellbeing Strategy;

¹ SHMA 2011 update

- Abolishes Primary Care Trusts and transfers their public health function to Cambridgeshire County Council under a new Director of Public Health;
- Transfers commissioning of primary health services to groups of local GPs organised into a Cambridgeshire “Clinical Commissioning Group”.
- Abolishes Local Involvement Networks (LINKS) and replaces them with a newly formed patient and service-user body called “HealthWatch”

Cambridgeshire Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board: The Cambridgeshire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) will work to promote the health and wellbeing of Cambridgeshire’s communities. Its focus will be on securing the best possible health outcomes for all residents. One of the key priorities identified for the Board is Warm Homes. The Board for Cambridgeshire will be embedded in a wider network of District-based Local Health Partnerships.

Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Comprehensive analysis of the health and well-being status and needs of the Cambridgeshire population for different population groups is provided in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The JSNA documents and information is available from a dedicated Cambridgeshire JSNA website at: <http://www.cambridgeshirejsna.org.uk>

On a county basis, Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) are undertaken by the County Council and PCT and involve local authorities and other key partner organisations providing services. The JSNA assesses the future health, care and wellbeing needs of the local populations and identifies the strategic direction of service delivery to meet those needs. Information in the documents is available at different administrative, geographic and statistical levels, including district council level, as well as ONS ‘clusters’.

It is acknowledged that housing plays a key role in the health and wellbeing of its residents and therefore any recommendations within the JSNAs needs to be aligned with the Housing Strategy and its supporting documents. The following JSNAs have been completed since April 2007:

- Adults with Learning Disabilities 2007 – 08
- Physical and Sensory Impairment and Long Term Conditions 2008
- Community Views 2008
- Migrant Workers 2009
- Homelessness and at Risk of Homelessness 2009
- New Communities 2010
- Children and Young People 2010
- Mental Health 2010
- Travellers 2010
- Older People 2010
- Prevention of Ill Health in Adults of Working Age 2011

The main housing related issues identified in the JSNA’s that are relevant to the priorities for the Housing Strategy are summarised within the text of this document. There are also other recommendations within the JSNA’s that have a cross reference to housing – full details of these are attached at Appendix A.

Local Context – South Cambridgeshire District

Corporate Plan

Our long term vision:

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live and work in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

The Council will be recognised as consistently innovative and a high performer with a track record of delivering value for money by focusing on the priorities, needs and aspirations of our residents, parishes and businesses.

The Council has in place a series of strategic Aims, Approaches and Actions setting out how we will work towards achieving our Vision for the district. The three strategic aims are as follows:

- We will listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money
- We will work with partners to create and sustain opportunities for employment, enterprise, and world-leading innovation
- We will make sure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer outstanding and sustainable quality of life for our residents

The actions identified within this Housing Strategy and its key priorities will be underpinned by the overarching vision for the Council and its strategic Aims.

Equalities

South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to equality of opportunity in our approach to service delivery, employment and being a community leader. We are committed to identifying, understanding and eliminating all barriers that prevent access to services, information and employment. Equality is an important element of our first Strategic Aim (listed above) and our Value of *Mutual Respect*.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination in compliance with our Comprehensive Equalities Policy, which sets out the Council's aims and objectives for equality. This more detailed Single Equality Scheme, along with a Gypsy and Traveller Community Strategy and internal Human Resource policies and procedures, support the Comprehensive Equalities Policy.

In October 2010, South Cambridgeshire District Council attained *Achieving* status on the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). The Council uses the EFLG as the improvement framework against which to measure its performance and development. Since adopting the earlier Equality Standards for Local Government (ESLF) in 2006, the Council has been successful in making significant progress on its equality and diversity journey. Progress will be further enhanced by the development and implementation of the Single Equality Scheme in response to the Equality Act 2010.

The Single Equality Scheme will help improve our services and policies and make sure that the different needs of people are better understood. It will also help to ensure that our services are better targeted and will lead to improved customer satisfaction and better staff

recruitment and retention. The Council's Single Equality Scheme can be viewed at: <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/Equality/default.htm>.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Housing Strategy and has been assessed as all encompassing for all groups. Positive outcomes within the Strategy are identified in particular to the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Race and Rurality.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The Medium Term Financial Strategy provides the framework within which resources for the General Fund (excluding landlord services) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates are allocated to meet the Council's service priorities. These priorities are developed in response to informal and formal feedback from residents, customers and members that shape the Council's Corporate Vision and strategic Aims. The MTFS is reviewed annually and approved by Council each February based on a five-year projected forecast of expenditure and income. Details of the 5-year MTFS approved by Council in February 2012 are provided under 'Resources', Chapter 10 at page 84.

New Homes Bonus

The New Homes Bonus is a new grant from 2011/12 based on net additions to the number of dwellings (the main factor), increases in affordable housing, empty homes brought back into use; and increases in gypsy and traveller pitches. The New Homes Bonus is designed to act as a financial incentive for communities and local authorities to encourage housing growth and bring empty homes back into use. Each year's grant is payable for six years and so the grant accumulates for six years and then levels off in year seven:

Table 1: Projected New Homes Bonus

Year of Grant	Financial Year						
	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000
2011/12	924	924	924	924	924	924	
2012/13		893	893	893	893	893	893
2013/14			950	950	950	950	950
2014/15				950	950	950	950
2015/16					950	950	950
2016/17						950	950
2017/18							950
Total	924	1,817	2,767	3,717	4,667	5,617	5,643

For South Cambridgeshire District Council, the new homes bonus is a welcome and vital grant for this Council as Housing Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) and housing growth funding (via Cambridgeshire Horizons) have ended. The Council received £1.841 million and £1.954 million from HPDG and housing growth funding in 2008/09 and 2009/10 respectively.

Only three years' income from New Homes Bonus is shown in the MTFS, with the first two years being used to meet General Fund expenditure and to replace previous income from Housing and Planning Delivery Grant and Cambridgeshire Horizons grant, and the third year being transferred to a reserve for non-recurring expenditure on infrastructure, community facilities, etc. The contributions to this reserve will total £3.8 million by 31 March 2017, with £50,000 so far identified for improving digital infrastructure.

The reason only three years' income is being shown is:

- there may be a new government within the six year period which may change the bonus;

- the 80% allocated to district councils may be reduced;
- the new homes bonus is a replacement for Housing Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) which was capped so the new homes bonus may also be capped in future years; and
- the housing trajectory may be too optimistic;

HRA Self Financing Regime

From April 2012, the Government is changing the rules relating to Council housing finances (landlord services). The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Subsidy System is to be replaced by a new regime of self-financing. Through the Localism Act 2011, the Government is ceasing negative subsidy and asking the Council for a one-off payment of £205.1M. In return for taking on this debt the Council is now able to keep its rental income in full.

The modelling work undertaken demonstrates that the baseline HRA Business Plan is viable for 30 years. Sensitivity testing on a range of key variables also shows that the Business Plan remains viable for 30 years.

The change from the negative subsidy system will increase the Council's ability to plan investment, with potential increases in financial capacity to re-invest into our existing Council stock and provide new affordable homes, owing to the current very low interest rates.

The self-financing settlement will allow for increased capital resources for the housing capital investment programme. Over the first five years of the baseline Business Plan this is around £26M extra compared to that available at 2011/12 levels. Having addressed the core property maintenance needs, the tenant aspirations and the need for stock replacement the Business Plan shows a range of investment surpluses depending on interest rate, inflation and Right to Buy (RTB) assumptions. The baseline model shows this investment surplus as totalling around £28M by year 10. The investment surplus will enable the Council to deliver a new build programme of several hundred homes within the life of the business plan and therefore contribute towards a key strategic objective. There is some investment surplus anticipated from year 1 so there is flexibility as to the timing of this new housing delivery programme although the main scope for delivery will be after year 5.

Local Strategic Partnership/Sustainable Community Strategy

In 2010 the South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership merged with the Cambridge Local Strategic Partnership to form a new partnership body called Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The partnership was set up to provide a focus for joint work in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire between statutory, voluntary, business, community and faith organisations. The aim of the partnership is to:

- Improve the quality of life for existing and future residents and those who work in or visit the area.
- Develop the health, social, economic and environmental well-being of those who live or work in the area.
- Achieve sustainable communities.

The Partnership is in the process of drafting its new sustainable community strategy for improving the quality of life for people living in the areas.

South Cambridgeshire Local Health Partnership (LHP)

The South Cambridgeshire LHP is in the early stages of formation, but it will take a lead on identifying health issues relating to housing and develop appropriate actions based on local

evidence. A District Forum has also been established so that a District representative for Cambridgeshire is able to feed-in and advise the Health & Wellbeing Board from the various Local Health Partnerships across the County.

South Cambridgeshire District Council Climate Change Action Plan 2011-13

This plan was adopted in September 2011 and lays out the Council's commitment through action to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire plays its part in tackling manmade climate change. This includes the following housing-related matters:

- Install photovoltaic panels on suitable Council housing stock through a 'roof rental' contract whilst rolling out solid wall insulation to properties as and when available.
- Take the Rampton Drift Retro-fit project from full installation into its comprehensive monitoring phase.
- Continue to sustain and develop the South Cambs Sustainable Parish Energy Project.
- In partnership with site developers on the major growth areas, provide 'sustainable show homes' that take options for more sustainable low-carbon living a step further forward for visitors to see and for prospective residents to specify in 'off-plan' purchases.
- Prepare for the introduction of the Government's Green deal low-carbon loans programme.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

Our existing LDF sets out the development strategy for the district, focused on a limited number of major new sustainable developments on the edge of Cambridge and the new town of Northstowe, which provide for the development needs of the local area to 2016 and beyond. Relatively limited development is planned for the rural area, but a hierarchy of villages is set out allowing for more development within the built up areas of the larger, better served villages and limiting new development in the smallest villages with very few services and facilities.

The Development Control Policies Development Plan Document – Policy HG/2 (2007) states residential developments will contain a mix of units providing accommodation in a range of types, sizes and affordability, to meet local needs. In developments of up to 10 dwellings, market properties should provide:

- At least 40% of homes with 1 or 2 bedrooms; and
- Approximately 25% of homes with 3 bedrooms; and
- Approximately 25% of homes with 4 or more bedrooms;

unless it can be demonstrated that the local circumstances of the particular settlement or location suggest a different mix would better meet local needs. In developments of more than 10 dwellings a mix of units will be sought providing a range of accommodation, including one and two bed dwellings, having regard to economic viability, the local context of the site and the need to secure a balanced community. A proportion of new dwellings should be designed to lifetime mobility standards.

The Development Control Policies Development Plan Document – Policy HG/3 (2007) seeks to achieve 40% or more of new homes as affordable housing on developments of 2 or more dwellings. The plan also includes provision for 100% affordable housing schemes outside of the village framework where there is a proven need for affordable housing to meet local needs (known as the Exceptions Site Policy HG/5).

The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in March 2010 and expands on the district wide affordable housing policies included in the Development Control Policies DPD. It includes guidance on aspects such as the Council's preferred tenure mix for affordable housing, size of affordable housing, design and appearance, timing of the delivery of affordable housing to secure mixed and balanced communities at all stages during the implementation of a development, approach to viability considerations, exceptional circumstances where financial contributions for off-site provision may be accepted, and implementation of the rural exception sites policy.

Local Development Framework Review

The development strategy and affordable housing policies are in the process of being reviewed and will take the form of a single plan called the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. This plan will set out the planning policies to guide the development and use of the land in the district up to 2031.

The first stage of the review will be public consultation on potential options for new policies and site allocations for development (referred to as Issues and Options) in Summer 2012. This will include consideration of the appropriate housing target for the district, options for the development strategy, and sites options to provide those new homes. As part of this process a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and a Sustainability Appraisal are being undertaken to identify the most appropriate site options for housing. The consultation will also consider whether the affordable housing policies remain the right ones to meet the housing needs of the district and will consider the implications of the new National Planning Policy Framework and introduction of the new Affordable Rent form of affordable housing.

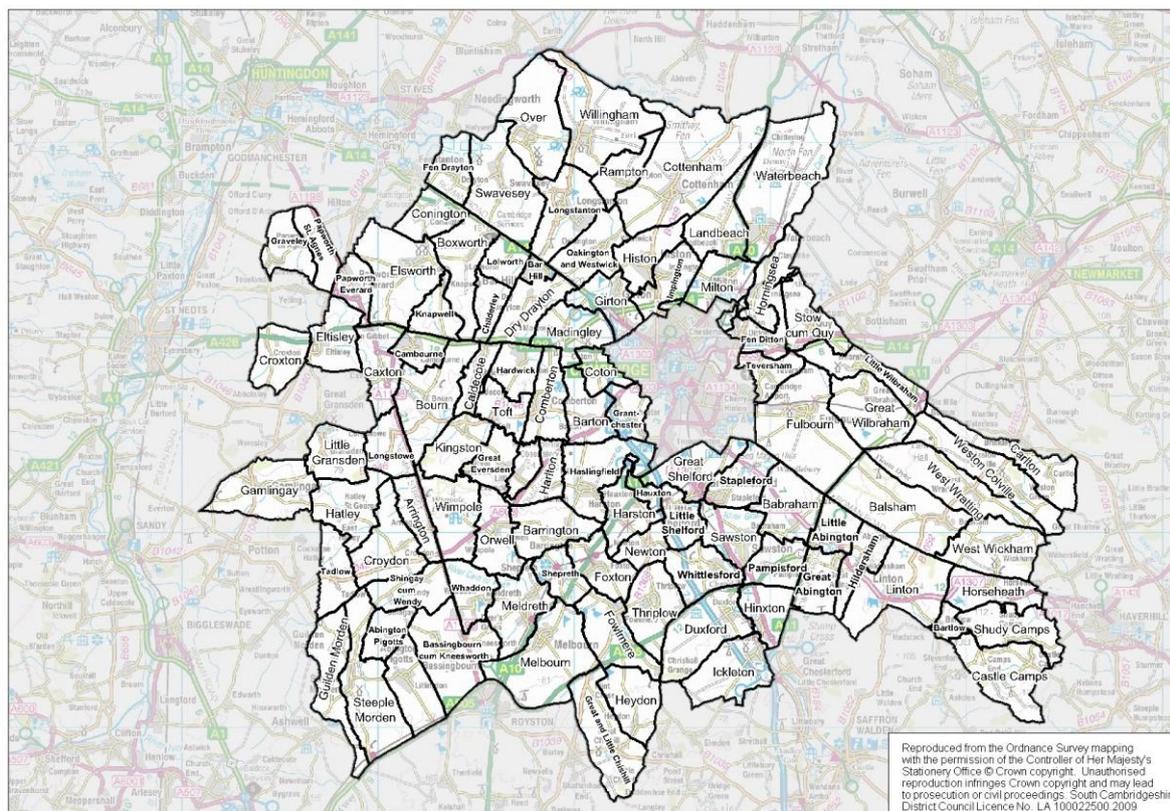
CHAPTER 3

HOUSING IN SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The key challenges that face the District over the coming years include:

- Planning for an appropriate level of housing growth to support the local economy, with an increasingly ageing population.
- Contribute to national carbon reduction targets and introducing measures to manage sustainable living.
- Severe pressure on affordable housing due to high house prices and the lack of private rented accommodation. Main driver to bring empty homes back into use.
- Ability to find suitable accommodation and maintain tenancies following impacts to the Welfare Reform and changes to housing benefit – anticipate increased pressure on the housing advice service.
- Increased homelessness applications and lack of temporary accommodation resulting in the need to use bed & breakfast.
- Accommodation needs for Gypsy & Travellers who are the District's largest ethnic minority group.
- Private Sector Housing - 21.5% fail the Decent Homes Standard, with 8.5% with Category 1 hazards, 11.3% in disrepair and 8.8% with inefficient heating and ineffective insulation.
- High levels of elderly households living in non-decent homes.
- Slightly above average levels of overcrowding in the private sector, especially those in the private rented sector.
- Some Houses in Multiple Occupancy undetected and unlicensed – some issues of overcrowding, safety measures and poor management especially in relation to migrant workers and disadvantaged groups.
- Managing increasing energy costs and improving energy security – 7.1% of private sector occupants identified as being in fuel poverty and 12% of survey respondents within Council homes.
- Managing the 30-yr HRA Business Plan for our Council stock to maintain the Decent Homes Standard and further improve homes following implementation of self-financing regime.
- High levels of disability within the Council's housing stock.
- Operational changes following implementation of the Localism Act and the HRA Subsidy Reform.

District Profile



- a mostly rural area set in 350 square miles of countryside
- a population of over 139,000 residents dispersed among 105 settlements
- consists mainly rural settlements and includes parts of the outer urban areas of Cambridge
- currently includes no towns, but the new town of Northstowe is planned
- a prosperous area with high levels of economic activity and low levels of unemployment; but with increasing house prices and a shortage of affordable homes
- a healthy area, with high life expectancy compared with national rates
- an area with the lowest crime rate in Cambridgeshire
- Voted *Best place to live in rural Britain* – Halifax Survey (April 2011)

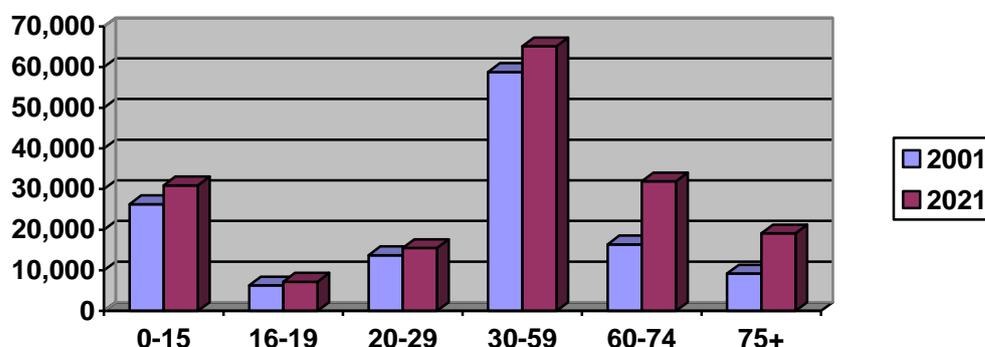
Population Trends: The greatest relative population change overall is seen in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. In SCDC this growth includes major increases in the population aged over 65.²

The long term population projection shows an increase of 39,200 people between 2001 and 2021 for South Cambridgeshire (this forecast incorporates the proposed dwelling targets outlined by the East of England Plan). For the sub-region, the projected increase in population of over 133,000 in twenty years requires a faster rate of growth than experienced in the past. This growth is heavily concentrated in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire – taking around 80,500 or two-thirds of the total increase forecast. These forecasts are being reviewed as part of the Local Plan review to take account of the effects of the recession. At the time the current development strategy was prepared in 2003, 80% of population growth was to support forecasted new jobs. The latest comprehensive forecasts

² JSNA – Older People 2010

were in the Cambridgeshire Development Study 2009 as part of the evidence base for the East of England Plan >2031, and forecast that the current jobs-led development strategy would provide for housing needs over the next 20 years, taking account of the anticipated recovery from the recession.

Chart 1: Population Forecast by Age Group



The age group 60 to 74 is expected to increase by over 15,500, growing from 16,400 to 31,900 or around 95% in just twenty years. In percentage terms there is an even bigger increase in the numbers of residents aged 75 and over. This age group is expected to increase from 9,200 in 2001 to over 19,100 by 2021, a rise of around 9,900 or 108%; with a 98% increase in those aged 85+. In contrast, the remaining age groups are expected to increase by between 11%-17%³.

A growing elderly population, greater mobility, immigration and other social trends are making changes to the population we serve. These changes will accelerate as a result of the population growth facing the district in the next ten years or so, leading to a far more diverse society than previously.

End of Life Care Health Needs Assessment 2009⁴

- Lowest deaths per 100,000 population.
- Least deprived LA in the County (ranked 350 out of 354)
- 2006 – 42% of deaths in acute hospital, 4% in community hospital, 30% at home, 8% in Residential home, 5% in nursing home, 7% in hospice and 2% elsewhere.
- Highest number of deaths at home, statistically significantly higher than Cambridge City and Fenland. A 4.6% increase since 2002.
- 27% of deaths at home from all causes, and 35.1% from cancer.
- Deaths to 2021 predicted to increase by 87%. Increases in deaths from dementia and changes in the population dependency ratio highest in the County.

Population projections for 2021 present a significant increase in the number of deaths, and deaths of people with dementia. Other demographic changes suggest that the dependency ratio will change which has important implications as the number of family members and friends available as carers will drop. All areas of the county are estimated to be effected by these changes, but South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire particularly so. This needs to be taken into account in the planning of future services.

³ Strategic Housing Market Assessment

⁴ JSNA 2009 - End of Life Health Needs

Ethnicity: The 2001 Census data shows that in South Cambridgeshire 93.2% of the population were White British, and a further 3.7% were White Irish and White Other, with 3,800 people identified as from minority ethnic groups. The largest identified minority ethnic groups were Indian, Chinese, and Other Ethnic group which overall do not represent more than 1% of the population.

Gypsy & Travellers: Gypsies and Travellers make up almost 1% of the population in Cambridgeshire and represent the largest ethnic minority in the county. In Cambridgeshire it is estimated that approximately 70% are Romany Gypsies, 20% are Irish Travellers and 10% are others including Scottish and Welsh Travellers and an increasing number of Eastern European Gypsies. There appears to be a difference in demographics across the county with a higher number of Irish Travellers in South Cambridgeshire and Eastern European Roma in Fenland.⁵

As a local authority we have statutory responsibilities to eliminate discrimination and promote good community relations. The Council has adopted a Gypsy & Traveller Community Strategy 2010-2013, its key objectives and actions are to

- improve access for Gypsies and Travellers to mainstream services,
- to work with partners to address social exclusion, to foster good community relationships,
- to address accommodation needs, and
- to seek to manage unauthorised camping in an efficient and effective way, having regard to the welfare requirements, rights and responsibilities of Gypsies and Travellers, the environment and the potential level of nuisance for local residents.

A review of the Gypsy & Traveller Community Strategy is to be undertaken later in 2012 to ensure the key objectives and actions are achievable and to consider whether the priorities need to be refreshed.

The Cambridgeshire Gypsy and Travellers JSNA 2010, aims to identify the current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of the Traveller population in Cambridgeshire. It identifies that lack of secure accommodation is the biggest issue facing Gypsy and Traveller communities in the East of England and many are homeless.

Travellers JSNA 2010 Recommendation:

- *The implications of the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy should be considered and the need for additional Gypsy and Traveller accommodation addressed. Promote consistent site management practices across the County.*

Selecting the right location for a site is a key element in supporting good community relations and maximising its success. Well-run, authorised sites can be effectively integrated into local communities. Gypsies and Travellers have significantly poorer health status and more self-reported symptoms of ill-health than the rest of the population with reported health problems being between two and five times more prevalent. Gypsy and Traveller children remain highly disadvantaged in terms of access to education and achievement. There is evidence of economic exclusion in the Gypsy and Traveller population and locally concern has been raised locally about access to affordable utilities.

At January 2011 there were 232 authorised residential pitches in the district. In addition, there were 75 pitches with temporary planning permission, which allow sites to be occupied

⁵ JSNA – Travellers 2010

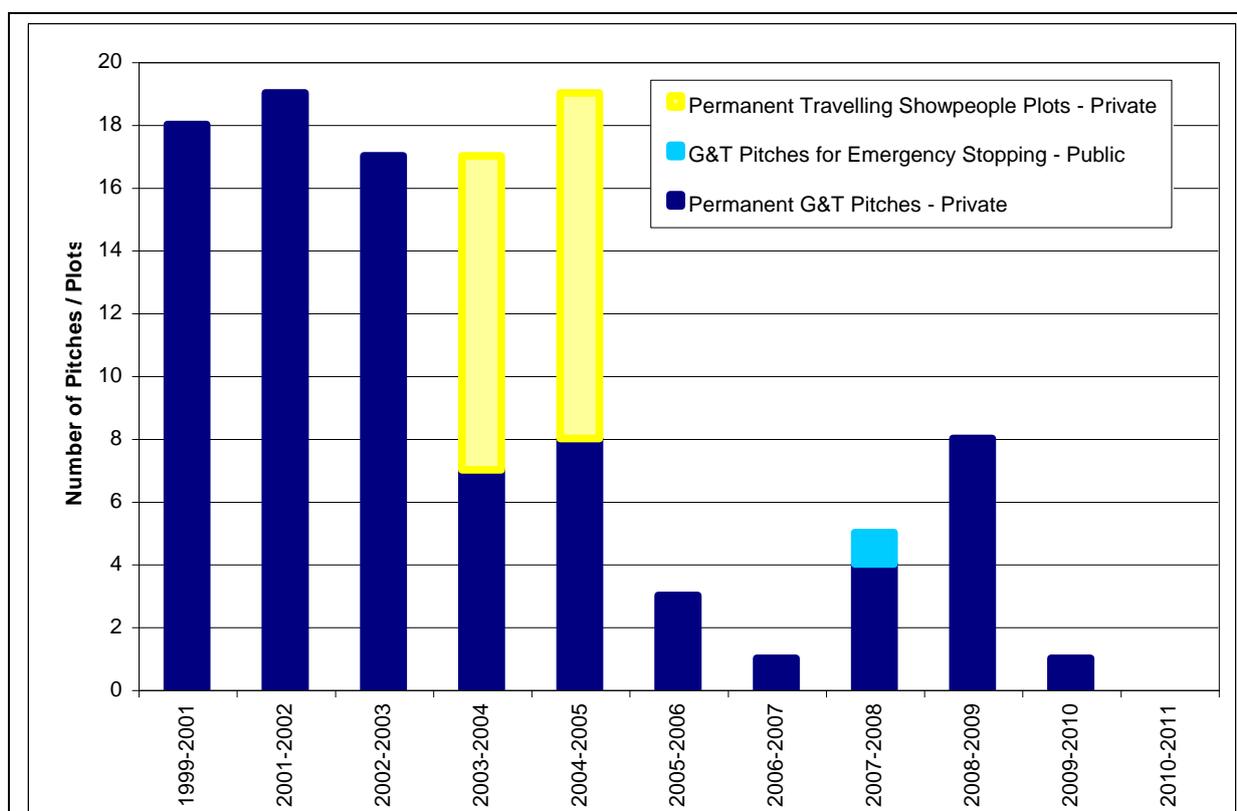
for a set number of years. (It is important to note the distinction between individual caravans and what is known as a “pitch” which can accommodate several caravans belonging to an individual family.) The highest concentrations of authorised sites are in the Chesterton Fen Road area of Milton parish, and Smithy Fen, Cottenham. There are a number of small sites located around the district, including in Rampton, Willingham, Meldreth, and Histon. There are also two existing Travelling Showpeople sites in the District, both located near Meldreth.

As part of the permanent Gypsy and Traveller provision, the Council operates two sites within the district – at Blackwell, Milton and New Farm, Whaddon. Pitches on these sites are rented, providing a form of affordable accommodation. Both sites are currently at full capacity with 15 and 14 pitches occupied respectively.

The number of unauthorised sites in the District has reduced dramatically over the last 5 years following planning enforcement action where appropriate and the granting of a number of temporary planning permissions as an interim measure prior to considering sites through the Development Plan process, As of January 2011, there were 11 unauthorised sites which are located on Gypsy & Traveller owned land without planning permission, near to existing authorised sites. Unauthorised encampments also occur from time to time on highway verge land or on privately owned land where Gypsies and Travellers are passing through or have been displaced from other accommodation.

The number of pitches and plots completed over the last ten years is shown in the table below:

Chart 2: Gypsy & Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots completed



At 31 March 2011:

- a further 66 Gypsy & Traveller pitches had temporary planning permission (time limited); and
- a further 27 Gypsy & Traveller pitches with permanent planning permission were under construction.

Source: Planning & New Communities – South Cambridgeshire District Council; Research & Monitoring – Cambridgeshire County Council

A Gypsy & Travellers Needs Assessment is in its final stages of completion, which will assess future accommodation needs; this is likely to be published in Summer 2012. Planning for new sites will be progressed as part of the Local Plan Review.

Migrant Workers: Recent immigration from outside the UK has included workers attracted by opportunities for employment in the food industry and in the local service economy. Migrant workers have traditionally formed an important sector of the seasonal labour force; recently, migrant communities are becoming more established and less 'seasonal'. Most migrant workers are 18-24 years of age and 59% are male. 33% of migrant workers are employed in the agricultural sector whilst 13% are employed as process operatives.⁶

International migration is extremely difficult to measure. There are currently two data sources used to estimate incoming migration; National Insurance Number (NINo) registrations and registrations for the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS).

NINos are required for employment or self-employment purposes or to claim benefits or tax credits and are allocated to overseas nationals by the Department for Work and Pensions. De-registration is not required, however, which means that NINo figures can only be used to estimate in-migrations. In 2009 approximately 800 people registered for NINos in South Cambridgeshire, which is 20% fewer than in 2008. Between 2002 and 2009 the largest number (39%) of registrations were Eastern European migrants.

WRS registrations are required by migrants from the so-called A8 countries of Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Latvia, Slovakia and Hungary. In 2009 just under 250 WRS registrations were issued in South Cambridgeshire, which was 14% fewer than in 2008. That both NINo and WRS registrations were lower in 2009 than 2008 may indicate that international migration into South Cambridgeshire is slowing. A guide figure for the level of international net-migration can be inferred based on ONS data and the CCCRG estimate. Taking population change in South Cambridgeshire between 2008 and 2009 as a base, ONS figures for internal migration and natural change as specified in the CCCRG estimate model can be subtracted from the total change figure. The remainder indicates that the level of net international out-migration may have been around 1,000 people. Please note: this figure should be taken as indicative rather than an official estimate.⁷

Housing is also important for the health of migrant workers. The housing report from the Migration Impacts Forum (2008) states that access to good quality and affordable accommodation is critical in providing stable circumstances for migrants to be economically active and to promoting community cohesion. The housing report indicates that the majority of migrants are living in privately rented or tied accommodation.

Anecdotally, the Housing Options Team have seen a slight increase in the number of migrant workers approaching the Council for housing advice/assistance over the last few years.

People with a Disability: No single figure exists to record the actual number of disabled people living in the district. In the 2008 Place Survey, 28% of respondents in South Cambridgeshire reported having some long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. This was lower than the Cambridgeshire average of 33%. For our own Council stock, this percentage

⁶ ONS 2008 Migration Statistics Annual Report

⁷ South Cambridgeshire Annual Demographic and Socio-economic report March 2011

is much higher, with 41% of households stating that they have a disability following the tenancy survey carried out in December 2009.

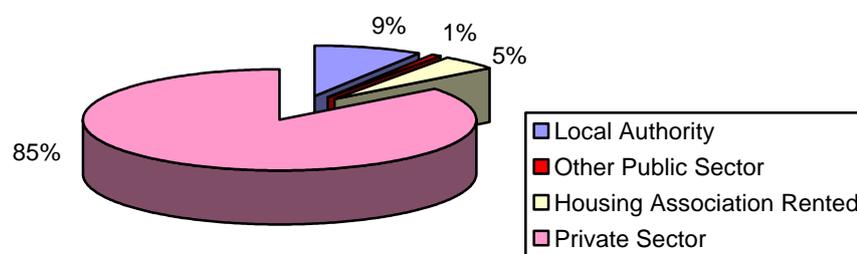
According to the Private Sector House Condition Survey (2011/12) 14.3% of households contain at least one member affected by a long-term illness or disability. The most common illness/disabilities relate to mobility impairments, heart and circulatory problems and respiratory illness.

Not all households affected by illness/disability will have special support or adaptation needs and will be able to function normally within their dwelling. Of the 14.3% of households in South Cambridgeshire containing at least one individual with an illness/disability 55% of households stated that they had no difficulties in living within their current dwelling. The remaining 45% suffered mobility problems, and may require support.

Dwelling Types and Tenure

Approximately 85%⁸ of the housing stock in the District is privately owned.

Chart 3: Properties by Tenure (2001 census)



Private Sector Housing: The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2011 identified owner occupation as the predominant form of private tenure accounting for 87% of dwellings. Dwellings rented from a private landlord account for a further 9.8%, whilst tenure was unrecorded for 562 dwellings, due to vacancy at the time of survey and 2.2% are either tied or rent free properties. Excluding those properties where tenure could not be determined, the rate of private-rental in South Cambridgeshire, at 9.8%, is significantly below the national average; 19.3% of all English private sector dwellings in 2009 were privately-rented⁹.

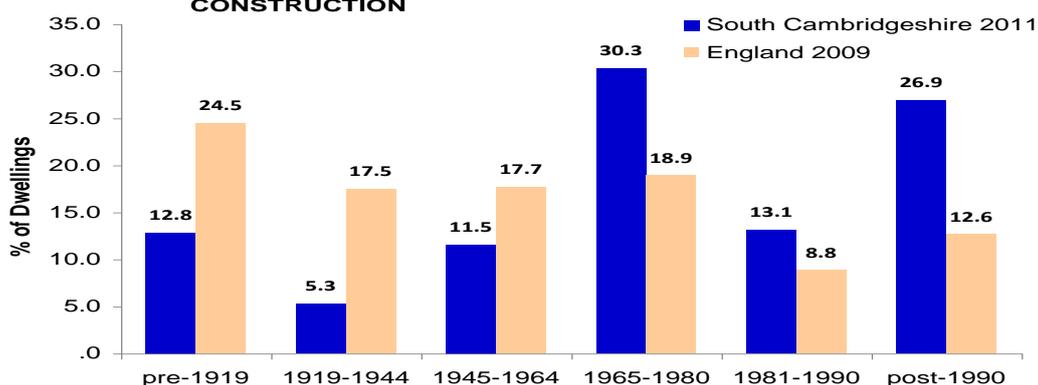
Private sector housing in South Cambridgeshire is representative of all building eras;

- 18.1% were constructed pre-1945, within this group:
 - 12.8% were constructed pre-1919
 - 5.3% in the inter-war period (1919-1944)
- 81.9% were constructed post-1944
- 40% were constructed post-1980.

⁸ 2001 Census

⁹ English Housing Survey 2010

Chart 4: PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING BY DATE OF CONSTRUCTION



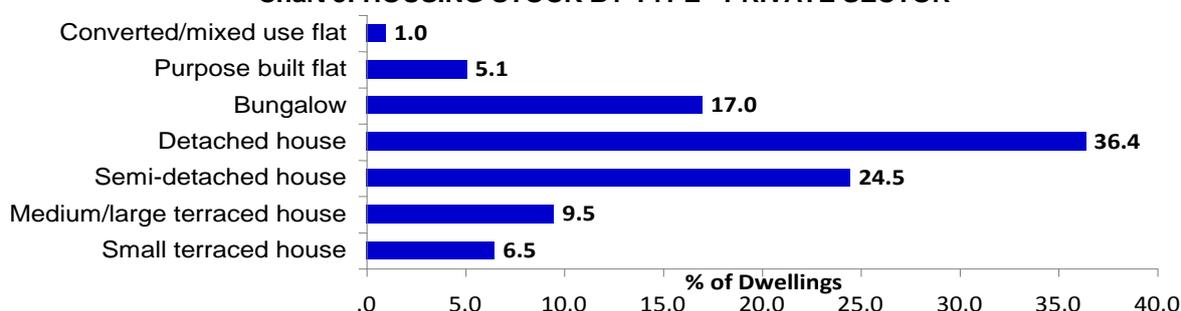
Private sector housing in South Cambridgeshire exhibits a significantly younger age of construction profile than the national average. Nationally, 24.5% of private housing was constructed pre-1919 compared to just 12.8% in South Cambridgeshire. Whilst 40.3% of private housing nationally is of post 1964 construction within South Cambridgeshire over 70% of all private sector dwellings were built after 1964.

The proportion of pre-1919 housing is significantly higher in the isolated rural area (28.6%) and significantly lower in the new build areas where less than two percent of private sector dwellings are of pre-1919 construction.

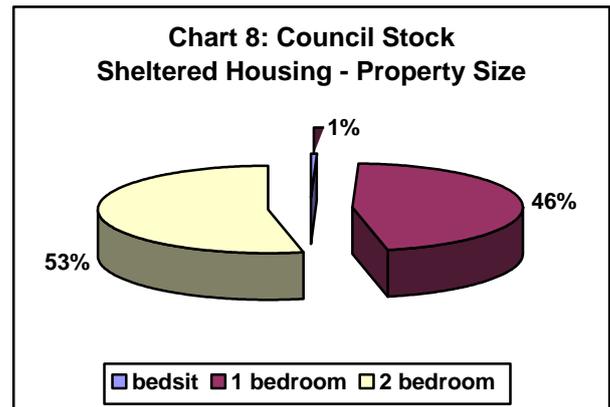
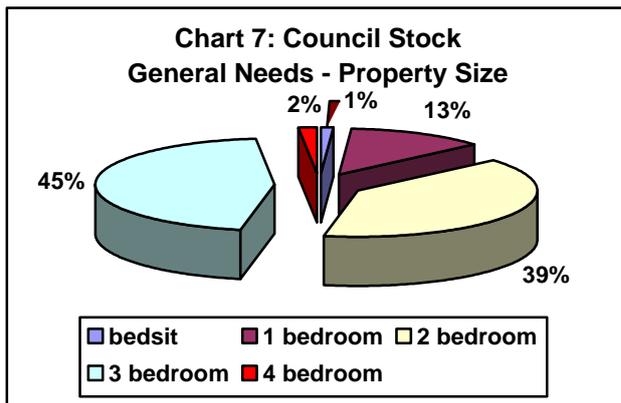
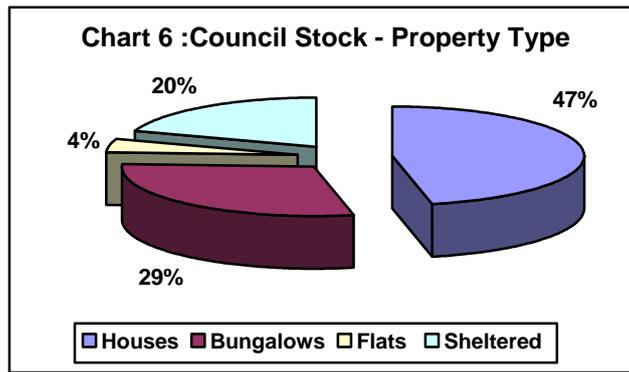
Differences in the age and house type characteristics of the main tenure groups are apparent. Private-rented dwellings exhibit a concentration in the pre-1919 terraced housing and converted flat markets but also exhibit a polarisation with a concentration in more modern (post-1990) purpose built flats. The owner occupied sector in contrast demonstrates a broader distribution by both type and age. However, owner occupation dominates the detached housing market.

Houses and bungalows comprise 94% with the remaining 6% in flats. Houses and bungalows offer a range of terraced, semi-detached and detached configurations with flats predominately in purpose-built blocks.

Chart 5: HOUSING STOCK BY TYPE - PRIVATE SECTOR



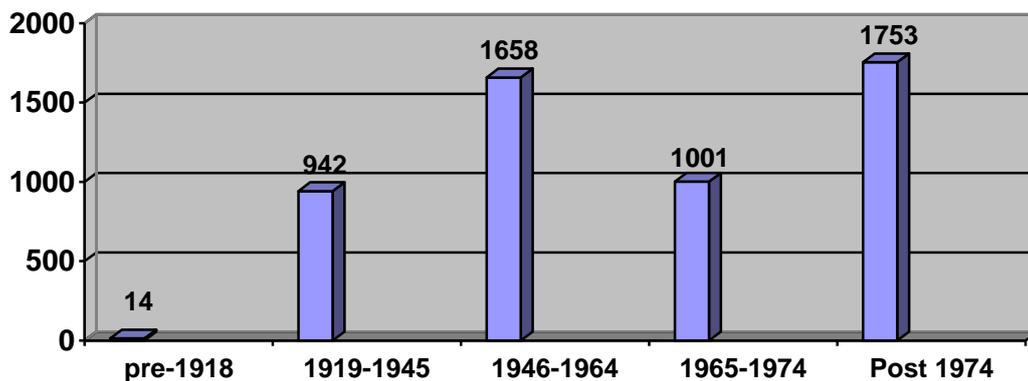
Council Housing: As at 1st November 2011, South Cambridgeshire District Council owns and manages 5388 dwellings, including 1068 sheltered homes with communal facilities (excluding 348 equity share properties).



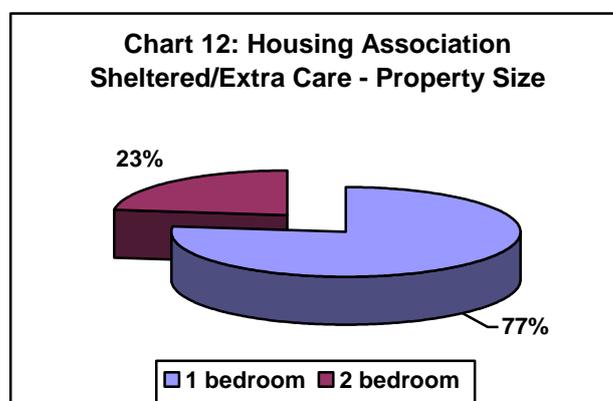
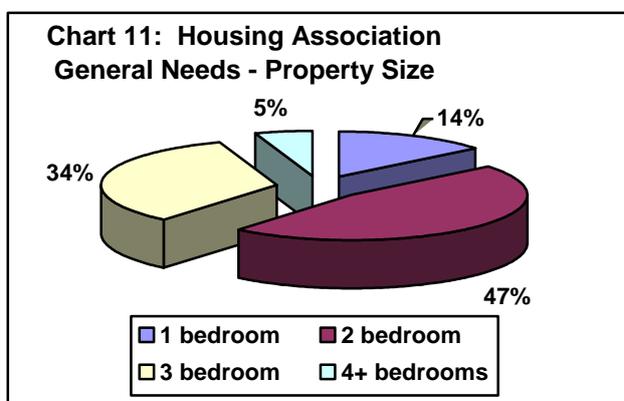
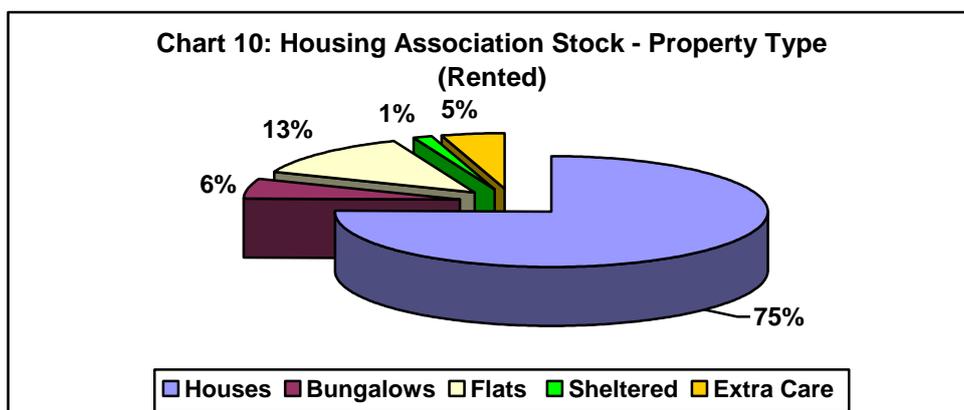
20% of all council housing are sheltered homes for the disabled or those over the age of 60, with a further 29% being bungalow accommodation. Just 14% of the general needs stock are one bedrooms or less, with the majority at 45% being three bedrooms.

As with the private sector age profile for housing, the Council stock is of relatively young age; 51% built after 1964, with only 0.5% built pre 1919.

Chart 9: Council Housing Stock Profile by Age



Housing Association Stock: Housing Association stock make up about 28% of the social housing in South Cambridgeshire, or 4% of the total housing stock in the District.



Existing Housing Conditions in the District: The Private Sector House Condition Survey undertaken in 2011 revealed that across all private tenures 21.5% of dwellings failed the Decent Homes Standard and are non-decent, with 8.5% with Category 1 hazards, 11.3% in disrepair and 8.8% with inefficient heating and ineffective insulation. To improve non-decent housing owners and private landlords will require a minimum investment of £80.644M net. (see page 49 for further details).

With regard to the Council’s housing stock, we achieved the target that all our homes would meet the Decent Homes standard by the end of 2010. A key component of this was to ensure that our properties were adequately insulated through providing cavity wall insulation and sufficient loft insulation. The 30-year HRA Business Plan sets out how the Council aims to maintain this standard and further improve our homes following implementation of the self-financing regime. (see page 52 for further details).

Most of the housing association stock is of relatively new build within the last 10 years and is maintained to a high level of standard.

The JSNA for Older People 2010 identified that in South Cambridgeshire District 47% of households occupied by elderly people are living in non-decent homes

Fuel Poverty: 7.1% of private sector households are in fuel poverty.¹⁰ In comparison, there is a much higher level of fuel poverty for our Council tenants – 12% of respondents following a survey indicated they considered themselves to be in fuel poverty.

The JSNA – Prevention of Ill Health in Adults of Working Age 2011, identified 22.7% of households in Gamlingay as being in fuel poverty which is the only LSOA (lower super output level) above 20% compared to 10.7% of household across South Cambridgeshire.

Overcrowding: Levels of overcrowding in the District at 2.3%¹⁰ are just above the national average for private housing (2% in 2007/08 to 2009/10 – EHS Household Report 2009-10). Those in the private rented sector at 6.0% are above the owner occupier sector average of 1.9%.

Information taken from the Housing Register identifies 6 applicants who are statutorily overcrowded. This includes 3 transfer applicants, two applicants living in caravans and one family living in privately rented accommodation.

Under-occupancy: 84.7% of households in the private sector have more bedrooms than required and are under-occupying.¹⁰

Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs): Cambridge City has a large amount of shared accommodation and comprises around 65% of this type of dwelling for the sub-region as a whole. 10

There are approximately 100 known HMOs in South Cambridgeshire, of which 26 are licensed comprising three storeys or more. Most of the licensed HMOs are located in Orchard Park and are occupied by professional people working in the Technology and Science Parks in Cambridge, or students. They are generally in good condition as most are less than 5 years old and have been upgraded to meet HMO fire safety requirements. According to studies, South Cambridgeshire does not have the concentration of migrant workers that neighbouring districts have but nevertheless action has had to be taken against the owners of several HMOs occupied by migrant workers and disadvantaged groups owing to overcrowding, lack of fire precautions or poor management.

It is likely there are other 3-storey HMOs that require mandatory licensing and periodical surveys and spot checks are carried out together with publicity to raise awareness of the need for licensing.

Mobile Homes: Mobile Home sites in South Cambridgeshire are licensed by the Council's Environmental Health Department following planning consent. The site licence conditions are mainly to control provision of facilities and some aspects of fire safety. There are several sites within the District where fitness and sub-standard accommodation are a cause for concern, where residents are affected by accommodation that does not provide adequate insulation and thermal comfort. Contraventions of site licence conditions at some of the sites that have recently been inspected have been identified and work is currently being carried out following a successful prosecution to bring one of these sites up to a compliant standard. Current site licence conditions need to be reviewed and updated in accordance with the latest model standards and Fire Safety Order to take account of the shared responsibilities with the Fire Authority. This will be addressed as part of the organisational enforcement and inspection review.

¹⁰ Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey 2011

Empty Homes: In April 2011, there were 561 empty homes (empty for 6 months or longer) across South Cambridgeshire, representing just under 1% of the total housing stock.

Table 2: Number of Empty Homes in the District

	2009/10	2010/11
Number of homes in the District	60,657	61,392
Number of Private Sector homes in the District	54,664	55,478
of which empty for 6+ months	542	441
Number of Public Sector homes in the District	5,993	5,914
of which empty for 6+ months	60	120

[Source HSSA return and local data]

An empty homes study was completed in May 2011, surveying all owners of homes that had been empty for 6+ months. Key findings within the study were:

The main reasons for properties being empty include:

- Property in the process of being refurbished
- Property up for sale
- Property empty because it had fallen into disrepair
- Planning issues delaying works to property

30% of owners said that the cost of repairs was a factor in the property remaining empty

Condition of properties empty:

- 25% require complete renovation inside but structurally sound
- 23% need updating, ie rewiring, new plumbing, new bathroom, etc.
- 23% are ready to move into

Reasons how/why became responsible for property:

- 26% bought property to live in it themselves
- 20% inherited property
- 11% bought for income from renting
- 11% included with other properties purchased

The Economy

The Cambridge Sub Region is an area with a nationally and internationally important economy, focused on high tech and bio tech industries. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire together lie at the heart of the Sub Region and have a close relationship in terms of provision of jobs and homes. Whilst the Cambridge area has withstood the effects of the recession better than some areas, the recession has had an impact on the vitality of local economy. There are more employed residents in the district than the number of jobs (workplace population), reflecting the relationship with Cambridge, and whilst the number of jobs (workplace population) declined in the early part of the economic downturn they have increased in the last monitoring year, although not back to pre-recession levels.

At the beginning of the recession, the number of people claiming job seekers allowance doubled, from 636 claimants in 2008 to 1,508 claimants in 2009. However, there was a reduction in the number of claimants of job seekers allowance in 2011 to 1,333 claimants. The number of active businesses in the district fell slightly in 2010, with more businesses closing than new businesses opening. The industrial composition of employee jobs shows a

decline in manufacturing and construction between 2008 and 2010, a sign of the reduction in house building as a result of the recession. Although the district has consistently shown over 80% of the working age population as economically active, the Economic Assessment 2010 (undertaken by PACEC) estimated a loss of 5,000 jobs between 2008 and 2010 in the district.

The growth agenda and the economy are fundamentally linked. A significant proportion of the planned housing growth in South Cambridgeshire is to support new jobs and the recession has affected the rate at which new jobs are now forecast to come forward. The formation of the Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) aims to help drive forward sustainable economic growth in South Cambs and the wider area of the LEP.

Planning for Growth: The adopted Local Development Framework (LDF) sets a development strategy around the level of jobs growth that was forecast in the early 2000s, focused on sustainable developments on the edge of Cambridge and at Northstowe. It set ambitious targets for housing growth by 2016 and beyond to support the anticipated jobs. With the recession in 2008 and the slow recovery, that level of growth will not now take place. The new Local Plan will review the amount of economic growth that is realistically anticipated to come forward by 2031 and will plan for the level of new housing and other infrastructure needed to support it, including making new housing allocations. In the meantime, the Council continues to work with developers to bring forward the major developments planned for in the LDF and other development that is consistent with the development strategy.

Housing Need & Affordability

There are currently just over 5,000 households on the Housing Register looking for affordable rented accommodation; this compares with just 505 homes being let through the Home-Link Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme in 2010/11, which equates to about 10% of the Housing Register. In the last three years there has been between 500-600 new applications per year made to the Housing Register.¹¹ The need for socially rented housing across the sub-region has increased without a proportional increase in social housing stock.¹²

The cost of buying or renting on the open market in the District is consistently high; with South Cambridgeshire being the second most expensive district for house prices in the county after Cambridge City. The average house price in Jun-Nov 2010 was £306,032, 9% increase since the previous year and 52% since Jun-Nov 2002.¹³

The ratio between median house prices and median income (to avoid distorting the picture by a small number of very high house prices and incomes) is also high. Until recently, South Cambridgeshire had been consistently higher than the county average and second only to Cambridge. The effects of the recession are that the ratio in 2009 and 2010 is now the same as the county average, although whilst the median gross household income of the district's population remains higher than that for Cambridgeshire as a whole (£37,200 compared to £32,900 for Cambridgeshire¹⁴), the ratio compared with house prices is such that there are still significant problems in the affordability of housing.

¹¹ Home-Link data January 2012

¹² JSNA – New Communities 2010

¹³ Annual Demographic & Socio-economic Report (April 2011)

¹⁴ SCDC Annual Monitoring Report (Jan 2012) – Source: Research Group, Cambs County Council

Table 3: Median House Prices : Median Income

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
South Cambridgeshire	4.9	5.8	5.9	6.5	6.9	6.8	7.4	7.0	8.2	7.9	6.4	7.4
Cambridgeshire	4.2	4.7	4.9	5.7	6.3	6.6	7.2	7.1	7.6	7.6	6.5	7.4

Source: Department for Communities & Local Government

Further up to date information from Hometrack shows average house prices at £307,134, which would indicate a slight increase from November 2010. According to the strategic housing market assessment (SHMA) at current incomes rates, 68% could not afford to buy in South Cambridgeshire – indicating significant pressures when trying to purchase a home.¹⁵

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment has recognised the problems particular to rural housing in relation to the mismatch of house prices and local incomes resulting in local people not being able to afford to live in rural areas.

Average rents for the District are also high at around £718¹⁶ a month for a two bedroom property. The average annual income for private rented households is estimated at £29,985 (gross median)¹⁷ which would account for over 35% of income being spent on rent alone without taking into consideration other housing costs, such as utilities.

There is further pressure through the availability of private rented homes in the District. With the changes to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates set at the 30th percentile of local rents instead of the average, this has reduced the number of private rented homes available to those dependent on benefit. As at January 2012, the LHA Rate applicable to the Cambridge BRMA (Broad Rental Market Area) was £575 for a two bedroom property. In fact, with the introduction of the Affordable Rent model as opposed to social rents, properties set at 80% of the market rent are likely to be more than the LHA rates for the District. Through the development of the Council's Tenancy Strategy we will seek to ensure that where possible Affordable Rents are kept below the LHA rates for the area.

The Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Board has recently commissioned a piece of work to consider the overall changes to the affordable housing sector across the sub-region over the next ten years, and the effect of changes to tenure on meeting future housing need.

The first phase of the project looked to establish an estimate of the number of homes of each affordable tenure in each district in ten years' time. Six scenarios were modelled testing the extremes of what may be developed dependent on varying percentage models of tenure and conversion rates; and what the affordable housing mix may look like by 2021 based on district dwelling trajectories. The table below identifies the possible minimum and maximum possible changes to tenure in comparison to the current stock profile.

¹⁵ JSNA – New Communities 2010

¹⁶ Hometrack Median Apr 2010-Mar 2011

¹⁷ SCDC Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2011

Table 4: 2021 Tenure Projections

	Social Rented			Affordable Rent			Shared ownership		
	Current	Min	Max	Current	Min	Max	Current	Min	Max
Cambridge City	10,409	10,134	9,528	0	3,032	3,913	296	1,595	2,462
East Cambs	3,578	3,217	2,734	0	1,291	2,135	392	945	1,314
Fenland	4,342	3,719	3,085	0	839	2,096	145	505	744
Huntingdon	7,698	7,014	6,056	0	2,689	4,331	524	1,676	2,445
South Cambs	7,764	7,461	6,859	0	3,125	4,030	736	2,075	2,968
Forest heath	3,300	2,944	2,483	0	1,191	2,008	308	818	1,158
St Edmundsbury	6,446	5,904	5,208	0	1,569	2,807	241	914	1,362
Sub-Region	30,668	27,525	23,084	0	13,737	21,321	2,642	8,529	12,454

The full report on Phase 1 can be found at <http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/docs/future-affordable-housing-summary.pdf>. The second phase of the project will consider the affordability of different tenures and how well they meet local need. This work will be completed in Winter 2011/12.

Homelessness

In recent years local authorities have placed an increased emphasis on improving homelessness prevention. As this area of work has developed a reduction in the number of homeless applications has resulted.

Homeless prevention has increased over the last few years from 134 households in 2007/08 to 185 in 2010/11. This is mirrored by a decrease in homeless acceptances, down from 101 in 2007/08 to 72 in 2010/11. Throughout the years, the main cause of homelessness has consistently been due to families being asked to leave by parents, although this often masks the main causes, as households may have returned to live with parents due to loss of other accommodation. In recent years termination of assured shorthold tenancies has become a more significant cause of homelessness. Reducing the number of families living in temporary accommodation has also been a priority for the Council and a direct result of increased homeless prevention. In South Cambs this has reduced from 57 at the end of 2007/08 (this followed significant reductions since 2004/5, where the figure stood at 153) to 31 at the end of March 2011.

With the continuing downturn in the economic market, many households are experiencing financial hardship due to redundancies, shorter working hours, lack of employment, etc. With the changes to the LHA rates, private rented accommodation is becoming less available and with further changes proposed through the Welfare Reform Bill many households will struggle to pay their rent/mortgage. The Council is very concerned what impact this will have on the residents of South Cambridgeshire and the potential increase in the number of homelessness applications. Since April 2011, we have already seen an increase in numbers and are seeing a significant use of bed & breakfast for the first time since 2005/06 as temporary accommodation. The lack of temporary accommodation for those with high-level support needs is also becoming problematic in the District.

The JSNA for the Prevention of Ill Health in Adults of Working Age 2011 also identifies its concern about planned changes and the effects of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). These include unaffordable rents, leading to overcrowding, evictions and possible homelessness.

A substantial proportion of all homelessness services are based in Cambridge City, however of newly homeless people in Cambridge City only 1 in 3 have a local connection with Cambridge City, while 2 in 5 have a local connection with other districts in Cambridgeshire.¹⁸

Recommendations from the Homelessness and at Risk of Homelessness JSNA 2009 include:

General

Refine work on homelessness by:

- Recognising principle overlapping domains with differential access to housing and complexity of needs
 - Statutory Homeless: including families, older people, and young people.
 - Rough sleepers /Single homeless: including prison and institution leavers
 - Hidden Homeless and those at risk of homelessness
- Recognising different reasons for becoming homeless and remaining homeless.
- Recognising the mobility and transience of the homeless population.

Services

Include excluded subgroups by providing appropriate housing, housing support and health solutions for

- Aging homeless people: accommodation solutions recognising that this population ages prematurely and individuals often have additional needs and behavioural issues
- Females: ensuring that services address the needs of the female minority among single rough sleepers and hostel dwellers and address the needs of women among the “hidden homeless”
- Young people: proactive provision of accommodation, training and employment services, sexual health and contraceptive services and addiction services to prevent recruitment to the homeless community.

Steps the Council is taking to meet these challenges is set out in Chapter 7.

¹⁸ JSNA - Homelessness and at Risk of Homelessness 2009

CHAPTER 4

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION

Our Aim: To deliver a range of homes that are affordable to all and where people want to live that will support economic growth and economic activity

[Corporate Plan: Key Aim (B8)]

We will:

- Ensure planning policies remain viable and achievable for the provision of affordable housing as part of the Local Plan Review.
- Work with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) to help prioritise funding allocations in South Cambridgeshire.
- Undertake further modeling of the HRA Business Plan to investigate the potential for a future Council house new-build programme.
- Aim to ensure that all affordable housing is built to the HCA Design & Quality Standards. As a minimum all affordable homes should reach Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Ensure homes are built to accommodate older people and people with disabilities and where possible homes meet the Lifetime Homes Standard.
- Continue working with local people, parish councils and local landowners to develop rural affordable housing, in the villages where a need has been identified.
- Work in partnership with the HCA and registered providers to look at new ways in which the Council can assist in bringing large-scale developments forward.
- Promote new Government initiatives once the Localism Act is implemented.
- Pilot the co-housing initiative at Orchard Park that will inform future projects.
- Work with key partners in health and social care and registered providers to bring forward housing provision for households with specific needs, with Extra Care housing identified as a priority.
- Identify a potential public Gypsy & Travellers Site in partnership with Cambridge City Council and seek a development and/or management partner to take a site forward by 2015.
- Publish a Tenancy Strategy by June 2012 to inform and influence registered providers on the allocation and renewal of tenancies.
- Work towards establishing a Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

Meeting the housing needs of the residents of South Cambridgeshire presents a growing challenge for the District Council and its partners. Reductions in Government funding for affordable housing is likely to impact upon levels of new supply, and extensive welfare and housing benefit reforms are likely to add to the pressure on low income and benefit dependent households finding good quality accommodation in the private rented sector.

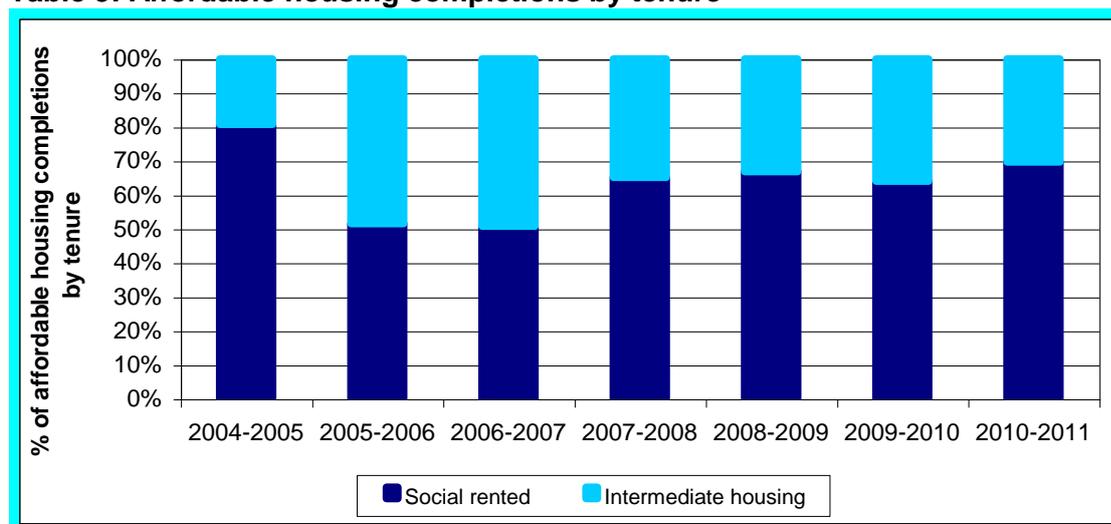
Affordable Housing Delivery

For new planning permissions granted in 2010/11, 40% of dwellings where Planning Policy HG/3 applied were affordable; this fully meets the target of 40% or more required by the policy. This takes account of sites where a financial contribution has been taken for off-site provision and a notional number of affordable homes has been assumed in these cases to reflect the level of contribution. The level of affordable housing secured is a notable improvement on previous years and it is positive to see that it has proved to be financially viable to secure 40% affordable housing, either on-site or through financial contributions, even in the challenging market conditions of the last few years; albeit that sometimes this is based on a tenure mix that is not the Council's preferred mix, with a higher proportion of intermediate tenures proving more viable.

The Council has noted that the number of cases where a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision has had to be accepted had risen, despite the policy saying this should happen only in exceptional circumstances. The vast majority of these are small sites of less than 10 dwellings, where a financial contribution of 40% has been financially viable but where on-site provision has been difficult to secure because small sites are not attractive to registered providers. These financial contributions provide flexibility to the Council to help bring forward or enhance affordable housing elsewhere. The implications of this for the Council's planning policy will be considered through the new Local Plan Review.

The tenure of affordable housing is also important in ensuring that the needs of those requiring affordable housing are being properly met. Within the New Communities JSNA 2010 it recommends that '*Provision for affordable housing needs to include a range of options to address the need for social rented housing*'.

In the last six monitoring years social rented affordable housing has been the majority tenure of affordable dwellings completed. There is a significant level of need for social rented housing in the district but it is likely that the new 'Affordable Rent' model will make up the majority of future affordable rented homes, with existing social rented homes being converted to 'Affordable Rent' upon change of tenancy. Research has been commissioned through Cambridgeshire County Council to establish the impact of this change on the tenure profile over the next ten years and how the 'Affordable Rent' model will meet local housing needs (see page 34). The Council will also be undertaking a review of its Allocations Policy during 2012-2013 to ensure homes are allocated, taking into account affordability issues and other housing policy changes.

Table 5: Affordable housing completions by tenure¹⁹

Over the last 12 years, there has been a general upward trend in the proportion of all housing completions that are affordable. This trend reflects the change in affordable housing target up from 30% in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 to 40% or more in 2007. The table below demonstrates the total amount of affordable housing provided as a proportion of **ALL** housing built - which includes sites of single dwellings, 100% affordable housing schemes (exception sites) and sites registered or granted before the adoption of the policy seeking 40% or more affordable housing in 2007.

Table 6: Gross affordable housing completions²⁰

New affordable dwellings from ...	1999-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
planning permissions	142	38	127	271	115	285	238	463	275	281	205
% of all completions	9%	7%	19%	26%	18%	30%	23%	35%	39%	41%	29%

In 2010/11, 29% of all dwellings completed were affordable compared to a high of 41% in the previous year. This fall reflects the changing housing market conditions and availability of funding for affordable housing developments. At the beginning of the recession, the continued supply of affordable housing completions using funding secured through the National Affordable Housing Programme 2008-11 and fall in market housing completions, resulted in a high proportion of affordable housing completions. However, now the supply of affordable housing sites with funding have been largely completed, affordable housing completions have fallen and there has been a slight uplift in market housing completions, the proportion of affordable housing completed has returned to pre-recession levels.

The downward trend in 2010/11 is likely to continue in 2011/12 and possibly the year after, with an anticipated completion rate of 127 affordable homes in 2011/12. This is attributed to the current economic climate and changes to the HCA funding regime (see paragraph below). Looking at a five-year projection up to April 2016, the outlook appears to be more optimistic. It is estimated that 1600 affordable homes will be delivered; this includes 92

¹⁹ SCDC Annual Monitoring Report (Jan 2012) – Source: Research Group, Cambs County Council

²⁰ SCDC Annual Monitoring Report (Jan 2012) – Source: Research Group, Cambs County Council

homes that have already completed in the first half of 2011 but is dependent on the larger sites coming forward, such as the city fringes, Cambourne and sites at Milton and Fulbourn.

Funding for new Affordable Housing

The Affordable Homes Programme 2011-15 aims to increase the supply of new affordable homes in England.

Throughout 2011-15 the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) will invest £4.5 billion in affordable housing through this programme; the majority of the new programme will be made available as Affordable Rent with some for affordable home ownership, supported housing in some circumstances and social rent.

It is important that South Cambridgeshire District Council and its partners engage with the HCA to maximise the level of affordable housing development in the district. Nationally, the new funding regime will provide 60 per cent less public subsidy per unit of housing than the previous three year investment programme. In order to address this funding shortfall, the HCA expects Registered Providers to contribute a greater proportion of finance for new housing themselves by borrowing higher levels of private finance against their assets and through increasing revenue by charging higher rents through the Affordable Rent model on a proportion of their stock. To enable Registered Providers to use this model, contracts with the HCA have to be agreed and due regard must be given to the Local Authority's Tenancy Strategy (see page 46).

Within the Council's 30 year HRA Business Plan, there may be potential to use investment surpluses to start a new build programme following implementation of the HRA self-financing regime. (see page 18). If the capital is available then the Council would be able to consider investment in new build as a way of contributing to the development of new affordable housing at a time when the development funds available to registered providers are being reduced. It is unlikely that any investment of this type would be available in the first 5-10 years of the Business Plan – further modelling using the Grimley Viability Assessment will be undertaken during 2012 to look at the potential for a future new build programme.

Affordable Housing Design Standards

Recommendations from New Communities JSNA include:

Plan housing and the places we live so that they reflect the changes that occur over the lifetime, and so that people are not excluded by design as they grow older and frailer or as their circumstances change. 'Lifetime homes' is a mechanism for achieving this.

South Cambridgeshire Affordable Housing SPD encourages the design standards for affordable housing to be high, both in terms of the visual appearance of the development and also the standards of accommodation and built quality. The units should also include measures to deliver buildings that help to respond to the challenge of climate change, such as energy efficiency and resource consumption. We aim to ensure that all our affordable housing is built to the Homes and Communities Agency Design and Quality Standards and also asks that where possible the units are designed to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard. We aim to meet the following standards:

Internal Environment - providing comfortable and convenient homes, meeting the needs of the intended user groups, including in terms of size, layout and service provision
External Environment - providing good places to live with well-mixed and integrated communities and providing an appropriate balance between private and public open space
Sustainability - providing homes that better adapt to climate change, with lower running costs and incorporating features that enhance health and well-being, including compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes.

The Code for Sustainable Homes measures the sustainability of a new home. The majority of all new affordable homes in South Cambridgeshire are now being built to either Code 3 or 4. The Code supports the government target that all new homes will be zero carbon from 2016.

Rural Housing – delivering for local people

House prices in South Cambridgeshire’s rural villages are higher than in most other parts of the Cambridge Sub Region. Existing social rented housing provided in the rural villages is usually under long-term occupancy and properties rarely become available for re-let.

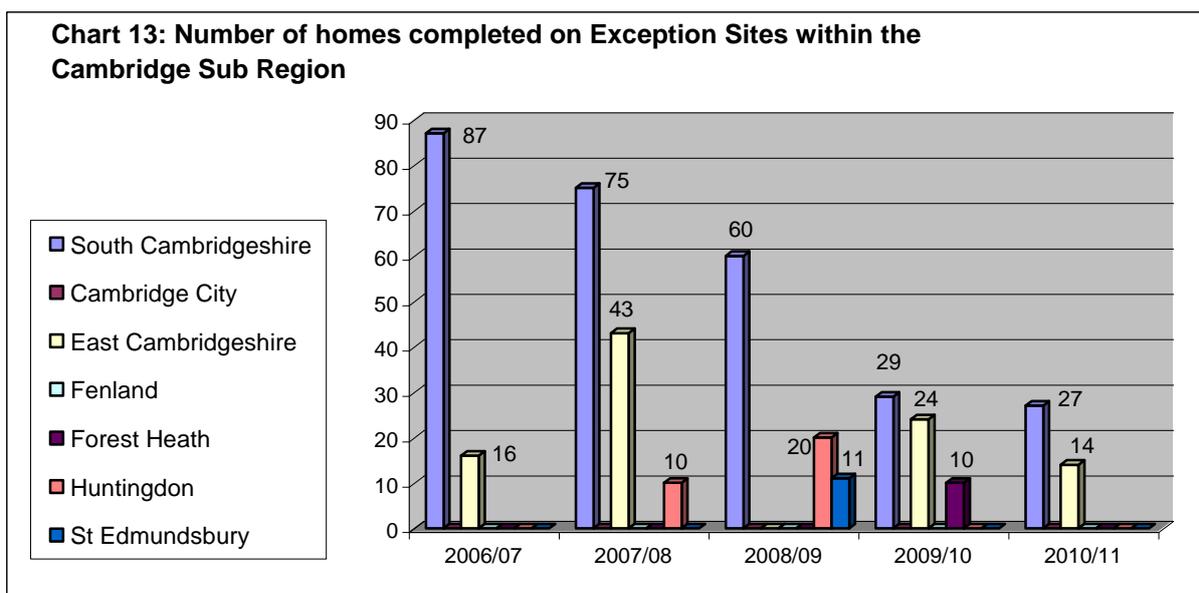
Through the Cambridge Sub Regional Rural Housing Enabling Project (led by Cambridgeshire ACRE), the Council has commissioned 16 housing needs surveys in the last 5 years. These surveys have identified a need for 743 new homes of which to date we have provided 69 affordable units through our Exception Sites Policy. Work continues in those villages where a need has been identified but not yet met, to identify suitable sites, and to develop the affordable housing needed.

South Cambridgeshire is one of only 5 authorities to receive the National Housing Federation’s Save our Villages Campaign for which we have received recognition. South Cambridgeshire is one of the top performing authorities in the Eastern region for delivering affordable housing on exception sites.

The development of affordable housing in rural villages, where a need is identified, can have benefits for the community by:

- Creating a mixed community
- Providing a sustainable community where young people can remain living in the areas they grew up in
- Helping to sustain local shops, schools and businesses
- Enabling people to receive and give support needed

We therefore want to continue working with local people, parish councils and local landowners to develop rural affordable housing, in the villages where a need has been identified.



Source: Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix

More details about the rural housing surveys and future developments can be found on the Council's website.

A key challenge for the future is continuing to deliver exceptions sites as government grant reduces. The draft National Planning Policy Framework proposes a change to the exceptions sites policy such that Councils can be more responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local requirements, particularly for affordable housing. It states that Councils should in particular consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs. This is a potentially significant change and will need to be given full consideration through the preparation of the new Local Plan.

Building for Growth

South Cambridgeshire District Council has been working in partnership with Cambridge City Council for over 10 years to deliver much needed affordable housing on Strategic Growth Sites such as Cambourne and Orchard Park. The round of new Strategic Growth sites on the edge of Cambridge and a brand new town within South Cambs are:-

- Southern Fringe – to deliver over 4000 homes with new schools and community facilities and 40% affordable housing. Some of the phases have been through the planning process and once the infrastructure has been completed homes will be built.
- NIAB – to deliver 1500 homes again with 40% affordable housing and much needed community facilities and a new school.
- Northstowe – to deliver 10000 new homes with 40% affordable housing and many new community facilities, several schools and new health facilities.

The Councils have been working in partnership with the HCA over the last few years to look at new ways in which it can assist in bringing large-scale developments forward. The Cambridge Challenge process was run in which one strategic affordable housing provider was selected to deliver the affordable across these sites. This has enabled the authorities to bring some certainty to the volume house builders in these uncertain economic times. By selecting one affordable housing provider, we can ensure that a single management service can be provided to new residents. We can also consider offering this single management service to buy to let investors.

Future housing provision for households with specific housing needs

There are some groups with characteristics or needs that mean they require particular types of accommodation or support to sustain housing. As part of the planning for affordable housing, consideration is given to potential development for households with specific housing needs.

The districts where the greatest growth in need for supported household units is anticipated are Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire.²¹

The Council uses money received in lieu of affordable housing (known as commuted sums) to help facilitate new affordable homes that require specialist adaptations. Since 2009, funding of £97K has been allocated through the commuted sums budget to help provide four adapted homes. We also work closely with the Disability Partnership to prioritise future development against need.

²¹ JSNA – New Communities 2010

The Council is currently investigating a potential development that will provide homes with on-site support for people with an acquired brain injury. This will be developed in partnership with the County Council, other local authorities in the sub region and Sanctuary Housing.

A redevelopment scheme at Cambridge Road, Fulbourn has received planning permission to provide 17 self-contained houses with on-site support for adults suffering from mental health problems. The site is owned by Granta Housing Society and the proposed development is to re-house existing residents currently living in shared accommodation on the site. The scheme is expected to be jointly funded by Granta Housing Society/Metropolitan Housing, the HCA and South Cambridgeshire District Council, with an anticipated start on site in the Summer of 2012,

On the strategic growth sites, the Council seeks to achieve 2% of all affordable homes built to be fully wheelchair accessible with a further 8% for other specialist housing requirements if needed.

One of the key objectives for the Council is the provision of extra care housing in the District to help meet the needs of an aging population (see page 66 for further details).

Affordable Gypsy & Traveller Site Provision

Corporate Plan: Key Aim (C6) - Develop a sustainable process to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers

Following the Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment (to be completed June 2012), this will inform planning for future provision for additional Gypsy & Traveller sites. This will inform policies and proposals in the new Local Plan to address identified needs.

Funding of £500,000 has been allocated by the HCA in their 2012-2015 Affordable Housing Programme to provide a 10 pitch site; this funding followed a joint bid submission by both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City. Over the coming years, we will work in partnership with Cambridge City to identify a potential public Gypsy & Travellers Site and seek a development and/or management partner to take a site forward by 2015.

Access to education, services and facilities and employment are highlighted by planning guidance as particular issues to consider when considering the location of new sites. When planning new sites it will be important to consider impact on nearby communities in terms of scale and on existing local infrastructure. Promotion of peaceful and integrated coexistence between sites and local communities is also an important consideration. Health inequalities of Gypsies and Travellers are highlighted by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and therefore accessibility of healthcare facilities is an important consideration when planning new sites.

Supporting community-led housing solutions

The pro-active work we do in relation to our Exception Sites Policy has produced real benefits to our communities and established good working relationships with parishes. The Government's Housing Strategy for England sets out their aspirations for greater community empowerment through the Localism Act, as set out at page 13. We will continue to work with parishes, providing guidance and assistance to help turn the Government's aspirations into reality.

Custom Build/Self Build Housing

The Government wants to support more people to build their own homes. It recognized that the Custom Build industry is important for the national economy and is worth approximately £3.6 billion a year - safeguarding and creating new jobs, strengthening the construction supply chain and making a real contribution to local economies. Nationally custom home builders are building as many homes each year as each of the individual volume house builders, with around 13,800 custom homes completed in the UK in 2010/11. Custom Build Housing also brings many other benefits, providing affordable bespoke-designed market housing, promoting design quality, environmental sustainability, driving innovation in building techniques and entrepreneurialism

As part of the Housing Strategy for England, the Government has also indicated that they want local authorities to establish the demand for Custom Build Housing, and take positive steps to facilitate it. Recent Government announcements indicate that a £30 million self-build fund to offer loans to qualifying projects will be made available and that some public land may be earmarked for self-build projects – possibly under a “build now, pay later” scheme. Details of this initiative are yet to be released by Government. Ministers have also indicated an interest in self-build groups where friends, families or neighbours club together to build their own neighbourhood. Such schemes are also popular internationally but account for only a handful of projects in Britain.

In partnership with Cambridge City Council, we are working with consultants to progress a new co-housing initiative at Orchard Park near Impington. The land is owned by Cambridge City and the project seeks to bring a group of around 40 householders together to commission and design their own homes and community. The project's launch, known as K1, includes a new website (www.cambridge-K1.co.uk) designed to keep all interested parties fully informed throughout the various stages of development and to provide an online tool for the development's design process. The overall aim of the co-housing project is to keep the costs of building and living down through a shared commissioning process, reducing running costs of the homes, sharing community resources and working together. As such K1 represents a unique opportunity for those who wish to live in sustainable homes and a supportive community.

The success of this flagship project will help us establish the level of interest in Custom Build and lessons to be learnt that can be taken forward into future projects.

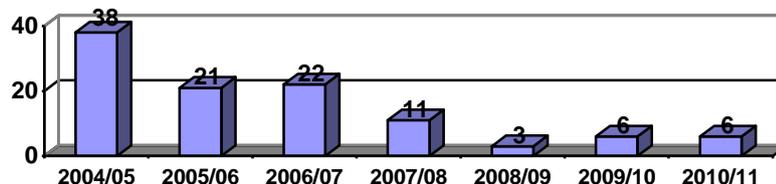
Reinvigorating the Right to Buy (RTB)

Reinvigorating the Right to Buy is one of the key objectives within the Government's Housing Strategy for England. It states that they want “to help more people realise their aspirations to home ownership” and that they are “now determined to reverse this decline and reinvigorate the policy to give a new generation the opportunity of home ownership”.

A significant commitment of this policy change is to “replace every additional home sold under Right to Buy with a new home for Affordable Rent.”

The RTB was introduced in 1980 and at its peak there were over 160,000 sales per year nationally. RTB sales are currently running at around 2,600 per year. In South Cambridgeshire during this period over 5,000 homes have been sold (around half of the original council house stock). Sales in recent years however have decreased.

Chart 14: RTB Sales in South Cambridgeshire



The main proposal by Government is to raise the discount to a maximum of 60% for houses and 70% for flats and to raise the maximum discount cap to £75,000 nationally. Currently average discounts are 25% and with caps at around £38,000. It is difficult at this stage to estimate what level of extra sales that this will generate within the District, although with high house prices in the District it is felt unlikely to have a major impact.

The average value of a Council house sold in 2010/11 was £176,500 (before discount). If a £75,000 discount cap was implemented, tenants would need to raise a deposit of £10,150 (assuming 10%) for a £101,500 mortgage and have an annual income of around £29,000 (based on an income multiplier of 3.5 for dual income households). The average annual income of applicants on the housing register is £19,500; with the national average gross income for new tenants being £22,807 (based on head of household data; Core Report).

In responding to the Government's consultation on reinvigorating the Right to Buy, the Council has made the following points:

- In principle it supports people in meeting their aspirations for home ownership.
- There is concern that large numbers of sales could have a detrimental effect on the HRA Business Plan.
- There are very few Council homes in some villages and a significant number of sales may remove all of the social rented homes from that village.
- Limited land supply may then prevent the supply of affordable rented homes to that village.
- It is also likely that the availability of social rented homes will decrease considerably over the coming years through housing association conversions and newbuild homes let at Affordable Rents. The Council is concerned that further reductions in social rent through replacement RTB homes with Affordable Rents will have an adverse impact on the affordability and supply of housing to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in the district.
- The Council has concerns about the financial viability of 1:1 replacement.
- The Council's preference would be for a local model for redistributing receipts as it would be free to use money as needed by its own residents within South Cambridgeshire.

Developing a Tenancy Strategy

Following the implementation of the Affordable Rent Model, local authorities are required to publish a Tenancy Strategy within 12 months of the relevant section of the Localism Act coming into force. South Cambridgeshire District Council published an Interim Statement in May 2011 as a temporary measure outlining the Council's position in relation to the new delivery model for affordable housing. The key principles included:

Affordable Rents: The Council is prepared to take a flexible approach to work with both the HCA and registered providers to provide a package that will deliver a proportionate mix of affordable housing at varying Affordable Rent levels to meet a range of housing needs across the District.

Length of Tenancies: Tenancies should be offered for a minimum of 2 years but we would encourage longer term tenancies where possible of between 5 and 10 years. Lifetime tenancies should still be available for the most vulnerable groups within the District

Re-Lets: The Local Authority supports the conversion of relets to Affordable Rents where this would provide for a more sustainable and balanced community

The Council is now in the process of drafting its Tenancy Strategy that will sit alongside the Housing Strategy. The Tenancy Strategy will be developed in consultation with registered providers and will set out the broad objectives that should be taken into consideration by registered providers when formulating their own policies on the grant and re-issue of tenancies. The Tenancy Strategy will need to strike a balance between meeting housing needs whilst ensuring future supply. The Government has made clear an expectation that registered providers give 'due regard' to the various Tenancy Strategies that cover their area of operation.

Regulation of Social Housing

Corporate Plan: Key Aim (A11) – 'Work with the newly elected Tenant Participation Group and other tenants to set up an independent Tenant Scrutiny Panel'

A further change in housing policy relates to the regulation of social housing. The Tenants Services Authority (TSA) was created in December 2008 to regulate Housing Associations, and Council housing from April 2010. The TSA promoted customer-focused outcomes and introduced a model whereby social landlords agree 'Local Offers' with tenants. The Localism Act abolishes the TSA with effect from 1st April 2012, shifting its regulatory role to the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA), whilst altering that role so monitoring powers are deployed only where risk of serious detriment affecting tenants are identified.

In the last four years there has been a more structured approach to resident engagement for our Council tenants and the number of forums has increased and now comprises:

- Tenant Participation Group or TP
- Disability Forum
- Leaseholder Forum
- Sheltered Housing Forum West
- Sheltered Housing Forum East
- Sheltered Housing Forum South
- Tenant E-Say Group

The Council's Resident Involvement Strategy was approved by Members in July 2010 and included an action to move towards an elected representative body. In light of the changes to the regulatory framework, the Council took the decision to bring forward this action, with elections to the Tenant Participation Group taking place in late 2011. The Council now has a fully mandated over-arching tenant group. It is also intended that a tenant scrutiny panel will be established in 2012/13; this panel will be recruited separately from TPG or the other tenant groups, and will need specific skills and aptitude that will be supported and harnessed through a training programme.

CHAPTER 5

BETTER HOMES

Our Aim: To improve the living conditions across all tenures, to help make homes more energy efficient and to reduce fuel poverty

We will:

- Publish a Private Sector Housing Action Plan following key actions identified through the Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2011.
- Promote progress against the HRA Business Plan, Warm Homes Strategy and Asset Management Strategy in relation to Council housing.
- Progress sites that are earmarked for redevelopment within the Council's own stock – working in partnership with registered providers where necessary.
- Review the Asset Management Strategy in 2013 and establish a replacement programme for properties identified through the Council's stock-profiling project.
- Improve the Council managed Gypsy & Traveller Site at Whaddon to improve the infrastructure to the site, including energy efficiency measures and utilising renewable energy sources.
- Reduce CO2 production by 0.28 tonnes per annum for the Council stock and achieve an average SAP rating of 70 (Energy Rating C).
- Ensure owner-occupiers and private rented tenants secure their full share of the increased help available through the new Green Deal and other programmes which help to address fuel poverty.
- Continue to access grants to improve the thermal efficiency in the Council stock and introduce innovative sustainable energy efficient heating solutions.
- Investigate the potential for partnerships to maximise the benefits of funding and ensure tenants are encouraged to seek the best priced energy supplier for their needs.
- Install solar photovoltaic panels to approximately 500 Council homes by 31st March 2012 that will generate free electricity for tenants during the day and reduce electricity bills.
- Investigate how fuel poverty impacts on the gypsy and traveller community following funding secured through LEAF (Local Energy Assessment Funding).
- Support local volunteer groups across the District to help communities and residents cut energy costs and become less dependent on increasingly expensive fossil fuels through the South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership.
- Take an active role in delivery of the new 'Green Deal' to improve energy efficiency in homes and other buildings.
- Over a period of 2 years, monitor the Retrofit Project at Rampton Drift, Longstanton to see what difference cutting edge 'green' technologies are making.
- Publish an Empty Homes Strategy that sets out actions for bringing empty homes back into use, including promotion of the Empty Homes Grant Initiative.

Understanding how the existing homes in South Cambridgeshire are used and what state of repair they are in, help the Council and its partners to identify the challenges and prioritise key actions to help meet housing needs. By improving and maintaining existing homes, this will help to provide suitable and decent housing that contributes towards residents having a superb quality of life.

Aspects of the built environment such as energy efficiency, ventilation and safety features of houses have a direct impact on health. High quality building can be health promoting.²²

Stock condition surveys for both the private sector and the Council stock were undertaken in 2011.

The condition of housing in the Private Sector

The private sector stock condition report presents the findings of a comprehensive survey of housing conditions in the private housing sector within South Cambridgeshire District. The study took a sample survey across the main private sector tenures; owner occupied, private-rented and tied/rent free.

At a Council wide level the study has involved a sample of 1,036 actual surveys of private sector dwellings; representing approximately 1.9% of the 55,124 private dwellings. The report provides a concise synopsis of the main findings of the house condition survey. A copy of the report will be made available on the website. A Private Sector Housing Action Plan will be developed to prioritise key actions once the information from the survey has been analysed

With the exception of disrepair, housing conditions locally are better than the national average for private housing. Local problems however remain which impact on this investment framework which are summarised under four main areas:

- **Physical condition factors;**
- **Energy efficiency and fuel poverty;**
- **Household considerations; and**
- **Environmental factors.**

Physical conditions: Within the Decent Homes Standard key issues include:

- 8.5% of dwellings have Category 1 hazards;
- 11.3 % are in disrepair; and
- 8.8% have inefficient heating and ineffective insulation.

Category 1 hazard rates are above average in the private-rented and pre-1919 housing markets and for detached houses and bungalows. Geographically rates of failure are higher in the small parishes. Patterns of disrepair are broadly similar impacting most strongly on the private-rented and pre-1919 housing sectors.

Energy efficiency and fuel poverty: Home energy efficiency levels in South Cambridgeshire are better than the national average although local issues still remain.

- 8.8% fail to meet the thermal comfort requirements of the Decent Homes Standard;
- 7.1% are in fuel poverty.

²² JSNA – New Communities 2010

Energy deficiencies again impact most strongly on the pre-war housing sector and for semi-detached and detached properties. Geographically, lower rates of energy efficiency are recorded in the isolated rural, deprivation and small parish areas. Fuel poverty impacts most strongly on younger and older households and single parent families. While less favourable energy efficiency levels are recorded for households in fuel poverty, household income differentials are the main driver of fuel poverty.

Action to address energy efficiency can have multiple benefits including reductions in fuel poverty and a positive impact on HHSRS (Housing, Health and Safety Rating System) and Decent Homes performance.

Household considerations: Poor housing conditions are associated with households in social or economic disadvantage. Elderly households, the economically vulnerable and those on low incomes are worst affected. Currently, 25.2% of vulnerable households live in non-decent homes. Lowest rates of progress towards decent homes for vulnerable households are recorded for households living in the isolated rural areas.

Equity potential among owner occupied households is high - estimated at £13.639 billion. Highest levels of equity are recorded for older households and also those on lower incomes. 15.1% of owner occupied households living in non-decent homes would remortgage for home improvement.

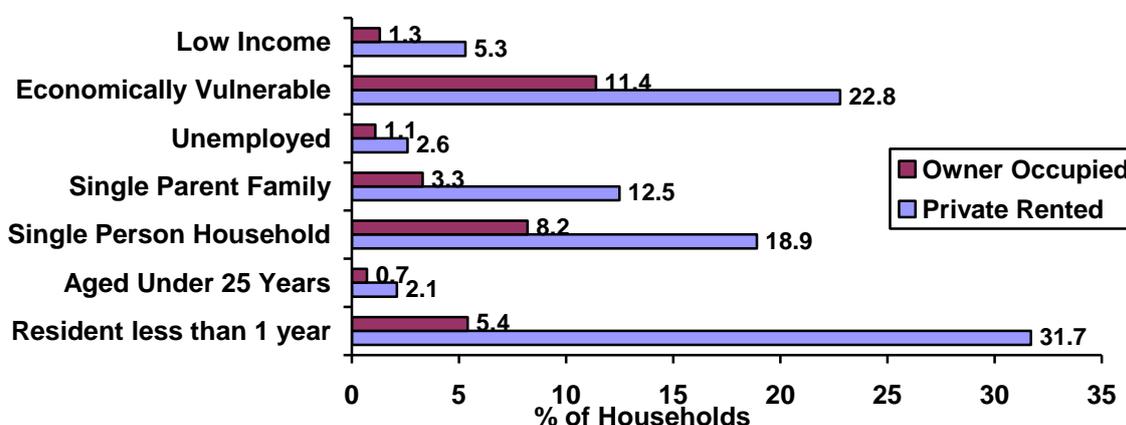
Environmental Factors: 6.8% of dwellings are located in residential environments suffering liveability problems with the greatest environmental impact coming from heavy traffic and street parking. Levels of household satisfaction with their housing circumstances and local area remain high although perceptions of area decline are apparent. These are higher within the Village centres and areas of Deprivation.

The Private Rented Sector

The private-rented sector shows a broad distribution but is more concentrated than the owner occupied sector. In this respect the private-rented sector is more strongly associated with terraced housing and purpose built flats. Geographically, private-rented dwellings are less likely to be found in the rural residential areas.

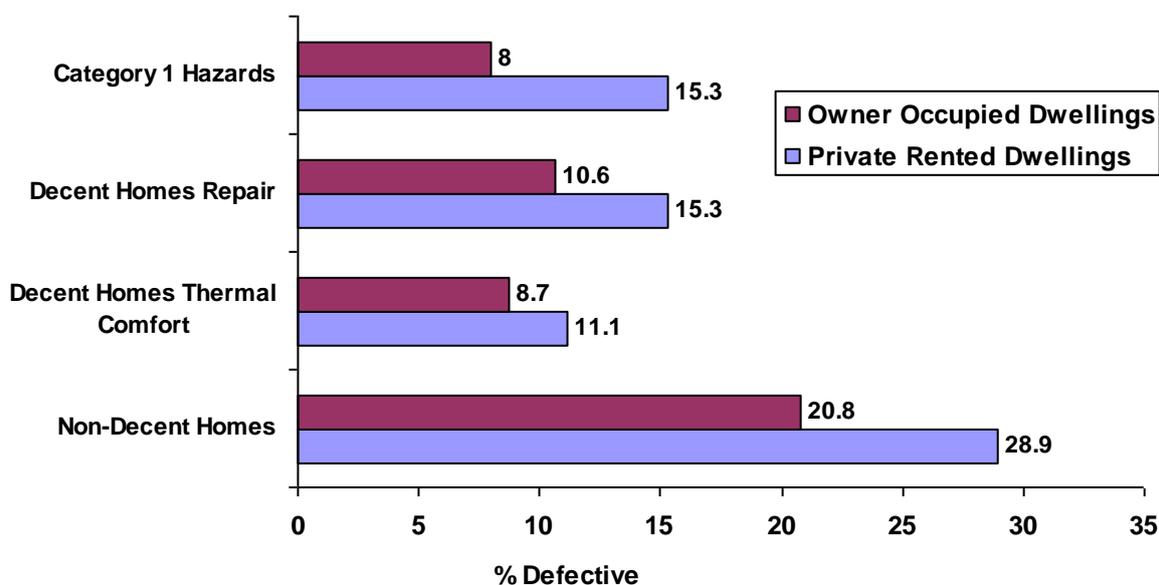
Households within the private-rented sector exhibit evidence of socio-economic disadvantage they also exhibit a younger more mobile household structure.

Chart 15: Household Characteristics in the Private Rented Sector



Housing Conditions: Housing conditions within the private-rented sector are generally worse on all main indicators. In particular rates of non-decency in the private-rented sector are significantly higher at 38.3%.

Chart 16: Housing Conditions in the Private Rented Sector



Costs to address non-decent homes in the private-rented sector are estimated at £9.808M averaging £6,255 per non-decent home.

Housing Occupancy: Levels of overcrowding within the private-rented sector at 6.0% are above the owner occupier sector average of 1.9%. The sector is also highly transitional. 31.7% of private-rented households have been resident in their current dwelling under 1 year; 11.1% intend to move within the next year compared with 1.9% of owner occupiers.

Energy efficiency and fuel poverty: Higher levels of socio-economic disadvantage in the private-rented sector contribute towards higher levels of fuel poverty even though variations in energy efficiency between tenures are minimal. 9.9% of private-rented households are in fuel poverty. This compares with 6.6% of owner occupied households in fuel poverty and 7.1% of all households. Income levels within the private-rented sector contribute to higher levels of fuel poverty. An average annual gross income for private-rented households of £29,985 compares to £35,156 for owner-occupiers.

The main findings within the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey relating to the housing conditions in the private sector are considered separately to the Housing Strategy and form part of the supporting documents. A Private Sector Housing Action Plan will be developed to identify key priorities and objectives to be taken forward over the next five years based on the findings of the survey.

The condition of housing in the Council Stock

Housing Conditions

The Council achieved the Decent Homes Standard by December 2010 and has an Asset Management Strategy in place for 2011/12 - 2013/14. This will be reviewed during 2013 once the self-financing regime is underway. The Council also has a Five Year Housing Maintenance Plan which details the asset management spending plans for a five-year period and which is refreshed annually.

A stock condition survey was completed in 2011 providing the Council with a clear, current picture of investment needed which will help to target resources effectively. Data was collected for almost 95% of the Council stock, which has been entered onto the Keystone Asset Management system. Based on the information contained within the Keystone system, the stock requires almost £37,500,000 to be spent over the next five years and £64,000,000 over ten years in order to maintain the Decent Homes Standard. The key areas of expenditure as prioritised by members of the Tenant Participation Group include Affordable Warmth, such as heating and insulation, aids and adaptations and improvement to environmental works. Further details on this are included in the HRA Business Plan and the Warm Homes Strategy.

The immediate priorities for the Council over the next five years are:

- Continuation of the programme of replacement kitchen and bathrooms.
- Continuation of the programme of re-roofing.
- Improvements in the thermal properties of the stock by the installation of insulation measures such as external insulation and loft insulation.
- Improvements in heating systems to ensure reliability and reductions in running costs where possible. This will include moves to sustainable heating systems such as air source heat pumps, particularly in areas off the gas grid.
- Implementation of a programme of electrical testing and upgrading.
- Completion of asbestos surveys and implementation of a programme of re-inspection, including development of the asbestos register.
- Survey and replacement of windows which may be reaching the end of their lives.

The Council has also recently appointed Mears as the new contractors for our response repairs and voids works. Part of this contract is to encourage local employment and employment of apprentices. The Council will work with Mears to look at employment opportunities through 'green' projects, with a focus on young people apprenticeships. Mears are also offering community chest funding to help support local initiatives such as youth football teams, refurbishment of clubs, etc. We will also look for further opportunities to support the local economy and provide training and employment for young people when the Council is in a position to start its own house building programme.

Energy Efficiency

The energy ratings within the Council stock compare favourably to the national average. This is indicative of the high levels of investment the Council has made in its stock already.

A large number of heating systems throughout the stock require replacement and upgrading. These include large numbers of oil, electric and solid fuel heating systems which are no longer energy efficient and which do not provide adequate levels of comfort at reasonable

cost for the tenants. Many of these are in areas where gas is not available, and as a result, there is a need to investigate and implement alternative technologies for energy provision in these areas. There are also an increasing number of recently installed gas condensing boilers which are prone to failure before their notional replacement dates.

Council Housing Stock Redevelopment Programme

As well as increasing the supply of affordable homes (see page 37), the Council has a programme, set out in the HRA Business Plan, to improve its own housing through redevelopment.

Within the Business Plan, the Council has earmarked the following schemes for redevelopment where properties have been identified as no longer being fit for purpose and would require extensive investment in the future.

The redevelopment of these schemes will in some cases increase the overall number of affordable homes available within the village and in other locations will replace the existing homes with more desirable developments which better suits the housing needs of the villages. All the projects are worked up in full consultation with Local Members, Parish Councils, residents, Registered Providers and other partner organisations.

Where possible, the Council aims to make land available to partners at nil cost or on a discounted land value basis. Sites will be transferred on a 125-year leasehold or freehold. This enables the Registered Provider to design a viable scheme that best matches the housing needs of the District in order to help meet its statutory obligation as housing enablers

Table 7: Council Stock earmarked for Redevelopment

Location	Current Use	Proposed Use	Status
Haddows Close, Longstanton	2 Airey Houses/under used garage site in poor condition	5 new homes including 1 purpose built adapted bungalow	Planning application approved start on site December 2011, expected completion Autumn 2012.
Mays Avenue, Balsham	13 bedsits in a sheltered housing scheme that were undesirable and hard to let	11 new homes	Planning application approved November 2011. Start on site Spring 2012, expected completion Winter 2012.
Windmill Estate, Fulbourn	1960 estate, comprising of 160 homes which are built to the Bison system construction standard and no longer meet current standards	274 new homes of mixed tenure including, rental re-provision, new rental properties, shared ownership units and outright sale	Phase 1A/1B – completed and fully occupied. Phase 2A on site and due to be completed Autumn 2012. Phase 2B granted planning December 2011, due to be on site late Spring 2012, with completion in 2013.

Location	Current Use	Proposed Use	Status
Robson Court, Waterbeach	16 general needs bedsits some of which are currently being used as temporary accommodation for homeless households and homeless hostel comprising 16 units with shared facilities	New purpose built hostel, with 30 new flats with the ability to provide between 8-10 purpose built units for adults with an acquired brain injury	To be completed by 2014.
Robinson Court, Gamlingay	Mixture of bedsits and one bed units, some of which are currently being used as temporary accommodation for homeless households	Master plan for 11 new homes	Consultation to be undertaken with local community
Fairview, Longstanton	5 units that are hard to let, some structural problems	Options for redevelopment being explored with Granta Housing Association	Consultation to be undertaken with local community

Using the latest stock condition survey data, a property-by-property stock profiling project has begun. This will identify houses that should be considered for replacement. The initial analysis indicates that around a further 220 homes will need to be replaced within the first 10 years of the HRA Business Plan. These are properties where the cost of maintaining them is generally higher than the income they will generate. They are also properties, which typically provide a lower quality of life for the residents.

As well as improving our Council homes, we have managed to secure funding from the DCLG for a flagship scheme of improvements, including refurbishment and the installation of renewable energy, to the Travellers Site at Blackwell, Milton. A ‘community hub’ on the site was also provided, where groups such as literacy clubs and playgroup have been established. We will continue to work towards improving our other Council-managed site at Whaddon to include energy efficiency measures and utilising renewable energy sources as well as potential additional pitches. We will also be looking for future site provision through the planning system following the Gypsy & Travellers Needs Assessment.

Tackling Fuel Poverty and making homes more energy efficient

The Council wants homes of all tenures to be safe, in a good state of repair and free from risks to occupants’ health – including offering adequate thermal comfort. The safer and more efficiently insulated a home, the more energy efficient it is. So these goals support our aim to reduce the carbon footprint of the District’s housing. Information from the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey identifies that emissions from private housing equates to average CO₂ emissions of 5.63 tonnes per dwelling per annum which is significantly better than the national average of 6.4 tonnes for all private housing in England.

For our Council stock, we are aiming to achieve an average SAP rating of 70 (Energy Rating C) by 2015, together with a reduction in average CO₂ production of 0.28 tonnes per annum. This is in line with the recently announced Warm Homes Standard.

Fuel Poverty is defined as the need to spend more than 10% of household income on domestic energy in order to achieve a warm and healthy indoor environment. It is estimated that there are at least 3,693 (7.1%) households in the Private Sector at risk of fuel poverty within the District.

The Council recognises that alleviating fuel poverty is a well-being issue, and that it is in the authority's interest to do all it can to facilitate effective measures. We will continue to ensure through partnership and publicity activities, that owner occupiers and private rented tenants secure their full share of the increased help available through the new Green Deal (see page 56) and other programmes which help to address fuel poverty. Tackling fuel poverty in the private sector will be a key priority within the Private Sector Housing Action Plan.

Fuel poverty is also an issue within our own Council stock as we have 670 homes in off-grid villages that have oil heating which is now recognised as one of the most expensive in the market. To understand the extent of fuel poverty in our own stock, the Council undertook a survey of tenants in relation to their heating systems in 2011. The information gained from the survey has helped us to prioritise spending on heating system updates and helped to identify those tenants who are unable to afford to run their current systems and who may benefit from any renewable energy initiatives that could be available in the future.

- For those tenants with oil heating – 51% (156) respondents said they spend more than 10% of their income on heating, with 5% stating that they do not use their oil heating system
- 64% of respondents (487) who have electric heating felt they were also in fuel poverty, the majority of which have storage heaters

In comparison to the private sector, there is a much higher level of fuel poverty for our Council tenants. This is not uncommon due to the majority of tenants being on lower incomes, high levels of disability and those households who are benefit dependent. Within the Council's Warm Homes Strategy the key priorities are

- to identify levels of fuel poverty and target assistance to the most vulnerable households,
- to raise awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency and encourage take up of appropriate benefits.

The Warm Homes Strategy as well as helping our tenants save on energy costs will be integral to cutting carbon emissions from the built environment by 29% by 2020 in line with government commitments. The Council will seek where possible to access grants to improve the thermal efficiency of properties and introduce innovative sustainable energy efficient heating solutions. Partnerships will be sought to maximise the benefits of funding and ensure that tenants are encouraged to seek the best priced energy suppliers for their needs, including investigations into the possibility of entering into a fuel consortium for oil purchase on behalf of tenants to take advantage of economies of scale.

The Council is working in partnership to install solar photovoltaic panels to the roofs of approximately 500 Council owned homes in the district that are suitable to maximise the solar gain. Electricity will be generated and free to use during the daylight hours reducing the electricity bills for many families. We have also secured EU funding through a joint bid with the County Council to provide a revenue funded post for three years to take forward our Warm Homes Strategy and tackle fuel poverty.

For owner occupier and private sector tenants looking for advice on insulation, microgeneration or any other sustainable energy matters we refer customers to either the Energy Saving Trust, the County Council's Registered Trader Scheme (due to be launched March 2012) or the District Council's Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership support team.

The Council has also been successful in bidding for LEAF funding (Local Energy Assessment Funding) which has been made available to finance projects that increase understanding and uptake of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and help to make energy supply secure and affordable for everyone in the community. The funding has been secured to fund a project to look at how fuel poverty impacts on the gypsy and traveller community.

The Transition to more Sustainable Living

As well as the actions the Council are taking to tackle fuel poverty and make homes more energy efficient, there is also the wider agenda of both reducing and adapting to the more threatening aspects of climate change. The transition to more sustainable low-carbon is as much about behaviour as it is about the fabric of buildings and renewable energy technologies. Making the transition to day-to-day living where energy is only used when it's really needed, is not wasted and is increasingly generated from low-carbon sources is a challenge that requires both individual and community support.

Through the South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership (SPEP) the Council directly assists local volunteer groups across the district to help their own communities and residents cut energy costs and become less dependent on increasingly expensive fossil fuels. The SPEP and its parish-based volunteer groups are able to help with advice, encouragement and access to a whole range of support and experience, such as insulation, renewable energy, borrowing energy monitors, thermal imaging and other wider issues relating to transport (e.g. car sharing) and food (e.g. garden-share schemes). Supporting the 'Green Deal' and the 'Retrofit' agenda.

The Energy Bill introduced to Parliament in December 2010 includes a new 'Green Deal' to improve the energy efficiency of homes and other buildings. The Green Deal will enable households to install energy-efficiency measures such as insulation and boilers at no upfront cost, paying for them through their electricity bill over a period of up to 25 years. It is anticipated that councils will be expected to play a leading part in delivering this ambition, with guidance to be published in spring 2012. Suggested roles for local authorities include working with energy companies to identify those in greatest need of energy efficiency improvements and working with partners and communities to identify ways to implement the scheme with maximised economies of scale.

We will keep emerging details of the policy under review and work to promote the Green Deal to our own tenants whose homes could benefit, as well as to private sector landlords (whom the government has indicated will be required to start improving the least energy efficient properties by 2015), as well as publicising more generally to homeowners. With improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon footprints as key objectives for the Council, we are proud to have implemented an innovative retrofit project. Thirteen homes at Rampton Drift, Longstanton have been fitted with a variety of technologies, including pioneering insulation, energy efficient boilers and solar panels, that will help to cut bills, reduce carbon and promote more sustainable living. The homes will be monitored over a period of two years to see what difference cutting edge 'green' technologies are making. As part of the project, members of the public were invited in June 2011 to come and view exhibitions and speak to the residents and partners involved about how the technologies work and what benefits they bring. Not only will the project reduce the carbon footprint of these homes, but will also provide key data and information for similar future projects.

Bringing Empty Homes back into use

Empty homes are a wasted resource in terms of housing available for people to live in and they can also have a negative impact on their surrounding communities, as well as being a financial burden for many owners. Tackling empty homes is a national priority for the Government as outlined in the Housing Strategy for England.

As of April 2011, there were 561 empty homes vacant for over 6 months in the District, representing just under 1% of the total housing stock. This compares favourably to the national figure of 4.6% of private sector dwellings empty for 6+ months.²³ Although empty homes may not be seen as a huge problem for South Cambridgeshire, homes sitting empty cannot be ignored when there is such a high demand for housing in the area. We are therefore committed to working with owners to develop services that help support them to bring these properties back into use.

An Empty Homes Strategy has been developed as a supporting document to this Strategy – the main priorities of the Strategy include:

- improving our evidence base of empty homes in the district;
- being pro-active in dealing with properties that are empty long-term;
- improving information and advice available to owners of empty homes.

How we will deliver these priorities is set out in the Action Plan contained within the Empty Homes Strategy.

We are also working in partnership with King Street Housing Society to pilot an Empty Homes Grant Initiative that provides grants to owners to help pay for necessary repairs in return for the property being let through the Council's Private Sector Leasing Scheme at an affordable rent. This is currently being funded through S.106 money we receive in lieu of affordable housing and we will continue to look for further funding through other sources, such as the Homes & Community Agency.

For further information on Empty Homes, please refer to the Empty Homes Strategy which is available on our website at <http://www.scamb.gov.uk/Housing/StrategyAndDevelopment/emptyhomes.htm>.

²³ English Housing Survey 2009

CHAPTER 6

MAKING BEST USE OF EXISTING STOCK

Our Aim: To promote safe and sustainable communities, ensuring people are living in the right homes at a time that is right for them

We will

- Work in partnership with King Street Housing Society to investigate the options available in releasing some of our sheltered stock in return for family homes, possibly through the Private Rented Sector Leasing Scheme to tackle under-occupation in the private sector.
- Be pro-active in providing support and advice to help social tenants to transfer to smaller accommodation. We will look at the options to joining the Huntingdonshire Under-Occupation Partnership Agreement or establish a similar scheme by 2013.
- Develop a Tenancy Fraud Policy and take a more pro-active approach in raising awareness of the consequences of tenancy fraud, including subletting.
- Publish a Tenancy Policy by April 2012, explaining how we manage tenancies in a way that makes the best use of homes to meet local needs. Including the use of Flexible tenancies for a minimum period of 10 years and introductory tenancies.
- Work towards signing up to the Respect Charter, which will demonstrate our commitment to providing a high quality ASB service for our Council tenants.

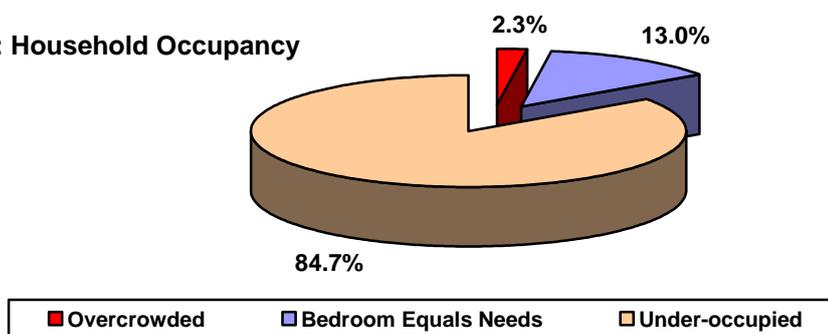
Tackling under-occupation

Tackling under-occupation/overcrowding in the private housing sector

The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey identified 13% of households having sufficient bedrooms to meet their family needs, 84.7% of households have more bedrooms than required and are under-occupying, while 2.3% households have insufficient bedrooms to meet their family needs and are overcrowded.

High levels of under-occupancy are not surprising against generally small household sizes and a significant housing stock of 3 and 4 bedroom configurations. Levels of overcrowding in the District at 2.3% are just above the national average for private housing (2% in 2007/08 to 2009/10 - EHS Household Report 2009-10).

Chart 17: Household Occupancy



Variations in housing occupancy are minimal by housing sector. Where they exist they indicate above average rates of overcrowding in the private-rented sector, in 1981-90 housing and in purpose built flats. Levels of under-occupancy are conversely higher in the owner occupied sector and for detached housing.

Geographically rates of overcrowding are above average within isolated rural areas, where 9.7% of households are deemed to be living in overcrowded conditions.

At a household level, and as might be expected, overcrowding is associated with large family households and under-occupation with the elderly. Thus, 20.3% of single parent families live in overcrowded conditions as do 18.4% of large family households. In contrast, 96.3% of elderly households, with no other family present in the property, are under-occupying their current dwelling.

The Government has recently announced that they want councils to help elderly people who are owner-occupiers to move into smaller homes so that their properties can be rented to families. Under the scheme, proposals are that councils will arrange for elderly people to move into rented accommodation, and then take responsibility for maintaining and letting their property at an affordable rate. As further details of these proposals emerge, we will work in partnership with King Street Housing Society to investigate the options available in releasing some of our sheltered stock in return for family homes, possibly through the Private Rented Sector Leasing Scheme. We will also investigate options for providing new affordable homes in return for larger existing family homes through shared ownership opportunities.

A further scheme through Care Network is being considered that would match employees in health/local government professions who are looking for somewhere to live to elderly households who are under-occupying and wish to have company/support/monthly income through taking on a lodger that has been verified through the scheme. This is still at a very early investigative stage, but the Council would support such a scheme.

Actions to tackle under-occupation/overcrowding in the private sector will be identified within the Private Sector Housing Action Plan.

Tackling under-occupation/overcrowding in social housing

Tackling under-occupation is also a key priority for the Government. Within the Government's proposed '*Allocation of accommodation Guidance*' emphasis is given to prioritising under-occupiers in social rented homes to make it easier for them to transfer. This was also highlighted as a key aim in the Government's Housing Strategy for England.

There are currently 31 transfer applicants on our Housing Register in South Cambridgeshire under-occupying by one bedroom and a further 58 transfer applicants under-occupying two bedrooms. Under our current Allocations Policy, those under-occupying by two or more bedrooms or to release an adapted property are awarded high priority (Band B) and medium priority (Band C) for those under-occupying by one bedroom. We are currently reviewing the Sub Regional Allocations Policy (see page 78) where further consideration will be given as to whether this is sufficient enough priority.

Figures from the Housing Register mask the true level of under-occupation in social housing as many tenants are not registered or have not considered moving to a smaller home. Proposals within the Welfare Reform to limit housing benefit for those of working age under-occupying a social home may put many tenants in a situation where they will have difficulty in

paying their existing rent. Within the Council's own stock, there are currently 450 working age households claiming housing benefit where they are under-occupying their home; 67 of which under-occupy by more than one bedroom.

It is therefore essential that the Council provides support and advice to help tenants transfer to smaller accommodation. One of the key actions for the service over the coming year is to ensure we are pro-active in this. The Huntingdonshire Under-Occupation Partnership Agreement was implemented in 2011 between Huntingdon District Council and its partner housing providers and aims to:

- identify the number of under-occupiers in **all** social rented homes across Huntingdonshire
- promote new developments to under-occupying tenants prior to advertising through the Choice Based Lettings scheme to give an assurance of a move
- offer an incentive support package in partnership with Age Concern, such as helping elderly tenants to sort possessions, organise removals, help to pack, etc.

Officers from South Cambs have been attending meetings during 2011 with Huntingdon DC with a view to joining their scheme as part of a sub-regional project, if the scheme proves successful during its first year of implementation. In 2012 we will assess the advantages of joining the scheme or look to set up something similar within the District.

From the information taken from the Housing Register, there are only three applicants currently living in social housing where they are classed as statutorily overcrowded as defined by the Housing Act 1985. The Home-Link CBL scheme awards the highest priority of Band A – Urgent Need to those classed as statutorily overcrowded.

Tackling Tenancy Fraud and ensuring fairness

One of the Government priorities is to ensure that social housing goes to those tenants that need it most for as long as they need it; this includes tackling tenancy fraud and targeting those households earning high incomes who continue to occupy subsidised housing.

Housing tenancy fraud is the use of social housing by someone not entitled to occupy that home. It includes:

- the unauthorised subletting of a property for profit to people not allowed to live there under the conditions of the tenancy;
- using false information in a housing application to gain a tenancy; and
- wrongful tenancy assignment and succession where the property is no longer occupied by the original tenant.

There have been several cases over the last year where occupants have been found not to be the original tenant in our Council stock. Following initial investigations we were able to secure vacant possession without the need to take necessary court action. With regard to false information on housing applications, verification checks are undertaken by the Council's Allocation Team upon applying to go onto the Housing Register and further checks are taken prior to the sign-up of tenancy.

As part of the customer profiling exercise to be carried out in Spring 2012, this will provide an audit check to ensure occupants match the tenancy information. A Tenancy Fraud Policy will also be developed during 2012 to formalise the procedures on the action the Council will take in tackling tenancy fraud, including possible prosecution proceedings. This policy forms part of the supporting documents to the Council's overall approach to enforcement. Members of the public are able to report suspected cases of fraud through the Council's existing fraud hotline.

Following the publication of a Tenancy Fraud Policy, the Council will take a pro-active approach of publicising the policy to ensure tenants are aware of the consequences of fraudulently obtaining a tenancy or subletting a property.

With regards to the Government's proposals to raise the rents for households with income in excess of £100,000, we await further guidance on this. It is not anticipated that this proposal will affect many (if any) Council tenants. As part of our customer profiling exercise we will have a better understanding as to who this may affect and will work within Government guidelines when/if this takes effect.

Flexible Tenancies

The Localism Act gives social landlords the option to grant flexible tenancies. The normal minimum length of tenancy will be five years, though tenancies of between two and five years will be allowed in exceptional circumstances. These flexible tenancies can be offered to new tenants with either social rented or Affordable Rent tenancies. Such tenancies will be subject to review, using criteria set by landlords, and can either be extended for a further fixed term or terminated depending on the tenant's circumstances at the time of the review.

This represents a major departure from how social homes are let, and has attracted a range of views, including concerns about the potential detrimental impact of reduced security on vulnerable tenants, community stability and costs for landlords having to review tenancies and having a higher volume of voids. However, flexible tenancies also offer beneficial options by enabling landlords to make best use of stock by ensuring the right properties meet household size, adapted homes are occupied by those that need them, or tenants that could afford alternative forms of housing are assisted to do so.

The Council's approach to flexible tenancies within its own housing stock will be considered as part of our Tenancy Policy which will be published in Spring 2012, explaining how we manage tenancies in a way that makes the best use of homes to meet local needs. One option to be considered in formulating the Tenancy Policy is whether the Council wishes to use flexible tenancies for general needs housing for a minimum tenancy of not less than 7 years. If this option was approved, assurance would be given that an alternative suitable property would be made available if a tenant was asked to move-on at the end of the flexible tenancy.

Community Safety

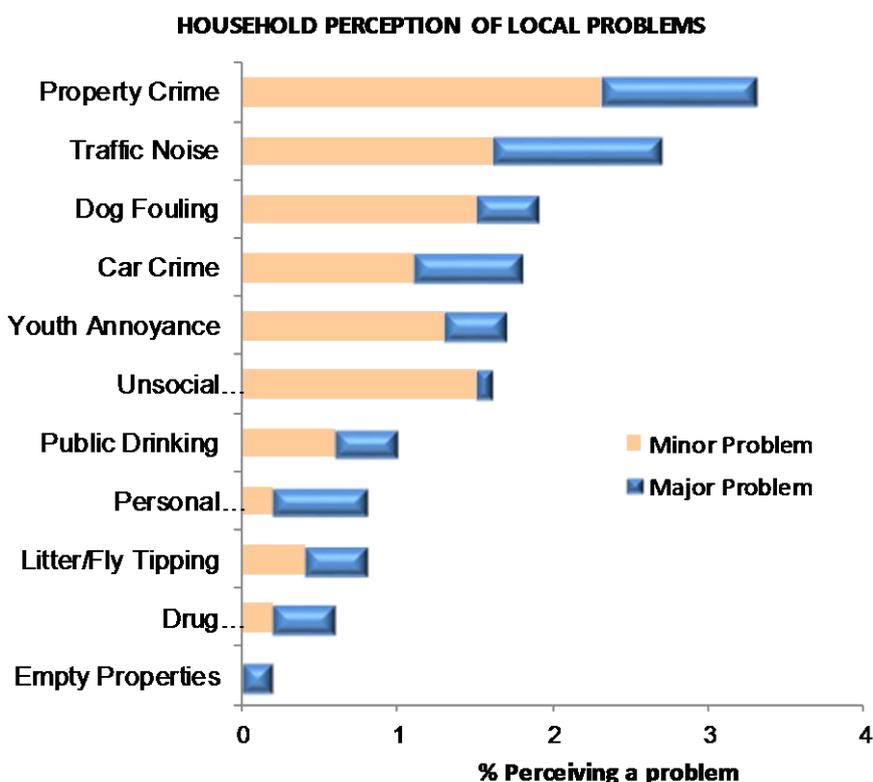
Community Safety is about working together to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. To do this South Cambridgeshire District Council works with a number of partner agencies as part of South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). The CDRP includes the District Council, County Council, Police, Fire and Rescue service and other agencies that work together to deal with problems such as crime, anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol misuse.

The CDRP Tasking & Co-ordinating Group (T&CG) meets every month to share information and data to identify current priorities and agree actions to work together across the District.

The District Council responds to reports of anti-social behaviour by working with partner agencies and across different council departments to take appropriate action, which can include using tools such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Mediation, Notice of Seeking Possession, positive interventions and in the most extreme cases Anti-social Behaviour Orders.

Anti-social behaviour in the District is low compared to the rest of the County and nationally. Residents can report anti-social behaviour through the Police 101 number, their landlord or through their local Neighbourhood Panel.

In the private sector householders were asked their views on local problems as part of the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey. A very small proportion of households indicated that there were issues that caused a problem in their neighbourhood. The most frequently mentioned relate to property crime and dog fouling, and even these were a problem (either minor or major) for only around three per cent of households.



For our own Council stock, there is a dedicated ASB Officer to deal with nuisance caused by anti-social behaviour that affects our Council tenants. As part of the Affordable Homes staff restructure we will also be looking to recruit another ASB Officer. Over the coming year, we will be working towards signing up to the Respect Charter, which will demonstrate our commitment to providing a high quality ASB service to our tenants. The Charter is based on a self-assessment approach and will be used as a framework for improvement, tailored to local needs and priorities.

CHAPTER 7

SECURING HOUSING WITH SPECIALIST SUPPORT

Our Aim: To promote fully inclusive communities and to work with partners to provide support and assistance to enable independent living

We will

- Publish an Ageing Well Strategy, which will include actions to encourage independent living and support community health schemes.
- Work towards developing a 'one-stop shop' within the District Council to enable easier access for older people to receive services and information.
- Continue to promote the Exceptions Site policy providing affordable housing for local people to enable them to stay in the village, maintaining a support network for both young and old.
- Bring forward Extra Care Schemes as part of the affordable housing contribution and in accordance with the Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care Sheltered Housing in Cambridgeshire 2011-2015.
- Remodel the Sheltered Housing Service in view of the reduction in Supporting People (SP) funding and in preparation for the competitive tendering process, with the new contract due to start in April 2013.
- Support mechanisms through existing and new village warden schemes to provide a wider range of personal services that help to maintain independent living.
- Monitor through a Service Level Agreement the performance of the newly established shared Home Improvement Agency service.
- Ensure sufficient resource is provided for disabled adaptations in our Council Homes as soon as possible when needed as part of the HRA Business Plan – as identified as a top priority for funding by tenants.
- Work with the Cambridge Community Service to raise awareness of Assistive Technology through training and publicity to other professionals involved in care and support, as well as to the wider public.
- Work with our contractors Mears to develop and provide a Handy Person Service for our Council tenants.

There are some groups with characteristics or needs that mean they require particular types of accommodation or support to sustain housing. The Department for Communities and Local Government define vulnerable people as:

- people seeking to maintain independence with support;
- people requiring support with care;
- and people who are socially excluded

Whilst these categories encompass a number of different groups, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment identifies the increase in the number of potentially vulnerable elderly people in this District as a major challenge; therefore meeting the housing needs of older people is a key priority for the Council.

The JSNA for Older People 2010 recommends:

- *In future needs assessments, explicitly consider the needs of older people as a specific group e.g. among prisoners, Travellers.*

Supporting People Programme

To help us meet the housing needs of the most vulnerable in the District and enable independent living, we work closely with Cambridgeshire Supporting People team.

Supporting People (SP) is a national scheme that is administered as part of Cambridgeshire County Council's budget by the County's Supporting People Team. The SP programme strategically commissions, monitors and reviews housing related support services to complement existing statutory services. The programme supports some of the most vulnerable and socially excluded members of our society. The primary purpose of SP is to develop and sustain an individual's capacity to live independently in their accommodation. Client groups include: single homeless, homeless families, rough sleepers; ex-offenders and those at risk of offending; physical and sensory disability; domestic violence; alcohol and drug problems; teenage parents; older people; young people at risk/leaving care; HIV and AIDS; learning difficulties; Travellers; migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers; mental health.

The SP programme saves money elsewhere by preventing or deferring the use of more costly alternatives e.g. hospitalisation; institutional care; committing/becoming a victim of crime; homelessness. It can also help the smooth transition to independent living from these alternatives. It is estimated that for every £1 spent on Supporting People, it could save local authorities between £5- £6 further down the line. Prevention and early intervention is therefore key to the 'spend to save' ethos.

Balancing the Budget [*Supporting People Commissioning Strategy 2011-15*]

In 2010/11, £12.5M was spent on services funded by the Supporting People programme across the county; this exceeds the Communities & Local Government (CLG) grant allocated in 2010/11 of £10.8M. This has been a result of the grant being cut by 20% in Cambridgeshire from its original allocation when the programme launched in 2003. These reductions have been managed in previous years through the development of a financial management fund. However, this "buffer" will be used up during 2011/12. It is therefore essential that the budget balances in that time.

The base budget for the programme set through the County Council's integrated planning process was £10.3m for 2011/12. The Commissioning Body in Cambridgeshire has acknowledged that it is no longer viable for the programme to keep reducing funding to existing services and still maintain the outcomes required. Working in partnership with all relevant commissioners and in collaboration with all stakeholders approaches to doing things differently, better and at a lower cost are being explored, with the main focus on:

- Establishing the real needs of Cambridgeshire's vulnerable residents and how they can best be met, regardless of how they are currently being addressed
- Establishing a whole range of ways in which the needs can be met to ensure the service offering is truly personalised and to maximise choice and control for vulnerable residents
- Ensuring the services are only provided for as long as is needed and in the way that best meets the need

- Taking forward the principles of localism such that services can be designed and delivered by residents themselves and their communities

The information provided in the paragraphs above relating to the SP budget are taken from the current Supporting People Commissioning Strategy, but this, and the future delivery of the programme, are currently under review. The base budget for 2012/13 is not yet known.

Supporting People Funding for the Council's Sheltered Housing Service

South Cambridgeshire District Council receives Supporting People funding to help deliver its sheltered housing service. In view of the overall need to balance the SP budget and to review the approach to supporting older people, the Supporting People Commissioning Body undertook a review on how this funding is spent.

A report was taken to the Supporting People Commissioning Body in August 2010 identifying the need to provide support to older people living in the wider community. The rationale for this decision was that the model of support currently provided, largely through historic models of service, does not meet the support needs of the wider older person's population. Support is currently only provided to those people living in the sheltered housing schemes. In Cambridgeshire, the number of older people is forecast to rise steadily in the county (apart from Cambridge City) up to 2021 and they comprise a higher proportion of the population in rural areas than in urban.

The current sheltered housing service is focussed on the 5% of older people living in sheltered housing, while 95% of older people live in the wider community. Of this 95% of older people, the majority live in the private sector (average 72% in private housing, 28% in public sector housing) yet Supporting People funding is currently only focussed on public sector housing.

Commissioners are currently looking to re-configure the services to include older people living in the community, focussing on prevention and early intervention. In doing so they are keen to maximise benefits by embracing localism and volunteering opportunities, learning from services such as village wardens.

In view of this, the County Council have taken the decision that the sheltered housing contract would have to go through a competitive tendering process, with the new contract due to start in April 2013.

A Supporting People Project Group has been established to oversee the development of the revised service specification so that there is both clarity and agreement on the service to be tendered and delivered from April 2013. This project will ensure that there is agreement with stakeholders on the range and scope of consultation and that this will shape the Community Impact Assessment for the revised service. This project has to be managed within the financial resource available and deliver on the following:

- Finalise savings with sheltered housing providers to assist with balancing the budget for 2012/13.
- Carry out consultation with providers, tenants, district councils and other stakeholders.
- Work with providers to offer support in the wider community.
- Cost up different approaches.
- Develop more holistic services, early intervention/preventative – to be achievable within the timeframe.
- Ensure that new services complement existing services provided by voluntary sector organisations, (e.g. the Village Warden service run by Age UK in some villages in South Cambs and Care Network that provides a range of services for older people).

- Explore the feasibility of changing the basis of the support service to one based on need, rather than tenure of housing.

The current support contracts have been extended while options to re-configure the services are explored. Further information on how the Council are planning for these changes are outlined at page 67.

Supporting Older People

Corporate Plan: Key Aim (C4) - Work with older people to improve their independence and quality of life

Ageing Well – Locality Project

Society is changing, and advances in health and living conditions are helping people live longer.

Housing with extra care options, good transport and easily accessible information about whats available for older people are just a few things which are key to helping older people live happy, healthy lives.

Ageing Well was an intensive programme of support for councils delivered by the Local Government Association and funded by the Department for Work and Pensions. As part of this programme the website on the Ageing Well Legacy (www.local.gov.uk/ageing-well) provides practical advice for councils and partners. It looks at what makes a good place to grow old and actions councils can take to create one.

The New Communities JSNA 2010 recommends “*Plan housing and the places we live so that they reflect the changes that occur over the lifetime, and so that people are not excluded by design as they grow older and frailer or as their circumstances change. ‘Lifetime homes’ is a mechanism for achieving this*

The Government’s Localism policy suggests an expectation that local communities will be engaged in generating new ideas for supporting older people within their local communities. South Cambridgeshire has an extensive network to help facilitate this.

An Ageing Well project for South Cambridgeshire has been established to work with partners to enable more older people to live actively and independently within their communities. A workshop bringing together the needs of local voluntary groups and older people to plan for the growing older population was held in July 2011. At the workshop attendees were asked to identify what matters to older people, what works well and why, and what doesn’t work well and why, before identifying areas for action. Three themes emerged from the group discussions as being particularly significant for older people and having major impacts on their health and wellbeing:

- social isolation;
- transport and mobility; and
- communication and information.

The Ageing Well project has also identified the potential value in expanding the coverage of community or village wardens for the elderly. At present around 12 villages have this service. Village wardens are able to provide a wider range of personal services that help to maintain independent living. Options to expand on this will be further explored as part of the restructuring of the Sheltered Housing Service (see page 67).

Following this a small working group with membership from the local authorities, health and the voluntary sector, along with older people’s representative organisations has been set up. One of the actions identified is to develop an Ageing Well Strategy for South Cambridgeshire based on local evidence such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment that will identify actions to improve the quality of life for local older people. It will identify actions to keep older people in their homes, improve the quality of their lives and reduce hospital stay through community support, advice and action. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be completed by Summer 2012.

A ‘one-stop shop’ within the District Council is also being developed to enable easier access for older people to receive services and information.

The Council also recognises the importance of keeping family links together so that care and support can be available for family members. The Exceptions Site policy (page 41) aims to achieve this by making affordable housing available for local family members to enable them to stay in the village, maintaining a support network for both young and old.

Extra Care Housing

Extra care schemes offer older people independent living in a home of their own with other care and support services on hand for when they want or need them. A development of this kind usually involves a partnership between housing, health and social care commissioners.

Table 8: Extra Care Schemes completed since 2006

	Moorlands, Melbourn	Flaxfields, Linton
Completed	March 2008	March 2010
HCA funding provided	Yes	Yes
Tenure	Social rent	Social rent
Number of units	35	40
Breakdown:		
1 bed flat	32	32
2 bed flat	3	8
Notes	19 private sale properties to provide cross subsidy (5 x 1bf, 6 x 2bf, 8 x 3bh)	

Further extra care schemes have been prioritised for South Cambridgeshire within the Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care Sheltered Housing in Cambridgeshire 2011-2015, as the District, alongside Fenland and Huntingdon, have the most significant shortfalls for extra care housing in the county.

An additional exercise to calculate the capacity within the county to develop new schemes established that one new scheme of approximately 40 units could be developed each year for the next ten years until April 2020. These, approximately 400 units, will replace the need for additional residential care places that are forecast to be required due to population growth in the next ten years. As the cost of social care in extra care schemes is around half that in residential care this provides a considerable saving as well as providing older people with new homes and helping them maintain their independence. Demand and supply of extra care housing will be kept under review and the priorities for developments adjusted accordingly.

Within South Cambridgeshire, the following schemes have been identified within our development pipeline:

	Bayer Site, Hauxton	Ida Darwin, Fulbourn
Start on site	2013/14	2014/15
HCA Funding	Not yet confirmed	Not yet confirmed
Tenure	Affordable Rent	70% rented 30% intermediate
Number of units	70	70
Breakdown of unit type:		
1 bed flats	25	25
2 bed flats	45	25

Further Extra Care schemes on the growth sites at Clay Farm (Southern Fringe), Northstowe, Cambourne and Cambridge East will be given due consideration when the sites progress.

The Council will also look for reassignment opportunities of existing sheltered housing schemes as part of the overall review of its sheltered housing service.

A further scheme of 55 homes at Bell School (Southern Fringe) is being proposed by Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association and Hills Residential. This scheme will be designed similar to an Extra Care Scheme but will target a wider age group to encourage residents to downsize. There will be a mixture of social rented and intermediate housing.

Sheltered Housing Review

Corporate Plan: Key Action 'C9' – 'Work to ensure the provision of a sustainable housing service for the Council's sheltered housing residents'.

The housing support element of the Council's sheltered housing service is funded by Supporting People. The Council's contract for the sheltered housing support service runs out in March 2012.

The County Council needs to reduce spending on its Supporting People budget and has therefore embarked upon a series of projects to identify where reductions can be made (see page 64 for further details). As part of this process the contract sum payable to the Council for sheltered housing is to be reduced from July 2012 from around £14 per person (per week) to £9 per person. In addition the contract will be subject to a competitive tender process during 2012 with the new contract starting in April 2013.

In view of this, a Task & Finish Group involving Members, sheltered housing residents and officers from the Council, was set up to review the options for the sheltered housing service. The terms of reference of the group were "to make an evidence-based recommendation to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Cabinet regarding a fresh approach to delivering the sheltered housing service in light of externally imposed changes"

In preparation of the review, a face-to-face support needs assessment was completed with sheltered housing residents. The Task & Finish Group then looked at the options for the Council to reshape its service delivery based on the findings of the support needs assessment and in preparation for the tender process. The key elements of the proposed new service structure include:

- The establishment of a visiting support team providing a targeted visiting support service to elderly and vulnerable people, within the sheltered schemes.

- Establish a team of officers to undertake estate management of a number of sheltered schemes within these same three areas, including the management of the communal facilities, testing of alarms and letting of sheltered properties.
- Establish three hub offices within the district based on the current 3 team areas – north, east and west.

The advantage of splitting the service into two teams is that it enables the Council to preserve an HRA funded service to the sheltered schemes that is under its own control. Residents will continue to see a ‘familiar face’ on their schemes during the week whatever the outcome of the supported housing contract tender which has the potential to be won by an outside agency.

The proposed restructure is designed to ensure continuity of service to the sheltered housing schemes and to allow the best use of resources in targeting those residents that need housing support.

These proposals will be considered by the Housing Portfolio Holder in February 2012. It is expected that the Supporting People procurement process will commence in August 2012 with the new contract to start from April 2013. The restructuring of the service proposed would therefore only be operational for the period July 2012 to March 2013.

Adapting properties to make them suitable for disabled people

The Council is committed to helping those with disabilities to live independently. Assistance is provided through the Home Improvement Agency, disabled adaptations grants for council tenants, assistive technology and the Handy Person Scheme.

Key messages identified in the Physical and Sensory Impairment and Long Term Conditions JSNA 2008 include:

- Housing is a major factor determining physically disabled people’s health and wellbeing. It appears that most disabled people live in unsuitable accommodation.
- Physical disability also affects family members, as they often give up their employment to become carers or, if parents, they need to face the costs of a disabled child.
- Low-income people are more likely to have disabilities than medium or high level income people. Moreover, people with physical disabilities tend to have less disposable income than people without disabilities. Often, this leads into debt problems and deprived housing.

Information from the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey estimates around 2,107 households who may need further support to enable them to live independently in their own homes. At a sectorial level these households are concentrated in the owner occupied sector. 1,002 households live in homes also assessed as non-decent, and at a household level, elderly households exhibit the highest support requirement.

Home Improvement Agency

The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) oversees the provision of disabled aids and adaptations to private sector homes and to housing association homes. This includes the Councils’ statutory obligations to administer Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). The service is provided in-house by the Council, having been developed from a basic grants service into a more holistic service, pro-actively assisting clients through all stages, from enquiry, through grant eligibility, scheme design and specification, obtaining prices and overseeing the works.

Revenue funding comes from a variety of sources including the Council, Primary Care Trust (PCT), Supporting People, Adult Social Care and fee income. The net cost to the Council is around £50,000 per year.

In 2008 the Cambridgeshire Supporting People Commissioning Body carried out a review of the HIA service. The review recommended that joint commissioning should be considered to ensure future funding certainty and the commissioning of the service over a broader geographical area to provide better value for money.

At the Supporting People Commissioning Body meeting on 28 April 2011 it was decided that there was sufficient interest to continue the development of a shared service model and agreed to explore the shared service as the preferred option of delivery.

With effect from the 1st April 2012, a shared HIA service will become operational and will see South Cambs, Cambridge City and Huntingdon create a shared service with partnership funding from the County Council, Supporting People and the PCT.

Disabled Adaptations for Council Tenants

During 2010/11, the Council has helped over 120 of our tenants to live more comfortably in their homes with major adaptations such as:

- Level access showers in 86 homes
- Over bath showers in 21 homes
- Access ramps to front doors in 8 homes

Minor day to day adaptations are also undertaken as a matter of course, such as grab rails or additional banister rails.

To make the most of the funding in place for this work, adapted Council homes that become available to let are allocated, wherever possible, to others who need them, either through the Home-Link Choice Based Lettings Scheme or as a direct let. Properties allocated through Home-Link are advertised providing information on mobility classification and any specific adaptations, so that applicants with limited mobility can make informed choices, and means wheelchair users have more choice as to where they live. The Council also work closely with the Disability Team at the County Council to help match people to properties when they become available.

Disabled adaptations were identified by tenants as a top priority for funding. Therefore additional resources for disabled adaptations have been included in the 30-year HRA Business Plan.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology, sometimes referred to as Telecare, describes a range of equipment that can enable individuals to be more independent and safe in their homes in the community. It includes alerts, alarms and monitoring equipment covering a range of issues from reminders to take medicines, pressure mats or sensors for gas or the operating of alarms.

Lifelines are currently provided to approximately 1,000 clients through the district and the service receives approximately five to eight new requests a week. In partnership with Cambridge Community Services Assistive Technology Team, Officers are able to assess lifeline applicants and refer them to the Cambridge Community Service for additional telecare equipment where necessary.

This service can also offer 'telehealth monitoring' for chronic long-term conditions in conjunction with the specialist nursing teams and community matrons. This means that patients' vital signs can be monitored from afar which should lead to greater self-management and less hospital admission. This is relatively new technology which can offer real benefits to help people remain independent in their own homes. Working with the Cambridge Community Service, the Council will continue to raise awareness of the service through training and publicity to other professionals involved in care and support, as well as to the wider public.

Falls Prevention

The Council works in partnership with Cambridgeshire Community Services to promote the Falls Prevention Scheme. The aim of the scheme is to reduce the number of falls which result in serious injury and ensure effective treatment and rehabilitation is available for those who have fallen. Promotion of the scheme includes talks to groups of older people in South Cambridgeshire, such as our sheltered housing schemes and participation in the 'Forever Active' scheme.

Handy Person Scheme

The three local councils (South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire) are working in partnership with Age UK Cambridgeshire to deliver a Safer Homes Scheme, which aims to reduce the potential for accidents and make homes safer. The scheme is for people aged 60 or over and is aimed at the prevention of falls and accidents in the home.

Following an assessment the scheme can recommend improvements to aid mobility such as a second banister, grab rails in the bathroom and other potential hazardous areas. The scheme also supplies information, for example on transport, hot meals services, Day Centres or any current strategies and initiatives such as energy grants, as well as giving advice on social benefits.

The scheme can also assist in more practical tasks, such as fitting light bulbs, putting up curtain rails, installing grab rails, second banister rails, securing mats/carpets/floor coverings, making safe trailing wires, extending telephone sockets, replacing tap washers, clearing gutters on bungalows when a slip hazard is involved, and referring onwards for more specialist help and services.

As part of the new contract with Mears to carry out the response repairs and void works for our Council properties, they will develop and provide a Handy Person Service for our tenants.

As well as providing support and assistance to enable households to remain in their home, the Council works with Registered Providers and other health organisations to provide future housing provision for households with specific housing needs (see page 42).

CHAPTER 8

PREVENTING AND TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

Our Aim: To reduce homelessness through being proactive in preventative measures and ensuring there is sufficient suitable accommodation available to people who are, or who may become homeless

We will

- **Monitor the impact of the Local Housing Allowance (Housing Benefit)** – in partnership with King Street Housing Society maintain an affordable private sector leasing scheme and maximize use of the private rented sector.
- **Money advice services** - work with Cambridge CAB to provide a money advice service within the Housing Advice and Options Team each week.
- **Home-Link developments** – this includes a new web site which provides applicants with information on housing options targeted at their specific needs and circumstances, and a new scheme to advertise affordable private rented properties on the Home-Link website.
 - Work with Sanctuary Carr-Gomm to redevelop the hostel site at Waterbeach to provide new provision in the form of self-contained units whilst still providing a supportive environment for homeless families and single people.
 - Promote the Empty Homes Grant Initiative to attract further private sector housing to be used for rental through the private sector leasing scheme.
 - Work with the MOD over the coming months to look at all the options available to ensure that homes at Waterbeach Barracks are not left empty following the Army's relocation.
 - Review the Homelessness Strategy during 2012 for publication in 2013.
 - Work with county partners to establish the provision of training flats. This enables chronically excluded individuals, to have a settled environment in which to receive the support they require from other services.
 - Work in partnership with the City and other districts (including Peterborough) to recruit a fixed term post that will work with Rough sleepers who have no recourse to public funds.
 - Review the allocation of housing grants to voluntary organisations for 2013 onwards.
 - Monitor take-up and performance following the new arrangements with Circle Support for the Floating Support Service that helps residents sustain their tenancy/home.
 - Develop an Income Maximisation and Financial Inclusion Strategy with the aim to assist households to successfully manage their income and other debts so that they are able to sustain their tenancy.

In the context of high house prices and rents, pressures on the supply of new affordable housing, changes to housing policy and welfare reform, as well as many households facing financial hardship through loss of work/earnings; it is anticipated that the Council will see a continuing trend in the number of people approaching the Council for housing advice and assistance.

It is never more important than now to ensure we offer a service that is both realistic in terms of meeting people's expectations through providing alternative housing options and ensuring we have good preventative measures to help households solve their own housing problems.

Preventing Homelessness

Providing easy access to good quality housing advice for those experiencing problems with their housing is a priority for the Council and is vitally important to preventing and alleviating homelessness.

In 2010/11 the Council prevented 185 households from becoming homeless and have managed to reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation year on year since 2004/5. Some of the prevention schemes we offer include:

- Rent deposit guarantee scheme
- Settled homes in the private rented sector through the Private Sector leasing scheme, managed by King Street Housing Society
- Mediation services for young people and their families
- Landlord liaison and negotiation to prevent homelessness
- Safe at home/ Sanctuary scheme for households at risk of domestic violence
- Floating support
- Mortgage rescue scheme

As the demand for affordable housing outstrips supply we are continuously looking at how we can help those who are unsuccessful in getting a council or housing association home. In view of this new initiatives and actions are being put into place, including:

- **Monitoring the impact of the Local Housing Allowance (Housing Benefit)** – in partnership with King Street Housing Society maintain an affordable private sector leasing scheme and maximize use of the private rented sector.
- **Money advice services** - We are working with Cambridge CAB for them to provide a money advice service within the Housing Advice and Options Team each week.
- **Home-Link developments** – this includes a new web site which provides applicants with information on housing options targeted at their specific needs and circumstances, and a new scheme to advertise affordable private rented properties on the Home-Link website is being developed.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

Discretionary Housing Payments are only available to individuals already in receipt of housing or council tax benefit. A local authority may award DHP where it is considered that an individual requires additional help to meet their housing costs and meets the following objectives:

- To prevent customers from becoming homeless
- To reduce the Council's use of temporary accommodation
- To enable people to stay in their own homes
- To help customers through personal crises and unforeseeable events
- To support people who are vulnerable

A DHP provides short-term assistance only, and those assisted will be expected to make reasonable provision themselves in the longer term.

The Housing Advice and Options service work closely with the Housing Benefit department in relation to DHP and will support applications where such payments will help to prevent homelessness.

Our increase in DHP (as part of the Local Housing Allocation (LHA) reforms) was a disappointing £10,202 extra, bringing the full year budget for 2011/12 to £34,815, which will only touch the tip of the iceberg given the reductions in LHA. In view of this, we have been working with our colleagues in Housing Benefit to update the DHP policy, to make it more focussed on the higher needs.

Providing Good Quality Temporary Accommodation

The Council uses a variety of accommodation types as temporary accommodation. Primarily this is hostel accommodation, however, it has been recognized that this is in need of redevelopment as it currently includes shared facilities, which is both less desirable and more expensive to provide. The council is therefore working with Sanctuary Carr-Gomm to redevelop the site at Waterbeach where a 16-room hostel is currently situated. It is hoped to provide new provision in the form of self-contained units whilst still providing a supportive environment for homeless families and single people.

The Council also use the private sector leasing scheme to provide some temporary accommodation as well as properties within our own stock, however, we want to minimize the latter so as not to reduce the availability of properties for permanent lets. Under the empty homes grant initiative, it is hoped that we will be able to attract further private sector housing to be used for rental through the private sector leasing scheme.

Relocation of Waterbeach Barracks

With the imminent relocation of Waterbeach Barracks out of the district, there may be opportunity to work with the MOD to secure the vacated homes of service personnel to be used as temporary accommodation until such time that the site is redeveloped. We will work with the MOD over the coming months to look at all the options available to ensure that homes are not left empty when there is such a demand for housing in the district.

Helping Vulnerable People

In addition to those who are homeless, other vulnerable people need help to find suitable accommodation. For example, young people, people with learning disabilities or mental health issues, victims of domestic violence, people with drug or alcohol problems, people with complex needs and ex-offenders can all have distinct needs for housing and support that will enable them to find and keep suitable accommodation. South Cambridgeshire District Council works in partnership to help homeless and vulnerable people with their housing problems. More details can be found within the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013; a review of which will be undertaken during 2012 – see also page 42 for future housing provision for households with specific housing needs.

The Council is also in discussions with the rest of the County to establish the provision of training flats, which have been trialed with positive results in Cambridge City. This enables

chronically excluded individuals, to have a settled environment in which to receive the support they require from other services.

Housing representatives from South Cambs and the City also attend the mental health accommodation forum, which occurs monthly. It brings together all supported housing providers, social care and mental health service providers. The purpose is to present vulnerable cases to the panel for discussion and the allocation of appropriate supported housing. As a result of our attendance we can now allocate directly to a number of providers.

Rough Sleepers

Rough sleeping figures in the District remain low (last estimate was 1). Rough sleepers mainly tend to migrate to Cambridge City or other larger towns/cities such as Peterborough where there are support services/facilities.

The Council offer a cold weather provision. During particularly cold weather (when temperatures are 0°C or below for three consecutive nights), we will provide accommodation to rough sleepers. These arrangements are to ensure there is a humanitarian response to prevent rough sleepers dying from the cold while there is severe weather. Historically there has not been any call on this service; however, the provision remains available at times of severe cold weather.

As part of a County-wide project funded by Central Government, South Cambridgeshire District Council is working in partnership with the City and other districts (including Peterborough) to recruit a fixed term post who will work with Rough sleepers who have no recourse to public funds. This will help to ensure that rough sleepers in this situation receive appropriate advice, support and referral to find suitable accommodation, are reconnected to their home nation or are linked in with employment and training opportunities across the sub region. This fits in with the recommendation within the Migrant Workers JSNA 2009 to “examine the needs of those who have no recourse to public funds or who are destitute in order to ascertain how these individuals and families may be best supported” and “to improve access to appropriate housing”.

Domestic Violence

The Council operates the Safer Homes scheme for our Council tenants whereby security repairs, such as door or window locks, are fast tracked so that anyone suffering from domestic violence has a safe home that is secure from the perpetrator. We also participate in the Sanctuary scheme that will look to install a safe room/sanctuary room within a property.

Housing Grants

The Council allocates housing grants to voluntary organisations. In 2010 the Housing Portfolio Holder made a commitment that funding would be available to the organisations specified below for the next 3 years, based on the 2010 allocation of £10,000. This commitment was made subject to the Council’s overall financial budgets and is to be reviewed again in late 2012.

- Cambridge Women’s Aid
- Cambridge Women & Homelessness Group
- Cambridge Cyrenians
- SOFA

Floating Support

The Floating Support Service was previously offered through the Council as a joint funded venture with Supporting People to help residents sustain their tenancy/home. Secure or temporarily accommodated Council tenants, housing association tenants, private sector rented and owner-occupiers were all eligible for support; the only criteria being that they must be deemed at risk of losing their home and aged between 18-65. (Younger people were until the recent loss of tender administered by Cambridge Housing Society).

Individuals referred into the service and accepted were assigned a support officer to work closely with them. This support period was short or longer term according to need but stipulated by Supporting People to not exceed 2 years.

Referrals in the main came from internal colleagues (Housing Benefit, Council Tax, Rent Recovery, and Homelessness Team) but were also sourced via outside agencies such as Social Services, charitable organisations, probation and other housing providers.

Types of support most associated with tenancy sustainment included:

- Support with claiming welfare benefits and budgeting
- Support with trying to furnish the home
- Support with social and leisure activities, and becoming involved with community groups
- Emotional support
- Support with finding training and employment
- Advocacy and liaison with other council departments or agencies
- Signposting to other types of accommodation

Individuals accessing the service needed to have a primary housing issue such as rent arrears, but this issue was most often precipitated by secondary problems. Domestic violence, severe or enduring mental and physical health problems, high levels of debt, low incomes, learning disabilities and family abuse featured strongly. Therefore a multi-disciplinary approach to support was adopted.

The County tendered out the Floating Support service, with Circle Support being awarded the contract for the areas of South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and Fenland, with effect from April 2011.

The People in Partnership (PIP) Consortium, which comprises the Council, Cambridge Housing Society, English Churches Housing Group and Axiom Housing Association were successful in their bid for East Cambs and Fenland only.

As a result of the tender some of the Council's employees engaged in Floating Support were TUPE'd across to Circle Support in December 2011. At the present time Circle incorporates younger and older people's support services across the region and although subject to an imminent restructure, are actively taking referrals from the Council and other agencies.

Following the new arrangements for the Floating Support Service, the Council will monitor performance and take-up on a quarterly basis with Circle Support.

Income Maximisation and Financial Inclusion

The impacts of the economic downturn and the changes in welfare reform present the Council with new challenges in supporting people to cope with financial pressures. Throughout the whole of this Housing Strategy there is a key theme to supporting residents so that they are able to remain healthy and independent in a home that they can afford.

Financial inclusion is about ensuring that everyone has access to appropriate financial services, enabling households to maximize their income and manage their outgoings more effectively. There is also a clear business benefit as tenants who are able to manage their finances better are more likely to pay their rent and council tax on time.

Over the coming year, the Council will develop an Income Maximisation and Financial Inclusion Strategy with the aim to assist households to successfully manage their income and other debts so that they are able to sustain their tenancy.

CHAPTER 9

IMPROVING HOUSING OPTIONS AND EXTENDING CHOICE

Our Aim: To work in partnership to provide housing advice so that people understand their housing options, help them to sustain their current home or access alternative suitable accommodation

We will

- Continue to work with King Street Housing Society to maintain the provision of affordable private rented accommodation.
- Develop the private rented sector module to allow individual landlords to advertise their properties for rent through the Home-Link scheme, offering landlords incentives to join.
- Review the Allocations Policy during 2012/13.
- Promote the Government's Homebuy schemes, such as Firstbuy through the South Cambs Magazine and other forms of publicity.
- Investigate the potential for new initiatives, such as equity models and working with high street banks to help first time buyers access mortgages.
- Work with King Street Housing Society to provide more single person accommodation in the private sector following a successful bid for funds from Crisis.

Meeting housing need is about more than just providing new affordable homes; residents should have a choice over the types and locations of the homes in which they live, which in turn helps community cohesion and stability. Usually those who can afford market housing are able to choose from a range of housing options, but those on lower incomes may face more difficulty exercising this choice. This is particularly true at a time when mortgage finance is constrained, leading to requirements for large deposits from first time buyers. One of the key priorities for the Council is to ensure we have measures in place to improve access to choice for those on lower incomes.

Helping access private rented accommodation

The Council works in partnership with King Street Housing to help households access the private rented sector. This includes a rent deposit guarantee scheme and a private sector leasing scheme. Whilst this has become more challenging due to the changes to the Local Housing Allowance we are continuing to work together to maintain the provision of affordable private rented accommodation and looking to increase provision through new initiatives, such as the Empty Homes Grant scheme.

Home-Link Choice Based Lettings Scheme

Social rented homes and those let at the new Affordable Rent are allocated through the sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme, known as Home-Link. This scheme enables applicants on the Housing Register to 'bid' for properties of their choosing. The scheme is aimed to be transparent, allowing applicants to make decisions over the locations and properties they would like to live in, as well as providing feedback as a reality-check on the likelihood of being successful in being allocated social housing.

In 2010/11, a total of 396 affordable homes in South Cambridgeshire consisting both council and housing association properties were let through the Home-Link Scheme.

There are currently just over 5,000 applicants on the Housing Register. It would be impossible to provide social housing for everyone in need, so other tenures, particularly the private rented sector have a critical part to play in meeting housing need. As part of the development of the Home-Link CBL scheme, a private rented sector module is being progressed to allow individual landlords to advertise their properties for rent through the Home-Link scheme; and a targeted housing options approach has been implemented so that when applicants log onto the Home-Link system they will see specific information relevant to their circumstances – such as information on extra care for older people, shared ownership options for those on a certain income levels, etc.

An Accessibility Strategy sits alongside the Home-Link scheme to ensure that vulnerable groups are not disadvantaged from participating in the scheme. This includes support to enable vulnerable applicants to bid through for example, circulation of the fortnightly property magazine to support agencies, the provision of personalised free sheets (containing adverts for properties the applicant is eligible to bid for) and an assisted bidders list, where bids are placed on behalf of vulnerable applicants.

Review of social housing allocations

The impact of the Government's housing reforms mean that the District Council and its partners will be required to review the policy that underpins the process for allocating affordable housing. Several reforms, including the introduction of the Affordable Rent model, new restrictions to housing benefit, the removal of the requirement for Council's to keep an 'open' waiting list and the flexibility for local authorities to identify their own priority groups to meet local circumstances, will all need to be taken into consideration as part of the policy review, which will be undertaken during 2012.

The Government have also published a consultation document on the '*Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England*'. This document sets out guidance for allocating social homes in line with the Localism Act 2011. It gives further emphasis on the importance to giving existing tenants who are under-occupying appropriate priority for a transfer and that allocation schemes must give 'additional preference' to former members of the regular Armed Forces who fall within any of the statutory reasonable preference categories and are considered in urgent housing need. Local authorities are also strongly encouraged to take into account the needs of other serving or former Service personnel when framing their allocation schemes and also to consider how allocation policies could support those households who want to work, as well as those who contribute to their community. Once the guidance has been finalised, these recommendations will help us to formulate our Allocations Policy as part of its review.

Housing Options for Young People

With high deposits required for first time buyers, the lack of privately rented accommodation and proposed changes to LHA rates for single occupants under 35; this provides a real challenge in meeting the housing needs of young people. There are currently 232 single applicants and 148 couples on the housing register who are aged under 25, this compares to 30 homes allocated to this age group in 2010/11.

According to research²⁴, the average age of first time buyers in the UK has increased by eight years since the 1960s. The average age when someone buys their first property is now 35 and over half, 53% of would be buyers not on the property ladder think they will never be able to afford to buy a home. The Government recognises that to kick-start housebuilding demand from first time buyers is crucial for economic growth. Many could afford to support a mortgage and would normally form a significant proportion of demand for new properties but are currently excluded from the market by high deposit requirements. Only 20% of mortgage advances to first time buyers nationally went to those with a 10% (or less) deposit, compared with 60% in 1990-2007²⁵

The Government's Firstbuy initiative is a new equity loan product designed to help first time buyers into affordable home ownership. An equity loan of up to 20% of the home's full market value is offered to eligible applicants and is co-funded by the Government and the developer. This scheme is administered by the Orbit Homebuy Agents for the region. As at January 2012, the FirstBuy scheme is available on developments in Papworth Everard and Cambourne, Orbit Homebuy have received approximately 25 applications to date. All developers offering FirstBuy are encouraged to advertise their properties on the Orbit Homebuy website and many developers also hold their own promotional events.

The Government are also supporting a new and innovative new build indemnity scheme led by the Home Builders Federation and the Council of Mortgage Lenders to provide up to 95% loan to value mortgages for newbuild properties in England, backed by a housebuilder indemnity fund. Other local authorities across the country are also supporting similar indemnity schemes, such as the 'Local Lend a Hand' scheme set up in partnership with Lloyds TSB. These are relatively new initiatives but we would be interested to learn more from these schemes, and look at ways we could engage with the high street banks to help first time buyers access mortgages. We will also investigate the options available for new 'equity' models that could help first time buyers to get a foot on the property ladder.

Within the social housing stock for South Cambridgeshire, one-bedroom properties make up just 14% of the overall general needs stock. Current planning policy recommends that no more than 10% of the affordable dwellings provided should be one bedroom. Projected population forecasts show that the major change in household composition over the period 2001 to 2021 is an increase in single person households – up from 37% of the total population to 41.2%.²⁶ With the current proposals under the welfare reform to restrict housing benefit to those under-occupying and the projected increase in single person households, the planning policy will be revisited as part of the Local Plan review.

The Council are working with King Street Housing to provide more single person accommodation in the private sector, in view of the changes to the Local Housing Allowance, in particular to those aged under 35 who are affected by the increased age limit for the single room rent. King Street Housing has successfully bid for funds from Crisis. This coupled with homeless prevention funds from the Council earmarked for private renting, a new post is to be created who will help to secure and manage this type of accommodation for single people.

Over the past few years the Council has also worked closely with the County's Social Care Services to develop new working practices and a protocol in relation to homeless 16 and 17 year olds. Social Care now has primary responsibility for this group in order to provide a package of support and accommodation, whilst maintaining the primary focus of keeping families together, for this very vulnerable age group.

²⁴ Research by Post Office Mortgages August 2011

²⁵ National Housing and Planning Advice Unit (2010) *Public Attitudes to Housing*

²⁶ SHMA March 2010 Update – Section C, Chapter 10

CHAPTER 10

MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE

Our Aim: To provide an Affordable Homes Service that is transparent and accountable, that is developed in consultation with our tenants, partner agencies and the wider public and demonstrates value for money

We will

- Ensure key actions from the Housing Strategy are captured in the Annual Service Plan for Affordable Homes or monitored through individual Action Plans.
- Take into account the comments of individuals and organisations in the development of the Housing Strategy and any supporting documents.
- Review the governance requirements for housing once the self-financing regime has been established.
- Continue to learn from our successes and failures and from other sources of good practice to improve our services and processes.
- Review the Value for Money Strategy in 2013.
- Implement the Affordable Homes 'Your Service' project – enhancing information through the Council's website, establishing neighbourhood teams and providing area-based hub offices.

The key aims within this Housing Strategy provide a clear direction to the Council on its Corporate priorities for strategic housing that help to inform and guide the Corporate Aims and Approaches that are set by Members, Executive Management Team and through wider resident consultation.

The Affordable Homes Annual Service Plan sets out plans for the next financial year and targets for the three subsequent years. The plan reflects the Corporate priorities and captures the key actions from the Housing Strategy in a SMART (*Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely*) Action Plan. The Service Plan is refreshed annually and monitored by the Housing Portfolio Holder and Tenant Participation Group. The Housing Services Management Team meet fortnightly and will be responsible for overseeing the Strategy's overall progress.

Consultation

The strategic housing group is an internal group of Officers across the Council that meet on a quarterly basis to discuss crosscutting issues relevant to the strategic housing role. Full participation from the group has helped to develop the Housing Strategy.

We also consulted District Councillors, parish councils, registered providers, private developers, voluntary housing organisations, and the Tenant Participation Group in developing the Housing Strategy. This consultation was carried out by way of a survey asking respondents to help shape a housing vision for the Council and whether we have effectively identified the main priorities for housing over the next five years. As part of the survey, respondents were also asked to identify what they considered were the top three priorities the Council should focus on – the key themes arising from this include:

Comments (Generalised)	Number of Respondents
More Affordable Homes	19
Making Best Use of Existing Stock	9
Homeless prevention	8
Supporting Older People	7
Fair allocation process/prioritising those in need	7
Quality, Design and Location of new homes	6
Empty Homes	5
Meeting Local Needs	5
Neighbourhood Plans/land availability	5
Working with private landlords	4
Energy Efficiency	3
Other – individual responses	14

In addition to this, the Council consulted young people through its community development with schools. Approximately 50 young people aged 14-15 were consulted, the majority of which said that they felt very strongly that there should be more affordable housing. The affordable housing should be a mix of part buy/part rent and also social rented for those that didn't earn much or were unemployed or retired. None of the young people had a problem with building new houses in existing villages or new towns as long as existing villages could cope with the extra people and new towns had plenty of facilities. It was also felt that larger gardens should be provided so people have space to sit outside or grow vegetables/flowers.

As far as possible the priorities and comments have been taken into consideration to help formulate the Strategy. A copy of the survey results and how these have been addressed through the Strategy will be published on our website.

Governance

Currently the key decisions for the Affordable Homes Service are taken by the Housing Portfolio Holder. Some decisions are reserved for the Cabinet and some for full Council, e.g. budget setting.

As a Council landlord the requirements of the housing regulator, the Homes & Communities Agency, do not cover governance or financial controls. The Housing Revenue Account ring-fence is to remain, however, so housing will become in effect a stand-alone self-financing service with a turnover of around £25M per annum and a debt of over £205M. It will be prudent therefore for the Council to have regard to this aspect of the new regulatory framework.

Whilst the debt is that of the Council's and not just Affordable Homes, this is much larger than that of many housing associations. The Council is therefore intending to review the governance requirements for housing once the self-financing regime has been established. The Affordable Homes Service Plan 2012/13 – 2014/15 sets out the timetable for this review.

Risk Management

The Affordable Homes Service Plan is the document where the operational risks are reviewed. There is also an Affordable Homes risk register, which seeks to control the key risks facing the service and this is refreshed quarterly. The Executive Management Team

also reviews the service risk register twice a year and notable risks are escalated to the corporate risk register, which is subject to scrutiny by internal audit on a regular basis.

Monitoring

It is important for us to manage and monitor the progress we make against this Housing Strategy. We will do this, primarily through the monitoring of the strategies and action plans that sit under the Housing Strategy (see page 11) and through the Affordable Homes Service Plan. Progress on all key actions and projects are monitored through the Housing Services Management Team who meet on a fortnightly basis and various working groups are/will be established to carry out some of the actions identified. Therefore, to avoid duplication, it is not necessary to have a separate Housing Strategy Action Plan.

These action plans will be monitored quarterly and reviewed annually by the appropriate partnerships to ensure their success in delivery, as well as to make certain their continued relevance amongst potential changes in national and local policy. Ensuring successful delivery on their actions will enable us to make real progress on delivering the vision set out in this Strategy.

The Housing Portfolio Holder, Health and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder and the Northstowe and New Communities Portfolio Holder all have a responsibility in part to the Housing Strategy, and all are actively engaged in their service area development and monitoring. Performance management reporting is undertaken as a matter of course through the Council's 'Corvu' system and reported quarterly to the Portfolio Holders and members of Scrutiny. The Council's Tenant Participation Group also monitor performance relating to Affordable Homes and participate in service development and improvement.

Equality Impact Assessments

To ensure that our services are accessible to all residents living in South Cambridgeshire, we will carry out Equality Impact Assessments on all our Strategies and Policies. This will allow us to monitor the impact of our services, ensuring that we provide equitable services across the board.

Customer Feedback

We will encourage feedback from residents and partners at every stage in delivery, so as to gain ideas and thoughts on how to further progress against our actions. Residents will be able to keep up to date on housing achievements and issues through the housing pages of the Council's website and the South Cambs magazine, which is delivered to every house in the district.

Learning from Experience and Good Practice

We continuously learn from our successes and failures and adapt our services and processes as a result of those experiences. We have an excellent culture of learning and sharing good practice between our sub regional partners through the many housing-related working groups. We are also a member of a number of organisations that promote good practice, including Housemark, Housing Quality Network, the Eastern Region Benchmarking Club, and the strategic partnership with the Chartered Institute of Housing. This enables the Council to keep up to date with new initiatives and policy development. The Council is also a founding sponsor of the Linchpin Project, which is a community interest company providing a tenant-led training and consultancy service focussed in the Eastern Region.

Value for Money (VfM)

Local authorities are responsible for public funds and need to demonstrate value for money.

Value for money is a concept that has been around in Local Government for over 20 years. It is generally defined as the relationship between economy, efficiency and effectiveness, sometimes known as the 'value chain'. VfM reviews are useful assessments of whether or not an organisation has obtained the maximum benefit from the goods and services it both acquires and provides, within the resources available to it. Reviews not only measure the cost of goods and services, but also take account of the mix of quality, cost and resource usage, fitness for purpose, timeliness, and convenience to judge whether or not, together, they constitute good value.

A Task & Finish Group was established in 2010 to review the services within Affordable Homes, predominantly the Council's landlord service, to look at Value for Money. Following this, a VfM Strategy for the Affordable Homes Service was published outlining the key objectives for delivering good VfM across the service.

The new Regulatory Framework for registered providers sets out a number of ways through which a new focus on VfM might be achieved: requiring 'greater transparency and consistency in the provision of cost information to allow landlords, tenants and others to benchmark performance and drive value for money improvements'. It is therefore important to consider how engaged tenants are in the consideration of VfM. This will include thinking about what information is provided for tenants on rent levels, costs and efficiencies and, more importantly, how this compares with others. Whilst the HRA Business Plan allows for an increase in resources it is the Council's intention to continue to measure value for money and to seek operating efficiencies within the new regime. The Value for Money Strategy will therefore be refreshed in 2013.

In 2012, as part of the Homelessness Strategy Review, we will be undertaking a benchmarking exercise to ensure the Housing Options and Homelessness service provides Value for Money. This will include comparing the unit costs for temporary accommodation provided as well as comparing costs and outcomes on prevention. Costs will be compared on a year on year basis as well as with other local authorities.

'Your Service'

Over the coming year, the Affordable Homes section will be embarking on the 'Your Service' project. This project aims to improve customer service to both tenants and the wider public and includes:

- Enhanced web-based information that is easily accessible and intuitive.
- Providing a more personalised service between Housing Officers and residents through restructuring the service into three neighbourhood teams in the District.
- Providing area hub offices to improve accessibility for tenants and build on the area-based structure.

Resources

The financial resources of the Council for the general fund are determined through the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Appendix B2 (see page 17) which are filtered down to actions/priorities identified in the Service Plan. The financial resources in relation to the Council's housing landlord service are determined through the HRA Business Plan 2012-2042 which is Appendix C3 of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

A more detailed analysis of the general fund housing estimates can be found at –

- Housing General Fund Estimates 2012/13
- Housing General Fund Capital Programme Estimates 2012/13

The resources available to the Council are allocated as part of the following annual decision making cycle.

Month/s	Action
June-July	Review of priorities and top level financial strategy by Management Team and Cabinet
September-October	Identification of spending pressures and potential savings in the light of priorities. Identification of specific ways to progress priorities (Cabinet)
November	Agreement by Cabinet and Council of Medium Term Financial Strategy and Work Force Plan
December-January	Consideration of revenue estimates and capital programme by Portfolio Holders and Cabinet
February	Agreement of Council Tax and Rent levels by Council Preparation of Service Plans to implement budgets, priorities and set targets for performance indicators by Chief Officers.
Regularly throughout the year – at least quarterly	Monitoring of performance targets and financial estimates (quarterly by Cabinet and at least quarterly by Portfolio Holders)

Money received in lieu of affordable housing (Commuted Sums)

In 2009/10 the District Council approved £260,840 in affordable housing commuted sums and in 2010/11 approved £545,619.75 through the implementation of the Local Development Frameworks policies to secure affordable housing as part of market housing sites. It is anticipated that similar sums, if not higher, will be experienced in future years due to the lack of Government funding impacting on ability for registered providers to purchase units on small scale developments. The planning policies relating to commuted sums will be reviewed in the new Local Plan.

The Council will seek to make the most effective use of any commuted sums received and ensure that any monies received in lieu of on-site provision will best meet the need for additional affordable homes in the district.

CHAPTER 11

REFERENCE LINKS

References	
Housing Reform	Local Decisions: a fairer future for social housing (DCLG – Nov 2010) http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/socialhousingreform
	Practical Implications of Tenure Reform (CIH – Jan 2012) http://www.cih.org/publication-free/display/vpathDCR/templatedata/cih/publication-free/data/Practical_implications_of_tenure_reform
	HCA Affordable Development Framework 2011-15 (HCA – April 2011) http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/sites/default/files/our-work/affordable-homes-framework.pdf
Welfare Benefits Reform	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/
Housing Strategy for England	http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/housingstrategy2011
Draft National Planning Policy Framework	http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/draftframework
Localism Act	http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/decentralisation/localismbill/
Sub Regional Housing Statement	http://www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/documents/crhb/publications/final_statement_2011.pdf
Strategic Housing Market Assessment	http://www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/our_challenge/housing/shma.aspx
Joint Strategic Needs Assessments	http://www.cambridgeshirejsna.org.uk/
Supporting People Commissioning Strategy	http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1FC34E2F-71C3-4FA5-A2EC-BA81DBC4E01E/0/SupportingPeopleCommissioningStrategyupdatedOct2011.pdf
Countywide Child Poverty Strategy	<i>Currently being drafted – link to be included once available</i>
Extra Care Housing Strategy	http://www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/documents/crhb/publications/final_delivery_strategy.pdf
Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan	http://www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/documents/crhb/CLIP%20FINAL%20Approved%20March%202011.pdf
Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/communityandliving/communitysafety/
Cambridgeshire Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board	http://www.cambridgeshirejsna.org.uk/node/1249
Local Enterprise Partnership	http://www.yourlocalenterprisepartnership.co.uk/
SCDC Corporate Plan	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/PerformanceAndPriorities/priorities.htm
SCDC Single Equality Scheme	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/CouncilAndDemocracy/Equality/default.htm
Sustainable Community Strategy/LSP	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/communityandliving/partnerships/lsp/default.htm
Local Development Framework Review	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/DistrictPlanning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/default.htm
Tenancy Strategy Interim Statement	<i>To be drafted – Available Autumn 2012</i> http://www.scambs.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=910493

Homelessness Strategy	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Housing/StrategyAndDevelopment/Strategies/homelessnessReview.htm
Empty Homes Strategy	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Housing/StrategyAndDevelopment/emptyhomes.htm
Private Sector Housing Action Plan	<i>Currently being drafted – link to be included once available</i>
Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/DistrictPlanning/LocalDevelopmentFramework/SPDs/AffordableHousingSPD.htm
Climate Change Action Plan	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/environment/energy/climatechangeactionplan.htm
Ageing Well Strategy	<i>Currently being drafted – link to be included once available</i>
Ageing Well Website	http://www.local.gov.uk/ageing-well
HRA Business Plan	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=911286
Asset Management Strategy	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=911287
Warm Homes Strategy	http://www.scambs.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=911288
Joint Strategic Needs Assessments	http://www.cambridgeshirejsna.org.uk
MTFS for the General Fund Appendix B2	http://modern.gov/documents/s62337/MTFS%20-%20Appendix%20B2.pdf
Housing General Fund Estimates 2012/13	http://modern.gov/documents/s61645/APPENDIX%20A.pdf
Housing General Fund Capital Programme Estimates 2012/13	http://modern.gov/documents/s61646/APPENDIX%20B.pdf

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments – Housing Issues and Themes

Purpose of this document

The following tables bring together the key recommendations relating to **Housing** from the various Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) and other assessments together with the associated supporting evidence.

The supporting evidence has been taken from:

- The JSNAs themselves
- The Health Profile 2011 for South Cambridgeshire
- NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010 (South Cambridgeshire is in the “Prospering Southern England Cluster) (See the =key at the end of this document for the other Local Authorities in the Cluster)
- The Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010 for South Cambridgeshire.

The document also shows the cross cutting themes/links with other JSNAs and where South Cambridgeshire District Council has an input or can take action on the recommendations either as an organisation in isolation or as part of wider partnership.

Structure of this document

Each table presents the evidence from the JSNA first, followed by any other supporting evidence from the Health profile, Cluster Data Set and the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report. The recommendations or key findings from the JSNA (some of the earlier phases of JSNA did not contain recommendations) are then presented with any actions the Council is/could/should be taking.

How this document can be used

The tables can be used a reference guide to the key health issues for South Cambridgeshire as well as an action for achieving the recommendations of the JSNAs. It should also be used in the service planning process to address areas where the Council can improve the Health and Wellbeing of South Cambridgeshire.

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Mental Health JSNA (2010)			
Evidence			Links
JSNA Facts, Figures And Trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions that particularly help to maintain mental health in later years include reducing poverty, keeping active, keeping warm, lifelong learning, social connections and community engagement, such as volunteering. • Interventions to increase individual, family and community resilience include those, which reduce inequalities, prevent violence, reduce homelessness, improve housing conditions and debt management, and promote employment. 			
Health Profile 2011 Not measured as part of the Health Profile			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010 Not measured as part of the Cluster Data Set, however the number of Statutory Homeless (1.7) (per 1000 household) is significantly worse than the Cluster Average (1.2) but better than the England Average (2.8)			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010 Not measured as part of the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
1. The comprehensive evidence base of what works to promote mental health and wellbeing in communities should be used by the range of partnerships that operate within the Local Strategic Partnerships and Cambridgeshire Together structures when developing and commissioning strategies and plans. Effective interventions for promoting mental health apply throughout the life-course and can be most effective in childhood because of the impact on a range of outcomes throughout life. The <i>Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment Tool</i> can be used to ensure that a programme maximises its positive impact.	Not specific to SCDC	1. Ensure SCDC staff and partners are aware of impacts of Mental Health and the referral pathways 2. Consider using the Mental Health Impact Assessment Tool for major planning applications and service redesign	
3. Ensure equitable access to services and mental health promotion for vulnerable groups by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the effectiveness of alcohol pilots within A&E, homeless shelters and police stations in improving equitable access for vulnerable groups. • Explore best methods to engage with the Travelling communities. 	Possible Possible	Action for CDRP? Action for Housing (Traveller site team leader)?	Homelessness JSNA Prevention JSNA Traveller JSNA

Adults with Learning Disabilities JSNA (2007/2008)			
Evidence		Links	
<p>JSNA – N.B. the evidence from the JSNA is from 2007 and therefore may not be an accurate up to date picture for South Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>The standardised ratio of service users is the observed number of service users in a district divided by the expected number based on the district's population and Cambridgeshire's average age-specific prevalence of service users. Using the figures of people using Social care services the ratios for East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire are similar to that of the county as whole; in East Cambridgeshire the ratio of observed to expected does not differ significantly from one. Cambridge City has 26% fewer resident service users than expected; this difference is significantly lower than average for the county. Fenland has 35% more service users than expected</p> <p>The ratio of the number of service users living in each district to the number on each Key Team's social care caseload gives an idea of the extent to which people with links to particular areas go on to live within that area. East Cambridgeshire has the same number of service user residents as on the Key Team's caseload. In South Cambridgeshire there are 11% more service user residents than on the social care caseload.</p> <p>Key Messages from the JSNA relevant to South Cambridgeshire include:</p> <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demand for quality housing and support is increasing. • Joint work with the housing agencies is key to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure access is fair and prioritized appropriately. ○ Expanding the range of housing available including rental, shared ownership and full ownership. ○ Ensuring the needs of disabled people are taken into account in future developments. 			
Health Profile 2011			
Not measured as part of the Health Profile			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010			
Not measured as part of the Cluster Data Set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
Not measured as part of the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
(There are no recommendations within the JSNA but the identified priorities are listed below) None relating directly to housing			

Older People JSNA (2010)				
Evidence		Links		
<p>JSNA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The greatest relative population change overall is seen in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City. In SCDC this growth includes major increases in the population aged over 65. In SCDC in 2004 33% of households aged 65+ are living in non-decent homes The percentage of pensioners living in overcrowded households in SCDC is 1.7% compared to under-occupation of 64% (compared to Cambridgeshire 60%) which is the highest proportion in the County. Properties in SCDC have the highest average SAP rating, but also the largest proportion of properties with a low SAP rating (less than 35). South Cambridgeshire is below the county average for the percentage flu vaccination coverage of the 65+ population The Percentage of Smokers aged 65+ in SCDC is higher than both the East of England and the rest of the County The number of people in Cambridgeshire with zero days of 30 minutes of moderate participation in sport and active recreation has remained fairly stable for males and has decreased for females. It appears that there has been a large increase in the proportion of males in Huntingdon, whilst there have been decreases in Cambridge City, ECDC and SCDC. The percentage of older people in Cambridgeshire with a long term illness or disability was higher than expected in Fenland but lower than expected in South Cambridgeshire (Census 2001) People in Cambridgeshire are living longer. Between 1991/93 and 2006/08, life expectancy at birth has increased for both males (to around 78 years of age) and females (to around 82 years of age). Life expectancy at 65 has also increased to more than 17 years for men and to more than 20 years for women. Between 1981 and 2006, the length of time lived in good health has increased as life expectancy has increased. Healthy life expectancy at birth has increased 4.1 years for males and 3.8 years for females to 68.5 years and 70.5 years respectively. People are also living longer in poor health. English males aged 65 can expect to spend 4.4 years in poor health and English females 5.4 years. Most older people are in good health but the number of frail older people is increasing. Older people comprise a higher proportion of the population in rural areas than in urban. This proportion is expected to increase. Around a third of people aged 65 and older will fall once a year. This rises to approximately half of those aged 85 and older. This is more than expected compared to the East of England, and within Cambridgeshire, it is highest in Cambridge City. Each year, around 20 deaths are associated with a fall. The number of older people with dementia in Cambridgeshire is expected to double from 7,000 to 14,000 over the next 20 years. The number of older people with depression in Cambridgeshire is expected to increase from 8,600 in 2010 to 14,500 in 2030. 88% of older people in Cambridgeshire are satisfied with both their home and neighbourhood. Within Cambridgeshire, older people are most likely to be satisfied with their neighbourhood in South Cambridgeshire (92%) and least likely in Fenland (82%). Fewer than 30% of people felt that residents are given the support they need to live at home as long as they want. Within Cambridgeshire, this ranges from 25% in Cambridge City to just fewer than 30% in South Cambridgeshire. In 2010 Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise forum surveyed their members who attended the Annual General Meeting in 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two-thirds reported a long term condition affecting daily life and just under half taking at least four daily medications, but almost all of whom reported being active on a daily basis and half described their health as good. One third reported falling at least once in the last year and less than two-thirds reported having someone to call on in the event of a fall. The Cambridgeshire Older People's Reference Group surveyed 260 community groups in 2008/09 and highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% of older people do not access social care services. Most care and support is unpaid and informal. Men are less likely than women to participate in organised groups. People aged 85 and over continue to be involved in community groups. Income, ability to travel, the availability of physical activities and access to information are important concerns. Older people in Cambridgeshire are most concerned about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Transport and social inclusion Access to information on services and activities Housing, including help in the home. 		<p>A Healthy Communities JSNA is being published in 2010 and many of the aspects it describes influence the health of Older People. The JSNA for Older People 2010 focuses on aspects of relevance to Older People (see section 'Views of Older People'): income, housing, access and transport, and access to information.</p>		
<p>Health Profile 2011</p> <p>Hip fractures in 65s and over is not significantly different to the England average</p> <p>Excess winter deaths is not significantly different to the England average</p>				
<p>NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010</p> <p>Not measured as part of the Cluster Data Set</p>				
<p>Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010</p> <p>Not measured as part of the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report</p>				
Recommendations from JSNA		Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
1. In future needs assessments, explicitly consider the needs of older people as a specific group e.g. among prisoners, Travellers.		Yes	Ensure needs of older G&T are addressed within the SCDC Gypsy and Traveller Strategy	Travellers JSNA

Children and Young People JSNA (2010)

Evidence			
<p>JSNA</p> <p>Population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are around 35,000 children and young people aged 0-19 currently living in South Cambridgeshire. The child population (aged 0-19) is expected to rise by almost 5,200 in South Cambridgeshire by 2021 to around 39,800. • In South Cambridgeshire there are sizeable communities of Indian, and Irish Traveller children. • Changes in the birth rate will impact on the numbers of the pre-school population aged 0-4, which is expected to grow across Cambridgeshire by almost 7.5% to approximately 37,000 by 2021. Almost all of this growth is expected in the south of the county, with South Cambridgeshire experiencing increases of 1,000. • Wards with significant anticipated growth of pre-school numbers in South Cambridgeshire include Teversham and the Wilbrahams. In addition there are expected to be 400 children aged 0-4 yrs in Northstowe by 2016. <p>Child Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The county total of children subject to a child protection plan has stabilised throughout 2009-2010 to around the 340-365. The overall rate of registration per 1,000 children in Cambridgeshire increased slightly throughout the year from 2.85 to 2.92, a higher rate than in comparator authorities. The Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire area has consistently had lower numbers and a lower rate of registrations than Fenland. 			
Health Profile 2011			
None relating directly to housing			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010			
None relating directly to housing			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
None relating directly to housing			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
1. Prevent/reduce the negative impact of alcohol and substance misuse, obesity and overweight, childhood accidents, child poverty, domestic violence and disabilities and the consequent inequalities in outcomes.	Yes	South Cambridgeshire Local Health Partnership Action Plan (TBC) CDRP?	
2. Ensure that schools, colleges, GP clusters, and partners within the Children's Trust understand the needs and issues for children in their areas and know what they should be doing to improve the outcomes for their children and young people.	Possible		

Prevention of ill Health in Adults of Working Age JSNA (2011) (Draft)

Evidence

JSNA

The persistent theme in the JSNA is that the current economic climate has created conditions that are well evidenced as having a negative effect upon health. Raised unemployment, increased demand for benefits, lower incomes, increased debt have all increased in Cambridgeshire in recent years. There is a particular concern with the availability and affordability of housing, which is accompanied by increasing levels of fuel poverty. In Cambridgeshire there are long standing pockets of deprivation in geographical areas and amongst vulnerable groups. Poorer health is experienced in these pockets and these are where the impact of the negative socio-economic factors is greatest.

There is widespread concern about planned changes and the effects of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). These include unaffordable rents, leading to overcrowding, evictions and possible homelessness.

Debt

Whilst debt issues have risen rapidly over the five year period they have stopped rising in some areas over the last year, and currently they have plateaued out. (This is in line with national trends). This is possibly because credit is harder to obtain.

Certain types of debt that have increased significantly are council tax arrears; income tax/national insurance arrears; mortgage arrears and shortfall; rent arrears – all debts that can lead to homelessness and severe penalties. The impact of the increase in VAT, and fuel prices is yet to properly filter through.

National CAB statistics indicate that Council Tax arrears is now the third highest debt recorded and fuel debts have overtaken mortgage arrears in the league table of recorded debts. Cambridgeshire is following the trend.

Housing

Overall, Cambridge had the highest number of dwellings (excluding local authority stock) with Category 1 hazards (9,000 in total). The rate per 1,000 homes was lowest in Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire

In 2009/10, Huntingdonshire had the highest rate of private owned dwellings made free from Category 1 hazards as a direct result of the authority's action at 65.5 per 1,000 private dwellings. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire had the lowest rates of such actions: 4.6 and 6.7 per 1,000 dwellings respectively.

In Gamlingay 22.7% of households are in fuel poverty which is the only LSOA above 20% compared to 10.7% of household across South Cambridgeshire

Market Rents

Market rents are high in South Cambridgeshire. The average rent for a one bed property in the SCDC is £589 per month. Because of this in SCDC, the average rent is equivalent to 30% of median household income.

South Cambridgeshire District Council has identified the following housing related issues

- Private sector housing – 5% have serious hazards especially fuel poverty, damp and mould. The most vulnerable groups especially those on low incomes are particularly affected by poor housing conditions.
- The South Cambridgeshire Housing Strategy identified a need for more housing provision for Gypsies and Travellers in South Cambridgeshire.
- House prices in South Cambridgeshire have been higher than the national average over the past decade. They rose strongly in line with the local and national trend between 2000 and 2008; however, they dropped more rapidly in 2009 than in Cambridge and the rest of Cambridgeshire, the region, and the nation. This will particularly affect younger people on lower incomes. The 2006 Cambridgeshire Quality of Life Survey identified “affordability of housing” as the feature of local life that respondents in South Cambridgeshire were least satisfied about.

Health Profile 2011

Significantly worse than the England average

- None relating directly to housing

Not significantly different to the England average

- Hip fracture in 65s and over is not significantly different to the England average
- Excess winter deaths is not significantly different to the England average

Significantly better than the England average

- Statutory Homelessness is significantly better than the England average
-

NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010

Significantly worse than the Cluster average Statutory Homelessness (per 1,000hh)

Not significantly different to the Cluster average

None relating directly to housing

Significantly better than the Cluster average

None relating directly to housing

Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Cambridgeshire is one of the most expensive districts to live in the County, but it has had one of the smallest percentage increases in average house price, by 63% between 2001 and 2008. The ratio of average house prices to average earnings has increased by 0.3 points since 2004. The percentage of affordable dwellings completions has increased, from 7% in 2001 to 39% in 2008/09. 			
Recommendations from JSNA			
There are no recommendations from the JSNA			
Homelessness and at Risk of Homelessness JSNA (2010)			
JSNA			
<p>Compared to the general population, homeless people experience poorer health outcomes. Physical health, drugs, alcohol, mental health and well-being have been recognised as priority health issues among the homeless. However, homeless people generally experience difficulties with accessing health services; this poor access also impacts on their health status. Health outcomes are generally worst for SHRS but may also be poor in the statutory and hidden homeless. People who are accepted as statutory homeless are at risk of moving into non-statutory homeless groups for a variety of reasons.</p> <p>Homeless people are much more likely to die young than people who are not homeless. Cambridge Access Surgery (CAS) is a dedicated GP practice largely for single homeless and rough sleepers with around 500 registered patients at any one time. Amongst the patients registered at CAS, 40 are known to have died over the last five years, their average age at death was 44 years. The registered patients at CAS are relatively young and range from young adulthood to middle age. Many are at the very lowest point in their lives. Of CAS patients, broadly speaking, ½ have an alcohol problem; 2/3 have a drug problem, ½ have a mental health problem and many people have two or all three of these problems. Taken together, drugs, alcohol and poor mental health play a major part in nearly all deaths among the homeless. Note that this should not be confused with life expectancy. Life expectancy at birth for the general population of Cambridgeshire is 80 for men and 82 for women. This does not mean that life expectancy for the CAS population is half that of the rest of the population in Cambridgeshire but does highlight that, consistent with poor health outcomes and complex health needs, the mortality figures for the CAS population of single homeless and rough sleepers are comparatively very poor.</p> <p>Early intervention and proactive prevention of both homelessness and the poor outcomes associated with homelessness are key to improving the health and wellbeing of the homeless and those at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>There is large geographical variation of services, particularly for SHRS, between town and rural areas with an overwhelming concentration in Cambridge City and, generally speaking, where there are no services there are no data. Therefore we have limited information for much of Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>A substantial proportion of all homelessness services are based in Cambridge City however of newly homeless people in Cambridge City only 1 in 3 have a local connection with Cambridge City, while 2 in 5 have a local connection with other districts in Cambridgeshire. The size and character of Cambridge City make it an attractive place for homeless people and services have largely been developed there to meet their needs, which in turn may attract individuals from both within and beyond Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>Former members of the Armed Forces have previously been identified as a distinct group among rough sleepers but recent research tends to suggest that the proportion of ex-Service personnel among the homeless and rough sleeping population has fallen; up to 25% of rough sleepers had been in the Armed Forces at some stage in 1997 compared to 7% in London in 2007-08. Better accommodation advice for those leaving the British Armed Forces and closer working between Government and the charitable sector including on the provision of supported housing ventures are thought to have contributed to this improvement. Learning from the success in helping former members of the Armed Forces at risk of rough sleeping can be used to help other groups in the future.</p> <p>Homeless acceptances as a rate per 10,000 households for 2005/06 to 2008/09. The overall trend is downward in most districts, particularly in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland. Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire appear to have been relatively stable since 2006/07. There is variation across the County with Cambridge City having the highest rate in 2008/09 and South Cambridgeshire the lowest.</p>			
Health Profile 2011			
Statutory Homelessness is significantly better than the England Average			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010			
Statutory Homelessness (per 1,000hh) is significantly worse than the cluster Average			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
Not measured as part of the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)

<p>General</p> <p>1. Refine work on homelessness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising principle overlapping domains with differential access to housing and complexity of needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statutory Homeless: including families, older people, young people. ○ Rough sleepers /Single homeless: including prison and institution leavers ○ Hidden Homeless and those at risk of homelessness • Recognising different reasons for becoming homeless and remaining homeless. • Recognising the mobility and transience of the homeless population. 	Yes		
<p>2. Develop a health strategy to address the health needs of the homeless population in Cambridgeshire as part of a joint commissioning strategy and action plans to support implementation and supporting the existing district homelessness strategies and action plans.</p>	No but SCDC will have a role in the action plan		
<p>3. Identify services enabling prevention of homelessness and early intervention for the newly homeless to improve individual lives and to reduce overall homelessness. Examples of situations are: risk of eviction, anticipated prison release, hospital discharge.</p>	Yes Possibly		
<p>4. Development of a multi-agency steering group to address the needs of chronically excluded adults in Cambridgeshire.</p>	Possible		
<p>Commissioning</p> <p>1. There should be direct input of homeless people and front-line service providers in the commissioning process.</p>	Yes		
<p>2. Strengthen joint-commissioning of multi-agency services in order to address the complex interrelations between health, housing and social care amongst the different categories of homeless.</p>	Yes		
<p>3. Provide for closer integration of services so that they meet the needs of the homeless by commissioning more integrated multi-agency services where possible including funded posts for liaison and co-ordination between services.</p>	Yes		
<p>Services</p> <p>Include excluded subgroups by providing appropriate housing, housing support and health solutions for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging homeless people: accommodation solutions recognising that this population ages prematurely and individuals often have additional needs and behavioural issues • Females: ensuring that services address the needs of the female minority among single rough sleepers and hostel dwellers and address the needs of women among the “hidden homeless” • Young people: proactive provision of accommodation, training and employment services, sexual health and contraceptive services and addiction services to prevent recruitment to the homeless community. 	Yes		
<p>Consider development of a MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) approach for chronically excluded adults.</p>	Possibly		

New Communities JSNA (2010)			
JSNA Demography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type of tenure is important, as more children tend to live in social housing than market housing. Building specific types of properties, such as retirement or sheltered housing, can bring specific population groups to a development that can help create a more balanced community in the initial phases. Housing needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing affordability is a major issue for Cambridgeshire with Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire less affordable than the three other districts. Out and about: transport, green spaces and the built environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living close to green space reduces mortality. Planning for green space could therefore help to reduce the inequalities of life expectancy experienced between socio-economic groups. Aspects of the built environment such as energy efficiency, ventilation and safety features of houses have a direct impact on health. High quality building can be health promoting. Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The districts where the greatest growth in need for supported household units is anticipated are Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. Housing affordability is a major issue for Cambridgeshire but Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire are affected to a greater degree than the three other districts. The need for socially rented housing across the sub-region has increased without a proportional increase in social housing stock. According to the strategic housing market assessment (SHMA) at current incomes rates, 68% could not afford to buy in South Cambridgeshire – indicating significant pressures when trying to purchase a home. In 2010 the supply of household units is around 8500 units. The districts where the greatest growth in need for household units is anticipated are Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. 			
Health Profile 2011			
Not measured as part of the Health Profile			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010			
Not measured as part of the Cluster data set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
Not measured as part of the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
1. Plan housing and the places we live so that they reflect the changes that occur over the lifetime, and so that people are not excluded by design as they grow older and frailer or as their circumstances change. 'Lifetime homes' is a mechanism for achieving this.	Yes		
2. Provision for affordable housing needs to include a range of options to address the need for social rented housing.	Yes		

Travellers JSNA (2010)

Evidence

JSNA

Gypsies and Travellers make up almost 1% of the population in Cambridgeshire and represent the largest ethnic minority in the county. In Cambridgeshire it is estimated that approximately 70% are Romany Gypsies, 20% are Irish Travellers and 10% are others including Scottish and Welsh Travellers and an increasing number of Eastern European Gypsies. There appears to be a difference in demographics across the county with a higher number of Irish Travellers in South Cambridgeshire and Eastern European Roma in Fenland.

Showpeople

A number of showmen have permanent winter quarters in yards. **South Cambridgeshire has two authorised travelling showpeople sites (of 21 plots).**

Mortality

- Maternal, perinatal, neonatal and infant mortality rates are high in many Travellers.
- Many Gypsies and Travellers die earlier than the rest of the population.
- Life expectancy: Gypsy and Traveller women live 12 years less than women in the general population and men live 10 years less.
- Nationally 17% of Gypsy and Traveller mothers have experienced the death of a child compared to less than 1% of the wider population.

Morbidity

- Self reported chest pain, angina, respiratory problems including asthma, diabetes and arthritis were more prevalent in the Traveller group.
- More than 40% reported long term illness compared to 18% of the settled community.
- The health status of Gypsies and Travellers, as assessed with standardised measures (EQ5D, HADS anxiety and depression), is worse than that of their age-sex matched comparators.

Life style and risk factors

The 2009 lifestyle survey of Gypsies and Travellers in the East of England found that:

- Smoking prevalence among Gypsies and Travellers is 47% (compared to 18% in the overall population) and 75% of heavy drinkers also smoke. Highest prevalence was seen in the 55-64 year age group and 53% started smoking before the age of 16. 61% expressed their willingness to give up smoking. None of them had ever tried NHS stop smoking services.
- High Smoking prevalence is also supported by other literature.
- Just over a half (55%) of Gypsies and Travellers drink alcohol. Nine in ten (88%) could be considered sensible drinkers.
- A third (33%) of the population ate at least five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day compared to half (50%) of the non Traveller population.
- Based on Body Mass Index (BMI), just under a third (31%) are of a normal weight, with one in three (35%) overweight and a further three in ten (31%) obese. In the general population in the Eastern region, one in seven is obese (14%).
- Over two thirds of Gypsies and Travellers (69%) are active to at least a moderate degree. Four fifths (80%) of the overall regional population are at least moderately active. Anecdotal evidence suggests an increasing trend in young women using tanning parlours as well as the use of unlicensed slimming pills.

An exploratory study on illicit drug use among Travellers found:

- Illicit and licit substances most widely used by Travellers are also the same substances that are used by the general population eg cannabis, sedatives, tranquillisers and antidepressants. Many more males than females use these substances. A wide age range of Travellers was perceived to be using illicit drugs.
- Education, health, employment, accommodation, previous and current drug use, involvement with criminal justice system, family, social networks and environment were identified as important risk factors for illicit drug use by the respondents

Mental Health

- Mental health problems are frequently mentioned as being high in Traveller population in most available surveys and in research studies.
- Gypsies and Travellers are nearly three times more likely to suffer from anxiety than average and just over twice as likely to be depressed. Women are twice as likely to experience mental health problems as men.

- Ormiston Children and Families Trust obtained Department of Health funding to carry out a project on Emotional Wellbeing in the Travelling community. The aim of the project was to empower female Travellers who are identified as experiencing emotional wellbeing difficulties residing in or passing through Cambridgeshire and improve their emotional wellbeing. This project took place between 2005 and 2008. An Emotional Wellbeing Advocacy Worker (EWAW) was recruited for the project and the key findings/outcomes were:
 - Over the project period, 341 people made use of the projects activities and services.
 - Issues included homelessness, child protection proceedings, eviction, benefits, setting up home, debt, racism, support to access services including help with mental health appointments.
 - There were potentially many more clients that could have been supported within the County than the EWAW had capacity to support.
 - Development of a culturally appropriate needs assessment tool
 - Need for information to be provided for members of the Traveller community on pathways and choices in an accessible format
 - Need to improve ethnic monitoring procedures

Screening and immunisations

Preventative measures such as immunisation, contraception and cervical screening had poor uptake amongst Travellers.

Health services/access to care

- The 2009 East of England lifestyle survey found, out of the 189 Gypsies and Travellers interviewed, 93% were currently registered with a GP, 84% had visited a GP within last two years and 43% had visited the hospital.
- Lack of trust, expectations of poor understanding of Travellers' needs, or frank discrimination from health workers featured strongly as barriers to accessing services. Reputations of different doctors and their practices, and also of different hospitals, were well-circulated within Traveller communities. Wherever possible, these services were either frequented or avoided accordingly.
- With regards to mental health services:
 - The 'invisibility' of mental health problems and lack of knowledge and understanding about mental health problems constituted clear barriers to care.
 - Women had low expectations of the ability of formal mental health services to meet their needs effectively and cultural and lay beliefs on specific health conditions such as mental health restrict the service access.
- Difficulty with encouraging men to access health services such as GP's.
- Compared to other Gypsies and Travellers, Romany Gypsies, men and those who work are less likely to have visited their GP.
- The role of the specialist health visitor featured positively and prominently, particularly their role as an advocate, and was a significant factor in access to and experience of health services.
- Self-reliance when suffering from ill health often result in delayed access to health services in this group.
- Health inequalities are observed in terms of access, registration, morbidity and mortality. Inequalities also exist between authorised and unauthorised accommodation sites.
- Access to initial or continuing healthcare can be very limited for Gypsies and Travellers, sometimes hampered by a lack of medical records in particular, Gypsies and Travellers report considerable problems in registering with GPs and/or receiving appropriate care from GP practices.

Perception of health

- In the East of England Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle survey, approximately half of the population surveyed said that they are either in very good or good health. 47% experiencing long term disabilities.
- The extreme fear of cancer among Gypsy and Traveller groups is a factor that contributes to delayed presentation, and where there is also a fatalistic belief that 'nothing can be achieved by attending for screening or potential early diagnosis' this can result in more serious outcomes that then reinforce the belief that terminal illness is an inevitable outcome.

Older People

- The CSTNA identified that a few elderly Gypsies and Travellers are extremely isolated as they do not have relatives on the same site and were dependent on other site residents for their needs.
- An Age Concern report exploring the issues for older Gypsies and Travellers identified the potential severe social exclusion and vulnerability that older Gypsies and Travellers may face including barriers in accessing health and social care services.

Communications

- Poor levels of literacy in the Gypsy and Traveller population can make it difficult to navigate the health system and may also present problems with inappropriate usage of prescription drugs. People with poor literacy skills may also feel embarrassed about having to seek help with reading.
- The lack of a postal address may mean that appointment letters are never received leading to missing appointments and treatment.
- This may also present problems with reading communications such as hospital appointments/results or public health information. This is illustrated in the case study below from a non health worker in Cambridgeshire.

Health Profile 2011

Not measured as part of the Health Profile

NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010

Not measured as part of the Cluster data set

Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010

Travellers were not identified as an ethnic group in the 2001 Census though this will change in the 2011 Census. The Cambridge Area Travellers Needs Assessment 2005 estimated that in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough there were 6,080 Gypsy/Travellers, making them one of the largest ethnic groups in the area. **South Cambridgeshire's Travellers estimate was 1,330 in 2005, which equates to 1% of the 2005 district population. This is the second highest figure in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough after Fenland. In South Cambridgeshire, much of the traveller population is transient: 90% of the households are in caravans rather than housing.**

Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
<p>The current Travellers JSNA is making the following recommendations:</p> <p>1. Develop a County wide Gypsy and Traveller strategy to improve outcomes and life chances for Gypsy and Traveller communities and promote and enable community cohesion in Cambridgeshire.</p>	Yes		
<p>2. There is a need for better data collection and ethnic monitoring. Local authorities, the NHS and other public bodies should review their ethnic monitoring systems to include Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller as separate categories and use the resulting data for better planning and commissioning. Work should be undertaken to encourage Gypsies and Travellers to complete the 2011 census.</p>	Yes		
<p>3. A number of health issues have been identified and there should be a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early intervention/prevention and promotion of immunisations and screening. • Mental health specialist support services. • Male health specialist support services. • More support around complex health needs. • Investigation into infant and maternal mortality and prevalence of disabilities in the Gypsy and Traveller population; further work is needed to help understand this. • Raising awareness of the Gypsy and Traveller community with professionals. • Training health champions from the Gypsy and Traveller community. 	Yes		
<p>4. Public health and other service information and communications need to be provided in an accessible format to the Gypsy and Traveller population and the content appropriate.</p>	Yes		
<p>5. Accommodation: The implications of the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy should be considered and the need for additional Gypsy and Traveller accommodation addressed. Promote consistent site management practices across the County.</p>	Yes		
<p>6. Continue emphasis on promoting good practice in education of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils in schools and other educational settings.</p>	Yes		
<p>7. Encourage sharing of good practice across different organisations.</p>	Yes		
<p>8. Promote continuing community engagement with the Gypsy and Traveller population.</p>	Yes		
<p>9. Develop strategies to promote integration between the settled and Traveller communities to reduce mistrust, fear and discrimination.</p>	Yes		

Physical and Sensory Impairment and Long-Term Conditions JSNA			
Evidence			
JSNA Most of the data contained in the Physical and Sensory Impairment and Long-Term Conditions JSNA is not broken down by district council area, the data which is broken down by District Council area shows:			
Disability Living Allowance (DLA) There were 660 people receiving Disability Living Allowance in South Cambridgeshire			
Health Profile 2011 None relating directly to housing			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010 No data has been calculated as part of the Cluster data set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010 Not measured as part of the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
<p>There are no specific recommendations in the JSNA but the key areas identified are:</p> <p>Housing Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing is a major factor determining physically disabled people's health and wellbeing. It appears that most disabled people live in unsuitable accommodation. • Physical disability also affects family members, as they often give up their employment to become carers or, if parents, they need to face the costs of a disabled child. • Low-income people are more likely to have disabilities than medium or high level income people. Moreover, people with physical disabilities tend to have less disposable income than people without disabilities. Often, this leads into debt problems and deprived housing. • Hospital and care staff often has negative attitudes towards physically disabled people mainly due to lack of knowledge of their requirements. 	Yes		

Migrant Workers in Cambridgeshire JSNA (2009)			
Evidence			
JSNA			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within South Cambridgeshire, the highest numbers of migrant workers live in Histon and Impington and Milton. GP registration data suggest Bourn and Cottenham may also be popular wards, particularly for Asians and Western Europeans. 			
Health Profile 2011			
Not measured as part of the Health Profile			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010			
Not measured as part of the NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
None relating directly to housing			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
Improve the access and condition of appropriate housing in order to reduce migrant worker dependence on poor quality tied accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).	Yes		
Examine the needs of those who have no recourse to public funds or who are destitute in order to ascertain how these individuals and families may be best supported.	Yes		

Other reports relevant to Health and Wellbeing in South Cambridgeshire			
End of Life Health Needs Assessment (2009)			
Evidence			
Needs Assessment			
<p>NHS Cambridgeshire has the highest proportion of deaths at home compared to other PCTs nationally. The proportion who died at home in 2006 in South Cambridgeshire was 30% compared to 21% in Fenland. Similarly 49% of people died in acute hospital in Huntingdonshire and Fenland compared to 42% in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>Population projections for 2021 present a significant increase in the number of deaths, and deaths of people with dementia. Other demographic changes suggest that the dependency ratio will change which has important implications as the number of family members and friends available as carers will drop. All areas of the county are estimated to be effected by these changes, but South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire particularly so. This needs to be taken into account in the planning of future services.</p>			
Demography Epidemiology & Socio-economic factors	Service mapping and benchmarking	Professional views	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowest deaths per 100,000 population. Least deprived LA in the County (ranked 350 out of 354) 2006 – 42% of deaths in acute hospital, 4% in community hospital, 30% at home, 8% in Residential home, 5% in nursing home, 7% in hospice and 2% elsewhere. Highest number of deaths at home, statistically significantly higher than Cambridge City and Fenland. A 4.6% increase since 2002. 27% of deaths at home from all causes, and 35.1% from cancer. Deaths to 2021 predicted to increase by 87%. Increases in deaths from dementia and changes in the population dependency ratio highest in the County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service mapping finds the same gaps as those for Cambridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general the proportion of GPs and DNs rating services as very or fairly adequate in South Cambridgeshire was above the average for Cambridgeshire. 	
Health Profile			
Not measured as part of the Health Profile			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010			
Not measured as part of the NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
Not measured as part of the Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from the Needs Assessment			
Population change means an increase in the number of deaths, deaths with dementia and a changing dependency ration needs to be planned for.		No	

Cambridgeshire DAAT Young People's Substance Misuse Treatment Needs Assessment (2010/11)			
Health Profile 2011 Drug misuse is significantly better than the England Average			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010 Not measured as part of the NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010 Not measured as part of the Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
How effective are referral processes into Substance misuse services? 1. Increase referrals from some key vulnerable groups. The focus will be on vulnerably housed and LAC young people. The need for this to be a priority is evidenced by the low referrals into treatment from these groups, and the lack of understanding in Cambridgeshire about the needs of young people living in housing projects, in terms of substance misuse.	Yes		
What are the needs of vulnerable groups? 1. CASUS have developed working relationships with young people's housing settings in 2010/11 and have provided training for staff, offered drop-ins for young people and have tried to encourage staff to make referrals when appropriate. There may still be further work to be done though, as the referral rate has not increased.	Yes		
2. Further information is needed on the prevalence of substance misuse, the substance related needs and access to substance misuse services for the following groups of young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people not in school • Children of substance misusing parents • Homeless young people 	Yes		
How accessible and effective are substance misuse services? 1. Links need to be developed between substance misuse services and key services working with young travellers and their families to ensure there is appropriate support and access to services.	Yes		

Cambridgeshire DAAT Adult Drug Treatment Needs Assessment (2010/11)			
Health Profile 2011 Drug misuse is significantly better than the England Average			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010 Not measured as part of the NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010 Not measured as part of the Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
What are the needs of the vulnerable groups?			
1. Further work is needed to establish the substance misuse needs of all the above vulnerable groups, particularly the gypsy and travellers population and mental health population.	Yes		
1. The DAAT continues its effort to increase access to suitable and sustainable accommodations for substance misusers by working in partnership with Supporting People, Local Authority strategic housing and local homelessness organisations.	Yes		

Joint Road Casualty Data Report (2010)			
Evidence			
JSNA			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None relating directly to housing 			
Health Profile 2011			
None relating directly to housing			
NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set 2010			
Not measured as part of the NHS Cambridgeshire Cluster Data Set			
Annual Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report 2010			
Not measured as part of the Demographic and Socio-economic Information Report			
Recommendations from JSNA	Is there an SCDC action required?	SCDC Actions	Links to other JSNAs (Cross-cutting Issues)
None relating directly to housing			

Community Views (2008)
No Specific Recommendations

NHS Clusters for South Cambridgeshire

LA area				
Prospering Southern England	Aylesbury Vale	Guildford	Runnymede	Tonbridge and Malling
	Basingstoke and Deane	Hart	Sevenoaks	Tunbridge Wells
	Bracknell Forest	Hertsmere	South Bucks	Uttlesford
	Brentwood	Horsham	South Cambridgeshire	Vale of White Horse
	Chelmsford	Kennet	South Oxfordshire	Waverley
	Chiltern	Mid Sussex	Spelthorne	West Berkshire
	Dacorum	Mole Valley	St.Albans	Winchester
	East Hampshire	North Hertfordshire	Surrey Heath	Windsor and Maidenhead
	East Hertfordshire	North Wiltshire	Tandridge	Woking
	Elmbridge	Reigate and Banstead	Test Valley	Wokingham
	Epping Forest	Rochford	Three Rivers	Wycombe
	Epsom and Ewell			

MONITORING PLAN FOR THE HOUSING STRATEGY 2012-2016

Action	Lead Officer	Monitored
AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION		
Ensure planning policies remain viable and achievable for the provision of affordable housing as part of the Local Plan Review.	Director for Planning & New Communities	Part of Local Plan Review
Work with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) to help prioritise funding allocations in South Cambridgeshire	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Through Local Investment Programme
Undertake further modeling of the HRA Business Plan to investigate the potential for a future Council house new-build programme.	Director of Affordable Homes	HRA Business Plan Housing Services Management Team (HSMT)
Aim to ensure that all affordable housing is built to the HCA Design & Quality Standards and where possible homes meet the Lifetime Homes Standard. As a minimum all affordable homes should reach Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Quarterly Performance Monitoring HSMT
Continue working with local people, parish councils and local landowners to develop rural affordable housing, in the villages where a need has been identified.	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Quarterly Performance Monitoring HSMT
Work in partnership with the HCA and registered providers to look at new ways in which the Council can assist in bringing large-scale developments forward.	Joint Development and Enabling Officer	Specific Project Working Groups HSMT
Promote new Government initiatives once the Localism Act is implemented.	All	New initiatives to be approved by appropriate Portfolio Holders HSMT
Pilot the co-housing initiative at Orchard Park that will inform future projects.	Director for Planning & New Communities	Project Working Group
Work with key partners in health and social care and registered providers to bring forward housing provision for households with specific needs, with Extra Care housing identified as a priority.	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Extra Care Commissioning Group Quarterly Performance Monitoring HSMT
Identify a potential public Gypsy & Travellers Site in partnership with Cambridge City Council and seek a development and/or management partner to take a site forward by 2015.	Director of Affordable Homes	Gypsy & Travellers Strategic Officers Group HSMT
Publish a Tenancy Strategy by June 2012 to inform and influence registered providers on the allocation and renewal of tenancies.	Housing Performance & Improvement Team Leader	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Work towards establishing a Tenant Scrutiny Panel.	Resident Involvement Officer	Housing Portfolio Holder Affordable Homes Service Plan HSMT

Action	Lead Officer	Monitored
BETTER HOMES		
Progress sites that are earmarked for redevelopment within the Council's own stock – working in partnership with registered providers where necessary	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Housing Portfolio Holder Affordable Homes Service Plan HSMT
Review the Asset Management Strategy in 2013 and establish a replacement programme for properties identified through the Council's stock-profiling project.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Improve the Council managed Gypsy & Traveller Site at Whaddon	Head of Housing & Property Services	Gypsy & Travellers Strategic Officers Group HSMT
Reduce CO2 production by 0.28 tonnes per annum for the Council stock and achieve an average SAP rating of 70 (Energy Rating C)	Head of Housing & Property Services	Warm Homes Strategy Action Plan HSMT
Ensure owner-occupiers and private rented tenants secure their full share of the increased help available through the new Green Deal and other programmes which help to address fuel poverty.	Environmental Health Officer – Public Health Specialist	Private Sector Housing Action Plan
Continue to access grants to improve the thermal efficiency in the Council stock and introduce innovative sustainable energy efficient heating solutions.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Warm Homes Strategy Action Plan HSMT
Investigate the potential for partnerships to maximise the benefits of funding and ensure tenants are encouraged to seek the best priced energy supplier for their needs.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Warm Homes Strategy Action Plan HSMT
Install solar photovoltaic panels to approximately 500 Council homes by March 2012 that will generate free electricity for tenants during the day and reduce electricity bills.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Warm Homes Strategy Action Plan HSMT
Investigate how fuel poverty impacts on the gypsy and traveller community following funding secured through LEAF (Local Energy Assessment Funding).	Head of Housing & Property Services	Gypsy & Travellers Strategic Officers Group HSMT
Support local volunteer groups across the District to help communities and residents cut energy costs and become less dependent on increasingly expensive fossil fuels through the South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Warm Homes Strategy Action Plan HSMT
Take an active role in delivery of the new 'Green Deal' to improve energy efficiency in homes and other buildings.	Team Leader – Sustainable Communities	Climate Change Action Plan
Over a period of 2 years, monitor the Retrofit Project at Rampton Drift, Longstanton to see what difference cutting edge 'green' technologies are making.	Team Leader – Sustainable Communities	Climate Change Action Plan
Publish an Empty Homes Strategy that sets out actions for bringing empty homes back into use, including promotion of the Empty Homes Grant Initiative	Housing Performance Improvement Team Leader	Empty Homes Action Plan HSMT

Action	Lead Officer	Monitored
MAKING BEST USE OF EXISTING STOCK		
Work in partnership with King Street Housing Society to investigate the options available in releasing some of our sheltered stock in return for family homes, possibly through the Private Rented Sector Leasing Scheme to tackle under-occupation in the private sector.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Be pro-active in providing support and advice to help social tenants to transfer to smaller accommodation. We will look at the options to joining the Huntingdonshire Under-Occupation Partnership Agreement or establish a similar scheme by 2013	Housing Performance Improvement Team Leader	Housing Portfolio Holder Tenant Participation Group HSMT
Develop a Tenancy Fraud Policy and take a more pro-active approach in raising awareness of the consequences of tenancy fraud, including sub letting.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Housing Portfolio Holder Tenant Participation Group HSMT
Publish a Tenancy Policy by April 2012, explaining how we manage tenancies in a way that makes the best use of homes to meet local needs. Including the use of Flexible tenancies for a minimum period of 10 years and introductory tenancies.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Housing Portfolio Holder Tenant Participation Group HSMT
Work towards signing up to the Respect Charter, which will demonstrate our commitment to providing a high quality ASB service for our Council tenants.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Housing Portfolio Holder Tenant Participation Group HSMT
SECURING HOUSING WITH SPECIALIST SUPPORT		
Publish an Ageing Well Strategy	Supported Housing Manager	Ageing Well Project Group HSMT
Bring forward Extra Care Schemes as part of the affordable housing contribution and in accordance with the Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care Sheltered Housing in Cambridgeshire 2011-2015	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Quarterly Performance Monitoring Extra Care Commissioning Group HSMT
Remodel the Sheltered Housing Service in view of the reduction in Supporting People (SP) funding and in preparation for the competitive tendering process, with the new contract due to start in April 2013.	Director of Affordable Homes	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Support mechanisms through existing and new village warden schemes to provide a wider range of personal services that help to maintain independent living.	Head of Housing & Property Services Supported Housing Manager	Ageing Well Project Group HSMT
Monitor through a Service Level Agreement the performance of the newly established shared Home Improvement Agency service.	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Service Level Agreement Project Board HSMT
Ensure sufficient resource is provided for disabled adaptations in our Council Homes as part of the HRA Business Plan – as identified as a top priority by tenants.	Director of Affordable Homes	HRA Business Plan HSMT

Action	Lead Officer	Monitored
Work with the Cambridge Community Service to raise awareness of Assistive Technology through training and publicity to other professionals involved in care and support, as well as to the wider public.	Supported Housing Manager	Ageing Well Project Group HSMT
Work with our contractors Mears to develop and provide a Handy Person Service for our Council tenants.	Head of Housing & Property Services	HSMT Mears contract management
PREVENTING AND TACKLING HOMELESSNESS		
Money advice services - work with Cambridge CAB to provide a money advice service within the Housing Advice and Options Team each week.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	HSMT
Home-Link developments – this includes a new web site which provides applicants with information on housing options targeted at their specific needs and circumstances, and a new scheme to advertise affordable private rented properties on the Home-Link website.	Home-Link Manager	Home-Link Management Board HSMT
Update the Discretionary Housing Payments policy to make it more focussed on higher needs groups.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	HSMT
Work with Sanctuary Carr-Gomm to redevelop the hostel site at Waterbeach to provide new provision in the form of self-contained units whilst still providing a supportive environment for homeless families and single people.	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	Affordable Homes Service Plan HSMT
Promote the Empty Homes Grant Initiative to attract further private sector housing to be used for rental through the private sector leasing scheme	Housing Performance Improvement Team Leader	Empty Homes Strategy Action Plan HSMT
Work with the MOD over the coming months to look at all the options available to ensure that homes at Waterbeach Barracks are not left empty following the Army's relocation.	Director of Affordable Homes	HSMT
Review the Homelessness Strategy during 2012 for publication in 2013.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Work with county partners to establish the provision of training flats. This enables chronically excluded individuals, to have a settled environment in which to receive the support they require from other services.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	Sub Regional Homelessness Group HSMT
Work in partnership with the City and other districts (including Peterborough) to recruit a fixed term position that will work with Rough sleepers who have no recourse to public funds.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	Sub Regional Homelessness Group HSMT
Review the allocation of housing grants to voluntary organisations for 2013 onwards.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Monitor take-up and performance following the new arrangements with Circle Support for the Floating Support Service.	Supported Housing Manager	Contract Monitoring HSMT

Action	Lead Officer	Monitored
Develop an Income Maximisation and Financial Inclusion Strategy with the aim to assist households to successfully manage their income and other debts so that they are able to sustain their tenancy.	Head of Housing & Property Services	Housing Portfolio Holder Tenant Participation Group HSMT
IMPROVING HOUSING OPTIONS AND EXTENDING CHOICE		
Continue to work with King Street Housing Society to maintain the provision of affordable private rented accommodation.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	Partnership meetings with King Street Housing HSMT
Develop the private rented sector module to allow individual landlords to advertise their properties for rent through the Home-Link scheme, offering landlords incentives to join.	Home-Link Manager	Home-Link Management Board HSMT
Review the Allocations Policy during 2012/13.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	Home-Link Management Board Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Promote the Government's Homebuy schemes, such as Firstbuy through the South Cambs Magazine and other forms of publicity	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	HSMT
Investigate the potential for new initiatives, such as equity models and working with high street banks to help first time buyers access mortgages	Head of Housing Strategy & Development	HSMT Housing Portfolio Holder
Work with King Street Housing Society to provide more single person accommodation in the privates sector following a successful bid for funds from Crisis.	Head of Housing Options & Housing Advice	HSMT
MONITORING PERFORMANCE		
Ensure key actions from the Housing Strategy are captured in the Annual Service Plan for Affordable Homes or monitored through individual Action Plans	Director of Affordable Homes	HSMT
Take into account the comments of individuals and organisations in the development of the Housing Strategy and any supporting documents.	ALL	Housing Portfolio Holder Approval of individual Strategies/policies HSMT
Review the governance requirements for housing once the self-financing regime has been established.	Director of Affordable Homes	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Continue to learn from our successes and failures and from other sources of good practice to improve our services and processes.	ALL	HSMT
Review the Value for Money Strategy in 2013.	Director of Affordable Homes	Housing Portfolio Holder HSMT
Implement the Affordable Homes 'Your Service' project – enhancing information through the Council's website, establishing neighbourhood teams and providing area-based hub offices.	Director of Affordable Homes	HSMT