



MIDDLESBROUGH HOUSING STRATEGY

2008 – 2011

Quality homes &
neighbourhoods

SECTION 2 (of 2)

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Chapter 4: Improving and maintaining existing housing

CHAPTER 4

IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING EXISTING HOUSING

**To secure the improvement and maintenance of existing housing so that it meets required standards and investing in sustainable neighbourhoods.
(Also Key Objective 3 of the North East Housing Strategy 2007)**

INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 This Strategy has already made the case for transforming the housing landscape in Middlesbrough. It has set out an exciting and ambitious programme to provide quality homes at the heart of sustainable communities. Amidst all this activity, however, it must be remembered that the vast majority of Middlesbrough's current housing will remain, and provide homes for the town's population and households looking to move to Middlesbrough, well into the future. It is essential that all of Middlesbrough's homes, not just the new ones, meet required standards.
- 4.2 In order to be decent a home should be warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities. The Government recognises that decent homes are a key element of any thriving, sustainable community. Not only are decent homes important for the health and well-being of those who live in them, they can also affect a neighbourhood's reputation and make it an area where people choose not to live, which may lead to more general neighbourhood decline. The Government believes that everyone should have a decent home. It is aiming to make all council and housing association homes decent and also wants to improve conditions for vulnerable households in privately owned homes, particularly those with children. The Government has set targets for achieving a Decent Homes Standard (DHS)¹ in the social and private housing sectors. By 2010, the Government aims to ensure all social housing is in decent condition, with most of the improvement taking place in deprived areas. In the private sector its aim is to increase the proportion of housing in decent condition occupied by vulnerable groups. A decent home is a basic human right and Middlesbrough shares the Government's view that it is entirely unacceptable in the 21st Century that anyone should be living in a home which does not meet basic standards of safety and comfort.
- 4.3 Whilst meeting these targets is a priority for Middlesbrough, achieving DHS is not an end in itself. Investment to bring about improvements to people's homes must go hand-in-hand with actions aimed at improving their living environment. This Strategy recognises the importance of a comprehensive approach to neighbourhood renewal which seeks to address issues of community safety, improve the environment, including the public realm/open spaces, and advance community cohesion. There is little sense in spending

¹ A home is Decent if:

- it meets the current statutory minimum for housing (i.e. it has no Category 1 hazards – as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System)
- it is in a reasonable state of repair
- it has reasonably modern facilities and services
- it provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

limited resources to improve housing unless such investment is accompanied by measures to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods.

DECENT HOMES IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR

- 4.4 Including Erimus Housing's stock, 19% of RSL homes in Middlesbrough currently fail to meet the DHS. However, all RSLs expect to meet the Government's 2010 DHS target. If necessary, the Housing Corporation (and any successor) will use its regulatory powers to ensure this is achieved.
- 4.5 Following an option appraisal, Middlesbrough Council decided that it could only meet DHS in its homes through transfer to a housing association. The Council's tenants voted for transfer, and, in November 2004, a new not-for-profit housing association, Erimus Housing, took over the ownership and management of the Council's housing stock. The stock transfer was based on a business plan designed to ensure that all former Council homes will meet the DHS by 2010. It secured £181 million of investment and Erimus Housing has already invested almost £78 million with the number of homes failing DHS reduced from 5,737 (out of a total stock of 11,968 in 2004) to 2,920 (out of a total stock of 10,981), a reduction from 47.9% to 26.6%.
- 4.6 The major investment that will flow from the need to meet the DHS in the social housing sector will be a major contributor to the overall regeneration of Middlesbrough and to the delivery of more sustainable communities across the whole town. This will help to underpin other major interventions outlined in this Strategy.

DECENT HOMES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Vulnerable households

- 4.7 Unlike the social sector, the DHS target for the private sector does not apply equally to all housing stock. Instead, through the concept of vulnerability², it makes a link between the condition of the home and the needs of the household living in it, and its ability to effect any necessary improvements as a result of social or economic vulnerability. The Government has set a target of increasing the proportion of vulnerable households living in decent homes in the private sector from 57 percent in 2001, to 70 percent by 2010, and above 75% by 2020/21.
- 4.8 As the Council's RSL partners are on target to deliver DHS in the social sector this Strategy will focus on the improvement and maintenance of private sector housing. This is one of the biggest challenges facing Middlesbrough, with the major barrier to achieving decency in the private sector being the scale of the problem and the associated cost. Government targets will only be met if the required physical improvement to properties is matched with sufficient financial resources. Current public sector resources are unlikely to be adequate.

² Vulnerable is defined as those in receipt of one of the principal means tested or disability-related benefits

Private Sector Stock Condition Survey

- 4.9 To improve its understanding of the condition of the town's private sector housing stock the Council commissioned a private sector stock condition survey in 2005 (PSSCS)³. Information was drawn from more than 1,400 individual property surveys. It was found that while the total amount of stock failing the DHS criteria (11,600 dwellings) was proportionately lower than the national average (25% compared with 33%) problems were concentrated in particular types of properties and locations. As in other parts of the country, the problems were most acute in the private rented sector, where 44% of dwellings failed the standard. In Middlesbrough's Older Housing Area, the stock condition survey found that over 40% of homes in North Ormesby, and in the Abingdon Road and Parliament Road areas, were non-decent.
- 4.10 The problems in the private sector are primarily explained by the age of the stock. Around 60% of the sector was built before 1919 and approximately 54% of dwellings from this period failed the DHS standard. The main reasons for Middlesbrough's better than average performance overall is the availability of gas central heating and the high proportion of properties with solid walls. Nationally, the main reason for failing the standard is inadequate thermal comfort.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System

- 4.11 In April 2006, new legislation was introduced in the form of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This replaced the Housing Fitness Standard (HFS). One of the drivers of this change was the fact that nationally, each year, housing conditions are implicated in a large number of deaths and illnesses requiring medical attention. The HFS failed to address many of the conditions that caused these deaths and injuries.
- 4.12 The new risk assessment process focuses on hazards in dwellings. The assessment will show the presence of any serious (category 1) hazards and other less serious (category 2) hazards. It is based on the risk to an occupant who is most vulnerable to that risk. A dwelling that is safe for the most vulnerable is safe for all.
- 4.13 In addition to responding to complaints about the health and safety of private sector housing, the Council has developed a new enforcement policy. This outlines standards, which must be achieved by owners and landlords, and the range of interventions available to the Council. The Council has produced a guide to inform landlords of the radical reforms introduced by the Housing Act 2004 - the HHSRS, DHS, Houses in Multiple Occupation and selective landlord licensing.
- 4.14 To meet the DHS a home must be free of serious hazards to the occupant (category 1 hazard). The PSSCS estimated that the number of homes in the private sector meeting the DHS and occupied by vulnerable people would change in line with the use of the HHSRS, increasing from 67.5% (under HFS) to 68.6%. This is due to there being a lower correlation between dwellings failing with a category 1 hazard under HHSRS and vulnerable occupiers, than is the case for unfit. Nevertheless, the PSSCS estimated the cost of

³ Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey by PPS (2005)

achieving DHS in Middlesbrough under the HHSRS at £33.2m, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Repair cost by non-decency reason (HHSRS)

Category	Total Cost	Cost per dwelling
Category 1 Hazard	£5.5 million	£1,400
Repair	£9.7 million	£2,100
Amenities	£6.8 million	£15,800
Thermal comfort	£11.2 million	£1,900
Total	£33.2 million	£3,300

Source: Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (2005)

- 4.15 The PSSCS also established a clear relationship between non-decent dwellings and the household income of the occupants, with 39% of households earning less than £10,000 per year living in non-decent housing. This compared with only 15.3% of households with an income of £30,000 to £40,000 per year. The survey estimated that 68.6% of households in receipt of a means-tested benefit lived in homes which meet the standard, against the Government's target of 70% to be achieved by 2010. The survey identified concentrations of non-decent housing in the older housing areas on the southern edge of the town centre.

Latest assessment of private sector stock condition

- 4.16 The extent of non-decency in the private sector in Middlesbrough has recently been further quantified through a stock condition survey undertaken by the Building Research Establishment (BRE).⁴ This provides estimates of local housing conditions based on models, which combine national data from the English House Condition Survey 2001 with local Census 2001 data. The Council is currently examining the findings of this study. Together with an update of the 2005 Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (to be completed in 2008) it will inform the further development of this Strategy.

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE

- 4.17 As mentioned in paragraph 4.3 the Council has looked to develop a comprehensive approach to neighbourhood renewal which goes beyond improving the physical condition of the town's housing stock.

HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY

- 4.18 Middlesbrough Council's Housing Renewal Policy reflects the national and regional policy emphasis that homeowners should be responsible for maintaining their homes with assistance targeted at the most vulnerable households. The new policy tools signal a shift from grants to loans to assist homeowners to meet the DHS. The loan products provide for resources to be returned to the Council, which can then be recycled to support future renewal programmes and achieve more housing improvement. They have also been developed as a pragmatic response to Government guidance that access to

⁴ Tees Valley Private Sector Housing Group: Housing Stock Projections, BRE, June 2007

future funding in these area will be dependent on the development of workable loan schemes. The policy tools include relocation packages which aim to encourage homeowners affected by HMR programmes to re-invest elsewhere within the town's Older Housing Area and to improve relocation properties to meet the DHS. These new approaches will make more effective use of resources and maximise the number of property improvements resulting from public sector intervention.

- 4.19 The new approach to property repair and improvement is underpinned by the provision of two different loan products; a secured interest free repayment loan and an equity share loan. The former is a basic repayment loan, which is secured against the property. The latter enables the homeowner to borrow capital which is secured against their property and is repayable at some future date, usually when the property is sold. A combination of these products (Combination Loan) will be made available where an applicant has some repayment ability or some equity in their property, but individually these are not sufficient to cover the full cost of the works required. The services of an Independent Financial Adviser (IFA) will be secured to offer advice to anyone taking on an additional financial responsibility. For more information please see the link to the Council's website and/or the contact person listed in the Key Contacts section of this Strategy.

Home Assistance, Priority Area Assistance and Loan Match Incentive

- 4.20 A Home Assistance Loan is intended to improve levels of decency in private sector owner-occupied properties. It is available to owner-occupiers throughout the town who are aged 60 or over and/or in receipt of one of the principal means tested or other qualifying benefits. Applicants assessed by an IFA as being able to access commercial lending will not be eligible. This provides access to between £1,500 and £20,000.
- 4.21 Priority Area Assistance is designed to support ongoing regeneration initiatives and provides the same level of assistance to residents within the Facelift areas of Gresham Road and Crescent Road and those in receipt of assistance from the Older Housing Relocation Scheme (OHRAS) who are moving to another property within the Older Housing Area so that their homes can be acquired for redevelopment. As this product aims to assist areas identified as needing targeted housing investment eligible applicants will not be means tested, but will still be assessed by an IFA to determine whether a commercial or Council loan would be most appropriate.
- 4.22 A Match Incentive and Loan Scheme will be made available to all owner-occupiers living in the non-clearance areas within the Parliament Road area of the wider Older Housing Area. This scheme will provide a maximum of 50% grant and 50% unsecured repayment loan to the maximum value of £5,000. This approach has already been successfully piloted in the North Ormesby and streets adjacent to the *mima*.

Hardship Grant

- 4.23 Although Government guidance places the responsibility for the repair and maintenance of private sector housing on the owner, it recognises that there are some people who, due to severe hardship, are unable to fund works to bring their homes up to a decent standard. The Government, therefore,

recommends that provisions are put in place to assist such households. A Hardship Grant of £20,000 will be made available to match the limits on both the Home Assistance and Priority Area Assistance packages as it is recognised that there may be very occasional cases where large scale works are required and the applicant has no means to finance the works through either a repayment or equity share loan. The Hardship Grant will automatically be made available to any home-owner meeting the criteria for either loan product but requires works costing less than £1,500 (due to the costs involved in the set up and administration of loans). The grant may also be used to top up loans in cases where some equity, residual income or combination of both is available, but this has been identified by the IFA as insufficient to cover the full cost of the works required.

PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

- 4.24 The Council recognises the value of the private rented sector, and the need for a comprehensive toolkit to ensure it provides well-managed, as well as decent accommodation. The Council has, therefore:
- a) strengthened its enforcement capability to meet the demands of this tenure and the provisions of the Housing Act 2004;
 - b) adopted a robust enforcement policy which employs the full range of enforcement actions from informal advice and education to prosecution;
 - c) prioritised the worst housing conditions within the tenure;
 - d) launched a Selective Licensing Scheme in 2007 to complement wider strategies in particular in the Gresham HMR area; and,
 - e) implemented mandatory licensing of HMO.

Selective Landlord Licensing (Mandatory Scheme)

- 4.25 The Government's Respect Action Plan recognises that strong housing management can make a real difference to both the quality of lives of tenants and those living in the wider community. The landlord licensing scheme within the Gresham ward, which is the focus for housing market renewal activity in the town's older housing area, works towards improving standards of property management and tenancy relations and will assume management responsibilities where landlords fail to meet the required standards. The scheme also identifies and supports landlords who are willing to participate in the regeneration of rundown areas, or tackle problems of anti-social behaviour.
- 4.26 Selective licensing enables an efficient, targeted and co-ordinated approach to tackling problems in an area suffering from low demand and anti-social behaviour. The scheme is an opportunity to establish effective partnership working with private landlords and lettings agents. Private landlords are encouraged to take greater responsibility in responding to problems to secure good quality housing and a safer community for all. The scheme is consistent with, and contributes to, overall national, regional and local policies and strategies to deal with particular problems in the private rented sector. The scheme will be monitored and evaluated to inform future plans, and may be considered for other areas meeting agreed criteria.

Voluntary landlord scheme – Shield Project

- 4.27 Established in 2004, a voluntary scheme continues to work across all areas of Middlesbrough, targeting areas with a high percentage of privately rented property. The project has been funded mainly by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, with a contribution from the Home Office Anti- Social Behaviour Action Area Fund. However, it will be mainstream-funded from April 2008. At present, approximately 300 private landlords, including lettings agents, have benefited from membership of the scheme, which offers the following core services:
- a) vetting of tenants;
 - b) robust pre-tenancy counselling and sign up service;
 - c) provision of model tenancy agreements;
 - d) a register of available properties to let;
 - e) assistance for landlords in allocating properties;
 - f) post-tenancy visits for all new tenants;
 - g) investigation of all complaints of anti-social behaviour by tenants;
 - h) support and training to assist landlords in managing their tenancies; and,
 - i) supporting landlords who are affected by a landlord licensing scheme.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

- 4.28 Good quality, well managed HMO provide a valuable source of accommodation for many single people some of whom are unable to access any other type of housing. Typically this type of accommodation houses those most vulnerable in society and tends to be in poor physical condition with lower management standards. Since April 6th 2006, those HMO of highest risk (3 storeys and above housing 5 or more occupants with some sharing of amenities) have been subject to a mandatory licensing regime. This involves approximately 130 HMO in Middlesbrough. The Housing Act 2004 also introduced a new, wider definition of HMO and significantly more dwellings will be included in this definition, which will lead to an increased regulatory responsibility for the Council.
- 4.29 The Council has targeted problem HMO first with a proactive rolling-program of inspections. A risk assessment system for HMO has been designed to enable a priority inspection programme which has ensured efficient use of available resources. An effective mandatory licensing regime has also been put in place for high risk HMO which includes licence conditions to control overcrowding. A self-certification and inspection programme for two-storey low risk HMO has also been implemented. Guides to licensing of HMO and amenity standards are now provided for landlords and tenants, and information packs issued to landlords with an HMO licence. HMO licensing, alongside the HHSRS will contribute to eliminating hazards and negligent HMO management.

EMPTY HOMES

- 4.30 Empty homes in the private sector are a wasted resource in terms of providing a home for those most in need. There are approximately 1,929 vacant private sector dwellings in Middlesbrough, and it is estimated that 856 are long-term

vacant, which is defined as vacant for 6 months or more. (Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix 2006/07)

- 4.31 Housing market renewal and housing renewal policy activity (see paragraph 4.18 above) will help to tackle the problem of long-term vacant dwellings. A sub regional partnership has also been established to bring problematic, long-term empty properties back into use. An RSL partner purchases, refurbishes to Decent Homes Standard, and relets long-term empty homes. The Council has also developed an Empty and Eyesore Dwellings Strategy. These initiatives will tackle a very obvious sign of neglect and decline and assist the Council to maximise the town's housing resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

- 4.32 The Council has a long tradition of improvement works to properties within the town's older housing area. The current SHIP2 funded Facelift works are designed to have a dramatic visual and practical impact on main thoroughfares in the older housing area as an integral part of the Council's comprehensive approach to housing rejuvenation. Works can include:

- a) brick cleaning and re-pointing;
- b) external painting ;
- c) re-decoration of existing pebble dashing or rendered finishes;
- d) construction of new front boundary walls, metal railings and gates;
- e) renewal of gutters' and installation of UPVc front entrance doors.

- 4.33 The Older Housing Area, and other parts of Middlesbrough have also benefited from the introduction of alley-gates, which are gates placed in an alleyway to prevent access. There are over 500 installed throughout the town as a crime prevention measure to reduce burglaries, arson, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour. They have also given communities a sense of ownership of the alleys.

- 4.34 The Council has also introduced a Home Zone scheme in the Older Housing Area which aims to change the way streets are used and improve the quality of life by making them places for people, not just traffic. The Home Zone design process was managed by a steering group whose members included local residents.

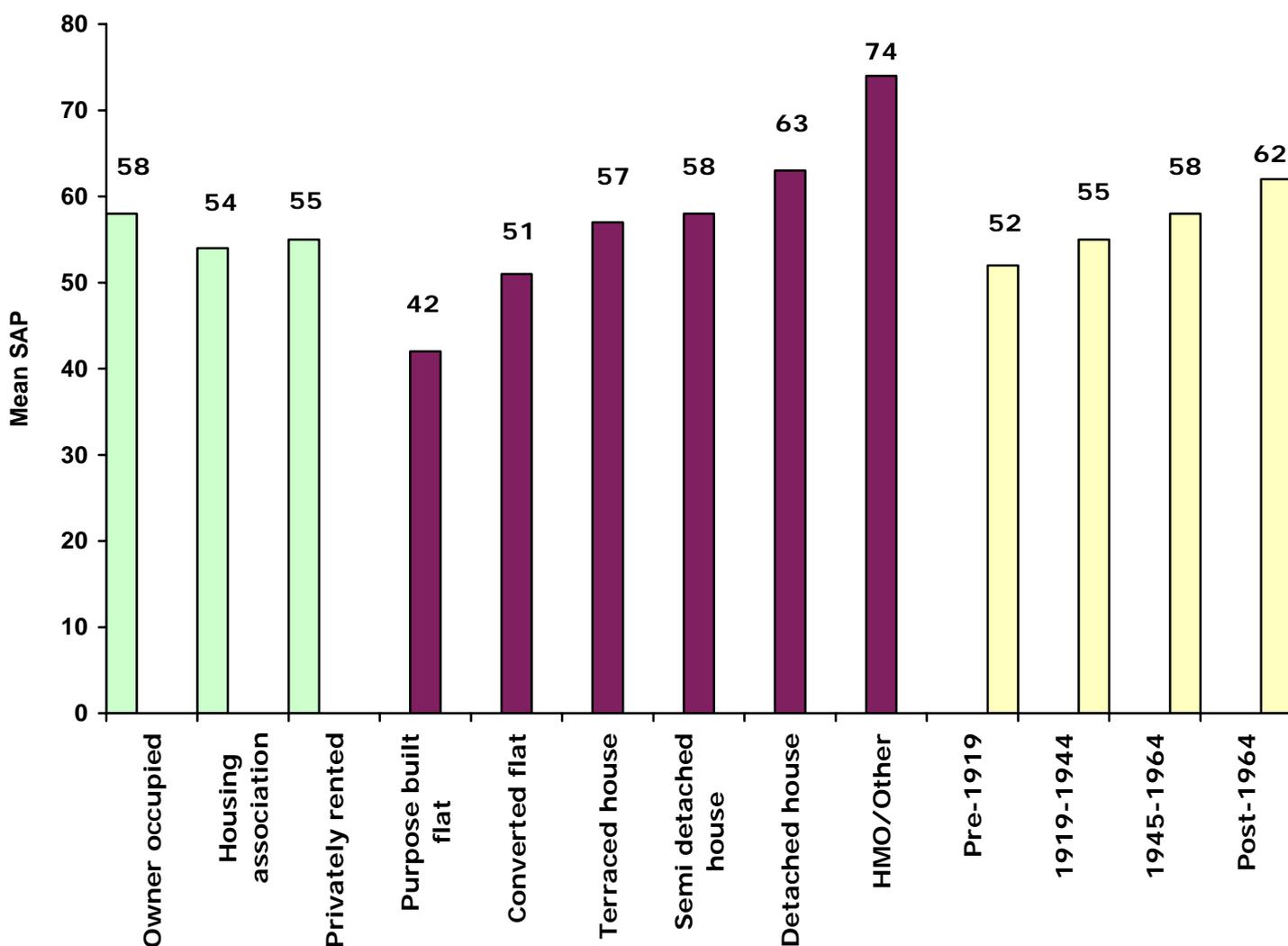
ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND FUEL POVERTY

- 4.35 The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) placed a responsibility on all councils to develop strategies to improve the energy efficiency of all residential accommodation in their areas. It set a target of a 30% reduction in CO2 emissions by the year 2010.

- 4.36 The PSSCS (2005) suggested that average SAP⁵ ratings for private sector dwellings in Middlesbrough are below the national average. Not surprisingly, the best SAP ratings are in the newest properties. Purpose-built flats suffer the worst rating, and detached houses the best. The concentration of purpose-built flats in the RSL stock means this sector fares worse than others, as shown in Figure 6.

⁵ Standard Assessment Procedure for rating energy efficiency in residential accommodation

Figure 6: Average SAP rating



Source: Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (2005)

Fuel Poverty

- 4.37 Being unable to keep a warm home can cause damage to the occupant's health and property. Energy inefficient homes, specific needs and low income levels compound the problem. The Government's view is that any household which spends 10% or more of its income on fuel is in fuel poverty, and its aim is to eliminate the problem. Households which spend 20% are said to be in severe fuel poverty and those spending 30% or more are said to be in extreme fuel poverty.
- 4.38 Estimates from the PSSCS (2005) suggest that 7,000 households in private/RSL homes in Middlesbrough are in fuel poverty. Low income is a major cause of fuel poverty in Middlesbrough. Only households with yearly incomes below £20,000 are affected. More than half the households living on annual incomes of £10,000 or less, and more than a quarter of those on benefits, are in fuel poverty. The older private sector areas to the south of the town centre and former Council house areas of east Middlesbrough are worst affected.

- 4.39 The Tenth Annual HECA Report shows that the town has surpassed the Government's 2010 target of a 30% reduction in CO2 emissions. Middlesbrough has achieved a figure of 31.27% as of March 2006. However, Middlesbrough still has levels of fuel poverty above the regional and national averages.

Affordable Warmth

- 4.40 Middlesbrough Council has, therefore, formed a partnership with National Energy Action (NEA) and a range of stakeholders to develop an Affordable Warmth Strategy. The five key aims of the strategy are to.

- a) deliver Affordable Warmth for Middlesbrough;
- b) work towards improving energy efficiency of all housing stock;
- c) promote and improve, access to free, impartial and accurate energy efficiency advice, grants and discounts schemes;
- d) improve health and well being through affordable warmth; and,
- e) improve affordable warmth through income maximisation and money advice.

- 4.41 The development of the Affordable Warmth Strategy will build on work already undertaken in Middlesbrough and across the Tees Valley as part of a Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) funded energy efficiency scheme. Through joint working with a national energy supplier, vulnerable residents across the sub-region were offered a package of energy efficient measures to reduce fuel costs.

SHIP3 RESOURCES 2008 – 2011

- 4.42 In delivering this strategic objective, the main challenge for the Council and its partners in Tees Valley Living is to maximise limited public sector resources for private sector improvement activity. The available funding over the period 2008/11, at £2.34 million, is less than that for the 2006/08 period. This position adds increased emphasis to the Housing Renewal Policy proposals described earlier in this chapter, which seek to maximise the impact of resources by recycling income from loan repayments.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 4.43 To deliver the objectives described in this chapter of the Housing Strategy Middlesbrough Council has prioritised the actions listed in Table 11 below. A more detailed Implementation Plan is provided in Chapter 6.

Table 11: Priority actions to improve and maintain existing housing

1	Seek to increase the proportion of vulnerable people in the private sector living in decent homes in order to meet the Government's 2010 target.
2	Take appropriate intervention action to bring private rented properties fail to the required standards.
3	Work with, and monitor the progress of RSL partners, including Erimus Housing, to ensure all social rented properties meet the Decent Homes

	standard by 2010.
4	Work with partners to deliver the Affordable Warmth Strategy.
5	License residential dwellings under the Selective Licensing designation within parts of the Gresham/Middlehaven Wards.
6	Carry out Housing Health & Safety Rating System Surveys.
7	Explore funding opportunities to continue to implement the sub-regional Filling the Empties scheme.
8	Update private sector stock condition survey.

Chapter 5: Meeting specific community and social needs

CHAPTER 5

MEETING SPECIFIC COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL NEEDS

To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address specific community and social needs. This includes an ageing population and the needs of minority communities, alignment with the Supporting People programme, and promotion of greater community involvement.

(Also Key Objective 4 of the North East Housing Strategy 2007)

INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 This part of the Strategy considers the housing needs of a broad range of people with specialist care, support and cultural needs. They include older people, those with physical disabilities and mental health problems, and the BME community, including asylum seekers, gypsies and travellers. As acknowledged by the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS), the range of issues and number of agencies involved make this strategic objective one of the most challenging to deliver. An added complication is the incomplete evidence base for some of the groups covered. Middlesbrough, like the NEHB is aware of this evidence gap and shares the view that this objective should be a high priority for research funding. Middlesbrough Council is committed to engaging with all of its citizens. As demonstrated throughout this Strategy, in considering specific community needs, the Council recognises that community participation and engagement is essential and that it is essential that citizens are afforded appropriate opportunities to inform the Council and its partners about their own vision for their communities and neighbourhoods and what they want and need in terms of service provision.
- 5.2 The challenge for Middlesbrough Council and its partners is to align capital and revenue resources to enable the town's most vulnerable and disadvantaged people to live in settled housing appropriate to their needs. The key issues in terms of meeting this challenge can be summarised as:
- a) growing needs and demand of local residents – an ageing population, increased life expectancy, including for those with disabilities, and the changing needs and aspirations of local communities;
 - b) limited financial resources against a backdrop of increased service demands and growing expectations; and,
 - c) changing priorities at national and regional level – Middlesbrough and the sub-region must keep pace with the changing Government agenda and ensure local delivery is aligned with national and regional guidance and policy.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

- 5.3 Central to this objective is the Supporting People Programme (SPP). This is a Government grant programme through which Middlesbrough's most vulnerable people receive housing related support to live independently. It can include, for example, helping older people to remain in their own homes or supporting homeless people to move towards living in their own home. Key to a successful SPP is getting the right services and outcomes for vulnerable

people. This can only happen when Middlesbrough Council and its partners work together effectively to ensure service design and provision is integrated and based on the needs of service users.

5.4 Middlesbrough's Supporting People vision is that it will, "through its continued and developing relationship with its customers and partners seek to improve the quality of life for vulnerable people in Middlesbrough, through the provision of affordable, good quality and accessible housing support services."⁶ This accords with the Government's national strategy for Supporting People which describes a vision of "prosperous and cohesive communities, offering a safe, healthy and sustainable environment for all."⁷ The national strategy for Supporting People is based on four key themes:

- a) keeping people that need services at the heart of the programme;
- b) enhancing partnership with the Voluntary Sector;
- c) delivering in the new Local Government landscape; and,
- d) increasing efficiency and reducing bureaucracy.

5.5 Middlesbrough's SPP aims to meet the Government's expectations. In particular, it looks to ensure delivery through the new performance framework set out in the Local Government White Paper⁸ and will move towards delivering Supporting People funds through the Government's new area based grant. In this regard Middlesbrough's Supporting People programme will further develop approaches to performance management and inspection which focus on key areas of risk or vulnerability. It will also continue to support, develop and share positive practice in the commissioning, procurement and delivery of housing related support.

5.6 A review of the needs of the various groups requiring support was undertaken as part of the process of developing the SP strategy. Groups requiring additional care and support included older people, people with physical and learning disabilities and those with mental health problems. Since this time the identified needs of some client groups have been addressed through the remodelling of existing, or commissioning of new services, and others have changed.

Move-on accommodation & floating support

5.7 Move-on accommodation and addressing the balance between floating support and accommodation-based services is a high priority for Middlesbrough's SPP across a range of client groups. The overwhelming preference of those requiring support is for a decent home in a pleasant and safe environment with support floated in. This provides flexibility for the individual and for SP contracts, prevents silting up of units of specialist accommodation, avoids the disruption of further home moves, often to less desirable accommodation, and the adverse effects of labelling. The challenge is actually providing appropriate move-on accommodation for people with support needs. In this regard Middlesbrough will look to develop services based on the Move-on Plans Protocol (MOPP) toolkit.⁹ MOPP is based on

⁶ Middlesbrough Supporting People 5-Year Strategy (2004/09)

⁷ Independence and Opportunity – Our Strategy for Supporting People – CLG (June 2007)

⁸ Strong and Prosperous Communities – CLG (2006)

⁹ Supported by Communities and Local Government (CLG), Homeless Link has piloted the protocol and produced a toolkit to support its implementation.

local partnership, a move-on audit, the development of a move-on action plan and regular analysis of progress and results.

SPECIFIC SUPPORT NEEDS

Older people

- 5.8 The Council's actions in this area will be guided by its recently developed Older People's Housing Strategy (2007). Older people represent the biggest group requiring support to stay in either their current accommodation or one of the supported accommodation options. It is currently estimated that there are 21,000 people aged 65 or over living in Middlesbrough. Almost half of these are aged 75 or over (ONS 2003 based population projections). There is a close link between age and support needs as people become increasingly frail. The greatest needs are from people aged 85 or over. The number of older people, especially the over-80s, is particularly significant because of the links between ageing and disability. More than half the over-60s have a disability and just under half have difficulty walking. Many live in two-storey housing no longer suitable for their needs. Meeting the mental health needs of older people is also a major concern for Middlesbrough. The Older People's Mental Health Strategy¹⁰ aims to provide a whole system approach for managing and delivering older people's mental health services. It will provide a basis for commissioning older people's mental health services in line with an agreed set of standards and the needs of the people of Middlesbrough. It is important that this strategy is aligned with Middlesbrough's Housing Strategy and Older People's Housing Strategy to ensure an effective response in this area.
- 5.9 Within the definition of older people, there are different groups in terms of income, health and social characteristics, whose needs are diverse and change at different stages in their life. As the RHS recognises, it is wrong to assume that the older population are a holistic group. Only the minority need supported housing, and, generally, the housing needs and aspirations of older people do not differ greatly from the rest of the population.
- 5.10 As the town's population of older people increases, and becomes a larger proportion of the population as a whole, the housing, health and social care needs of older people will require a greater share of resources, time and attention. The major challenges for all those involved in the delivery of older people's services can be summarised as:
- a) an ageing population - increased life expectancy with longer periods of ill health;
 - b) pressure on health, social care and Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) budgets;
 - c) challenges of maintaining independence; and,
 - d) providing choice and meeting rising expectations;
 - e) high levels of deprivation;
 - f) high levels of ill-health;
 - g) broadly low property prices; and,
 - h) issues with older, unsuitable housing stock.

¹⁰ Middlesbrough's Older People's Mental Health Strategy (2007)

5.11 Middlesbrough Council has recently adopted its first Older People's Housing Strategy¹¹. A key component is the Council's Telecare (assistive technology) Strategy which forms part of a suite of initiatives designed to enable older people to remain independent for longer. For more information, see the link to the Council's website and/or the relevant person in the Key Contacts section of this Strategy. It aims to deliver sustainable older people's housing in Middlesbrough by ensuring the partners involved in housing and related services for older people work together to:

- a) enable older people to choose housing that is suitable for their needs; and,
- b) provide a range of support to enable them to exercise that choice.

5.12 The strategy aims to achieve this by:

- a) ensuring efficient service delivery by integrating health, social care and housing services to enable older people to stay in their homes for as long as possible;
- b) enhancing the options for accommodation-based services (including meeting the need for additional extra care provision) so that older people have access to appropriate, high quality accommodation with support and care; and,
- c) ensuring that older people's housing needs are integrated with housing regeneration initiatives.

Physical disabilities

5.13 In order to promote social inclusion it is vitally important that existing homes and new housing development meets the needs of people with physical disabilities so as to enable this group to exercise housing choice. One particular area which requires attention is the specific housing needs of younger disabled people. Adults with a physical disability can generally be divided into two groups with different approaches required to meet their needs.

5.14 The first are those with a disability from childhood whose needs can be planned for over time because they are usually known to social care agencies. This requires effective collaboration between key agencies. If this does not happen then this group can move into adulthood facing an extended period of living with their parents, until they become too old or frail to care for them. Whilst their housing needs might be met, their needs as independent adults are not, thus reinforcing a dependent role in the family and society.

5.15 The second group are those with acquired disabilities. Their needs are more difficult to predict because of different levels of engagement with social care agencies or changing requirements over time, resulting from, for example, degenerative or progressive illnesses. Added to this is the fact that the spectrum of housing needs of disabled adults varies from a requirement for very specific individual design, through wheelchair and mobility housing to that of flexible lifetime home requirements.

5.16 In order to inform its response to the needs of this particular client group a steering group has recently been established with members drawn from housing, social care and planning, to explore how joint approaches for the provision of physical disability services can be further developed. The group

¹¹ Middlesbrough Council Older People's Housing Strategy (October 2007)

will consider how well designed housing and carefully planned public realm can contribute to the well being of this client group. As part of this work the Council is examining the extent of specialist provision and the needs of those with physical disabilities. Early indications are that there is a significant gap in provision overall and, in particular, an acute shortage of move-on accommodation for those currently living in supported housing who have decided they want to live more independently. Unlike other needs groups there are no permanent independent supported living schemes for this client group in Middlesbrough all of which results in the one move-through scheme for younger disabled people being unable to properly function and offer services to new clients.

- 5.17 Middlesbrough Council will continue to promote the delivery of locally based services for people with physical disabilities and work with health and social care partners to assist with the delivery of commissioning strategies that will see a movement towards independent living with support. In practical terms this will require capital and revenue funding to develop new independent living options, and the Council will continue to work with RSL partners to develop bids to the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme.
- 5.18 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) can help people with a physical disability to adapt their current home so that it can better meet their needs. Middlesbrough was successful in SHIP Round 2 (2006/08) securing £1.8 million funding for additional DFG. In 2006-07, a total of 157 DFG cases were completed and 240 households were assisted in 2007/08. This level of activity has moved the Council closer to meeting increasing demand from older and disabled residents wishing to stay in their own homes and the recent increase in the maximum mandatory grant award from £25,000 to £30,000 will enable the Council to assist applicants with higher levels of need and to some extent ease pressure on the Social Care top up fund. However, this level of investment still falls short of that required to meet identified needs. Given this, and the SHIP funding settlement in this area for 2008/11 (£1.32 million) the Council will need to continue to develop ways of maximising the impact of expenditure on DFGs. There will be full consultation should there be any move towards the development of a loans system for adaptations.
- 5.19 Local authorities have been encouraged by Government (through its agency, Foundations) to set up arms-length Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) to provide support and assistance to homeowners. Middlesbrough set up an in-house HIA in 1990, the Staying Put Agency (SPA), which has recently been awarded the Foundation's Quality Mark. Through the SPA, the Council offers advice and help to owner-occupiers, landlords and tenants who wish to repair, improve or adapt their properties. The forms of assistance targeted towards people with physical disabilities include:
- a) Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs);
 - b) Middlesbrough Mobile Adapt and Mend Scheme (MMAMS); and,
 - c) Disabled Persons' Rehousing Assistance Scheme (DPRAS).
- 5.20 The SHIP2 funded DPRAS assists homeowners to purchase a more suitable replacement property where a member of the household has been assessed as requiring major adaptation of the current home, and where moving to a replacement home is the person's preferred option, and would deliver the most beneficial outcome. Although in many instances a DFG to adapt the

current home will continue to be the preferred funding route for households requiring major adaptations, this scheme can be used to complement, or provide an alternative to, the mandatory grant regime. Homeowners will be eligible for a grant award to assist them to purchase a replacement home suitable to the needs of the household. In addition to DPRAS the homeowner may also qualify for a DFG to adapt the replacement home.

- 5.21 Middlesbrough recognises the value of services which prevent vulnerable older people having to leave their homes. The SHIP2 funded MMAMS fills a gap within the overall provision of repair and minor adaptation services for older and disabled people in the town.
- 5.22 The Council will continue to explore funding opportunities to build on good practice and seek to sustain and further develop the innovative complementary schemes described above.

Mental Health

- 5.23 Since the needs assessment which informed the SP strategy, considerable work has been undertaken in order to ensure appropriate criteria to determine eligibility for access to supported housing services for people with mental health problems. A key development has been the establishment of a multi-disciplinary panel to consider the accommodation and support needs of this group. A Care Programme approach forms the foundation for the panel's work and only individuals with an assessed mental health problem are considered eligible for services. The panel, which meets every fortnight, has developed a much clearer picture of the demand for services.
- 5.24 A particular focus for the group has been shared-living accommodation with support. While this type of accommodation is not appropriate for all clients, because it does not always provide sufficient privacy and independence, it can be beneficial for some clients in helping to avoid the negative consequences of social isolation. It is, therefore, considered appropriate that a limited number of shared-living units should be provided, wherever possible improving the quality of provision. Apartments with shared support are an important element of the required spectrum of housing and related support services for this client group.
- 5.25 In addition to the need to carry out reviews to compare the quality of provision across accommodation-based services, the panel has identified the need to consider the extent to which the support needs of people with mental health problems currently living in residential care homes can be met in more independent settings. A particular focus in this area will be younger people with mental health problems.
- 5.26 In terms of floating support, SP has now revised all contracts so that they are based on the number of support hours to be provided to people living in any tenure, as opposed to a fixed number of service users in specific accommodation. This has been a major success in terms of increasing the flexibility of the service and has enabled it to support more people.
- 5.27 Middlesbrough Council will continue to promote the delivery of locally based services for people with mental health problems and work with health and social care partners to assist with the delivery of commissioning strategies that

will see a movement away from traditional residential care models towards independent living with support. In practical terms this will require capital and revenue funding to develop new independent living options, and the Council will continue to work with RSL partners to develop bids to the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme.

Learning Disabilities

- 5.28 Middlesbrough Council's strategic direction is towards local services for all people with learning disabilities, including those who challenge services and those with complex needs. Increasing tenure choice by introducing shared ownership as an option for people with learning disabilities has also been identified as a priority for a client group which has the potential to access long-term enabling funding, and which is often excluded from mainstream housing.
- 5.29 For this client group, Middlesbrough's priorities include bringing at least 10 people back home from out of area placements each year for the next three years by providing localised services. These individuals are currently in high cost out of area placements, including young adults in transition, and the aim is to return them to their home town. Plans are already in place to bring some people with complex needs back home to local schemes. Increased options in the future will help prevent clients from moving to out of area placements.
- 5.30 Middlesbrough Council's Social Care Department also has a waiting list of seventeen people who currently live in Middlesbrough with older parents or carers with immediate housing needs and a further sixteen people requiring accommodation with support within the next twelve months. Future forecasting shows an increase in demand over the 2008/11 period.
- 5.31 Middlesbrough Council will continue to promote the delivery of locally based services for people with learning disabilities and work with health and social care partners to assist with the delivery of commissioning strategies that will see a movement away from traditional residential care models towards independent living with support. In practical terms this will require capital and revenue funding to develop new independent living options, and the Council is working with RSL partners to develop bids to the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme.

Young People and Care Leavers

- 5.32 Middlesbrough has developed a Children's Trust to address and direct children and young people's services, ensuring that they have access to opportunities for a secure future. The Children and Young People's Strategic Plan for Middlesbrough (CYPP) has identified that, between 2005/06, young people of the 16 to 25 age group accounted for more than one third of all homeless applications for Middlesbrough where a duty to re-house existed. Young people, who have experienced difficulties establishing relationships in a secure family background, often need support to develop skills in managing their day to day lives (see also paragraph 5.58 below). Sustainable housing provision for young people in Middlesbrough has, therefore, been recognised as a priority within both the 2006/07 and 2007/08 Children and Young People's Strategic Plan for Middlesbrough (CYPP). This relates particularly to vulnerable young people who require additional support in relation to their housing need. A target set within the 2007/08 CYPP by Middlesbrough

Children's Trust is to increase the number of young people supported into permanent decent accommodation. The Government's new national Children's Plan¹² makes reference to the need to improve working relations between housing and children's services at a local level to meet the needs of young people. This will be an important consideration for this Housing Strategy.

- 5.33 A review of the needs of young people and care-leavers requiring support was undertaken as part of the process of developing the Supporting People Strategy (2004/09). Since this time the identified needs of this client group have been reviewed and this has identified continuing need/demand and highlighted successful services where remodelling can improve the support provided. Following the success of the mental health panel described in paragraph 5.23, work is under way to develop an accommodation and support panel for young people. This will enable specific data gathering on the housing related support needs of young people and will inform future commissioning decisions. The need for an increase and improved quality in supported accommodation has already been identified.
- 5.34 The need for more suitable housing and supported housing placements for single young people in Middlesbrough was recently agreed as a priority at the Middlesbrough Homelessness Forum (November). The Forum is led by Middlesbrough Council and seeks to draw together stakeholders/service providers/commissioners on a regular basis to consider homelessness issues, develop responses, particularly in relation to prevention, and share good practice.
- 5.35 In 2006/07, SP commissioned a Supported Lodgings Service (8 units) for care leavers. In addition, the capacity of floating support contracts has been altered so that they are based on the number of support hours instead of a fixed number of service users thus increasing the flexibility of the service and enabling it to support more people.

Substance misuse

- 5.36 Substance misuse is not only a contributory factor for many of the vulnerable groups referred to in this Strategy, but also constitutes a problem in its own right. Tees Valley has the third highest rate of drug use in England, and the fourth highest for treatment, with Middlesbrough having the most people in drug treatment services in the Tees Valley.
- 5.37 In line with the approach adopted for other SP client groups existing supported housing contracts have been altered so as to reflect support hours as opposed to a fixed number of service users, increasing the flexibility of the service and supporting more people. SP has recently changed the contract for a 20-unit accommodation-based service from single homeless people to those who are homeless, misuse substances and receive treatment from a recognised drug treatment agency. SP is currently working with a service provider to develop a floating support service for offenders and people at risk of offending, including people who misuse substances and receive treatment from a recognised drug treatment agency.

¹² The Children's Plan: building brighter futures – Department for children, schools and families (December 2007)

- 5.38 As with other client groups, SP is working with a range of partner agencies to gather specific data on the housing related support needs of people who misuse substances. This data will inform future commissioning decisions

Offenders

- 5.39 Addressing the housing related support needs of offenders, and those at risk of offending, particularly young offenders, is a particular priority for Middlesbrough Council. The cross-over between this client group and that for substance misuse, including alcohol misuse is also recognised as a key issue. High-risk offenders are also a priority. The initiative described in paragraph 5.37 above has helped to meet the demand for specific accommodation and support services for some offenders. As already mentioned, SP is currently working with a service provider to develop a floating support service for offenders and people at risk of offending. There remains, however, a significant number of offenders, who, because of the level of risk they pose to themselves, or the level or complexity of their needs, are unable to access either accommodation based services or floating support services. Furthermore, the issue of limited access to suitable, affordable and sustainable move-on accommodation for those in receipt of either accommodation based, or floating support services, remains an issue. This can often lead to unmet need for many offenders and a lack of progression for others. Services that are capable of meeting the needs of all offenders are essential, particularly if PSA targets relating to the socially excluded are to be met.¹³

BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC (BME) COMMUNITIES

- 5.40 Middlesbrough has the highest proportion of population from BME communities in the Tees Valley at around 6%. Further developing an understanding of the housing needs of the town's BME communities is a priority for this Strategy. This Strategy shares the aim of Middlesbrough's BME Network of increasing meaningful participation of the BME Community within Middlesbrough and delivering culturally appropriate services, policies and strategies. In taking forward this part of the Strategy Middlesbrough's BME Network will be an invaluable resource. It brings BME groups and communities together and plays an important role in the Middlesbrough Partnership. It is recognised by the LSP as an important part of its community engagement and empowerment mechanisms and is used as a consultative mechanism by the LSP and individual partner agencies.

Tees Valley BME Housing Needs Study

- 5.41 This study¹⁴ indicates that there is need to widen provision of a range of tenure and property types in traditional BME community areas. At least one third of current BME households are looking to move home and only one fifth of these would expect to remain living in their current area. This suggests

¹³ PSA Delivery Agreement 16: Increase the proportion of socially excluded adults in settled accommodation and in employment, education and training.

¹⁴ Embracing Difference, A study of the housing & related needs of the Black & Minority Ethnic community in the Tees Valley Living area, By Andy Steele, Salford Housing & Urban Studies Unit, University of Salford & Naseer Ahmed, EMS Consultancy Ltd, March 2006.

housing provision does not always align with need and can lead to fragmentation of BME communities.

- 5.42 There is also evidence to suggest that a range of issues, including relatively low levels of economic activity, low incomes and associated welfare dependency amongst much of the BME population, restricts the ability of current homeowners to repair and maintain their properties. This can lead to poor housing conditions. However, whilst a relatively high proportion of households live in properties deemed to be in a poor state of repair, or lacking basic energy saving measures, such as double glazing, there appears to be a strong attachment to these properties (and therefore, the area) and a preference for home ownership. There is a preference for receiving financial assistance to improve and repair their property rather than receiving some form of help to move to another property. Middlesbrough is working with its Tees Valley local authority partners to develop a range of financial packages to assist BME households in this way. The Council will continue to work with Middlesbrough's BME Network as this work is progressed.
- 5.43 The lack of larger sized properties in the sub-region is an issue for BME communities. A high proportion of the BME community (around a quarter) is living in properties which they feel are too small for the needs of their family and about one in five felt that they were overcrowded. The lack of availability of larger properties is a major factor leading to BME households wanting to move home. Middlesbrough will take these needs into account when planning new housing developments.
- 5.44 In terms of social housing provision, it was felt that RSLs had limited stock and housing type in locations preferred by BME communities. Middlesbrough will work with its RSL partners to further explore and address this concern.
- 5.45 The study identifies home ownership as the aspirational goal amongst many BME communities. However, in reality, whilst this may be the tenure of choice it is not always a financially viable option, at least in terms of traditional routes into home ownership. Middlesbrough will continue to develop and promote various forms of subsidised home ownership, such as shared ownership. Particular emphasis needs to be given to how this is marketed at the BME community as misconceptions about the cost of such initiatives often prevail within communities.
- 5.46 Improving the knowledge of housing related services amongst the BME community in order to improve fair access to all services, and of housing related support services in particular, is a key aim of this Strategy. Middlesbrough will continue to develop a more pro-active approach to consultation with the BME population to ensure needs are fully understood and service delivery is able to adapt accordingly.

Gypsies and Travellers

- 5.47 The Housing Act 2004 introduced new requirements on local authorities to include Gypsies and Travellers in their housing needs assessment process and to have a strategy in place that sets out how any identified need will be met, as part of their wider housing strategies. In order to comply with these requirements the Tees Valley local authorities have established a sub-regional operational group which has managed the commission of a Gypsy and

Traveller Accommodation Assessment, the findings of which are currently being considered. This work builds on the recent North East Assembly Gypsy and Traveller Site Study (2007) and the outcome will inform future policy and practice.

- 5.48 Following the most recent local assessment about provision in Middlesbrough, carried out in consultation with the Gypsies and Travellers community, the Council successfully bid for funds from CLG to improve facilities at its Metz Bridge Gypsy and Travellers' site.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

- 5.49 The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 came into force in April 2000. It established a new directorate within the Home Office – the National Asylum Support Services (NASS). NASS is responsible for the national dispersal of asylum seekers. To manage the dispersal arrangements regional consortia were formed. Middlesbrough Council is one of ten councils in the North East Consortium for Asylum Seekers & Refugee Support (NECARS). The Council is the lead authority in the Tees Valley and allocated homes for asylum seekers which have since been transferred to Erimus Housing but continue to provide the agreed service to the Council's Asylum Seeker Unit (ASU). NASS has also contracted with two private sector housing providers in Middlesbrough.
- 5.50 The ASU's core function is to provide accommodation and support to asylum seekers until their asylum application is determined. The unit is now a source of expertise for other asylum seeker services. It has opened a dedicated resource centre (Erimus House) for all asylum seekers and refugees in Middlesbrough. The centre offers advice and guidance, recreational activities and English classes. A steering group has been established, which includes asylum seekers, and this helps the Council to identify ways to develop services. Tees Valley Housing Association provides a resettlement service to asylum seekers who are allowed to stay in the UK.
- 5.51 In September 2007, the Border and Immigration Agency commenced a case resolution programme to determine and relieve the backlog of family asylum applications. The backlog cases are known as Legacy Cases and the impact of the programme needs to be met through mainstream services, including housing. The services involved in this programme have been co-ordinating efforts to ensure that the families are assisted into independent living and that community cohesion is maintained.

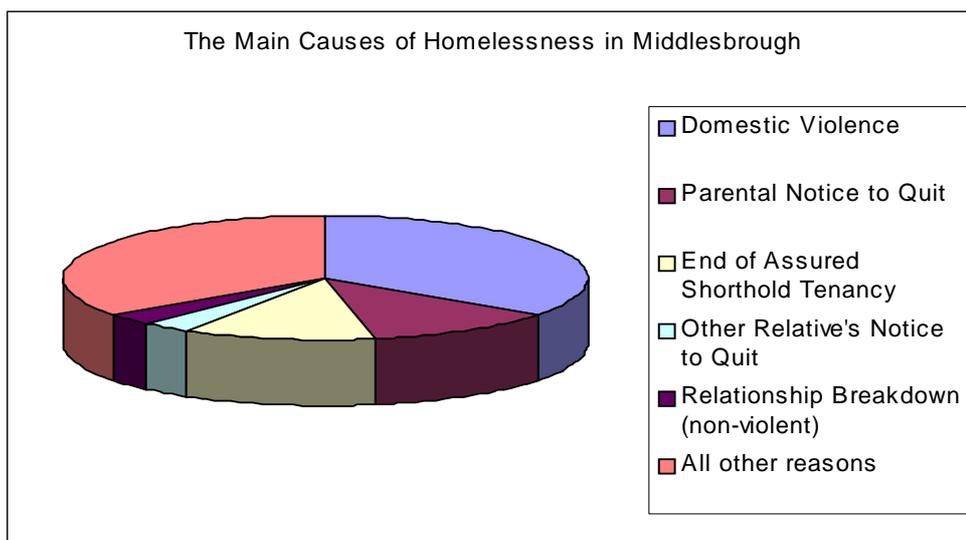
HOMELESSNESS

Causes

- 5.52 The main causes of homelessness in Middlesbrough (2006/07), as illustrated in Figure 7 below, are as follows:
- | | |
|---|-----|
| a) Domestic Violence | 35% |
| b) Parental Notice to Quit | 12% |
| c) End of Assured Shorthold Tenancy | 12% |
| d) Other Relative's Notice to Quit | 3% |
| e) Relationship Breakdown (non-violent) | 3% |

- f) All other reasons 35%

Figure 7: Causes of homelessness in 2006/07



- 5.53 Additionally CLG has set a target to halve the use of temporary accommodation by 2010 by preventing homelessness in the first instance and offering more settled/ permanent forms of accommodation to homeless families and individuals where possible. It is also unlawful to use bed and breakfast accommodation for 16/17 year olds except in emergencies. The preferred option is to use other avenues to resolve the housing need of this age group, and where accommodation remains an issue, to utilise supported living schemes.
- 5.54 All of the above illustrates the importance of focusing resources on assisting those at risk of domestic violence and children and young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Council, Erimus Housing, which provides the Council's homelessness service, and a range of partners and stakeholders are currently reviewing the homelessness strategy. It will further develop the response to the need for increased housing and support services for the priority groups identified above.
- 5.55 Difficulties of finding permanent rehousing solutions for many of these clients have been compounded by the net reduction in, and additional demand for, social housing which has been generated by regeneration activity in Middlesbrough's HMR areas. The Council recognises the need, therefore, to maximise the potential of the town's housing stock to provide housing solutions for homeless people. The Council recognises the role the private sector can play. To date the private rented sector has been used to provide accommodation for those who cannot, for a variety of reasons, access social housing. However, it is acknowledged that Middlesbrough needs to make further progress in this area. The introduction of voluntary landlord and mandatory landlord licensing schemes (see Chapter 4), along with a rent deposit scheme, has increased confidence in the use of the private sector as a homelessness resource. Closer dialogue with the sector is to be established in order to further develop its potential.

Prevention

- 5.56 Middlesbrough has embraced the homelessness prevention agenda. Activities designed to avoid homelessness include tenancy sustainment services, Sanctuary Scheme and Rent Bond Guarantee Scheme. Raising service awareness is also a priority. School visits, mediation services, information and advice packs, and training, all feature strongly. Middlesbrough has dedicated staff within the Council, and its homelessness service provider, Erimus Housing, and has developed improved housing advice and assistance services. The use of bed and breakfast accommodation as emergency provision has reduced significantly. The requirement for temporary accommodation is also decreasing.
- 5.57 Partnership working has been particularly effective in providing services to those leaving institutions such as prison and long stay hospitals. Middlesbrough has recently contributed to the review of the HARP (Housing and Returning Prisoners) protocol aimed at improving joint working in this area. The Council is currently working with Erimus Housing to develop a protocol for meeting the housing needs of prisoners and prolific offenders.

Domestic abuse

- 5.58 Middlesbrough Council has developed a tenure-neutral Sanctuary Scheme. This is an innovative approach to homelessness prevention which provide security and support to enable people who are subject to domestic violence to remain in their own homes. The scheme is presently funded from Local Public Service Agreement monies which are time limited up to 31st March 2009. With its sub-regional partners, Middlesbrough is seeking funding from SHIP resources to sustain and further develop this provision to complement existing, established and valued refuge services. However, the Council and its partners acknowledge that Middlesbrough's Women's Refuge offers too few units to meet need and poor quality accommodation. Neither does the premises enable the required level of accommodation based and floating support for this client group. Re-providing this service is, therefore, a priority for Middlesbrough.

Vulnerable young people

- 5.59 A homelessness grant from the former ODPM has been channelled into the voluntary sector to provide floating support for vulnerable people going into tenancies for the first time, or those who have previously failed in tenancies. SP recognised the benefits of this service, and when the homelessness grant period expired a replacement Housing Related Support and Resettlement Service was commissioned. This currently provides 80 support hours per week to be provided to all client groups across all tenures. (Please see paragraph 5.32 above for more information on the needs of Young People and Care Leavers).

Direct Access provision

- 5.60 Wellington Street Hostel provides supported, temporary accommodation for homeless people. A range of support services are also delivered to the residents. It is the only direct access hostel in the sub-region and the only one that accepts individuals under 25 years of age. The service provides support

and rehabilitation for each client, enabling participation in a Staged Move programme that teaches independent living skills. Residents receiving a support package within the hostel, and successfully completing the Staged Move into independence, have shown a 98% success rate in sustaining tenancies within the social rented sector after leaving the hostel.

- 5.61 Significant investment in the hostel premises is required within a short time as vital building components are coming to the end of their useful life. Whilst the Supporting People review recognised the service as above average, it also identified that the building design did not provide an appropriate environment for the client group, placing occupants of different ages and with substance misuse and/or social problems in close proximity.
- 5.62 The Council commissioned a study to consider options for the future of the hostel. This covered:
- a) the future demand for this type of hostel provision within the town;
 - b) whether the current building and services were fit for purpose;
 - c) future resources to complete the preferred option for the hostel; and,
 - d) the likely impact upon redevelopment proposals in terms of the presence of the existing hostel, or a re-modelled provision.
- 5.63 An option appraisal was conducted which included consideration of the following:
- a) continue with the current site and provision;
 - b) remodel on the existing site;
 - c) clear and re-provide on an alternative site; and,
 - d) clear and not re-provide.
- 5.64 The study concluded that remodelling the hostel on the existing site would be the best course of action. It found that this would help to fulfil the statutory duty to house homeless people and provide a long-term sustainable resource for homeless individuals. It would enable the owner/service provider to work with partner agencies to develop the new facility to high quality specifications, improving the aesthetics of the building. Clients of different age groups and with a wide range of substance misuse and social problems could be accommodated more appropriately. Supported housing management practices could be further developed, allowing the service provider to enhance support and developmental work with the client groups and assist in meeting a number of its strategic objectives.
- 5.65 Given that the hostel is situated in an area of regeneration, and development partners' concerns about its impact on the image of the area, land values and inward investment from developers, further stakeholder consultation on the preferred option has been conducted and has revealed widespread support. Regular meetings with regeneration partners will assist in ensuring that any remodelling will have a positive impact on the regeneration process and complement design principles in relation to the Middlehaven development. CLG has recently announced £2 million funding will be made available for the remodelling of the scheme which has also secured £1 million in grant funding from the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme.

Family Intervention Services – Middlesbrough Families Project

- 5.66 Middlesbrough has been actively involved in the development of Family Intervention Services. These are designed to enhance support services to families who are homeless or threatened with homelessness due to their chaotic lifestyles and possible involvement in anti-social behaviour.
- 5.67 The Respect programme identifies the problem of small numbers of highly problematic families that account for a disproportionate amount of anti-social behaviour. Furthermore the programme acknowledges that this small number of families need an intensive, persistent and, if necessary, coercive approach.
- 5.68 The Middlesbrough Families Project, which is managed by the Tees Valley Housing Group, encompasses many elements of the family intervention framework promoted by the Respect Task Force. The project aims to:
- a) challenge families regarding their serious anti-social behaviour and provide intensive support and positive intervention; and,
 - b) facilitate a change in families' behaviour to enable them to live within acceptable boundaries of behaviour within the community.
- 5.69 A Core Unit (self-contained apartment) is available for families who have been evicted and whose behaviour can no longer be tolerated where they have been living. It provides 24-hour support and has communal facilities for group work, counselling, parenting classes and other life skills sessions. Outreach intervention is also provided to support families living in their own homes who are at particular risk of eviction due to their serious anti-social behaviour. Families leaving the core unit can access floating support in order to ensure they receive continued support to enable successful resettlement into the community.
- 5.70 Since the project started in summer 2005 it has worked with 34 families, and is currently actively involved with 17. To date 11 families have successfully completed the programme and are successfully sustaining their tenancies. However, demand for the scheme far outstrips supply. The Council is, therefore, keen to extend the service by pursuing capital and revenue funding opportunities, including through the National Affordable Housing Programme and Supporting People.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 5.71 To deliver the objectives described in this chapter of the Housing Strategy Middlesbrough Council has prioritised the actions listed in Table 12 below. A more detailed Implementation Plan is provided in Chapter 6.

Table 12: Priority actions to meet specific community and social needs

1	Implement the Older People's Housing Strategy including seeking to identify appropriate sites and secure resources to deliver additional units of extra care housing.
2	Implement new Homelessness Strategy.

3	Seek to further improve multi-agency delivery to prevent homelessness.
4	Aim to reduce the number of accepted homeless cases due to domestic abuse
5	Seek to sustain and further develop the Sanctuary scheme.
6	Explore site and funding opportunities and seek to re-provide the Women's Refuge.
7	Explore site and funding opportunities and seek to expand the Family Intervention Project.
8	Continue to work with the Riverside Group to re-develop Wellington Street hostel on the existing site in line with option appraisal completed in 2007.
9	Work with colleagues in the Department of Social Care and Health to develop key housing-related workstreams from the Physical Disabilities Housing Strategy.
10	Explore site and funding opportunities to provide additional supported housing for those with Learning Disabilities.
11	Explore site and funding opportunities and seek to provide additional supported housing for those with mental health problems.
12	Explore site and funding opportunities and seek to provide additional supported housing for vulnerable young people.
13	Develop and implement a Move-on Plans Protocol (MOPP).
14	Work with sub-regional partners to consider the needs of the BME communities and develop a prioritised action plan.
15	Explore funding opportunities to sustain MMAMS.
16	Consider the findings of the Tees Valley Gypsies and Travellers Assessment and develop a prioritised action plan to address issues raised.

Chapter 6: Implementation, performance monitoring and evaluation

CHAPTER 6

IMPLEMENTATION, PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- 6.1 The tables below list the priority actions required to meet the strategic objectives described in the preceding chapters of this Strategy. For each, targets are identified, along with an assessment of the risks to successful delivery. The responsible Council service is also listed along with main partners

OBJECTIVE 1: REJUVENATING THE HOUSING STOCK						
To rejuvenate the housing stock to meet 21st Century aspirations by replacing market failure with high quality housing in the right locations. This will help to create successful, cohesive and sustainable communities.						
	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL /LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
1	Develop HMR funding/delivery vehicle for the Older Housing Area.	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services	RSLs. Private sector developers. Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). GONE. NEHB.	Receive a capital funding allocation from the HCA.	Delivery vehicle will need to be fully assessed against potential risks.

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL /LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
2	Continue community consultation as an element of masterplanning in the Older Housing Area and produce regular newsletters for residents.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Social Regeneration Consultants	Quarterly Community Sounding Board Meetings. Quarterly newsletters.	Future funding for consultants
3	Develop and implement loan-based financial assistance packages for residents in HMR areas.	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services		Appropriately targeted assistance and maximised resources.	Potential low take-up.
4	Continue the acquisition by agreement of privately owned homes in HMR priority intervention areas and commence acquisition in Phase 2 Gresham (Older Housing Area) by 2009/10.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Tees Valley Living	To realise a suitable site to address housing market failure.	Subject to securing sufficient public funding and private sector investment.

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL /LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
5	Continue to work with West Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Trust (WMNT), Bellway Homes and Tees Valley Housing Group to complete the new housing development at Acklam Green (Central Whinney Banks)	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	WMNT. Bellway Homes. Tees Valley Housing Group.	62 properties to be completed in 2009/10. NI154 – net additional homes provided	Uncertain housing market.
6	Continue to work with Erimus Housing to agree a regeneration strategy for Grove Hill and work towards its implementation.	Ongoing 2008/11	Urban Policy and Implementation Unit & Strategic Housing Services	Erimus Housing	NI154 – net additional homes provided	Subject to securing sufficient public funding and private sector investment.
7	Work with Haslam Homes and Tees Valley Housing Group to complete the new housing scheme at Trinity Crescent, North Ormesby.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Haslam Homes. Tees Valley Housing Group	Future development subject to reservations of current plots. NI154 – net additional homes provided	Uncertain housing market.

OBJECTIVE 1: REJUVENATING THE HOUSING STOCK

To rejuvenate the housing stock to meet 21st Century aspirations by replacing market failure with high quality housing in the right locations. This will help to create successful, cohesive and sustainable communities.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL /LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
8	Work with WMNT, Yuill Homes and Endeavour Housing Association to complete the new housing scheme at West Lane (St. Cuthbert's Mews).	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	WMNT. Yuill Homes. Endeavour Housing Association.	Phase 2 on hold. Considering extra care scheme. NI154 – net additional homes provided	Uncertain housing market.
9	Complete St. Hilda's land acquisition.	2011	Urban Policy and Implementation Unit & Strategic Housing Services	HCA, Tees Valley Regeneration, ONE North East, Erimus Housing.	Re-house remaining residents.	May need to consider CPO.
10	Seek to deliver complementary Facelift and other environmental improvements in and around retained homes within HMR priority intervention areas.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services		Achiveve positive visual impact on key routes in HMR areas.	Subject to securing sufficient public funding and private sector investment.

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL /LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
11	Identify good practice in other HMR areas and work with sub regional partners to develop training and local employment opportunities within housing improvement and regeneration schemes.	Q4 2009/10	Strategic Housing Services and Economic Development Team		Report on options for moving forward	
12	Hold regular Housing Forum meetings.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Middlesbrough Partnership.	Maintain constructive dialogue with key strategic partners.	Not applicable.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROVIDING CHOICE AND QUALITY

To ensure the type and mix of new housing provides choice, supports economic growth and meets housing needs and demand. This will reflect the diversity of urban communities and the needs for affordable, family and executive housing.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL/ LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
1	Seek to enable the provision of affordable housing where there is evidence of need.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	RSLs. Private sector homebuilders. HCA.	NI 155 – number of affordable homes delivered (gross) NI154 – net additional homes provided	Subject to site availability, funding through the HCA and/or developer contributions.
2	Implement the Tees Valley Sub-Regional CBL scheme to include shared ownership, social and private rented homes.	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services and Erimus Housing	Sub-regional local authorities, Erimus Housing and sub-regional RSLs.	More choice and mobility for those seeking accommodation across a range of tenures.	Subject to available scheme co-ordination resources.
3	Review the sub-regional Housing Corporation protocol.	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services.	HCA, Sub-regional local authorities and RSLs.	Progress measured against specific action plan targets.	

OBJECTIVE 2: PROVIDING CHOICE AND QUALITY

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL/ LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
4	Regularly update the Local Housing Assessment (affordable housing model).	Q4 2008/9 then annually	Strategic Housing Services & Urban Policy and Implementation	Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit Other Tees Valley local authorities. RSLs. Private sector developers.	A completed local housing assessment	Subject to available funding.
5	Complete Strategic Housing Market Assessment.	Q4 2008/09 then every 5 Years	Strategic Housing Services & Urban Policy and Implementation	Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit Sub-regional local authorities, RSLs and private sector developers.	A completed SHMA	Subject to available funding and agreement on/implementation of sub-regional commissioning and project management arrangements.
6	Develop the approach to section 106 planning agreements to procure affordable housing to meet identified need (complete an affordable housing SPD).	Q2 2010/11	Urban Policy and Implementation & Strategic Housing Services	RSLs. Private sector homebuilders.	Adopted SPD for affordable housing NI 155 –	The economic downturn may make affordable housing provision

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL/ LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
					number of affordable homes delivered (gross) NI154 – net additional homes provided	through s106 economically unviable on a number of sites.
7	Work with the private sector and other housing providers at pre-application stage to deliver well designed and energy efficient housing.	Ongoing 2008/11	Development Control, Urban Policy and Implementation & Strategic Housing Services	RSLs. Private sector homebuilders. HCA.	An increased number of new housing developments that meet the requirements of LDF Core Strategy policies CS4 (sustainable development) and CS5	Subject to development schemes coming forward and impact of policy requirements on economic viability of development during the economic

OBJECTIVE 2: PROVIDING CHOICE AND QUALITY

To ensure the type and mix of new housing provides choice, supports economic growth and meets housing needs and demand. This will reflect the diversity of urban communities and the needs for affordable, family and executive housing.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL/ LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
					(design) in relation to high quality design and EcoHomes very good.	downturn.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING EXISTING HOUSING

To secure the improvement and maintenance of existing housing so that it meets required standards and investing in sustainable neighbourhoods.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL/ LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
1	Seek to increase the proportion of vulnerable people in the private sector living in decent homes in order to meet the Government's 2010 target.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services.	Homeowners. Private landlords	CLG Departmental Strategic Objective	Subject to securing sufficient public funding and private sector investment.
2	Take appropriate intervention action to bring private rented properties to the required standards.	Ongoing 2008/11	Community Protection Service.	Strategic Housing Services, Private Landlords, Erimus (housing advice), Managing Agents, Tenants' Associations.	150 Housing Health & Safety Rating System inspections, 200 Selective Licences processed.	
3	Work with, and monitor the progress of, RSL partners, including Erimus Housing, to ensure all social rented properties meet the Decent Homes standard by 2010.	Ongoing 2008/10	Strategic Housing Services	RSLs HCA.	CLG Departmental Strategic Objective	Dependent on successful implementation of RSL investment programmes.
4	Work with partners to deliver the Affordable Warmth Strategy.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services.	Middlesbrough Environment City. Energy Action	Local target NI 187 – tackling fuel poverty.	Subject to available funding.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING EXISTING HOUSING

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL/ LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
				Grants Agency. Energy Saving Trust. Middlesbrough PCT. Powergen. National Energy Action. RSLs.		
5	Licence residential dwellings under the Selective Licensing designation within parts of the Gresham/Middlehaven Wards.	2009/10	Community Protection Service		200 selective licenses to be processed to March 2010	
6	Carry out Housing Health & Safety Rating System Surveys.	2009/10	Community Protection Service		225 surveys carried out by March 2010.	
7	Explore funding opportunities to continue to implement the sub-regional Filling the Empties scheme.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Other Tees Valley local authorities and RSLs.	Maximise limited housing resources and positive impact on neighbourhoods	

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING EXISTING HOUSING

To secure the improvement and maintenance of existing housing so that it meets required standards and investing in sustainable neighbourhoods.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL/ LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
8	Update the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey.	Annually	Strategic Housing Services		Measurement of progress against Decent Homes targets. Informed strategy & policy development.	Subject to available funding.

OBJECTIVE 4: MEETING SPECIFIC COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL NEEDS

To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address specific community and social needs. This includes an ageing population and the needs of minority communities, alignment with the Supporting People programme, and promotion of greater community involvement.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
1	Implement the Older People's Housing Strategy including seeking to identify appropriate sites and secure resources to deliver additional units of extra care housing.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services & Department of Social Care	Middlesbrough PCT. Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust. RSLs. HCA.	Local Target L4 – develop additional Extra Care Housing.	Subject to available funding and successful cross-service/agency partnership working.
2	Implement new Homelessness Strategy.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Erimus Housing. Middlesbrough Homelessness Forum.	NI 156 – number of households living in temporary accommodation.	
3	Seek to improve multi-agency delivery to prevent homelessness.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Erimus Housing, Middlesbrough Homelessness Forum, Community Protection Service	NI 156 – number of households living in temporary accommodation.	

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
4	Aim to reduce the number of accepted homeless cases due to domestic abuse.	Annual reduction	Strategic Housing Services, Erimus Housing.	Middlesbrough Homelessness Forum, Middlesbrough Domestic Violence Forum.	NI 32 – repeat incidents of domestic violence	
5	Seek to sustain and develop the Sanctuary Scheme	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Middlesbrough Domestic Violence Forum	Enhanced service provision for victims of domestic violence with emphasis on remaining at home.	Subject to availability of funding.
6	Explore site and funding opportunities to re-provide the Women's Refuge	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services	Endeavour Housing Association.	Enhanced service provision for victims of domestic violence.	Subject to availability of appropriate site and NAHP funding.
7	Explore site and funding opportunities to expand the Family Intervention Project	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	Tees Valley Housing Association	Expanded service provision which	Subject to availability of NAHP and

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
					mitigates the impact of anti-social behaviour on families and neighbourhoods	Supporting People funding.
8	Continue to work with the Riverside Group to re-develop Wellington Street hostel on the existing site in line with the option appraisal completed in 2007.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services	The Riverside Group	New development with capacity to provide enhanced services.	Ensuring that physical works are completed within budget and outcomes meet expectations of funders and partners.
9	Work with colleagues in the Department of Social Care and in Health to develop key housing-related workstreams from the Physical Disabilities Strategy	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services & Department of Social Care	RSLs. Supported housing providers.	Physical disabilities strategy.	Subject to available funding and successful cross-service/agency partnership working.

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	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
10	Explore site and funding opportunities to provide additional supported housing for those with Learning Disabilities.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services & Department of Social Care	RSLs, Supported housing providers, HCA, Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust.	NI 141 - Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living. NI 142 - Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	Subject to available HCA and Supporting People funding.

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To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address specific community and social needs. This includes an ageing population and the needs of minority communities, alignment with the Supporting People programme, and promotion of greater community involvement.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
11	Explore site and funding opportunities and seek to provide additional supported housing for those with mental health problems.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services & Department of Social Care	RSLs, Supported housing providers, HCA, Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust.	NI 141 - Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living. NI 142 - Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	Subject to available NAHP and Supporting People funding.

OBJECTIVE 4: MEETING SPECIFIC COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL NEEDS

To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address specific community and social needs. This includes an ageing population and the needs of minority communities, alignment with the Supporting People programme, and promotion of greater community involvement.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
12	Explore site and funding opportunities to provide additional supported housing for vulnerable young people.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services, Department of Social Care, Children and Families Service	RSLs. Supported housing providers. HCA.	NI 141 - Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living. NI 142 - Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	Subject to available NAHP and Supporting People funding.

OBJECTIVE 4: MEETING SPECIFIC COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL NEEDS

To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address specific community and social needs. This includes an ageing population and the needs of minority communities, alignment with the Supporting People programme, and promotion of greater community involvement.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
13	Develop and implement a Move-on Plans Protocol (MOPP).	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services	RSLs Supported housing providers. Supporting People. Middlesbrough Homelessness Forum, RSLs	NI 141 - Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living. NI 142 - Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	
14	Work with sub-regional partners to consider the needs of the BME communities and develop a prioritised action plan.	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services	Middlesbrough BME Network, Tees Valley local authorities and RSLs	Improved understanding of needs/requirements and prioritised action plan.	

OBJECTIVE 4: MEETING SPECIFIC COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL NEEDS

To promote good management and targeted housing investment to address specific community and social needs. This includes an ageing population and the needs of minority communities, alignment with the Supporting People programme, and promotion of greater community involvement.

	PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RELEVANT NATIONAL / LOCAL INDICATORS	RISKS
15	Explore funding opportunities to sustain MMAMS.	Ongoing 2008/11	Strategic Housing Services		NI 141 - Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living. NI 142 - Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	Subject to available funding.
16	Consider the findings of the Tees Valley Gypsies and Travellers Assessment and develop a prioritised action plan to address the issues raised.	2009/10	Strategic Housing Services	Tees Valley local authorities, Gypsy & Travellers community	Improved understanding of needs/requirements and prioritised action plan.	

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- 6.2 This Strategy implementation plan will be monitored to ensure progress against actions.

Regeneration Service Plan

- 6.3 Performance management is the responsibility of all members of the Regeneration Department, which has the lead responsibility for the development and implementation of this Housing Strategy. Heads of Service have an individual duty to have such reporting and monitoring arrangements as are necessary to ensure that they are aware on a regular basis of the actual performance of both best value performance indicators, planned actions against strategic priorities, local area agreements and local planned actions. A performance management team whose prime function is monitoring national indicators and other performance matters, and is responsible to the Director of Regeneration supports the individual services. The following Officer reporting arrangements are in place:

- a) performance management is a standard agenda item on the Regeneration Management team (Director of Regeneration, Heads of Service, Service Accountant and Performance Manager);
- b) quarterly meetings with the Director of Regeneration, Heads of Service and the Performance Manager;
- c) each service within the Regeneration Department holds both senior managers and individual team meetings with performance management as a standing agenda item;
- d) actual outturns are monitored within each service on a quarterly basis by the Performance Management team;
- e) monthly outturns are compared to target profiles and where actual is not on target appropriate adjustments are made, including redirection of resources; and
- f) performance clinics.

- 6.4 Elected member reporting arrangements include:

- a) budget clinics
- b) integrated clinics
- c) Scrutiny; and,
- d) Executive member briefings

- 6.5 As already mentioned, each year the Council is measured against a number of performance indicators (until recently called Best Value Performance Indicators) which are used to compare its performance against other councils. Appendix 1 provides a summary of Middlesbrough's performance against housing related Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) during 2006/07. National Indicators (NIs) have now replaced BVPI. BVPI performance in 2007/08 and targets for 2008/09 including the NIs are shown at Appendix 1. For more information please see the link to the Council's website and/or the contact person listed in the Key Contacts section of this Strategy.

- 6.6 It is essential that those leading on the delivery of this Strategy are appropriately trained and informed. The Regeneration Service Plan underscores the Council's commitment to training and development.

Arrangements are in place to identify key service level personnel involved in the monitoring of performance measures and provide training and support as appropriate. There is a robust appraisal and review process, including evaluation of learning and linking training and development to strategic objectives. All training and development activities are recorded in a training plan, which is updated six monthly by managers during appraisal and review periods. The Council's Regeneration Service, which has the lead responsibility for the development and implementation of this Housing Strategy, achieved the Investors In People (IIP) standard in May 2007 and has contributed to achieving IIP corporately in October 2008.

EVALUATION

- 6.5 The Housing Strategy must deliver the strategic objectives described in earlier chapters. Feedback from the Council's partners, stakeholders, service users and residents will be used to evaluate its impact.
- 6.6 The Strategic Housing Service will engage with the community and other key stakeholders to consider the impact of the Strategy. Individual residents, groups and communities will be directly affected by many of the specific projects and will be asked for their views as part of specific consultation processes. This activity will be publicised via the Council's website and be made available to stakeholders through the Housing Forum and Middlesbrough Partnership.

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

- 6.7 Quarterly meetings are held with relevant Council Executive Members and regular updates on the Strategy implementation plan will be provided. During the lifetime of the Strategy regular updates will be produced to advise the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development of progress and to consider any necessary changes in strategic direction.

MIDDLESBROUGH PARTNERSHIP & THE ECONOMIC VITALITY THEME ACTION GROUP

- 6.8 The Economic Vitality Action Group (EVAG) is responsible for developing and delivering strategies under the Promoting the Economic Vitality of Middlesbrough theme of the Community Strategy. The Head of Planning, Housing and Regeneration Programmes will provide regular updates on the Housing Strategy implementation plan. This group, in turn, provides updates to the Local Strategic Partnership.

MIDDLESBROUGH HOUSING FORUM

- 6.9 The Middlesbrough Housing Forum, established in December 2004, comprises a range of stakeholder organisations. It will receive regular updates at its pre-programmed meetings.

Appendix 1
Best value performance
indicators 2006/07/08 and
National Indicators 2008/09

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2006/07

Achieved

Indicator	Performance Indicator	2004/2005 Result and quartile	2005/2006 Result and quartile	2006/2007 Target	2006/2007 Result	Key Issues/Comments
BV 183a (CPA-Housing)	Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless.	4.1	3.25	3.15	2.56	<p>It is difficult to make accurate estimates on the number of families with children and pregnant women who will present themselves as homeless and requiring temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Priority is given to accessing alternative temporary accommodation and ensuring that all applicants are registered and assessed on the Choice Based Lettings allocation systems as soon as possible.</p>
BV 183b (CPA – Housing)	Average length of stay in hostel accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless.	0	0	0	0	There is no hostel provision for the relevant client group in Middlesbrough.
BV 064	Vacant private sector dwellings reoccupied or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority.	69	93	110	114	<p>This measure depends on the ability to assist relocation/acquisition of properties or the assistance to owners to bring properties up to standard and attract new tenants.</p> <p>Targets are based on planned clearance projects and estimates of the number of properties returned into occupation.</p>

Indicator	Performance Indicator	2004/2005 Result and quartile	2005/2006 Result and quartile	2006/2007 Target	2006/2007 Result	Key Issues/Comments
BV 213	Number of homeless cases prevented.	New	2.6	2.7	6.29	Prevention activities have improved with protocols being developed with other organisations to facilitate the ability from an audit perspective for the service to record as prevention activities cases resolved through referral and joint working with other agencies.
BV 214	Repeat homelessness.	New	4.69%	4.5%	2.26	The funding of a tenancy/resettlement support officer through the homelessness grants has made a positive contribution to this measure. Whilst the post will no longer be funded from the grant (from July 2007), mainstreaming the role is being considered through the Supporting People Fund.
BV 225	Actions against Domestic Violence.	New	45.5%	81.81%	81.81%	<p>This measure has eleven elements to it, nine elements have been met ($9/11 \times 100 = 81.81\%$).</p> <p>The two outstanding elements are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. introduce a sanctuary scheme; and 2. increase the number of refuge spaces from 11 to 14. <p>Funding has been secured through LPSA targets for delivering a sanctuary scheme. Services from an external organisation are being procured to undertake this work.</p> <p>A long term solution will be looked at in 2008 to increase the provision of refuge spaces via Housing Corporation bids. It is unlikely that 100% of this measure can be achieved in the short term.</p>

Not Achieved

Indicator	Performance Indicator	2004/2005 Result	2005/2006 Result	2006/2007 Target	2006/2007 Result	Key Issues/Comments
BV 203 (CPA-Housing)	The percentage change in the average number of families, which include dependent children of pregnant women, placed in temporary accommodation under the homelessness legislation compared with the average from the previous year.	11%	16% Decrease	10% Decrease	0	There was no change between 2005/06 and 2006/07.
BV 202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority.	6	3	0	3	

Best Value Performance 2007/08 and Indicators/Targets for 2008/09

Indicator	Performance Indicator	Retained	Rationale.	2007/08 Target	Outcome	2008/09 Target
Housing						
BV 183b (CPA – Housing)	Average length of stay in hostel accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless.	No	Middlesbrough does not have any Hostels.	0	0	Not Retained.
BV 202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority.	No	Not a meaningful measure	3	3	Not Retained.
BV 064	Vacant private sector dwellings reoccupied or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority.	Yes	Details Housing activity in a specific manner.	121	131	150
BV 213	<u>Number of homeless cases prevented.</u>	Yes	SLA with Erimus and indicate positive action to prevent homelessness	4.3 per 1,000 household	6.39 per 1,000 household	4.4 per 1,000 household
BV 225	Actions against Domestic Violence.	Yes	Supports LPSA2/9 Actions to reduce homelessness as a result of domestic violence	90.9%	90.9%	100%

Indicator	Performance Indicator	Retained	Rationale.	2007/08 Target	Outcome	2008/09 Target
Planning & development						
BV 106 (CPA – Environment)	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land.	Yes	Complements NI 170 Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years.	60%	74.4%	60.0%

LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (To Follow Soon)

Appendix 2

Key contacts and links

APPENDIX 2

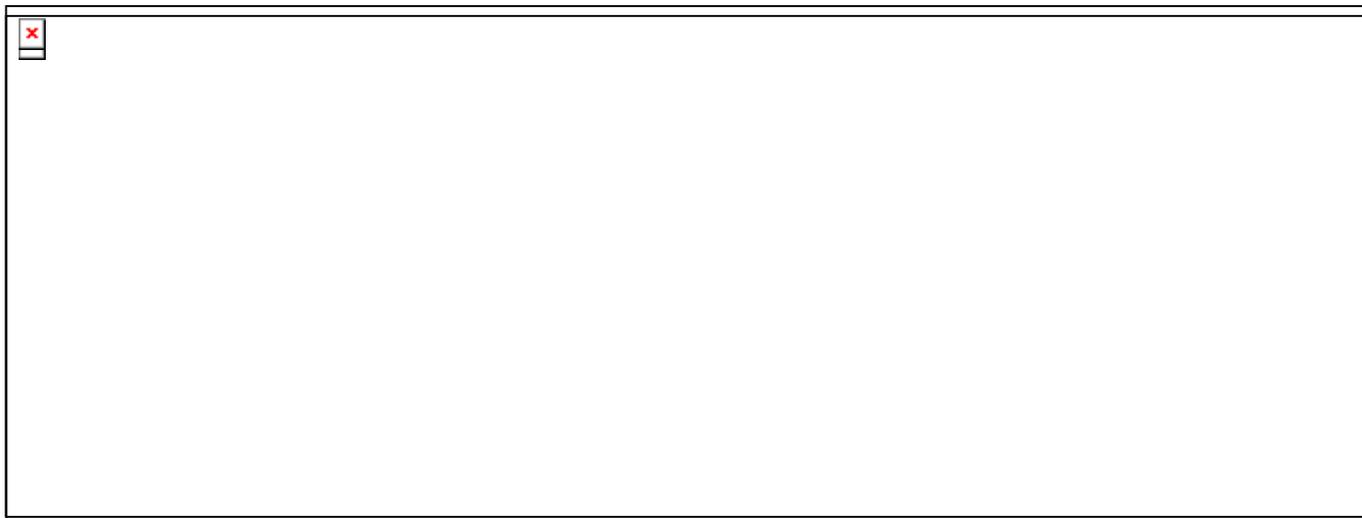
KEY CONTACTS & LINKS

For general enquiries about the Housing Strategy, please contact Michael Quinn (01642) 729154.

Homelessness Strategy	Sharon Caddell / Sarah Brannen 01642) 729369 sharon_caddell@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Housing Renewal Policy	Sarah Wilson (01642) 729148 sarah.wilson@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Local Development Framework	Paul Clarke (01642) 728404 paul_clarke@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Older Housing Area	Andrew Carr (01642) 729148 andrew_carr@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Older People's Housing Strategy	Michael Quinn (01642) 729154 michael_quinn@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Private Sector Stock Condition Survey	Sarah Wilson (01642) 729454 sarah_wilson@middlesbrough.gov.uk
West Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Trust	Kelly Harrison (01642) 757874 kelly_harrison@wmnt.co.uk
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**MIDDLESBROUGH HOUSING STRATEGY 2008-2011
CONSULTATION RESPONSE AND ADOPTION**



**MIDDLESBROUGH HOUSING STRATEGY 2008-2011
CONSULTATION RESPONSE AND ADOPTION**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
COUNCILLOR DAVID BUDD**

DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION: TIM WHITE

9 DECEMBER 2008

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Executive of the comments received during the recent consultation on the draft Housing Strategy, propose appropriate amendments and seek adoption of a final document.

BACKGROUND AND EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Purpose of the Strategy

2. Communities and Local Government (CLG) requires that all councils prepare a housing strategy statement. CLG considers that this should be an overarching document that reviews housing-related issues in a local authority's area. It should set out the authority's housing objectives, establish priorities for action by the local authority, other service providers and stakeholders. In order to be fit for purpose the Strategy must also set out a clear action plan, agreed with the authority's local partners, to ensure its implementation. It

should be consistent with national policy and designed to deliver regional and sub-regional strategies as well as meeting wider objectives set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Consultation

3. At its meeting of 29th April 2008 the Executive approved a draft Housing Strategy and that this should be subject to a six-week consultation period. A report on the Strategy and the proposed consultation methodology was presented to the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel on the 1st May 2008. Subsequently the Strategy was made available in summary and detailed formats via a feature on the homepage of the Council's website. A response form was also provided which could be returned electronically or by post. A press release resulted in an article in the Evening Gazette. All Council employees were made aware of the consultation via the weekly e-bulletin. A range of stakeholder organisations/groups were formally invited to comment as described in Appendix A.
4. In addition, presentations/briefings were provided on request to the following organisations/groups, and each was encouraged to formally respond to the Strategy:
 - a) Economic Vitality Action Group;
 - b) Area Cluster Groups (subject specific consultation meeting to which all Cluster Group representatives were invited);
 - c) Middlesbrough Housing Forum;
 - d) Safer Middlesbrough Partnership Reducing Re-offending Steering Group; and,
 - e) Middlesbrough Council Regeneration Service staff.
5. The information provided on the Council's website was accessed by more than 850 people

Formal Responses

6. During the consultation period 200 written responses were submitted, the vast majority of which came from individual residents of Middlesbrough. Not all respondents commented on the Strategy in its entirety, with the overwhelming majority focusing solely on the Council's approach to housing market renewal.
7. For the purposes of this report responses are summarised under each chapter of the Strategy along with the proposed Council response. These matters were also reported to the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel on the 17th November 2008. Where respondents simply expanded on reasons for agreement or restated matters already clearly set out in the Strategy they are not covered in this report.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic, policy and organisational context

COMMENTS AND PROPOSED RESPONSES

Reader accessibility

8. Almost without exception those who responded to this chapter felt that the socio-economic, policy and organisational context had been properly considered, although there was some concern that the level of detail might be quite daunting. This chapter and the remainder of the document have, therefore, been reviewed to ensure maximum reader accessibility.

National Indicators and Local Area Agreement

9. It was also suggested that the Strategy should include reference to relevant National Indicators and, in particular, those forming part of the Local Area Agreement. This information has, therefore, been added to the Strategy.

Greenfield development

10. Other comments about this chapter included concerns about allowing greenfield development. This area is considered in paragraphs 41 to 44.

CHAPTER 2: OBJECTIVE 1

Rejuvenate the housing stock to meet 21st century aspirations by replacing market failure with high quality housing in the right locations - this will help to create successful, cohesive and sustainable communities

COMMENTS

11. This objective generated by far the largest number of responses. An identical response, submitted by 175 respondents, sets out their reasons for disagreeing with the objective. Its contents are set out in Appendix B and summarised in the following paragraphs, along with a proposed response to each of the issues raised.

Gresham - Clearance of only part of some streets

12. The respondents question the clearance of only one side of some streets in Gresham, despite the fact that the houses are essentially the same on both sides.
13. In response, the boundaries of the clearance area follow, wherever possible, the main thoroughfares of Union Street, Princes Road and Parliament Road. This decision was based on extensive analysis and consultation with local residents and other stakeholders. The strategy for the older housing area was clearly set out in the report agreed by the Executive on the 20th July 2005. This decision was also subject to the Council's scrutiny process. Inner Middlesbrough has high numbers of terraced properties with many sharing design and construction similarities. Inevitably there will be homes which will be retained which are similar to those to be cleared. The condition of homes

was just one of the factors which helped determine the clearance area boundaries.

Finsbury Street - Failure to improve retained parts

14. In the case of Finsbury Street, the decision to demolish one side of the street and not to improve the retained part is questioned.
15. Finsbury Street is included within phase 3 of the clearance programme. As phase 3 is progressed the case for improvements to the retained side of the Finsbury Street will be considered as part of the rolling programme of improvement works which forms part of the comprehensive housing market intervention in Gresham.

Princes Road - Demolition of a section of a previously improved street

16. In the case of Princes Road, respondents queried the decision to improve the retained side and to demolish a section (from Glebe Road to Wentworth Street) which was improved several years ago, suggesting that this points to a failed attempt at rejuvenation through improvement which is now to be repeated.
17. In response, houses on the north side of Princes Road were improved in 2000 using Single Regeneration Budget funding. The houses were selected as a pilot scheme to determine whether housing improvement in the area would encourage longer-term sustainability. Evidence collected as part of the Older Housing Visioning Masterplan showed that the approach had failed, and there was little difference in conditions, stable ownerships or property values between this area and those adjacent, which had not been improved.
18. This evidence points, therefore, to the fact that housing improvements alone will not bring about the necessary change in the area. What is different about the Council's approach now is its comprehensive and coordinated nature. The intention is to intervene to re-balance the entire housing provision in central Middlesbrough in order to deliver sustainable communities. The various elements of this approach include, amongst other things, selective demolition of the worst areas, improvements to retained stock, selective landlord licensing and neighbourhood management. The facelift improvements on the retained side of Princes Road should be seen as part of a much wider strategy to protect and enhance the popularity and stability of the neighbourhood ensuring that the area has a more sustainable long-term future. As the evidence strongly suggests, isolated housing improvement will not address the issues in the older housing area.

Southfield Road – Why not targeted for demolition?

19. The respondents argue that the justification for demolishing 1,500 homes is that they suffer from market failure, which was shown to be more evident in streets not selected for demolition. They point to the Older Housing Survey which suggested that problems of market failure (in terms of voids and higher proportions of rented properties) existed in greater number in the area of Southfield, yet none of the streets identified in this area have been targeted for demolition.

20. In relation to Southfield Road, the selective use of indicators may suggest a particular area is worse than another. However, it was the combination of data that led to the Gresham/Jewel streets area being highlighted as suffering from market failure. The Older Housing Visioning Masterplan was a significant body of work prepared in 2004/5 for the Council by consultants representing a number of different disciplines. The study took over a year to complete and drew together an assessment of the older housing area based on a wide range of considerations. These include factual data on the condition and tenure of property, the characteristics of the local population, the general environment, the activity of the housing market locally and regionally and the views of local people and partner organisations.
21. From the information collected consultants developed a series of options. These options were then measured against a set of aspirations including the desire to create a sustainable housing market, obtain community support, create a quality environment, improve social and economic conditions and, importantly, being capable of delivery. As an outcome of this body of work the Council developed the strategy for the older housing area and determined the priority areas for intervention. It was through this process that the modified, preferred option emerged as the most likely to create the regeneration and sustainable community that the project sought to deliver.

Face-lift works and overall quality

22. It is also suggested that the rejuvenation proposed by the Council is essentially geared toward outward appearance and will do little to improve the overall quality of the housing stock. It is argued that it would, therefore, be much better to spend the money on improvements which go beyond facelift works as opposed to spending the majority on demolition. Reference is made to Princes Road, Glebe Road, Wentworth Street and Lovaine Street and the ineffectual nature of facelift improvements.
23. The fact that improvement works alone will not address the issues in the older housing area and the comprehensive nature of the Council's approach have already been addressed in paragraph 18. In addition, the Council has been offering complementary packages of Decent Homes Grant alongside facelift improvements. These grants help homeowners to invest in internal property improvements.

Exacerbating affordability issues

24. The respondents argue that terraced properties are the most affordable of all types of accommodation and the demolition of such a large proportion of this stock type is likely to lead to increasing prices, making them less affordable.
25. In response, whilst many terraced properties in central Middlesbrough can be said to be affordable, this house type constitutes around 40% of the town's housing stock whilst the Regional Housing Aspirations Study (2005) showed that only 11% of moving residents aspire to it. Indeed, since 1991 there has been a significant reduction in owner-occupation in the area, and this trend has continued despite increases in house prices, which underlines the core problem that much of the housing in central Middlesbrough fails to meet modern-day aspirations.

26. One respondent also suggested that properties targeted for demolition could provide an alternative source of affordable housing and that current market conditions, which are not conducive to private sector investment, will result in them being replaced with social housing, which will ultimately destabilise other less popular social housing areas.
27. As already stated in paragraph 25, many people do not aspire to this form of affordable housing, particularly in the most run-down streets. The current slow down in house building rates is regarded as a temporary situation and there is no evidence to show that families will suddenly choose to buy terraced houses in the inner area, instead they may rent or wait for the market balance to be restored. The Council remains committed to the provision of quality homes in balanced, mixed tenure communities and this long-term strategic goal will not be deflected by short-term market conditions.

Investment by owners in major improvements

28. The respondents argue that the Council's Strategy was developed when the average price of terrace housing in the north meant it was almost impossible to recoup any investment spending on major home improvements. The respondents argue that it is now worthwhile to invest in such improvements.
29. In response, the ability to recoup investment in housing, and decisions to make home improvements, are not based solely on property values. A wide range of factors are at play, including the homeowners capacity to invest, and their willingness to do so having regard to the sustainability of their neighbourhood. With respect to the cost of terraced property, the available evidence shows that the value of this type of accommodation has risen at a slower rate than other types of property. This has increased the differential and made it more difficult for owners of terraced housing to move to different types of property as their household needs change. By reducing the supply and regenerating neighbourhoods the aim is to increase values in line with other areas which will benefit owners in the long-term as the value of their asset rises.

Justification for the strategy

30. It is suggested that the Council's Strategy fails to prove conclusively why certain homes should be cleared when others of the same age and condition should remain. It is also suggested that a workable housing strategy needs to be able to adapt to changing circumstances, and that numerous consultation periods, and market changes, have not resulted in the Strategy being reconsidered.
31. In response, the Council has developed a comprehensive Strategy, which has been informed by extensive evidence gathering, data analysis and consultation, as described in paragraphs 18, 20 and 21. The Strategy has not been based on the clearance of a certain design, specification or age of property. It is based on a robust analysis of a wide range of data about the older housing area.
32. A number of respondents, whilst in general agreement with the overall objective, expressed a strong preference for rejuvenation without demolition. Others suggested that Council's intervention in Gresham was trapping people in low demand neighbourhoods.

33. The case for a comprehensive approach is set out in the Council's Strategy. Far from trapping people in low demand neighbourhoods the Strategy aims to do the exact opposite by tackling the problem of market exclusion.

Residents' welfare

34. Finally, a number of respondents suggested that Council's intervention in Gresham placed little importance on the welfare of inhabitants.
35. In response, the Council recognises that having to move home so that an area can be improved is a very traumatic experience. It has, therefore, put in place arrangements which provide dedicated support all affected residents. Each resident has a named case officer responsible for assisting them through the relocation process and ensuring they are properly advised on the range of rehousing options and the financial assistance packages available. Regular newsletters are provided to all residents to keep them up to date on regeneration activity and events in their area.

Regeneration and training/employment measures

36. It was suggested that more emphasis could be given to the need to combine other regeneration measures with housing interventions, particularly the training and employment aspects. The Strategy has been amended to reflect this suggestion.

Mixed tenure development

37. One respondent highlighted the importance of ensuring that in mixed tenure development all tenures are incorporated simultaneously so that communities are developed concurrently. The respondent cited this as a particular concern given the current housing market where, due to the reluctance of private sector developers to commence development until there is greater market certainty, and specific timescales required by the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Homes Programme, affordable and intermediate housing development may take place prior to development for owner-occupation.
38. In response to this concern, whilst it is clearly desirable that mixed tenure development occurs concurrently, a degree of pragmatism may be required if potential funding opportunities are to be maximised. The commencement of development can help stimulate market interest. The Council is currently working with the Housing Corporation and other partners to consider how more flexible approaches can help support the housing market in these challenging times.

Resources and partnership working

39. It was noted that the delivery of priority actions for Objective 1 are dependent on the Council securing long term resources and resolving gap funding, which may be particularly challenging in the present housing/financial climate. Similarly, a number of priorities are also very dependent on the social and private sector as the strategic delivery vehicles, with the Council retaining a purely strategic or monitoring role. In response, this is an important consideration which is already referred to in the draft Strategy.

Priority actions

40. Some respondents also commented that the actions set out at the end of this chapter should be prioritised. Where possible some priority has, therefore, been reflected in the final draft

CHAPTER 3: OBJECTIVE 2

Ensure the type and mix of new housing provides choice, supports economic growth and meets housing needs and demand - this will reflect the diversity of urban communities and the needs for affordable, family and executive housing

COMMENTS AND PROPOSED RESPONSES

Greenfield development

41. All those responding to this chapter agreed with the objective. However, a number of respondents qualified their support by expressing the view that there should be a presumption against greenfield development. The legitimacy of using the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure affordable housing in new development (commonly termed section 106 agreements) was also questioned by a number of residents. It was also argued that demand and choice can be met by the redevelopment of existing sites.
42. In response to these comments it is recommended that the Strategy remains unchanged. Whilst a significant amount of new development does actually take place on previously developed land (in the region of 78% over the period 2004/05 to 2007/08), some greenfield sites are required to:
- a) meet the Regional Spatial Strategy net additional dwellings target of almost 7,000 new dwellings between 2004-2021;
 - b) satisfy the Government's Planning Policy Statement 3 requirement to have a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites available; and,
 - c) ensure a range of house types/tenures come forward which will provide an improved housing offer and help to reverse population decline by retaining existing residents and attracting economically active people back into Middlesbrough to secure its long term prosperity.
43. It is also important to correct some respondents' misconceptions about planning legislation. Securing the provision of affordable housing is an entirely lawful and legitimate use of section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and is encouraged by Government and its agencies where local authorities have an identified need for affordable housing.

Site 44 in Coulby Newham

44. A number of respondents raised specific objections to the proposed development of Site 44 in Coulby Newham on the grounds that it is a well-used and valued recreational space and haven for flora and fauna in a town

which, they argue, lacks such provision. In response, the Housing Strategy does not propose sites for development. Site 44 is an allocated housing site in the Middlesbrough Local Plan and was subject to extensive consultation and public inquiry by an independent planning inspector as part of its preparation taking into account various representations. This allocation has been taken forward in the Local Development Framework Regeneration Development Plan Document and will be subject to an independent examination in November 2008.

Choice Based Lettings

45. One respondent felt that whilst the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) approach is appropriately outlined, not enough is acknowledged as to the evidence base that this provides, along with the homelessness service, in terms of housing need and demand. It was also commented that CBL has been instrumental in other authorities in helping to deliver balance and mix when tied into managed lettings, and this could have been more appropriately considered. These matters are now acknowledged in the Strategy.

Changes in the housing market

46. It was suggested that the Strategy must address recent changes in the housing market. In response, as these concerns have come to light towards the end of the drafting process, and as the current economic climate and responses to it are particularly dynamic, it is proposed that such matters continue to be closely monitored and considered as part of Strategy update and review process (see paragraph 65).

Lifetime Homes

47. Reference was made by one respondent to the need to ensure all new buildings meet Lifetime Homes Standards so as to meet changing needs and produce a cost saving to the Council through a reduced need for adaptations via Disabled Facilities Grants. In line with current national housing and health policy the Council accepts the need to build more inclusive and flexible housing and supports the Government's commitment to ensure that all public sector funded housing is built to Lifetime Homes Standards by 2011. The Council will also look at how best to encourage the take-up of Lifetime Homes elsewhere, and this issue is to be explored as part of the further development and implementation of the Older People's Housing Strategy and Physical Disabilities Housing Strategy.

Fire safety

48. Cleveland Fire Brigade made a specific request to be given the opportunity to make comment on proposed new developments and refurbishments in order to discuss the feasibility of providing either water suppression/residential sprinkler systems to properties. Whilst this is not something with which the Council can insist developers comply, it is proposed that the Council encourages the proactive approach of Fire Brigade in this area, by providing copies of the weekly planning applications bulletin so that, where appropriate, they may progress matters with individual applicants.

Housing for those struggling to get on the housing ladder

49. Finally, whilst some respondents agreed with the need to create more owner-occupied housing in Middlesbrough it was also thought important not to restrict the availability of accommodation for young people and others who struggle to get onto the housing ladder. It is felt that this matter is appropriately addressed in the Strategy. It aims to ensure the type and mix of new housing provides choice, supports economic growth and meets housing needs and demand. The Council's approach will be informed by ensuring an up-to-date understanding of the housing market through a Local Housing Assessment and Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

CHAPTER 4: OBJECTIVE 3

Secure the improvement and maintenance of existing housing so that it meets required standards and investing in sustainable neighbourhoods

COMMENTS AND PROPOSED RESPONSES

50. All those who responded on this Chapter agreed with the objective.

Repair versus demolition

51. Reference was also made to the need to repair and improve rather than demolish homes. The need to demolish some homes is explained in the proposed response to comments on Objective 1.

Fuel Poverty

52. Concerns were expressed about the levels of fuel poverty in the private sector and the impact of significant increases in energy prices in 2008, which will have the greatest impact on those people living in the least energy efficient properties. In response, matters relating to fuel poverty are considered in detail in Middlesbrough's Affordable Warmth Strategy, which is referred to in the Housing Strategy.

Priority actions

53. Again, it was felt that priority actions designed to deliver it should be prioritised. Some respondents also commented that the actions set out at the end of this chapter should be prioritised. Where possible some priority has, therefore, been reflected in the final draft.

CHAPTER 5: OBJECTIVE 4

Promote good management and targeted housing investment to address specific community and social needs - this includes an ageing population and the needs of minority communities, and promotion of greater community involvement

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

54. All those who responded on this chapter agreed with the objective.

Diversity

55. In terms of the specific priority actions to deliver the objective many respondents felt that there was too much emphasis on too many diverse groups, without expanding on their reasons for this conclusion. In response it is recommended that the Strategy remains unchanged as it is essential that it meets the needs of all of the people of Middlesbrough, which are many and varied.

Rapidly deteriorating conditions

56. A number of respondents suggested that this chapter should address the needs of those with rapidly deteriorating conditions, including the potential need to fast-track to services and/or adaptations to enable independence to continue as long as possible. Reference was also made to the importance of considering a more dynamic and flexible approach to funding care packages rather than an extension of a loans system for adaptations. In response, all applicants for adaptations are already assessed by an Occupational Therapist and works fast-tracked for priority applicants. The maximum mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant has recently been raised from £25,000 to £30,000, which should ease the pressure on the Social Care DFG top up fund. The Strategy has been amended to reflect this position and there will be full consultation should there be any further development of a loans system for adaptations.

Sub-regional working

57. A number of housing providers, particularly those engaged in Supporting People from the Voluntary and Community Sector working across local authority boundaries within the Tees Valley, have suggested that they often have to work to different criteria and regulations. The concern was expressed that this causes difficulties and sometimes barriers if an individual wishes to re-locate to another locality in the Tees Valley area and also beyond to North Yorkshire, County Durham and Tyne and Wear. In response, the Tees Valley local authorities and their RSL partners have extensive sub-regional working arrangements and the delivery of a common allocations policy and extension of Choice Based Lettings Scheme across the sub-region will result in improvements in this area.

Dementia

58. Finally, in light of an ageing population and the increase in the incidence of dementia and other such illnesses, it was proposed that the use of assistive technology and telecare could be explored to prevent hospital admissions and care interventions. In response, Assistive Technology is considered in detail in the Older People's Housing Strategy, which is referred to in this chapter. The Council has also developed a Telecare Strategy. In both areas it is recommended that more informative references and links are provided in the final draft of the Strategy.

Priority actions

59. Again, some respondents also commented that the actions set out at the end of this chapter should be prioritised. Where possible some priority has, therefore, been reflected in the final draft.

CHAPTER 6: IMPLEMENTATION, PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

COMMENTS AND PROPOSED RESPONSES

60. Most respondents to this chapter agreed that the relevant partners have been identified in the implementation plan to meet the strategic objectives. As to whether the implementation plan timescales are appropriate/achievable many respondents felt that they were unable to judge, without explaining why. Those who did felt that the plan could be made more SMART i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. Reference was also made to the present economic climate, which may delay new housing developments. One group of respondents highlighted the importance of linking the implementation plan to the Local Area Agreement and Single Set of National Indicators. Finally, it was also suggested that training for staff and an appropriate mechanism should be included in this chapter so that those delivering services and developing housing related policies are appropriately trained and have up-to-date information.
61. In light of the comments above the implementation plan has been reviewed and amended accordingly.

UNIVERSITY WARD

62. In addition to the written responses referred to above, 140 residents in the University Ward submitted identical forms in response to the Strategy consultation. This identified a set of common concerns, many of which go well beyond matters addressed by the Strategy, including:
- a) road safety, residents' street parking and traffic congestion;
 - b) litter and cleanliness of streets and alleys
 - c) condition of roads;
 - d) dog fouling and vermin;
 - e) community cohesion;
 - f) improvements to properties;
 - g) lack of youth facilities; and,
 - h) impact of regeneration and demolition plans.
63. In response, officers from Regeneration, Environment and Children, Families and Learning have arranged meetings with the relevant elected members to discuss their concerns and how they might best be addressed.

HOUSING STRATEGY PUBLICATION AND ANNUAL UPDATES

64. It is proposed that the amended Strategy is publicised by way of a press release and added to the Council's website. Paper and electronic versions will be made available on request.
65. During the lifetime of the Strategy regular updates will be produced to advise the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development of progress and to consider any necessary changes in strategic direction. This is a Government requirement. Again, it is proposed that this activity will be publicised via the Council's website and be made available to stakeholders through the Housing Forum and Middlesbrough Partnership.

OPTION APPRAISAL/RISK ASSESSMENT

66. Preparing a Housing Strategy is a mandatory duty for councils. Only through effective strategy development, implementation and evaluation will the Council satisfy the Government requirement of ensuring that the impact of available resources is maximised in order to secure the best possible housing and related outcomes for Middlesbrough. The recent consultation process is an important part of the Strategy development process and will help to ensure its effectiveness.
67. Regular performance monitoring and review will help to mitigate risks relating to the successful delivery of the Strategy, including those associated with changes in levels of available resources, partnership working arrangements and relevant national, regional and local policy.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

68. The resources already secured to deliver the Strategy are set out in detail within the document. These include Single Housing Investment Pot funding from the NEHB, CLG Housing Market Renewal Funding, the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme, RSL and private sector investment. Successful implementation is dependent on securing adequate resources throughout the lifetime of the Strategy and this area will be a key consideration in the proposed regular review and update process. The Strategy also identifies a number of areas where detailed research will be required, for example the development of a Physical Disabilities Housing Strategy. As these areas of work are more fully scoped it will be possible to determine their resource implications and further reports will be brought forward to the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development as appropriate.

Ward Implications

69. The strategic priorities identified within the Strategy affect a number of wards directly and impact more generally on all wards. Concerns raised by residents in the University Ward are specifically addressed in this report.

Legal Implications

70. Legal implications arising out of Strategy implementation will be reported as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

71. It is recommended that the Executive:
- a) endorses the proposed responses to the comments received during the Strategy consultation period, including proposed changes to the draft Strategy; and,
 - b) approves the adoption of the Strategy subject to the amendments recommended in the report.

REASONS

72. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:
- a) the consultation process has enabled a range of stakeholders to comment on the Housing Strategy;
 - b) comments have been duly considered; and,
 - c) as a result of comments received the Strategy has been amended or reasons given for it remaining unchanged.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

73. Middlesbrough Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011 - report of the Executive Member for Regeneration to the Executive (29th April 2008).

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**ORGANISATIONS/GROUPS FORMALLY INVITED TO COMMENT ON THE
DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY 2008 - 2011**

- a) Government Office for the North East;
- b) Housing Corporation;
- c) North East Regional Assembly;
- d) Tees Valley Living;
- e) Middlesbrough Partnership and Area Cluster Groups
- f) Middlesbrough BME Community Network;
- g) West Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Trust;
- h) Fabrick Housing Group – Tees Valley Housing Group and Erimus Housing;
- i) Endeavour Housing Association;
- j) Home Housing;
- k) Accent North East;
- l) Places for People;
- m) Three Rivers Housing Association
- n) Salvation Army Housing Association
- o) Railway Housing Association;
- p) Housing 21;
- q) Hanover Housing;
- r) Anchor Trust
- s) Guinness Trust;
- t) English Churches Housing Group;
- u) Habinteg Housing Association;
- v) Dimensions North East;
- w) William Sutton Homes.
- x) Carr-Gomm Housing Association;
- y) Homebuilders Federation; and,
- z) Michael Poole Associates (estate agents).

CHAPTER 2: REJUVENATING THE HOUSING STOCK

Do you agree with Objective 1, to rejuvenate the housing stock to meet 21st Century aspirations?

The following was submitted by 175 respondents all of whom disagreed with Objective 1.

Your older housing strategy is unsustainable and lacks measures that will lead to real rejuvenation. In Gresham you have selected streets where one side is to be cleared, leaving the other side standing despite the fact that the houses are essentially the same on both sides. In Finsbury St you plan to demolish the odd side, leaving the even side standing, but are proposing no improvement to the side that will survive. The side that is to be retained in Princess Rd alternatively, has been chosen for some improvements, yet the side that is to be demolished includes a section (from Glebe to Wentworth) that actually underwent more or less the same improvements several years ago at a cost of on average 8,000 pounds per home. In selecting these previously improved homes for demolition now, are we to conclude that this previous attempt at rejuvenation has failed, but then why are you proposing the self same course of action again, and how do you expect it to result in lasting value this time? The justification for demolishing 1500 homes is not by reason that they are unfit, but by suggesting that they suffer from 'market failure'. When assessing this market failure you commissioned an 'Older Housing Survey' in 2005 and this survey suggested that if there were problems in terms of voids and higher proportions of rented properties, that such problems existing in greater number in the area of Southfield. The report even went on to name streets, it considered to be in particularly bad condition and yet none of these streets appear in the 'hit list' of those scheduled for demolition. Your plans were drawn up in early 2005 and have seen little change since despite the fact that the housing market is now very different and that the large development companies such as Bellway have announced cut backs to their new build targets withdrawing from many sites nationwide. Terraced properties are the most affordable of all types of accommodation and offer the best prospects for families to get themselves on to the first rung of the property ladder. By demolishing such a large proportion of this stock of properties, at a time when the major house builders are cutting back, your policy is likely to lead to increasing the price of this type of property making them much less affordable. The rejuvenation proposed is essentially geared toward outward appearance of a terrace (row repairs) and will make little impression on the inside living conditions so will do little to improve the overall quality of the housing stock. It would be a much better use of public funds to spend the money on both internal and external improvements (remodeling) rather than waste the lion's share of the funds on demolition and clearance. Princess Rd, Glebe Rd, Wentworth St, Lovaine St all underwent the face-lift improvement that you are proposing for some of the terraces yet this appears to have done little to improve their longevity since you are now proposing to demolish them.

Do you agree that all issues have been considered in relation to Objective 1?

The following was submitted by 175 respondents who disagreed that all issues have been considered in relation to Objective 1.

The strategy you propose is largely based on theories of 'Housing Market Failure' on which the Pathfinder scheme was founded. These theories were drawn up when the average price of terrace housing in the north was less than £20,000 per home (1990's). The years from 2000 onwards saw unprecedented house price inflation, so much so that you would now be lucky to purchase a terraced home in Middlesbrough (outside the proposed demolition area) for less than £85,000. At the low levels of market failure when terraced properties were changing hands for less than £20,000 each, it was almost impossible for owner-occupiers to recoup any investment spending on such large improvement such as installation of central heating or double glazing as there was no real differential between a modernised and unmodernised property. This situation radically changed during the early years of this century and now there is a marked difference in the values of improved to non-improved terraces – perhaps £90,000 for a fully modernised home and £75,000 for the same type terrace that needs investment. Consequently it is now worthwhile to invest in major household improvements. There has been no adequate survey of the interior conditions of the Towns' older housing and therefore the strategy fails to prove conclusively why certain homes should be cleared when others of the same age and condition should remain. In conclusion the circumstances that led to this described failure do not now exist, and the Older Housing Strategy is no longer relevant.

Any further comments about Middlesbrough's Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011?

Comments

The following was submitted by 175 respondents

A workable housing strategy would need to be able to adapt to changing circumstances. Yet we have seen numerous consultation periods over the last three years and despite public feedback, overriding opposition at all stages, and market changes, nothing seems to have been reconsidered. As recent as June 4th this year a public question was asked at the full council meeting, querying if there was any possibility that in light of new market conditions whether MBC would be revising their demolition proposals. The answer was absolute – there would be no rethink on the proposals and the demolition target would prevail. Will this consultation be any different? Will people be finally listened to, and their views taken on board?


Middlesbrough
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