

People and Places

Housing Strategy for Telford & Wrekin: 2010-2013



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The strategic housing role is at the heart of achieving social, economic and environmental objectives that shape a community and create a sense of place.

FOREWORD

This strategy is all about **the future of housing in Telford & Wrekin**. The Council's Cabinet has approved the draft document for consultation and engagement with a range of different partners and individuals who have an interest in housing in the borough. While Telford & Wrekin Council no longer has its own housing stock – it still has an important role in housing.

Having somewhere to live is important, but housing is not just about bricks and mortar. It also has a part to play in other areas, such as:

- Helping people to live happier and healthier lives
- Providing better changes in life through education and life-long learning
- Contributing to lower levels of crime and less fear of crime.

The Housing Strategy also has strong links with strategies for other service areas, both within the Council and with other bodies.

This Strategy is an overarching or 'umbrella' document. It complements a range of other housing related documents, including the Homelessness, Planning Core Strategy, Supporting People and Housing Care & Support sub strategies. It covers all aspects of housing, including meeting local housing needs, improving housing conditions and helping people to access or remain in the housing that they need. It is deliberately short and concise in order to provide an effective basis for delivery, with prepared. The Strategy includes an Action Plan, with individual actions listed in their respective sections.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This draft Housing Strategy - *People and Places* - will ultimately replace the Council's current Housing Strategy, which ran to 2010. The main purpose of the document is to set out a vision for how the diverse housing needs of the borough will be met over the next three years. It will also:

- provide a clear statement on the housing issues facing the borough, the Council's future housing priorities and a strategic lead on how this need to be addressed.
- help to identify areas where housing can contribute to other service strategies and plans (internal and external) and, in turn how these can contribute to achieving housing objectives.
- provide the basis for aligning investment and service provision by other service areas and agencies.

This Strategy has been produced after a period of consultation on a draft document. The full Engagement Plan is set out in Appendix 2 of this document.

The new Housing Strategy is an overarching, or umbrella document, which is complemented by a range of supporting strategies and other policy documents, including the Local Investment Plan (LIP) and the Council's Priority Plans (see below) It covers a three year period: 2010 -2013 and will be reviewed annually. The Strategy is comprehensive and covers a number of key housing issues facing the borough, including:

- New house building of all tenures, and across the whole borough
- The renewal, regeneration and making best use of the existing housing stock, whether it is rented or owned.
- The housing needs of all groups in the community, including the most vulnerable
- How housing contributes to other service areas and policy issues, including health, care and support, education, employment and child and family poverty.

Why is housing important?

Housing is a basic human requirement, however it is about much more than 'bricks and mortar'. The provision and quality of housing in a local area is important for a number of reasons, including:

- It can help people to lead healthier and more fulfilling lives. Damp homes, poor heating and falls can affect health and lead to injuries.
- It can help to create better chances in life through education and life-long learning. Overcrowding and enforced housing moves can harm children's education and personal development.
- It can help reduce crime and fear of crime, which can have negative economic and social effects.
- It can help to create jobs and prosperity for local people, by retaining existing skills, attracting new employers and protecting existing jobs.

Housing also contributes to virtually every one of the current National Indicator Set of 198 performance measures.

Telford & Wrekin Council no longer has its own housing stock, having transferred its former properties to The Wrekin Housing Trust and other local housing associations in 1999. While the Council is not a landlord, it still has a number of important strategic housing responsibilities, which include:

- Understanding its local housing market, including assessing existing and future housing requirements across all tenures
- Creating a long term vision for new and existing housing that is closely linked to the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Planning Core Strategy for the area
- Developing shorter-term investment strategies and action plans in collaboration with local stakeholders and communities
- Working in partnership with other agencies and service providers to commission, fund and co-ordinate the activities to implement the strategy to bring about the desired change
- Using their full range of housing and planning powers, including powers of regulation
- Using the authority's own resources as creatively as possible.

More generally, strategic housing activity contributes to local authorities' important place-shaping role. Through the alignment of investment and service priorities, it can help to deliver improved services (including health, education and social care); create a safe environment; promote accessible transport; achieve a strong sense of community; address climate change and provide a decent home for at all a price they can afford. Much work has been done nationally to support local authorities in strengthening their strategic housing roles.

2. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 Housing in Telford & Wrekin

Telford & Wrekin is a unitary authority within the West Midlands region, to the west of the West Midlands conurbation. With an estimated population of around 167,000 (2008) it is made up of the town of Telford, together with the town of Newport to the north east, and a substantial, largely rural, area between these settlements and to the west.

Telford has consistently been amongst the most rapidly growing settlements in the region over the last forty years. The population of the borough has increased consistently by an average of 1.2% per Annum. From 1994, natural change and migration have each made up 50% of the borough's population increase, but since 2000, natural change has accounted for two thirds of growth. However, as a former New Town, there is a considerable ex- Development Corporation housing that is now in various ownerships, much of which is need of significant renewal and refurbishment.

The Telford & Wrekin housing market area has a high level of self containment, with relatively small proportions of the borough's residents travelling out to work (13%), and a low proportion of its workforce commuting in (26%) [2001 Census]. It has recently been aligned with Shropshire and Herefordshire, as one of six housing market areas or zones within the West Midlands region.

Within the overall housing market in the borough there are three broad sub markets, which include:

- **Telford** – this generally has lower housing values, higher levels of social rented and privately rented housing, lower incomes and higher levels of deprivation.
- **The Rural Area** – with higher values and predominantly owner occupied, with much higher average incomes. However, there are a range of income levels and housing conditions in the rural area.
- **Newport** – a separate settlement (although many residents work in Telford or elsewhere) which falls between Telford and the rural areas, although it too generally has high values and high incomes.

There are currently around 67,000 homes in the borough. The majority of these are located in Telford with significant stocks in Newport (4,600) and the rural area (5,300). As a former New Town, the borough has traditionally had a high proportion of public sector housing stock and, while this has fallen over the last two decades as a result of new private house building and public sector sales, it is still higher (20%) than the average for the West Midlands and England. The private rented sector has increased significantly and, although comparatively low, is currently estimated at around 8%. The majority of the borough's stock is owner occupied (69%).

While the condition of the borough's housing stock is slightly better overall than that of England and the West Midlands region, parts of it are in poor condition. The main findings of the most recent housing condition survey in the borough (2008) is summarised in Box 1, below.

BOX 1**Housing Conditions in Telford & Wrekin**

The Council commissions a five yearly survey of housing conditions in the borough (all tenures). The most recent five yearly stock survey (2008) provide a detailed picture of housing conditions in the borough:

- Around 15,100 dwellings (22%) do not meet the national Decent Homes Standard. This compares with 27% for England as a whole.
- The majority of dwellings that are non decent are due to the incidence of 'Category 1' hazards, such as risk of cold, damp, risk of falls or thermal comfort failure
- Housing conditions vary by tenure. 35% of home in the private rented sector do not meet the Decent Homes Standard, compared to 20% of owner occupied housing and 21% of social rented housing.
- 68.3% of households that are classed as 'vulnerable' are living in decent homes. To achieve a level of 70%, 660 properties would need to be made decent at a cost of around £2.2 million.
- An estimated 3,200 households (5%) are in fuel poverty. The cost to remedy owner-occupied fuel poverty is £6.2 million (1,750 dwellings)
- An estimated 14,900 households (22%) have one or more residents with a disability. The net cost of adaptations, after means testing, is £6.7 million
- 2.7% (1,957) of dwellings in the borough are empty. Just under 600 of these have been empty for more than six months.
- 2.3% of dwellings in the borough are overcrowded.

There is a growing shortage of affordable housing in the borough. The Council regularly commissions a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to help it to understand its local housing market. The Study follows a published national methodology. The results from the latest local SHMA are summarised in Box 2 below.

BOX 2**Housing Needs in Telford & Wrekin**

The latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2009) identifies the need for a net additional 1,240 affordable homes per annum in Telford & Wrekin, of which the majority should be for social renting. On average between 100 and 200 new affordable homes are being delivered each year in the borough. There is a shortage of affordable housing in all parts, including Newport and the Rural Area. There is also a need for housing for larger families and for wheelchair users.

The population of the borough is ageing and there is a growing requirement for specialist and supported housing (all tenures) to meet the needs of older and vulnerable people in the borough. There is also a need to ensure that the existing homes in the Borough are suitable for the ageing population. In addition there is a need to develop provision for Gypsies and Travellers.

Homelessness continues to be an issue locally, particularly for young people. The Council and its partners are working hard to prevent homelessness in the borough. It is recognised that some groups, such as older single homeless people, are not able to access statutory support services.

BOX 3**Homelessness**

The Homelessness Strategy 2007 provides a framework for an inter-agency homelessness steering group to sustain housing arrangements for those at risk through a diverse range of prevention initiatives, support those who cannot avoid becoming homeless back into permanent accommodation, to improve the quality of temporary accommodation, and to deliver the Community & Local Government's (CLG) temporary accommodation targets.

The Council has placed a strong focus on increasing prevention and early intervention in homelessness services, which has resulted in a year on year reduction in homeless acceptances since 2003/04. Its Housing Needs Service offers advice over a range of housing issues ranging from general housing advice to homelessness and issues with affordability and mortgage rescue. Families who do enter temporary accommodation as a stage to permanent housing receive tenancy support to help them to live independently. It provides good quality temporary accommodation across a range of providers including a local housing association and private landlords.

Overall, the picture of the borough is of:

- A mixed area, with a strong urban core but which also includes a local market town and a significant rural community.
- A diverse housing stock, much of which is comparatively recent but also includes some much older housing in established communities and some original new town development corporation housing - now in need of significant renewal and regeneration.
- A population that is continuing to grow significantly as a result of a combination of factors including natural increase, new in-migration and the borough's Growth Point status.
- A population that will age rapidly over the next twenty years. Also a large number of people who are vulnerable or who have health needs. In addition there is an increasingly diverse population, with a growing Black or Minority Ethnic community.
- A changing housing tenure balance. The proportion of social housing is continuing to fall, with a growth in owner occupation and the private rented sector.
- A mixed economy, with some polarisation and some areas with high levels of deprivation.

2.2 Future Housing Challenges

As the strategic housing authority, the Council faces a number of major challenges over the life of this new Strategy. These include:

- Meeting the long term aspiration for new house building in the borough. Also, meeting the growing shortage of affordable homes and creating a range of housing opportunities for local people.
- Creating communities that will be sustainable in the long term, including integrating new development with areas of established housing.

- Continuing to help local people to make appropriate housing choices and access suitable housing, including the prevention of homelessness.
- Improving the condition and making the best use of the existing housing stock of the borough. Also responding to a growing and changing housing stock, including increasing owner occupation and a shift from the social to the private housing sector.
- Meeting the housing needs of the borough's growing ageing and vulnerable population, including the need for a greater choice of good quality accommodation. More generally, contributing to the wider health and well being of the borough and the creation of cohesive communities.
- Helping to reduce and mitigate the effects of Climate Change, for which there are challenging long term national targets. Linked to this is the need to reduce fuel poverty.

More generally, the Council and its partners will be operating in an economic downturn, with a period of public expenditure constraint expected.

Some issues to be addressed in the new Strategy will be complex. For example:

- Balancing the need to achieve new housing growth with the needs of the existing housing stock of the borough. While new house building is very important to Telford it only represents a small proportion of the existing housing stock.
- Prioritising the competing regeneration needs of different geographical areas within the borough
- Achieving housing growth and creating sustainable communities, while also taking account of the needs of existing communities in the borough.
- Creating mixed and balanced communities that meet the needs and aspirations of all.

It is recognised that there will be competing priorities for the use of limited resources for investment.

3. VISION AND PRIORITIES

3.1 The Overall Vision for the Borough

Housing is a key part of the overall vision for the borough of Telford & Wrekin. This section describes the Council's broad priorities for housing in its borough over the next 3 years.

The overall vision for the future of the borough of Telford & Wrekin is set out in the local *Community Strategy, 2006-2011 - Transforming Telford & Wrekin from New Town to Modern City* (Telford & Wrekin Local Strategic Partnership, 2006). This describes 6 shared community ambitions or priorities for the Council and its partners, which are:

- **A Modern Town** – a vibrant Town /Centre, with substantial new housing and improved accessibility.
- **An Enterprising and Innovative Community** – a strong, diverse and low carbon local economy, based on strong business networks.
- **A Strong and Inclusive Community** – regenerated Borough Towns and former New Town estates, a thriving rural area and strong voluntary and community sector.
- **A Learning Community** – integrated learning provision providing vocational and academic skills.
- **A Sustainable Green Community** – a zero waste community, more sustainable forms of energy supply and green businesses.
- **A Safe, Caring and Healthy Community** – a place where people feel safe and secure, and health inequalities are reduced.

3.2 Overall Housing Priorities

The Council's housing responsibilities are wide ranging. As a strategic housing authority it faces a number of key challenges and issues. The Council's broad housing priorities are set out in its Priority Plan and the Local Investment Plan for the borough. The new Housing Strategy will follow the broad structure of the Local Investment Plan and the Council's Priority Plan and will address the three broad sub priorities, which are described in Section 4 below.

Housing has a major part to play in contributing to the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) vision for the borough. A number of housing indicators have been included in the borough's current Local Area Agreement (LAA). Good housing provides the basis for good health and well being, educational attainment and economic prosperity.

New house building is important to the borough in helping to achieve the level of growth it wishes to see, which in turn will support the long term sustainability and infrastructure. There are several large strategic sites and other smaller schemes, which also create the opportunity to meet the needs of specific groups or achieved high standards of design or environmental performance. It is recognised that while the scale of development is a major issue, it is also important to create places where people will want to live and stay.

The existing housing stock is also very important to the borough. While some of it is relatively recent, there is a significant older stock with low levels of accessibility and environmental performance, which needs to be addressed. There is also a significant former New Town Development Corporation rented housing stock, some of which is in urgent need of renewal. While new house building is vital to the borough, it is recognised that annual new building represents only a small proportion of the existing stock.

4. IMPROVING HOUSING OUTCOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

4.1 Introduction

This section describes the main housing outcomes the Council will seek to achieve for local people over the next three years. These are set out under the sub priority areas of:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Securing Sustainable Housing 	Achieving a step change in the delivery of new housing, particularly affordable housing, to meet the long term needs and growth targets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Housing Led Regeneration 	Improving the neediest parts of the borough, especially the former New Town estates in South Telford, by a programme of transformational change that includes physical improvements to the existing housing stock.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good Housing for All 	Promoting access to good quality housing for all in the borough.

An Action Plan is provided for each of the themes under the above three sub priorities. This shows the action; the broad target date for completion; the primary mechanisms through which the action will be delivered and the lead Service Delivery Unit within Telford & Wrekin Council.

4.2 *Securing Sustainable Housing*

■ Future Housing Growth

The planned and sustainable growth in the level of housing provision in the borough is closely linked to long term plans to increase its level of future prosperity. The framework for future development in the borough to 2016 is set by its adopted Core Strategy, together with other policies. While the borough has been set long term housing growth targets, it will be extremely challenging to meet these, particularly in the current economic circumstances. The borough benefits from the allocation of New Growth Point (NGP) funding in the period covered by the Strategy. There is a need to ensure that housing growth is linked to the creation of new employment opportunities.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
The launch of a new financial intervention initiative (The Market Intervention Fund) using New Growth Point funding, to unblock stalled private sector housing development sites.	2010/11	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Introduce new monitoring and liaison arrangements with private developers to help future housing delivery in the borough.	2010/11	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Contribute to the forthcoming update of the Council's Economic Strategy, the supporting Economic Assessment and the emerging cross-authority Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to ensure that these reflect local housing issues.	2010/11	Local Economic Strategy	Economy & Skills
Updating the Council's planning Core Strategy and related documents.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Supporting the delivery of the new Telford Town Centre project and the other strategic sites, including Lawley, Lightmoor and Telford Millenium Community (TMC) at East Ketley.	2010/13	Local Development Framework	Housing & Planning
To complete a study of the future infrastructure needs of the borough.	2011/13	Local Development Framework	Housing & Planning

▪ **Creating Sustainable Communities**

The planned development of new communities and other house building in the borough must be done so as to ensure that places are created where people want to live and continue to stay.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Promoting high development standards in new housing stock, including 'Building for Life'	2010/13	Core Strategy	Housing & Planning
Achieving a mix of house types and tenures on new developments,	2010/13	Core Strategy	Housing & Planning

4.3 Housing Led Regeneration

▪ **The Renewal of former Development Corporation Housing**

The Council has given a high priority to the renewal and redevelopment of former New Town Development Corporation estates in the south of the borough. Significant progress has been made in Woodside where, through a mix of funding, unpopular deck access flats have been demolished for redevelopment, some existing housing areas have been refurbished and reconfigured and new high quality housing and community provision has been developed. While more remains to be done on Woodside, the Council is also focused on the significant needs of other South Telford estates, including Sutton Hill and Brookside.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Complete mixed tenure private sector- led development on the former 'Courts' site at Woodside	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Complete North Woodside regeneration scheme.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Complete Sutton Hill Local Centre regeneration scheme.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Prepare plans for future Brookside regeneration project	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Update Council's Housing-led Regeneration Strategy	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **Renewal – Borough Towns**

A number of small towns within the borough are the focus of efforts by the Council to support their regeneration, including Wellington, Oakengates, Madeley, Dawley, Ironbridge and Newport. Housing has a part to play in helping to breathe new life into these old established communities across the borough.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Undertake targeted renewal and other initiatives to improve housing quality and supply in these areas.	2010/13	Housing Renewal Strategy	Housing & Planning
Help to facilitate new housing provision and related investment in district centre locations.	2010/13	Borough Towns Initiative	Economy & Skills
Undertake combined housing and education-led regeneration initiative in Dawley District Centre (Paddock Mount)	2010/13	Borough Towns Initiative	Economy & Skills
The redevelopment of Hadley District Centre, including general and specialist housing provision.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
The promotion of 'live-work' schemes in appropriate locations across the borough.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **Renewal of the existing housing stock**

While much of the housing stock in the borough is relatively new, there are significant areas of stock that needs renewal in some of the new town estates and in other parts of the borough. In the social sector around 95% of properties currently meet the national Decent Homes Standard, although this is much lower in the private sector. The Council’s Housing Renewal Strategy and related Home Assistance Policy were updated in 2009.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Continue to deliver small investment programme of small grants targeted at specific geographical areas and housing tenures.	2010/13	Housing Renewal Strategy	Housing & Planning
Continue to deliver ‘Kickstart’ innovative equity loan intervention.	2010/13	Housing Renewal Strategy	Housing & Planning
Continue to deliver targeted assistance to older and other vulnerable owner occupiers to help them to maintain and improve their homes.	2010/13	Housing Renewal Strategy	Housing & Planning
Work closely with main housing association partners to monitor progress in meeting the Decent Homes Standard and in implementing their Asset Management Strategies.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **Making best use of the existing housing stock**

Given the local housing shortage, it is important that best use is made of the existing housing stock of the borough. The proportion of empty properties in the borough is comparatively low, although this number has varied slightly in recent years. A number of properties remain empty long term, mostly pending their long term redevelopment. The Council is proactive in responding to issues and opportunities identified in its area.

Using one measure, dwellings in the borough are comparatively less overcrowded (2.3% or 1,580) than England as a whole. However, this still suggests a lack of adequately sized accommodation.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Develop ‘Under Occupation Strategy’	2010/11	Homelessness Strategy	Care & Support
Update Empty Property Strategy	2010/11	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
The delivery of a number of high profile projects to work with local partners to redevelop long term empty properties, for example: Dothill flats, Wellington; London House, Madeley; Windsor Road flats, Wellington.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Continuing to respond promptly and effectively where dispersed empty properties are identified.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
The use by the Council of its regulatory powers, where appropriate.	2010/13	Housing Renewal Strategy	Housing & Planning
Continuing, wherever possible, to commission new larger family homes (3+ bedrooms) through housing association partners.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Continuing to commission a small programme of works and adaptations in the social housing sector.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Work with housing association partners to tackle unlawful occupation in their housing stock.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **Energy Efficiency of Housing Stock**

The domestic sector is responsible for around one third of CO2 emissions. Housing has an important part to play in helping to address Climate Change and mitigating its effects. At national level very challenging long term targets have been set for the development of ‘zero carbon homes’.

In addition, an estimated 3,200 (4.7%) households in the borough are in *fuel poverty* and cannot afford to heat their homes properly. This compares with 13.9% in England as a whole. Fuel poverty and poor health are closely linked. The Council has adopted a local Climate Change Strategy and promotes improvements through its in-house ‘Affordable Warmth’ team

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Participate in national initiatives to tackle Fuel Poverty, including ‘Health through Warmth’.	2010/13	Affordable Warmth Strategy	Care & Support
Promote high standards of energy efficiency and other environmental standards in new housing, in both market and affordable schemes	2010/13	Core Strategy	Housing & Planning
Explore the opportunities to undertake improvements programmes of the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock (‘retrofit’), working with the Homes & Communities Agency and housing association partners.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **The Private Rented Sector**

There has been a significant increase in the size of the private rented sector in the borough over the last ten years and it continues to play an important part in meeting the housing needs of the borough. The sector is diverse and contains a range of providers of different scales. While conditions vary, the sector contains a disproportionate share of properties which are below the national Decent Homes Standard.

Recent national proposals have been developed to help local authorities to promote high physical and management standards in their private rented sector stock.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Continuing to use the Council's licensing and enforcement powers, especially for Houses in Multiple Occupation	2010/13	Housing Renewal Strategy	Housing & Planning
Explore the potential for expanding the role of the private rented sector in meeting local housing needs, working with the Homes & Communities Agency and other investment partners,	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

4.4 Good Housing for All

▪ **Increasing the supply of affordable housing**

There is a continuing shortage of affordable homes in the borough. While the Council and its partners have achieved a significant increase in the supply over the last twelve months it is not certain that this can be sustained into the future. Even, with this increase there is a growing mismatch with the housing needs of the borough. The Local Investment Plan and the new strategic commissioning approach to housing investment will help to maximise the use of investment in this area. Commissioning priorities identified in the Local Investment Programme (LIP) include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support delivery of strategic housing sites (Lawley, Lightmoor, Telford Millennium Community) • Support delivery of other 'stalled sites' across the Borough • Regeneration of the South Telford Estates • Regeneration of the Borough Towns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of supported and specialist housing including Extra care housing in priority areas. • Deliver other affordable provision – including Newport and the rural area • The renewal of the existing housing stock • Delivery of other schemes of strategic importance or benefit to the Borough
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In the past the Council has worked closely with developers to deliver affordable housing through the planning process. However, the current economic situation has impacted on levels of provision through this route.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Continuing to update the local Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) on a regular basis, with the next update to be completed by autumn 2010.	2010/11	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Increasing capacity and knowledge of the Council to work with private developers to deliver affordable and open market housing to meet the needs of the borough.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Using the new Strategic Commissioning approach to work with the HCA, local housing associations and other partners to maximise the use of the all resources available to increase affordable housing supply and to meet identified priorities.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Jointly commissioning, with the HCA, a small sites programme that will deliver up to 200 new affordable homes on land donated by both agencies at no cost.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Continuing to intervene directly wherever appropriate to create a range of housing opportunities for local people, including low cost (social) rented and low cost home ownership housing.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Developing new affordable housing delivery models with the HCA and housing association partners.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **Increasing the supply of affordable housing in rural areas**

The local Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) highlights the high affordability ratios and lack of affordable housing supply in the rural part of the borough. The supply of affordable housing in the rural areas is important in helping to sustain these areas and to provide opportunities for people with close connections to specific rural areas. The Council’s planning policies support the provision of small rural ‘exception’ sites where a housing need has been identified. Rural affordable housing is identified as a commissioning priority in the Local Investment Plan.

The Council is currently undertaking a comprehensive programme of rural housing needs surveys, working closely with rural parish councils. The findings of these will inform the future commissioning of new rural affordable housing provision.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Complete the programme of rural parish housing needs surveys by Spring 2012	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Deliver at least 25 new affordable homes in rural parts of the borough through local development partners by 2013.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **Meeting the housing needs of the ageing population**

The population of the borough is ageing and in the future there will be a significant increase in the proportion and absolute number of older people. Appropriate housing is essential to the ability of older people to live independently for as long as possible.

While some older people will live in specialist or purpose built housing, many more will continue to live in their existing homes to a significant age. The housing expectations of the older people of the future are likely to continue to increase.

The borough is underprovided in specialist housing for older people. The Council’s Housing, Care & Support Strategy aims to deliver an additional 500 homes in Extra care housing by 2021, with 113 homes already completed or in the development pipeline. Through its Supporting Programme and other resources, the Council provides a range of services to help older people to remain in their own homes, including help with adaptations to properties and provision of housing-related support. It also works with private developers of specialist housing for older people.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Updating the Council’s Housing, Care & Support Strategy by March 2011 making use of new funding announced by Department of Health (February 2010), which will be matched by funding from its own resources.	2010/11	Housing, Care & Support Strategy	Housing & Planning/Care & Support
Working with the developer, Bournville Village Trust (BVT), to bring the new Extra care housing scheme at Lightmoor into commission in summer 2011.	2010/11	Housing, Care & Support Strategy	Housing & Planning/Care & Support
Exploring opportunities to deliver further Extra care housing schemes linked with the strategic sites at Lawley and Telford Millennium community (TMC) working with the Homes & Communities Agency and housing association partners.	2010/11	Housing, Care & Support Strategy	Housing & Planning/Care & Support
Increasing the supply of Extra care housing and other specialist housing, particularly in priority areas within the borough.	2010/11	Housing, Care & Support Strategy	Housing & Planning/Care & Support
Maintain, and where possible enhance, investment in adapting existing private housing (through the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants with works delivered through the Home Improvement Agency) and housing related support.	2010/13	Supporting People Strategy	Care & Support
Continuing to develop innovative ways of supporting older people to maintain and improve their homes.	2010/13	Supporting People Strategy	Care & Support
Promoting the development of new housing to meet the ‘Lifetime Homes’ standard, where ever possible.	2010/13	Core Strategy	Housing & Planning
Work with private providers of older persons housing to help create a wider range of housing opportunities and choice.	2010/13	Older Adults Strategy	Care & Support
Working with providers of sheltered and other specialist housing for older people to ensure that existing provision continues to meet local needs.	2010/13	Supporting People Strategy	Care & Support

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Continue to deliver adaptations to properties through in-house Home Improvement Agency (HIA)	2010/13	Supporting People Strategy	Care & Support

▪ **Helping vulnerable people to live independently**

Through the Supporting People (SP) programme the Council commissions the provision of housing related support services through a range of providers to help vulnerable people to live independently. SP services contribute to many of the national indicators and are included in the Council’s current Local Area Agreement. The national strategy document ‘Valuing People’ promotes the provision of housing solutions for people with a learning disability.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Update Supporting People Needs Analysis and Strategy	2010/11	Supporting People Strategy	Care & Support
Deliver stalled supported housing schemes, including two schemes at Telford Millennium Community (TMC).	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning
Undertake a strategic review of Community Alarm provision in the borough.	2010/13	Supporting People Strategy	Care & Support

▪ **Increasing access and choice**

Local people are able to access the majority of social housing in the borough through the ‘Choose Your Home’ arrangements operated on behalf of the Council and partners by The Wrekin Housing Trust. The Council’s in house ‘Housing Options’ service supports people to access housing opportunities in the borough.

A formal review of the Council’s allocation policy was commissioned in autumn 2009 and is due to be completed later in 2010.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Complete review of Council Allocation Policy and implement new Policy.	2010/11	Homelessness Strategy	Care & Support

▪ **Meeting the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers**

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in there areas are met. There is existing Council and privately owned site provision in the borough.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Complete review work to assess levels of locally arising need and potential appropriate sites in the borough through the review of the Core Strategy	2010/13	Core Strategy	Housing & Planning
Review opportunities to redevelop and/or extend existing provision.	2010/13	Core Strategy	Housing & Planning
Review opportunities to bid for funding from the Homes & Communities Agency to support new provision or the refurbishment of existing sites.	2010/13	Local Investment Plan	Housing & Planning

▪ **Tackling homelessness**

The Council's updated Five Year Homelessness Strategy (2008-13) continues to focus on a range of activities to prevent homelessness in the borough. The Council directly provides or commissions a range of temporary accommodation provision where prevention has failed. The Council is on track to meet its long term target for the reduction in the use of temporary accommodation.

While the number of homelessness acceptances is continuing to reduce, the number of homeless young people has been highlighted as a concern.

The Council is vulnerable to changes in the national economy or other external factors, which could increase the number of homeless presentations. It will be important to retain short term funding in order to maintain successful preventative interventions which have reduced the number of homeless presentations by 80%.

Action	Target Date	Delivery Mechanism	Lead Service Delivery Unit
Implement new 'Young Person's Pathway' for access to housing, care and support services.	2010/11	Homelessness Strategy	Care & Support

5. DELIVERING OUR HOUSING STRATEGY

5.1 Introduction

The Council recognises that the implementation of its Housing Strategy must be properly resourced. It will not be cost-effective for the Council to do everything itself; instead this will be achieved through a combination of means:

- Appropriate in house services, including service commissioning and direct delivery
- Other Service Delivery Units within the Council
- Council 'support services'
- Close partnership working with other key national and local agencies, e.g., the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)
- Close working with a number of other key partners, including local housing associations and private landlords.
- Contractual relationships with a range of direct service providers from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

5.2 The Housing Service

Telford & Wrekin Council provides a strategic enabling function and a range of community housing services. While the Council's various housing functions are located in different service areas within the authority, there are strong mechanisms for bringing these together and ensuring a fully integrated and co-ordinated approach.

Through Telford & Wrekin's 'One Council' approach - launched in January 2010 – the authority has been restructured in a way that will promote effective joint working with a range of partners. There are also a number of well-established partnership groups that bring a wide range of stakeholders together at both strategic and operational levels. These include:

- The Local Strategic Partnership Board (LSP) for Telford & Wrekin
- The Housing & Regeneration and Health & Well Being Partnership Boards
- Other thematic Partnership Boards
- Other Commissioning and partnership groups including, for example, The Supporting People Commissioning Body.

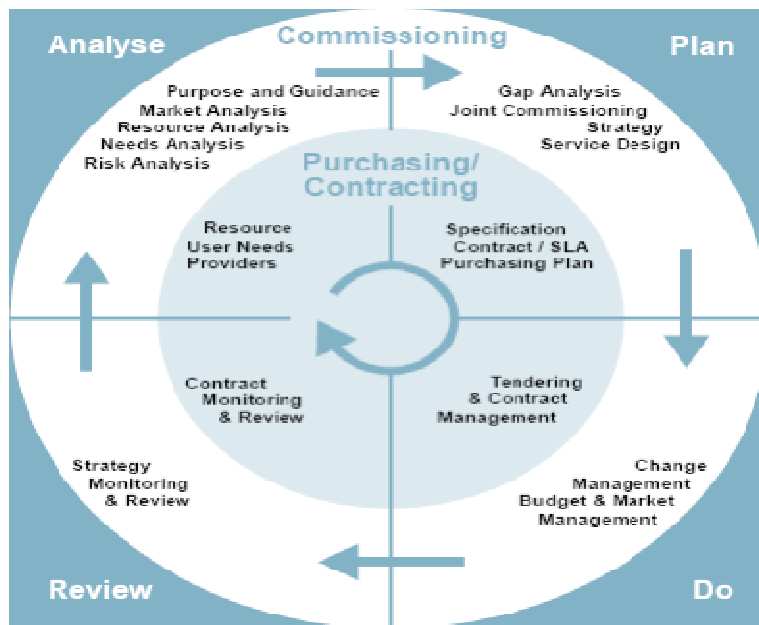
There are also well established formal working relationships with a number of sectional and representative groups, including local housing partners, private sector developers, private sector landlords and Supporting People providers. Telford has recently become part of the West Housing Partnership and is also involved in the proposed Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

5.3 Developing a Strategic Commissioning approach to housing

The Council is working with the Homes & Communities Agency, through its ‘Single Conversation’, to develop a strategic commissioning approach to housing investment. This follows an approach that is already well-developed in Social Care, Supporting People and other service areas.

The process is a continuing one and enables Telford & Wrekin Council and the Homes & Communities Agency, working through the Housing & Regeneration Partnership Board, to provide clear direction on the priorities for housing activity (new and existing housing) to achieve positive outcomes for the community. This approach will also contribute to wider approaches to addressing the needs of local areas and more closely aligning the use of resources by a range of agencies in one place. This is summarised in the diagram below:

Figure 1. The Strategic Commissioning Process



5.4 Working with the Third Sector

The third – or voluntary/community – sector plays an important part in meeting the housing needs of Telford & Wrekin. This includes:

- The provision of specialist housing
- The direct delivery of services on contractual basis, e.g. housing-related support, specialist housing advice
- Representation on partnership groups
- Advocacy on behalf of specific service user groups

The Council works with the third sector organisations in a number of ways:

- Provides direct financial support to enable them to develop or acquire new housing stock
- Supports them in larger new build projects, working through larger developing housing associations
- Supports them in bringing unused property back into housing use.
- Commissions third sector organisations to deliver local services and supports them in engaging in the procurement process
- Involves them as consultees in a range of strategic and policy issues.

6. RESOURCES

- 6.1 The Council has an established rolling three-year approach to service and financial planning to ensure that resources are aligned with its overall priorities. The Council's own capital resources for investment in housing come from a number of sources, including
- Regional allocations for housing growth and regeneration
 - National allocations to support the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)
 - Investment from the Council's own resources supported by Prudential Borrowing, capital receipts and other sources.
 - Other one-off allocations

- 6.2 The Council manages strategic projects within the borough through its Policy Forum (Cabinet and Directors). This ensures a *Total Place* approach to joining up priorities and funding streams, enabling links to be made to wider regeneration and other investment projects.

- 6.3 Investment in housing over the life of the Strategy will also come from a number of sources, for example:

- The Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)
- Local housing associations
- Private developers
- Private landlords and homeowners.

The Local Investment Plan (LIP) identifies anticipated housing investment requirements of £50 million over three years. Of this potential sum, £21.5 million may come from the Council, £26 million from the HCA and £4 million from others, such as Communities and Local Government (CLG).

- 6.4 The current period of public expenditure constraint future is expected to lead to pressure on resources for housing investment. Reductions have already been made to allocations to the Council and in grant funding by HCA. The authority has adopted a balanced approach to the allocation of resources into our Housing and Regeneration capital programmes. In 2010/11 we have been able to sustain high levels of investment in Disabled Facilities by reprofiling the capital programme.

APPENDIX 1

Building the Evidence Base

The evidence base for the draft strategy includes a number of Council undertakes engagement as part of the overall process of developing its housing and other sub strategies and also in maintaining its housing market intelligence. Examples of these activities and the mechanisms used are summarised in the table below:

Activity	Date	Format				
		Postal Survey/	Focus Group	Workshop	Desk analysis	Other
Published Strategies						
Local Investment Plan (LIP)	2010		■	■		■
Homelessness Strategy	2009			■		
Learning Disability Housing Strategy	2009		■			
Affordable Warmth Strategy	2009			■		
Housing Renewal Strategy	2009			■		
Local Development Framework Core Strategy				■		■
Central Telford Area Action Plan (CTAAP)				■		■
Housing, Care and Support Strategy	2006				■	
Supporting People Strategy	2005			■	■	

Activity	Date	Format				
		Postal Survey/	Focus Group	Workshop	Desk analysis	Other
Research Studies						
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) – update	2009				■	■
Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA)	2009			■		■
Housing Viability Study	2009			■		
Stock Condition Survey	2008	■				
Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	2009	■	■			
Rural housing needs surveys (in progress)	2010 - 11 onwards	■				

Activity	Date	Format				
		Postal Survey/	Focus Group	Workshop	Desk analysis	Other
Supporting People Needs Assessment update	2010 (in progress)				■	
Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA)	2010 (in progress)				■	
Consultation Projects						
Community Consultation Panel	Nov. 2009	■				
Citizens Survey	Feb. 2010	■				
South Telford regeneration				■		■

APPENDIX 2

Consultation and Engagement Plan

Background

National guidance (Audit Commission, 2010) emphasises the importance of engaging a wide range of partners and stakeholders in the development of the local housing vision and accompanying strategy. It is suggested that local authorities should therefore:

- consult widely with local, regional and national partners and show how feedback has shaped the local housing vision and priorities (and supported their delivery).
- use a range of community engagement mechanisms to build understanding of the housing vision and identify the needs and preferences of local communities and other stakeholders.
- engage relevant statutory and third sector organisations and groups more at risk of disadvantage in the local housing market to ensure that local housing ambitions are inclusive.

	CHARACTERISTICS		TYPE		
	The Council is a formal member of group	Meets regularly	Statutory	Voluntary/ Other	Hard to Reach / at risk of disadvantage
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)		■	■		
Council for Voluntary Services		■		■	
Voluntary Sector Forum		■		■	
Main local housing association partners				■	
Supporting People service providers Forum		■		■	
Parish & Town Councils		■	■		
Housing & Regeneration Partnership Board	■	■	■		
Primary Care Trust			■		
Director of Public Health		■	■		
Development Industry				■	
Private Landlords' Forum		■		■	■
Marches Energy Agency				■	
REGIONAL					
Other West Housing Market Area local authorities		■	■		
National Housing Federation (West Midlands office)				■	
Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM)			■		
NATIONAL					
Homes & Communities Agency		■	■		

APPENDIX 3

Jargon Buster

The jargon buster has been developed to help you if you are unfamiliar with a term in this document. If you think an entry is missing please let us know. To find a definition, simply use the A-Z index by scrolling down the screen.

A

Advantage West Midlands (AWM) - set up to transform the West Midlands region through sustainable economic development. *N.B. The Government has recently announced that Advantage West Midlands is to be wound up.*

Affordable Housing – Subsidised housing to provide homes for rent, to buy or part rent/part buy, to meet the needs of people who otherwise would not be able to access housing.

Anti-Social Behaviour – Behaviour which causes harassment, alarm or distress to any household other than itself.

Audit Commission – A body appointed by the Government to be responsible for the appointment of local authority's external auditors and best value inspectorate (including the Housing Inspectorate) and promoting the best use of public money in local government. *N.B. The Government has recently announced that the Audit Commission is to be wound up.*

B

Building for Life – A national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. New housing developments are scored against 20 criteria to assess the quality of their design. Schemes that score 14/20 or 15/20 receive the silver standard while schemes scoring 16/20 or more receive the gold standard.

C

Choice based lettings – A method of allocating social housing which gives applicants more choice about where they live. In Telford & Wrekin this is called 'Choose Your Home' and is run by The Wrekin Housing Trust working with the Telford & Wrekin Council and other large housing associations.

CLG (Communities and Local Government) - ministerial department at Central Government level.

Core Strategy - The principal development plan document contained within the *Local Development Framework* (LDF). It sets out the general spatial vision and objectives for the delivery of the LDF and can also include 'Strategic Site Allocations'.

D

Decent Homes Standard – A national standard for housing conditions which sets criteria in relation to the age and condition of key elements of a property

Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) – Government department with a remit to promote community cohesion and equality and responsibility for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) – Means-tested grant paid by local authority to support the adaptation of homes to meet the needs of residents resulting from disability or long-term illness.

E

Extra care housing – A type of purpose built housing in which varying amounts of care and support can be offered and where some services and facilities can be shared.

F

Fuel Poverty – Where a household can achieve temperatures needed to maintain health and comfort for expenditure of less than 10% of income. It results from a combination of low household income, unaffordable energy costs and inadequate thermal insulation and inefficient and uneconomic heating systems.

G

Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) - Co-ordinates the delivery of Government policy in the region, helps people to understand that policy, and informs Ministers of the region's needs. It represents and undertakes work on behalf of twelve Government Departments.

H

Homebuy (previously known as Shared Ownership. A form of low cost home ownership in which a household buys a portion of a property

Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) A national agency charged with working with local authorities and other partners to deliver housing and regeneration schemes. The HCA was launched in 2009 and includes former Housing Corporation and English Partnerships, along with parts of CLG (see above).

Home Improvement Agency (HIA) – A local advice and assistance to help older and vulnerable people to repair and maintain their homes and continue to live independently.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) – Houses owned by private landlords and lived in by several different households who share facilities, such as a kitchen or bathroom.

Housing Strategy – An overarching document that reviews housing-related issues in a local authority's area, sets out its housing objectives and establishes priorities for action within the borough.

Housing Associations (or Registered Social Landlords [RSLs]). They manage existing affordable homes and provide new ones. They are non-profit making organisations, with any surplus ploughed back to maintain existing homes and to help finance new ones

K

Kickstart - A new initiative to help older and disabled people to fund the cost of essential repairs and maintenance to their homes by making use of the equity in their homes.

Key Worker Housing – Designed to help people in certain specific jobs in England to buy their own home through equity loans – or by providing them with affordable rents

L

Lifetime Homes – A set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes.

Local Development Framework (LDF) – A folder of local development documents prepared by district councils, unitary authorities and national park authorities that outline the spatial planning strategy for the local area.

Local Area Agreement (LAA) - Agreements made between central and local government in a local area. Their aim is to achieve local solutions that meet local needs, while also contributing to national priorities and the achievement of standards set by central government.

Local Investment Plan (LIP) – This sets out the investment required for an area to deliver the agreed vision and economic purpose of a place.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) - A partnership of people that brings together organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sector within a local authority area, with the objective of improving people's quality of life.

N

New Growth Point (NGP) - A national initiative to support local partners who are keen to pursue sustainable housing growth.

National Indicator (NI) Set - A single set of 198 national performance indicators to reflect national priority outcomes for local authorities, working alone or in partnership.

P

Prudential Borrowing – Councils may borrow under the prudential borrowing regime to fund their investment plans on the basis of their capacity to service these loans from their revenue budgets.

S

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) – An approach with a defined methodology for local authorities and their partners to understand their local housing market and to assess housing need and demand. Used to inform housing strategies and spatial planning policies.

Supporting People – a programme that provides housing related support to vulnerable people to enable them to live more independently

Sustainable Communities Strategy - Under the Local Government Act 2000, local authorities in England & Wales have to produce a community strategy to promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their areas, achieving sustainable communities. The strategy outlines the steps the council will take towards achieving sustainable improvement, and is reached by a process of community planning.

T

Thematic Partnership - Smaller partnerships that sit beneath the Local Strategic Partnership and focus on specific themes.

V

Vision 2026 - A document signed up to by all the partners in the Local Strategic Partnership which sets out the ambition and aims for an area over the next twenty years.

APPENDIX 4

Impact Assessment

As part of the process of developing the new Housing Strategy, the Council has carried out an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). This has been done to help it to assess the costs, benefits and associated risks of the document. The IIA assesses impacts under four main categories:

- Impact on people (including Equality & Diversity impacts)
- Value for money and economic impact
- Environmental impact
- Other risk/opportunities

This is a new form of Impact Assessment for the Council and the new Housing Strategy is being used to pilot this approach.

The full impact assessment document is available separately and will be placed on the Council's website alongside this Strategy document.

For more information on the Impact Assessment please contact Chris. Winter on 01952 381901 or chris.winter@telford.gov.uk.

APPENDIX 5

Further Reading

Audit Commission

[Building better lives - Getting the best from strategic housing \(September 2009\)](#)

[Updated strategic approach to housing KLOE for use from 12 April 2010](#)

Communities and Local Government

[The local authority strategic housing role](#)

Homes and Communities Agency

[The Single Conversation](#)