

STRATEGIC HOUSING
PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Response to Audit Commission Housing Inspection 2005

July 2008 Update

Improvement Plan – Access/Customer Care/Consultation (Generic)

Action	Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing	Lead Officer (and support)	Comments / update	<u>Resources</u> H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant	<u>UPDATE</u>
Develop an access strategy in conjunction with the corporate centre, based on research into footfall and need, which clearly identifies how the housing service will: improve access for customers; develop service standards; deliver mandatory customer care training; and use complaints, surveys and other forms of customer consultation to ensure access to services meets customer needs.	medium	AB / Corporate	Key recommendation of report – to complete by March 1 st 2006 – Item referred to corporate centre	H / C	Homelessness Strategy addressed improvement of access to service. Will be fed into the corporate access strategy when developed.
Renew web pages	Short	PK		H	Completed
Review web pages	ongoing	JH		H	Completed
Review homeless out of hours service	medium	AB		H/C	Completed
Review daytime homelessness service and service standards and need for a local rate or free phone telephone service (Previously identified)	medium	JMW	i - Service reviewed to emphasise prevention and introduce soft split	H/C	Review completed – freephone number in place at Thetford Customer Contact Centre
Review leaflet formats and consultation /participation arrangements for leaflets	short	AB/GP		H	Completed

Review housing service standards involving customers	medium	AB/GP		H	Completed
Review need for IT terminal in interview rooms	short	AB/ Corporate		H/C	Completed
Ensure full consultation on migration to customer services centre	long	AB/ Corporate		C/H	Migration of service on hold - Corporate
Deliver customer care training to staff	medium	AB		H/CON	Completed
Develop a consultation strategy for Housing Services	medium	AB		H	Housing Consultation Plan for 06/07 developed. Annual Corporate Plan will be updated from 07/08
Establish a complaints system for Housing Services	short	AB/GP		H	Completed
Communicate the key messages in the Housing strategy to residents.	short	AB		H/C	Completed
Review the housing strategy action plan and consolidate it with the ADP (involving partners in that process)	medium	AB/ Corporate		H/C	Completed

Improvement Plan – Diversity (Generic)

Action	Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing	Lead Officer (and support)	Comments/update	Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant	Completed
Within six months, develop a diversity strategy in conjunction with the corporate centre, which includes: profiling of customers to inform service development; a comprehensive training package for housing staff to ensure behavioural compliance with good practice and which is tailored to housing specific service delivery issues; and a system for monitoring contractor compliance on equalities and diversity issues.	Medium	AB/ Corporate	Key recommendation of report – by March 1 st 2006. referred to corporate centre	H/C	Completed BME housing research study completed. Norfolk Wide Action plan in development.
Review involvement in the East of England Regional Assembly equality network, the county wide Community Cohesion group, the Racial Equality Council or the BME (Black & Minority Ethnic) sub group of the county wide public involvement forum	Short	AB		H	Completed
Investigate and address the needs of groups other than gypsies and Portuguese including the needs of HIV customers	Medium	AB Corporate		H/C	Research completed.
Develop a BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) housing strategy and specifically take account of Houses Of Multiple Occupation	Medium	AB / GP		H	Completed – Norfolk Wide Strategy Action plan adopted.

Improvement Plan – Performance Management and Value for Money (Generic)

Action	Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing	Lead Officer (and support)	Comments / update	<u>Resources</u> H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant	<u>Completed</u>
Review protocols with partner agencies around case management and nominations to ensure improved services for homeless applicants during assessment and rehousing	Medium	AB		H	Completed.
Use newly increased staffing resources as an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of appraisal, performance management, risk management and partnership involvement processes and embed in the way housing services are planned, delivered and monitored	Medium	AB		H	Completed/o ngoing
Within six months, develop systems for involving partners, particularly in rural areas, and customers in monitoring performance and reviewing the continued relevance of strategies on a regular basis	Medium	AB/GP	Key recommendation of report – by March 1 st 2006	H	Completed.
Identify a risk champion in the service	Short	AB		H	Completed
Review the properties and shortcomings of ' FLARE' computer system	Short	GP		H/C	Completed

Improvement Plan – Housing Strategy and Enabling

Action	Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing	Lead Officer (and support)	Comments/update	Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant	Completed
Review the methodology for assessing housing need to include local needs survey information from parish councils or targeted research data on the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic, older or younger people.	Medium	AB		H	Housing Market Assessment completed.
Assess the housing options available for young people Including supported accommodation	Medium	AB/PK		H/Con	Assessment complete – bids in place
Review the decision made in 2002 housing not to adopt a policy recommended an affordable housing policy of 40 per cent on new build sites	Short	AB/PC/ Corporate		H/C	Review of affordable housing policies currently being undertaken through LDF
Develop a strategy to deliver the required number of affordable housing units as defined by the housing needs study of 2003 for 600 units per year and assign affordable housing objectives to named individuals so as to assess success	Long	AB/ Corporate		H/C	New Affordable Housing Policy to be developed by Q2 2008 following LDF consultation

					process.
Investigate other forms of funding for development	Long	AB/ Corporate		H/C	Completed 07/08
Adopt a formal 'preferred partner' system	Short	AB/ Corporate		H/C	Completed
Prepare development briefs for sites to guide developers	Ongoing	PC/ Corporate	Subject to planning agreement	H/C	Planning target – achieved where appropriate
Assess the provision of shared or other low cost home ownership or market renting schemes.	Medium	AB/ Corporate		H/C	Completed - Part of Housing Market Assessment
Establish a protocol with regeneration service areas to ensure that housing is firmly on the agenda	Short	AB/ Corporate		H/C	Completed/On going – Growth Point status.
Assess the need for a direct lettings scheme in the private rented sector.	Short	PK		H	Completed - service to be developed in 2007 with landlords forum.
Lead the development of a Norfolk wide physical and sensory disability strategy	Medium	AB		H/CON	Completed
Whilst making use of the powers contained in the Housing Act 2004 as soon as they take effect, develop over the next twelve months a private sector housing strategy. This should be based on a revised stock condition survey	Long	AB/GP	Key recommendation of report – by September 1 st 2006	H	Completed
Review strategies including the empty property and fuel poverty strategies and the renewal policy	Medium	AB/GP		H	In development – part of 08/09

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Homelessness and Housing Advice – Performance and Improvement Plan

Improvement Plan - Housing advice and Homelessness

Action	Timescale/ Months :	Lead Officer (and support)	Comments / update	Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant	Completed
	Short (3) Medium (6) Long (12) Ongoing				
Monitor the number of homelessness presentations prevented through housing advice	Short	JMW		H	Completed – ongoing (Best Value Performance Indicator)
Undertake a rough sleeper count.	Short	PK		H	completed march 06
Review protocol with Peddars Way regarding assessment and rehousing processes	Medium	AB/ JMW	Key recommendation of report – undertake as part of choice based lettings proposal - by March 1st	H	Completed as part of transfer of waiting list.
Review the budgetary provision for the rent deposit loan scheme	Short	AB/PK	Budget required – in star chamber bid	H	Completed budget increased
Review the position regarding a 'sanctuary' scheme to reduce homeless presentations after domestic abuse,	Short	PK	Budget required- in star chamber bid	H	Completed
Review the list of private lettings agents it provides to customers asking for help in obtaining private rented accommodation	Short	PK		H	Completed

Review the 95% target for the speed in assessing homelessness cases	Short	SHM / JMW		H	Completed – reviewed and maintained
Within six months, develop a strategic approach to the provision of interim and temporary accommodation to ensure it is of appropriate quality and in locations which optimise the opportunity for customers to maintain existing support networks.	Medium	AB		H	Completed – actions ongoing
Review procedures and practices engaged in placing homeless people in interim accommodation	Short	JMW		H	Completed
Review the level of support given to people placed in temporary accommodation	Short	AB		H	Completed review of floating support finalised
Establish a programme to regularly check the quality of temporary or interim accommodation and review the need to adopt the Greater Norwich grading system for bed and breakfast accommodation, based on the fitness standard	Short	PK/AC		H	Completed Regular checks undertaken
Assess the need to adopt the Government’s hostel review toolkit.	Short	PK/AC		H	Completed Desirable elements adopted

Improvement Plan - Private Sector

Action	Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (12) Ongoing	Lead Officer (and Support)	Comments / update	Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant	Completed
Undertake a stock condition survey to identify properties not achieving decent homes standard	Long	GP		H/Con	Completed
Investigate the effectiveness of local Performance Indicators and consider identifying further ones.	Short	GP/AB		H	Completed
Amend e mail contact provided on web site from principal housing officer	Short	GP		H	Completed
Realistically assess the risks inherent in inspecting only 30 Houses of Multiple Occupation per year in a district.	Short	GP/AB		H	Completed new target adopted
Reinvigorate the landlord forum and task it to :- Develop its terms of reference Establish an accreditation scheme	Short	GP		H	completed
Establish systems to ensure housing associations in the district achieve 100 per cent decent homes standard by 2010.	Short	GP		H	Monitoring system in place via annual reporting mechanism.
Review the use of intervention strategies to target disrepair in the private sector	Short	GP/Ab		H	To be undertaken as integral part of development

					of private sector housing strategy in 07
Establish a system to prioritise work on the worse cases of empty properties or properties in disrepair	Short	GP		H	Completed
Review the application of small grants and loans, under the 'Enhance' and Domicile schemes, to help tackle disrepair.	Short	GP/AB		H	Completed
Complete discussions to transfer 'safeguard' inspections and customer support role on grants and loans to the Home Improvement Agency. (HIA)	Short	GP/AB		H	Completed
Identify resources required to focus on Home Energy Act work and education to ensure 'Enhance' is well used for heating installations.	Short	GP/AB		H	Completed budget agreed
Establish consultative proposals for the implementation of the 2004 Housing Act.	Short	GP		H	Completed
Agree arrangements with partner housing associations to manage Empty Dwelling Management Orders,	Short	GP		H	Completed
Examine how the enabling role is used in respect of adaptations	Short	GP/AB		H	Completed as part of LAA target discussions and physical Disabilities strategy
Establish a district wide register of adapted properties to allow all agencies to 'work smarter' in exploring rehousing options.	Medium	GP/AB		H/RSL'S	As above.
Review and improve target timescales allocated to dealing with DFG's	Short	GP/AB		H	Review completed – timescales on priority 1 cases have improved.
Agree with partners a system for reporting performance i.e. Home Improvement Agencies and Occupational Therapists	Short	GP/Ab		H	Agreed.

Key

AB – Anita Brennan

GP – Gordon Partridge

PC – Paul Cason

PK – Polly Kane

JMW – John Walker

AC – Adrian Cherry