

Brighton & Hove City Council

DRAFT DOCUMENT

Housing Strategy 2004-2007



Brighton & Hove

Foreword

To be completed.

Will be signed by lead Member for Housing and/or Leader of the Council (to be determined).

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1. Our Strategic Housing Vision for Brighton & Hove

This strategy outlines how our existing **Housing Strategy 2001-2006: “Housing – the well-being of the city”**, will be implemented and developed over the next 3 years. This document complements our comprehensive housing strategy and the progress reported in **“Decent Homes 2002-2003: a housing strategy update”**.

We have produced this updated strategy for a number of reasons:

- the existing Housing Strategy 2001-2006 is mid way through its cycle, providing us with the opportunity to review priorities and actions
- recently there has been some key changes to the national, regional, and local housing agendas
- all authorities are required to have a 3 year ‘fit for purpose’ housing strategy in place by August 2004
- the current housing strategy and its update is ‘close to fit for purpose’ and can be improved
- to reflect current needs and requirements over the next few years

Brighton & Hove’s Housing Strategy aims are to:

- Ensure that local people have somewhere to live
- Raise housing quality toward a decent home for all
- Improve housing care and support
- Make homes warm, energy efficient and more affordable
- Strive for equal access to housing and services
- Make neighbourhoods safe, attractive and sustainable
- Widen housing choices for local people
- Ensure good housing contributes to city regeneration and renewal
- Promote health, well-being and learning through appropriate housing solutions

We have grouped our strategy aims and objectives into 5 overarching priorities, reflecting the diversity of our work:

- Affordability
- Decent Homes
- Care & Support
- Equalities
- Neighbourhoods & Communities

Our housing aims underpin the refreshed citywide council priorities for 2003-2008 contained in the **2020 Community Strategy “Creating the city of opportunities”**, set by the Community Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership):

- Clear leadership to the city
- A council that is fit for purpose
- An Enterprising City
- A Safer City
- A Healthy City
- An Inclusive City
- An Affordable City
- An Attractive City
- A Mobile City
- A Customer-focused City

Since our last update, in response to the Sustainable Communities Plan, a Regional Housing Board has been set up which has overseen the development of a Regional Housing Strategy. The Strategy, building on the Regional Housing Statement for the South East, sets out the Region’s approach to housing investment and gives a clear framework for spending decisions.

The Regional Strategy’s key funding priorities for the next few years focus on:

- affordability and homelessness
- urban renaissance / regeneration
- growth areas
- key strategic land release
- rural settlements
- key housing groups

These important regional themes are incorporated throughout our strategy update to ensure that our work and services are effectively targeted.

Ultimately, our housing vision is:

“To do all within our power to ensure all the people of Brighton & Hove have access to decent affordable housing that enables a good quality of life.”

2. Population & Tenure: Census 2001

The Census 2001 recorded the population of Brighton & Hove at 247,817 people, representing an increase of almost 2% over the past ten years. Our city's population growth is similar to the national average but lower than overall growth in the South East at 4%.

Brighton & Hove has the highest proportion of one person households and smallest average household size in the South East. At the same time however, 12.7% of the city's households live in overcrowded conditions, the highest level outside London, and we are the fifth most densely populated area in the region, with 30 people per hectare.

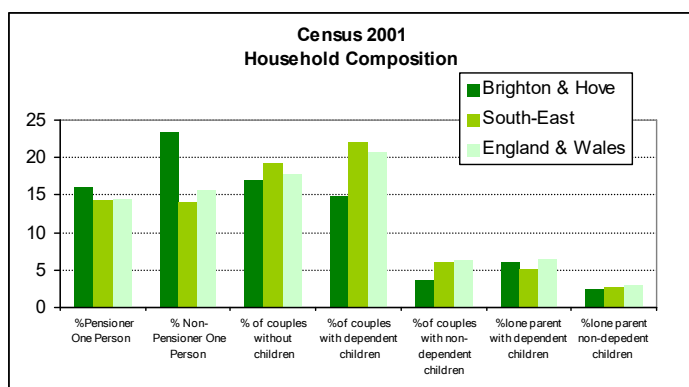
Bounded by the Downs and the sea, Brighton & Hove has limited opportunity for new housing development and population growth. Demand from households wanting to live in the city has been reflected in larger than average property price increases and the high levels of overcrowding.

The proportion of residents in the 20-44 age group is a fifth higher than the regional average at 42%. As the proportion of people in this age group has risen, the proportion of residents aged under 16 and over 60 has reduced to 17% and 21% respectively.

This changing population pattern has been attributed to growth in the two universities, a range of other higher education establishments, and the popular cultural image of Brighton & Hove as the 'place to be'.

In total 22.6% of all households in the city (25,841 households) have dependent children. Whilst one parent households with dependent children make up only 6% of all households in the city, they make up over 25% of all households with dependent children.

The authorities demographics team are currently developing new population projections based on the results of the Census 2001 to help plan future services in the city.



Amongst the more notable housing findings from the Census 2001 are:

- Brighton & Hove has a smaller proportion of owner occupiers than the South East and England & Wales average
- Brighton & Hove has a smaller proportion of households in housing association accommodation than the South East and England & Wales average
- The proportion of households in Brighton & Hove renting from private landlords is the 6th highest outside London, and more than double the South East and England & Wales average
- Brighton & Hove has the highest proportion of overcrowding outside London
- Brighton & Hove has the fifth highest percentage of households without central heating or sole use of bath/shower and toilet
- 1 in 35 of the England & Wales total number of converted or shared dwellings is in Brighton & Hove

Census 2001	Population	Households	Average household size
Brighton & Hove	247,817	114,476	2.09
South East	8,000,645	3,287,489	2.38
England & Wales	52,041,916	21,660,475	2.36

Tenure	Brighton & Hove		South East Average
	Dwellings	Proportion	
Owned outright	29,810	25.1%	30.2%
Owned with mortgage	40,131	33.7%	40.5%
Shared ownership	639	0.5%	0.8%
Local authority	11,779	9.9%	7.1%
Housing association	5,017	4.2%	6.4%
Private landlord	23,390	19.7%	8.5%
Other	3,713	3.1%	3.2%
Vacant	3,571	3.0%	2.7%
Second / holiday home	903	0.8%	0.7%
Total	118,953	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Census 2001

3. The Challenges We Face

Homelessness and unmet housing need continue to exert real and significant pressures across Brighton & Hove, causing severe misery and hardship to those affected and a major financial strain on the authority.

In partnership with the government's Homelessness Directorate, in 2003 we developed our new Homelessness Strategy and Homelessness Prevention Strategy, setting out the city council's and its partners approach to preventing homelessness and supporting homeless households.

Our new strategies outline our work to identify the reasons for homelessness in the city, early intervention and support services to prevent homelessness, and the alternative housing options and resources available to households threatened with homelessness.

Over the last two years, we have refocused our services to concentrate on the prevention of homelessness, as we believe that early prevention is better than simply reacting to homelessness when it occurs. We have tried to better understand the triggers and drivers of homelessness in the city and have directed our services to those groups most likely to experience homelessness.

Our three key homelessness targets for Brighton & Hove are:

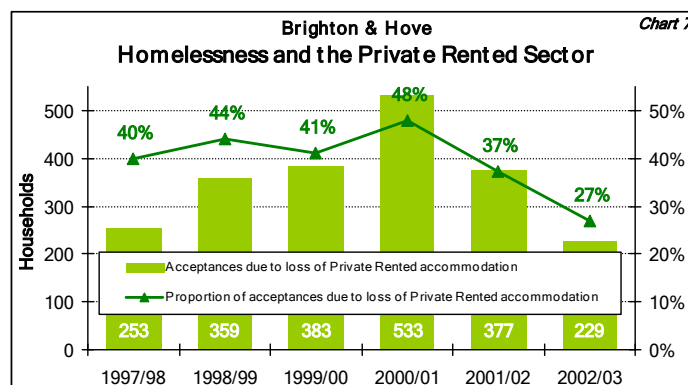
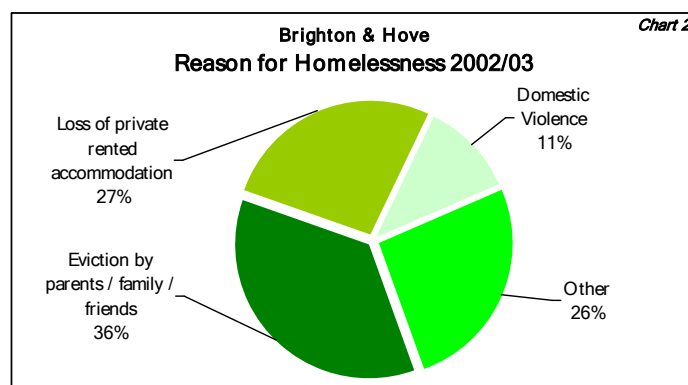
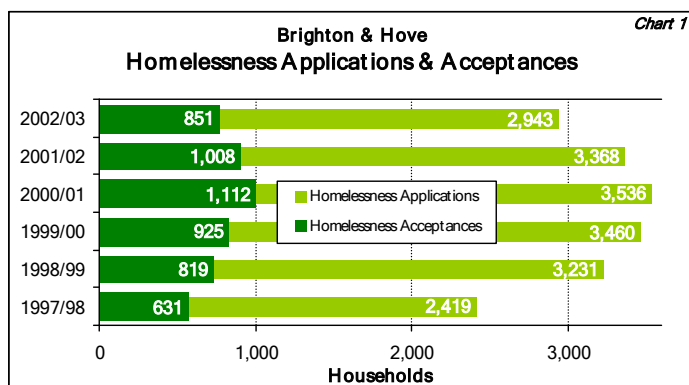
- to ensure rough sleeping remains below two-thirds of 1998 levels
- to ensure that homeless families with children are not placed in B&B accommodation unless it is an emergency
- to reduce the levels of homelessness resulting from the main causes

Although homelessness remains a problem within Brighton & Hove, with 8 households presenting as homeless every day, our prevention work has brought some notable success in 2002/03 when compared to 2001/02:

- homelessness reduced by 16%
- homelessness from the private rented sector has reduced by 39%
- homelessness caused by parental eviction reduced by 9%
- The Housing Advice / Tenancy Relations Service has been awarded a Community Legal Service Quality Mark at the Specialist Level

Homelessness arises from a variety of causes, however, almost three quarters of all our homelessness cases arise from 3 areas, which we are particularly targeting for action:

- 36% of cases result from eviction by parents, family, friends
- 27% of cases arise due to loss of private rented accommodation
- 11% of homelessness is caused by domestic violence



Housing Need & Communities of Interest

Monitoring by the authority has recognised that households with dependent children and people with mental health problems account for the majority of homelessness cases.

Our new homelessness prevention services have initially focussed on working with those suffering from mental health issues and also families with children, and have seen remarkable successes in the last couple of years.

Households with health related issues

Analysis across Brighton & Hove has shown that residents' health varies depending on where they live. Ensuring households have access to suitable decent housing which is free from damp, watertight and economical to heat is essential in minimising demands on the local health economy and improving people's wellbeing.

The Housing Needs Survey 2000 identified that over 3,000 households were suffering health problems relating to their home, the majority of these feeling that it was a 'serious problem'.

A comprehensive Private Sector Stock Condition Survey was carried out in Brighton & Hove during 2000 and found significant levels of poor quality housing in the city. Around 10,200 of dwellings were found to be unfit, representing 9.7% of the total, compared to a national average of 7%.

It is estimated that private sector housing requires investment of around £220 million over the next ten years for repair and replacement, with a potential demand for renovation of unfit owner-occupied housing totalling around £21 million. The Regional Housing Strategy has recognised the needs of our private sector as amongst the most pressing in the region which will result in additional funding to assist us in addressing these challenges.

Unfitness levels were higher than average in the homes occupied by lone parent families and households receiving means-tested benefits.

Poor health is a significant reason for people presenting as homeless and being accepted. Having a physical or mental health problem accounted for 34% of people being accepted by this authority as being in priority need for rehousing. This figure is a slight decrease on last year, totalling 37%.

Supported accommodation remains as much in demand as ever, particularly for those with mental illness and young people.

In partnership with social care services, a full-time Housing Occupational Therapist post has been established to advise on disabled people's housing needs, to assess adapted and accessible properties and to liaise with allocation's officers to improve matching between people and properties.

Residents with Mental Health Issues

Between 2001/02 and 2002/03, homelessness in Brighton & Hove amongst those with mental health issues has reduced by a sizeable 27%.

Our success can be attributed to the work of our Special Needs Housing Officers and tenancy support teams provided by a range of in house and our partner agencies. This work is co-ordinated through the multi-agency Single Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Steering Group through a mixture of funding from the ODPM's Homelessness Directorate and Supporting People.

Rough Sleeping & Street Culture

The Rough Sleepers Street Services Team works pro-actively to make contact with people on the street, verify the fact that they are rough sleeping and check local connection. They then carry out an initial assessment and link rough sleepers into other agencies and services. Those without a local connection are referred to re-location services in order that they may access accommodation and support in other areas.

The team also works in partnership with the Council's new Anti Social Behaviour Team, police and other agencies to address anti-social behaviour in the city such as street drinking, begging and illegal vending of the Big Issue.

Brighton & Hove has been chosen as one of 10 'Trailblazer' areas in a major new national initiative to tackle anti-social behaviour with the top local priority to reducing the number of beggars on the streets by 60 % by March 2005. As part of this work, the council has funded 10 extra Police Community Safety Officers to prevent low level situations, such as begging, before they become a crime. Also, in 2003, the city became the first in the country to introduce powers enabling the police to confiscate alcohol from anti-social drinkers in public places and help them link into support services.

Younger People & Families

Brighton & Hove remains a city with a high proportion of young people, with 16-29 year olds at 23.1% of the total population, which is significantly higher than the national average.

A key issue for young people living in the city, is the high cost of housing, in both property prices and the high cost of rents. Housing Benefit single room rent restriction excludes most under 25 year olds, with nearly 85% of the local market rents higher than housing benefit levels.

Eviction by parents / family and friends is now the most common reason for homelessness in the city, causing 36% of all cases. Young people becoming homeless account for 12% of those who are in priority need.

Therefore it is very important that the needs of young people and families are addressed. New initiatives, as outlined in the Homeless Prevention Strategy are key in addressing these needs. These initiatives include, The Homeless Prevention fund, that provides small one-off payments that will prevent homelessness, the work of the Social Justice Team, who provide assistance to those on low incomes on how to maximise their incomes, and, providing mediation to prevent family breakdown.

The recent success of our homelessness prevention has resulted in homelessness amongst households with children being reduced by 19% between 2001/02 and 2002/03.

Older households

The 2001 census showed that the number of people aged 65 years and above was 16% of the total population, with more than half the city's 85+ residents living alone.

In the last year there has been a reduction in the amount of people being accepted as being in priority need due to old age, from 3% of acceptances in 2001/02 to 1% during 2002/03. Initiatives such as

the handyperson scheme and our adaptation service have helped large numbers of older people remain in their own homes, reducing pressures on other forms of accommodation.

As an authority, we have been working with the Primary Care Trust and our colleagues in Social Care & Health to contribute to the Brighton and Hove Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People. This strategy reviews the current commissioning of care homes, home care, and extra care housing.

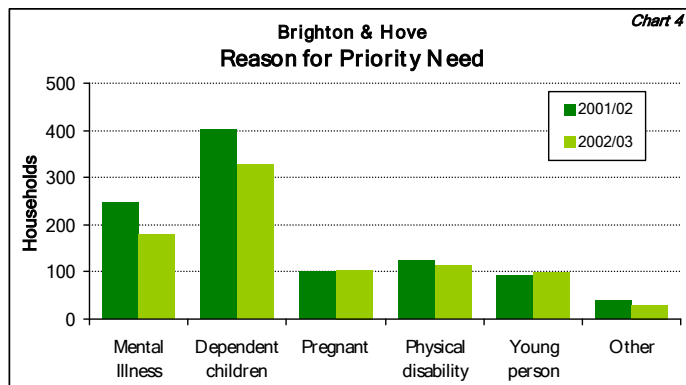
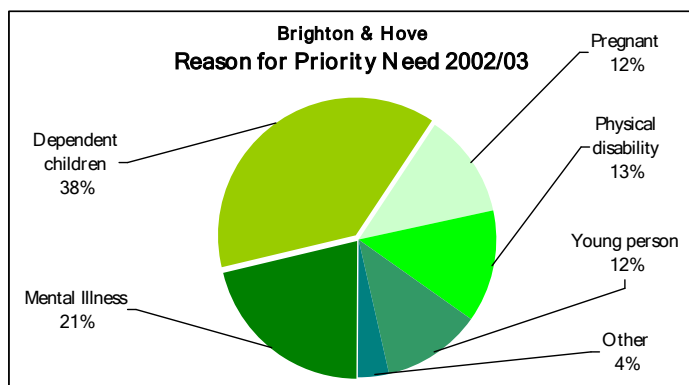
It is a joint strategy between the Local Authority and the Primary Care Trust and reflects the ongoing process of integrating commissioning across health and social care in Brighton and Hove.

The key commissioning objectives include:

- Increase the numbers of older people who are supported to remain in their own home
- Improve partnership working and communication between the independent sector and local health economy (NHS and Local Authority) to ensure seamless care provision

This strategy will be considered when writing our Older Person's Strategy, which will be developed and launched in 2004. We will be working with and consulting a range of agencies including the new Older Person's Council, which have been newly elected this year.

We are concerned that some older people have to stay in hospital unnecessarily as they need a level of support that cannot be provided at home. To address this, we are working to develop Extra Care housing in the city, providing a range of self contained homes in clusters with on site care and housing related support. Currently this project is in its early stages, but has been recognised as a priority in the Brighton & Hove Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People, with a target of at least 37 units by 2006. When developed, the city older residents will benefit from having an extra option of housing offering security of tenure with flexibility of care and support.



Housing Support for those in need

Supporting People is the new national structure for planning, commissioning, and monitor all housing-related support services provided to those in need, which was introduced in April 2003.

As part of our move to Supporting People, we mapped the provision of all housing related support funded from a range of sources, including the City Council, South Downs Health NHS Trust, and probation services.

The Shadow Strategy identifies existing priorities within city-wide strategies and highlights several unmet needs based on information gained from the supply analysis and through consultation with stakeholders.

The key needs identified include:

- More supported accommodation for vulnerable people with complex needs, such as a mental health diagnosis and drug or alcohol problems
- Floating support for older people to remain at home and reduce time spent in hospital
- More floating support and supported accommodation for vulnerable young people and care leavers
- More integrated assessments and clearer pathways for people who require support
- More preventative, flexible services that maintain people in their own homes and prevent admission to hospital or long term care

- Better links with the private sector to enable support to be provided across tenures and to prevent homelessness
- To review the move on policy and encourage providers to explore private sector opportunities to re-house those ready for independence.
- Faster assessment and referral processes and better use of alternatives to reduce the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

Supporting People Strategy 2004

Since the launch of the Supporting People shadow strategy there have been a great many changes to the range and levels of support provided. To ensure that support provision is based on the most accurate and up to date information, we are updating the shadow strategy to produce a Supporting People Strategy 2004.

During the autumn of 2003 and extensive needs mapping exercise was carried out amongst all front line services throughout the local health and housing sectors to identify the full range of support services provided and determine levels of demand from clients.

This needs mapping will be used to determine future service and funding priorities in the new five year strategy, to be published in November 2004, and will include detailed plans for delivering appropriate support services to local people designed to enable them to live independently in the community.

Housing Support Provision in Brighton & Hove	Supported Accommodation	Floating Support	Supporting People Needs Analysis
Client Group			(Note: detailed and up to date needs and supply analysis to be published in the Supporting People Strategy 2004)
Older People (includes frail elderly & with dementia)	2,445	0	Shortfall in floating support
People with mental health problems	261	129	Shortfall in supported accommodation
People with learning disabilities	138	14	Shortfall in floating support
People with a physical (or sensory) disability	27	20	Shortfall in supported accommodation
Single homeless with support needs (incl. rough sleepers & travellers)	570	129	Shortfall for those with multiple needs
People with alcohol problems	9	65	Shortfall in supported accommodation
People with drug problems	103	35	Shortfall for those with multiple needs
Offenders or people at risk of offending (includes mentally disordered)	51	0	Shortfall in floating support
Young people at risk or leaving care	68	56	Shortfall in floating support
Women at risk of domestic violence	23	8	Refuge under expansion to meet shortfall
People with HIV / AIDS	8	0	Overall shortfall in support
Homeless families in need of support (includes teenage parents)	10	0	Overall shortfall in support
Generic	325	168	
Total	4,038	624	

Source: Supporting People Shadow Strategy 2002-2003

Black & Minority Ethnic Households

As a city, each year we are becoming more culturally aware and diverse. The 2001 Census recorded that 5.8% of Brighton & Hove's population was from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) group, an increase from 3% in 1991. Our BME population is higher than the regional average, but lower than the national average.

As a council, Brighton & Hove embraces the diversity within our communities and recognises that to ensure positive service delivery, we must monitor needs and provision, particularly for key services, to ensure we are reaching those most in need.

The Housing Needs Survey 2000 recorded that BME households were slightly more likely to be living in unsuitable housing and be in housing need than other households. This will be re-examined in the new Housing Needs Survey, to be undertaken shortly.

Minority Group	No:	%
Black-Caribbean	468	0.2%
Black-African	1380	0.6%
Black-Other	144	0.1%
Total Black or Black British	1992	0.9%
Indian	2106	0.8%
Pakistani	540	0.2%
Bangladeshi	975	0.4%
Asian-Other	918	0.4%
Asian or Asian British	4539	1.8%
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	834	0.3%
Mixed – White and Black African	961	0.4%
Mixed – White and Asian	1582	0.6%
Mixed - Other	1422	0.6%
Total Mixed	4799	1.9%
Chinese	1305	0.5%
Other-Other	1600	0.7%
Total Chinese or Other	2905	1.2%
Total Minority Ethnic Groups	14235	5.8%

Source: 2001 Census

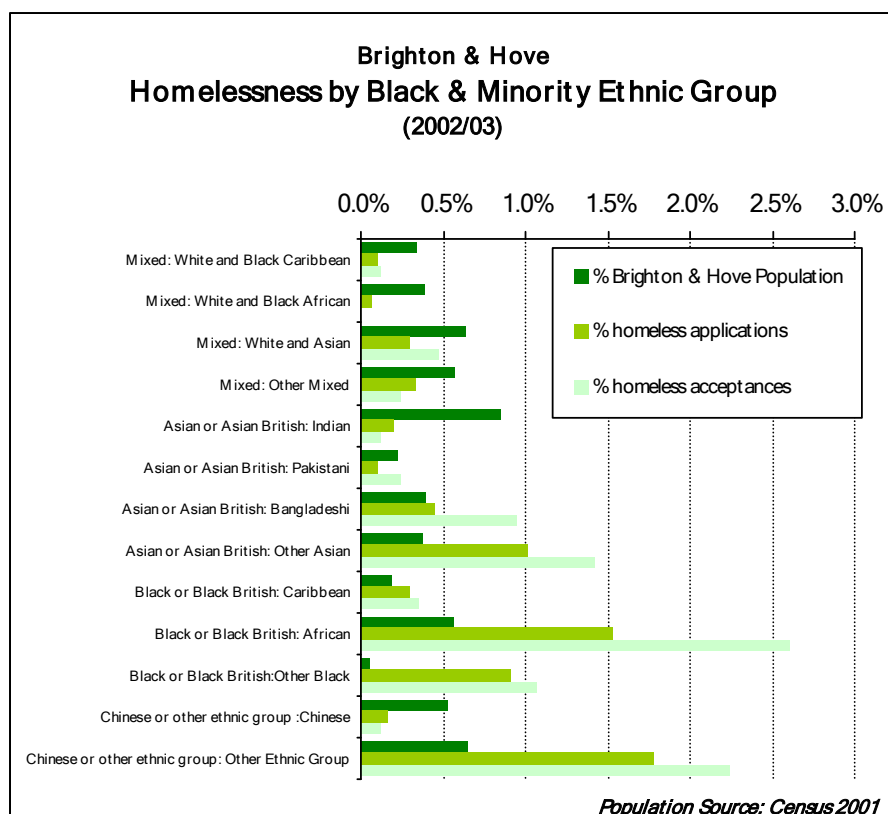
Addressing the housing needs of the Black & Minority Ethnic Communities

Our annual monitoring of homelessness in respect of BME groups identified that for 2002/03, 11.6% of homeless applications and 12.4% of households that were accepted and re-housed by the council were from a BME background. These overall levels of homelessness are in excess of the anticipated levels based on the size of the BME population.

Our analysis has highlighted that some ethnic groups have proportionally far lower levels of homelessness in relation to their relative population size. For example, those with an Asian Indian background comprise 0.8% of the population yet only 0.1% of homelessness acceptances.

Research by the Community Legal Service Partnership into the advice needs of the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities has shown that there is a low level of awareness of the availability of housing advice services. There is also concern that the BME groups share misconceptions about the way in which council housing services operate.

Through our commitment to the Race Equalities Scheme, we are exploring ways of working with BME groups to address issues of concern and target service more effectively, including new monitoring to allow analysis of the reasons for homeless by ethnic group.



Temporary Accommodation

Use of Bed & Breakfast Accommodation

The increase in homelessness over recent years, combined with a shortage of affordable housing in the city, has resulted in the council increasingly having to rely on Bed & Breakfast for temporary accommodation.

B&B accommodation often offers the poorest housing conditions at the highest cost. This emergency accommodation is particularly unsuitable for children as families have to endure crowded rooms, shared bathrooms and kitchens, and this has been linked to poor health and declining educational attainment.

We have made a commitment to the residents of Brighton & Hove that families with children will not be placed in B&B accommodation unless it is an emergency. If there is an emergency resulting in a family with children being housed in B&B then we will ensure they will not have to spend more than six weeks in this accommodation.

Other forms of temporary accommodation

To ensure that the council no longer has to rely on B&B accommodation, we are actively seeking to increase the supply of alternative temporary accommodation that we can access.

Our main focus in the last year, and over the next few years, is to expand the supply of flats and houses we rent for use as temporary accommodation from Housing Association Leasing Schemes (HALS) and direct from the private rented sector through a Private Sector Leasing (PSL) programme. In the last year, this work has ensured that we have increased the supply of this type of temporary accommodation by over 100 units.

At the same time as ensuring procurement of accommodation, the council is seeking to improve standards of temporary accommodation, particularly within the private sector.

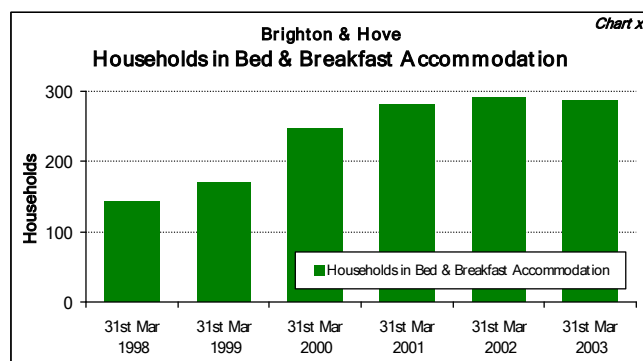
Support for people in temporary accommodation

Becoming homeless and moving into temporary accommodation is a very demanding and stressful time for anyone who has found themselves in this situation. Very often it is the most vulnerable residents who become homeless, those least able to manage the situation themselves.

Not only are we working with vulnerable households to reduce the risks of homelessness, we are also providing support to those who are homeless to ensure that they are able to manage the transition back into secure accommodation. In certain circumstances, households most at risk will continue to receive support once rehoused to ensure that they have meaningful occupation of their home and do not fall into a cycle of repeat homelessness.

The Housing Support Team provides support to vulnerable people in all forms of temporary accommodation. Referrals are made via the Supporting People Assessment Team from the Homeless Team. Funded through the supporting people grant, the team offers housing related support including advocacy, working with other agencies and resettlement support.

Morley Street Surgery is a GP service for people who are not currently registered with a doctor and have no fixed address or are in temporary accommodation. The service offers both appointment and a walk-in clinic. We are also working with support providers to ensure that support is available to 16 and 17 year olds in temporary accommodation.



Sustainability of the Social Housing Sector

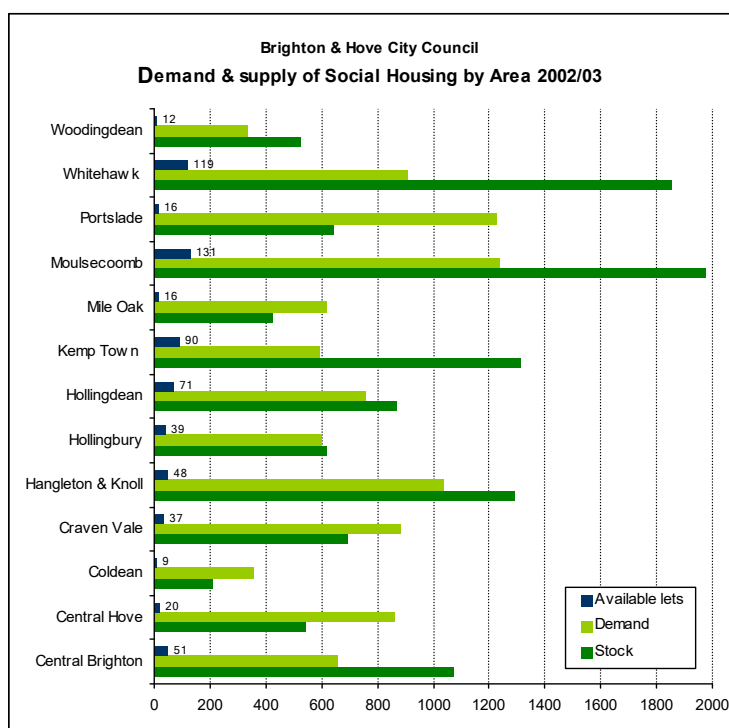
The reductions in homelessness we have managed to achieve over the last 2 years have unfortunately occurred in tandem with a decline in the availability of our already limited supply of social housing.

In short, we have fewer homeless households but correspondingly fewer available properties to house them. Even though our homelessness situation appears to have improved, supply, cost, and wellbeing pressures temporary accommodation remain as significant as ever.

We have managed to reduce homelessness to the levels seen in 1998/99, yet our social housing stock turnover is now 30% lower. Demand for social housing in the city is considerably in excess of supply, with waiting lists in many areas larger than the amount of social housing.

Over the last 5 years, the proportion of social housing lets to the most vulnerable residents of the city has risen from less than half to around 80% as stock turnover has reduced. Despite the large demand for social housing seen in the Housing Register, only a small proportion of lets are available for these households.

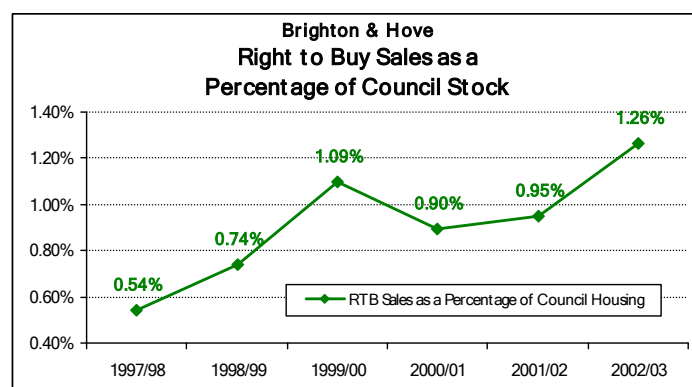
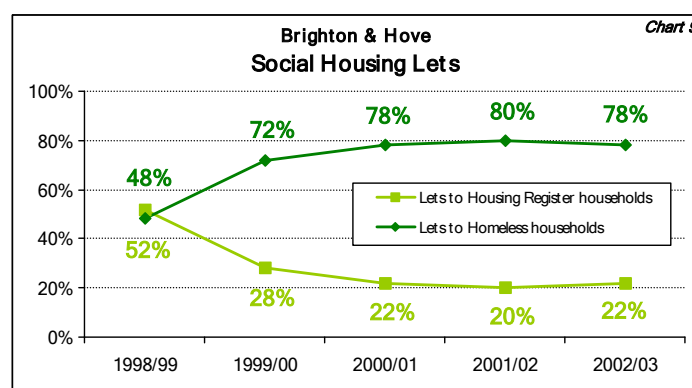
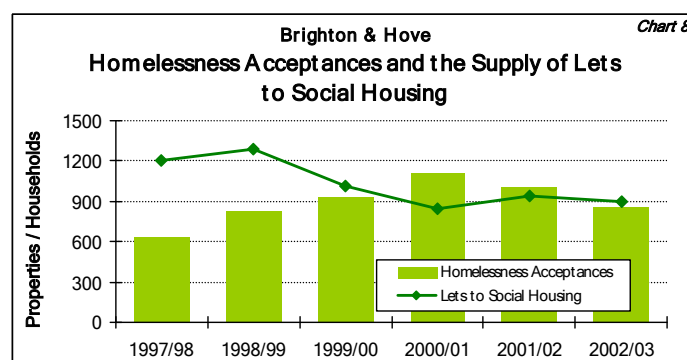
We are most concerned that the larger concentrations of vulnerable residents in these predominantly social housing areas may become detrimental to our longer term Neighbourhood Renewal and New Deal for Communities objectives, undermining the city's efforts to create mixed sustainable communities.



To counter this sustainability issue, we are actively looking to private rented sector and long term leasing options to significantly reduce the proportion of vulnerable residents moving into social housing.

Whilst demand for social housing remains high, the aspirations of existing council tenants still points towards home ownership. The number of Right to Buy applications has trebled over the last 5 years which has led to a steady increase in the sale of council homes to tenants.

Whilst the Right to Buy can be viewed as a source of low cost home ownership, however, it does not increase the overall supply of housing in the city, but is eroding a much needed supply of affordable rented housing for those in need.



Housing Costs & Affordability

Property prices across Brighton & Hove have continued to rise over the last few years, although monitoring suggests that the rate of increase has started to decline.

Smaller properties, those traditionally associated with first time buyers, have seen the greatest price rises in recent years. We attribute this increase in pressure to the local buy-to-let market and the trend for smaller household sizes¹.

Brighton & Hove Cost to Buy			
Size	2003 Q1	2001 Q2	Increase
studio flat	£ 91,043	£ 64,425	+41.3%
1 bed flat	£ 126,832	£ 98,436	+28.8%
2 bed flat	£ 170,747	£ 150,930	+13.1%
2 bed house	£ 189,487	£ 158,493	+19.6%
3 bed house	£ 236,594	£ 186,662	+26.7%

Source: Housing Strategy Monitoring

Brighton & Hove has the 6th largest private rented sector in the country², at 20.4% of our housing stock, which to some extent compensates for the small social housing sector in the city and meets the housing needs of many residents.

Increased awareness amongst landlords in the city raised through the local media and partnership working with the city council and have seen rent levels in the private sector begin to stabilise.

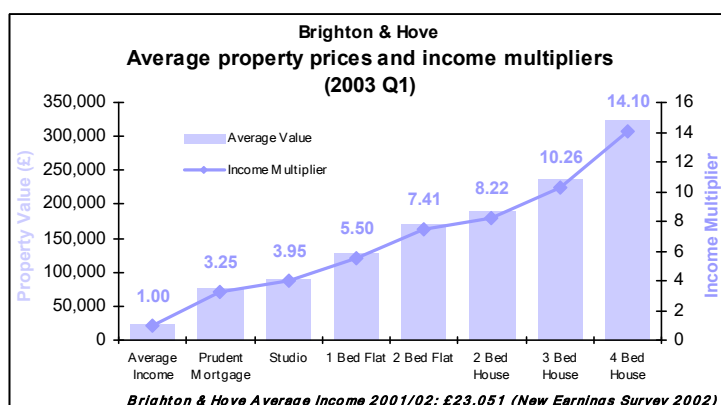
We are finding ways of using private sector accommodation more effectively and are working to support both tenants and landlords to make it easier for people to secure and maintain decent housing, helping to reduce the high levels of homelessness originating from this sector.

Brighton & Hove Cost to Rent Privately			
Size	2003 Q1	2001 Q2	Increase
studio flat	£ 433	£ 398	+8.8%
1 bed flat	£ 574	£ 576	-0.4%
2 bed flat	£ 770	£ 811	-5.0%
2 bed house	£ 821	£ 827	-0.7%
3 bed house	£ 1,004	£ 1,035	-3.0%

Source: Housing Strategy Monitoring

Locally, income levels have not risen in line with the increases in the cost of accommodation, with 1 bed flats costing around 5½ times the average income, and 3 bed houses, over 10 times average income.

For someone to buy an average one-bedroom flat in the city would require an income of around £37,000 per year, with a 3 bed house requiring an income of around £69,000³. The high levels income required are placing home ownership out of the reach of many households, with the average annual income in the city last recorded at £23,051 per annum⁴.



Even though rents appear to have stabilised, the average rent on a 1 bedroom flat, at £574 per month, is equivalent to the monthly repayment of a mortgage in the region of £98,000, which would traditionally require an income of around £30,000 to finance. Households on average incomes can face significant financial hardship in renting, with limited opportunity to save a deposit for those aspiring to home ownership.

Brighton & Hove Private Sector Rent Levels & Mortgage Comparison			
Size	2003 Q1 Average Rent/Month	Rent Compared to Mortgage	
		Mortgage	Income
room	£ 338	£ 57,818	£ 17,790
studio	£ 433	£ 74,069	£ 22,790
1 bed flat	£ 574	£ 98,188	£ 30,212
2 bed flat	£ 770	£ 131,716	£ 40,528
2 bed house	£ 821	£ 140,440	£ 43,212
3 bed house	£ 1,004	£ 171,744	£ 52,844

Assuming a 95% mortgage at 3.25 times income over 25 years with 5% interest

¹ Census 2001: Brighton & Hove has the smallest average household size in the South East, the fifth smallest in England & Wales

² Census 2001

³ Assuming 5% deposit and mortgage of 3.25 times income

⁴ New Earnings Survey 2002

Stability of the Housing Market

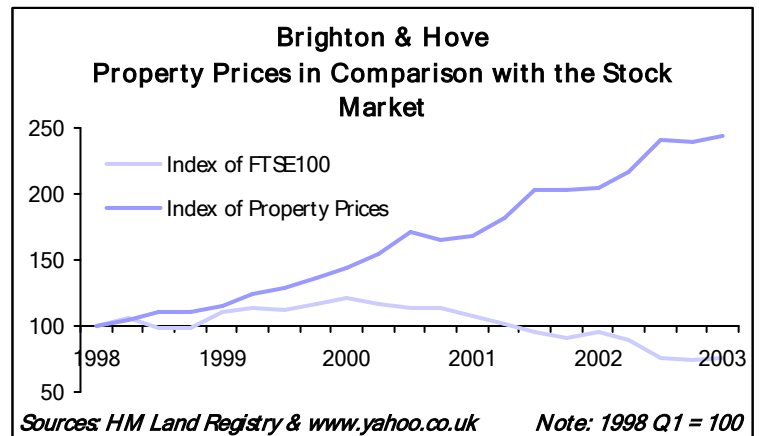
As house prices have risen over the last few years, financial investment in 'bricks and mortar' has been on the increase, as evidenced by the increase in the buy to let market. Rising property prices at a time when mortgage interest rates are at their lowest for 48 years, has encouraged many people to borrow in excess of traditional prudential mortgage levels.

Since 1998, property prices in Brighton & Hove have considerably outperformed the Stock Market and FTSE100 index. £100 invested in residential property in Brighton & Hove at the start of 1998 is now worth £243, whilst the same money invested in the FTSE100 was only worth £76 during Q1 2003.

With the property markets outperforming traditional pension plans and other forms of financial investments, the buy to let market has seen a steady growth, with homeowners buying additional properties to let and provide a steady income later in life.

We are increasingly concerned that as property prices stabilise, fears of a downturn in the market may encourage buy to let investors to sell, causing an increase in homelessness from the private rented sector.

We are also concerned that if interest rates rise to the levels seen only a few years ago, it may cause mortgage payment difficulties for many recent homebuyers that have borrowed heavily to realise their aspirations.



Housing Benefit

Comparatively high private rents continue to effect those relying on housing benefit to pay their rent. Joint working through the local authority, private landlords, lettings agents, and the rent service, has resulted in revision of the methodology used by The Rent Service to determine local Reference Rents. As a result benefit levels for private sector tenants, particularly in 1 bedroom accommodation, have increased. This is reducing shortfalls between rent charged and maximum housing benefit.

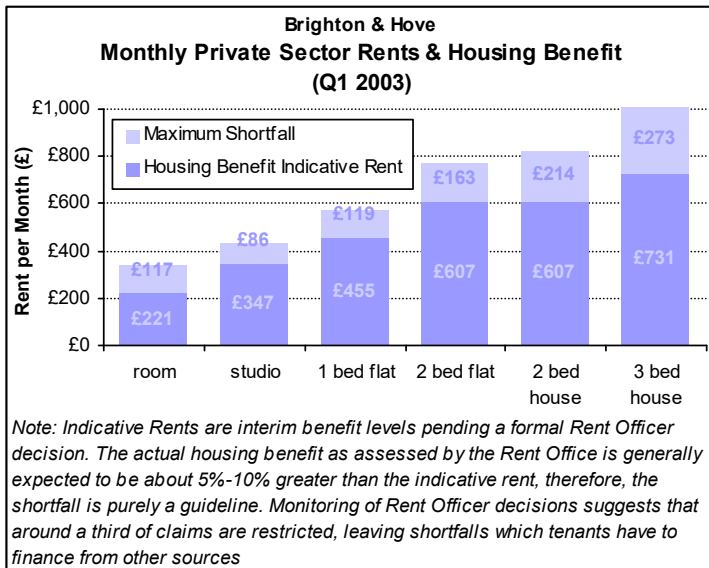
Local Housing Allowance: Housing Benefit Pathfinder Scheme

From February 2004, Brighton & Hove is taking part in a new scheme designed to simplify the housing benefit system. It is hoped that the new scheme will give individuals more choice over where they live and speed up the administration process.

Rent officers will calculate benefit allowances monthly and make the results public, so that even before accepting a tenancy, claimants will already know the rent allowance based on household size.

Claimants accepting tenancies costing less than the allowance will be able to keep the difference; claimants accepting tenancies costing more than their allowance will have to make up the difference from other sources. If there are no arrears, payments will usually be made directly to tenants.

As part of the project, an independent Money Advice Service is being set up to assist claimants. Evaluating and monitoring the effects of the LHA in Brighton & Hove will help to shape the future of the national Housing Benefit system.



Housing Need

In 2000 we commissioned a comprehensive Housing Needs Survey to determine the demand for new affordable housing in Brighton & Hove. The survey obtained detailed information about crucial issues such as the suitability of current housing, household income and affordability as well as considering issues such as tenure, area, household type and special needs.

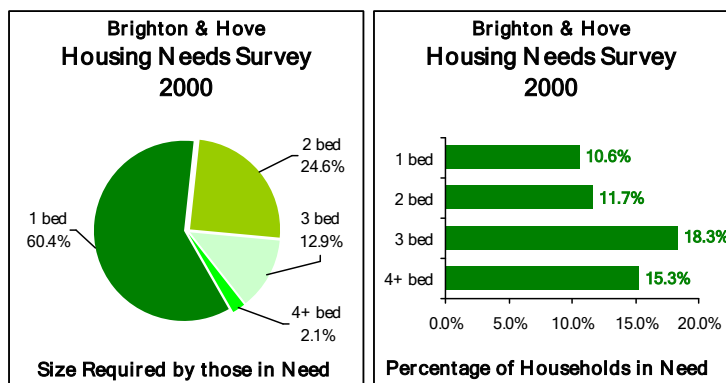
When the survey was undertaken, it was estimated that the demand for affordable housing affected 13,687 households in the city, projecting that housing need would increase by around 13,145 households by 2005, to a total of 26,832. The Census 2001 has helped to reaffirm this position, highlighting that overcrowding affected 12.7% of all households in the city, the highest level outside London.

Not all of this housing need necessarily has to be met through the provision of additional affordable housing. Some households need can be met 'in situ' through repairs or adaptations, whilst demand arising from the social rented sector may well be best solved by increasing transfer opportunities. Taking these factors into account, it is estimated that an additional 15,727 affordable homes would be required between 2000 and 2005 to meet need. This is in contrast with the Adopted Structure Plan for housing provision which outlined that an average of 540 homes per annum (market & affordable) are required.

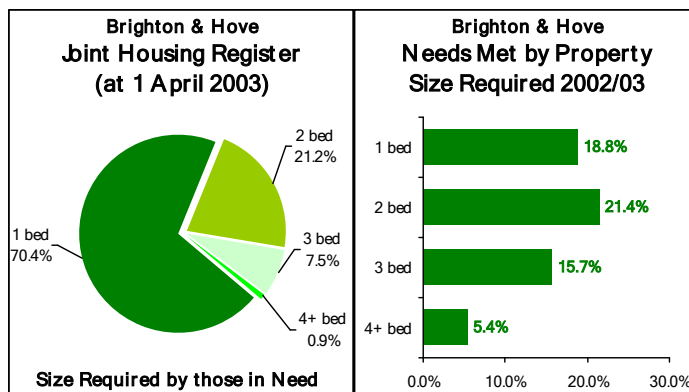
Since we undertook the Housing Needs Survey 2000, property prices in the city have doubled and private rents have increased. To ensure we have up to date relevant information on our housing needs we are aiming to commission a new Housing Needs Survey during 2004/05.

Meeting Housing Need

The Housing Needs Survey 2000 highlighted an overwhelming demand for affordable 1 bedroom properties in the city (60.4%), reflecting the growth in single person households and couples without children. However, our survey also indicated that those requiring 1 bed homes were less likely to be in need (10.6% of the group) in comparison to those with children or carer responsibilities requiring family sized houses (18.3%).



Our affordable housing development programme recognises both the large demand for 1 bed homes, but also that those with families are more likely to be in need. To balance these needs, a greater emphasis is placed on the development of family sized homes when our limited development opportunities permit.



The analysis of our Joint Housing Register confirms our Housing Needs Survey findings in illustrating an overwhelming demand for 1 bed homes. When comparing the Housing Register with the supply of affordable housing during 2002/03, it highlights that the needs of those families requiring larger accommodation are less likely to be met than the needs of smaller households, reaffirming the need to develop larger homes where possible.

Recruitment & Retention of the workforce

Retaining valued and experienced workers must be always be a prime consideration in any growing city such as Brighton & Hove. No member of the workforce is more vital than keyworkers, those who work in health and social care, the emergency services and teaching.

The key worker analysis undertaken for the Starter Home Initiative in Brighton & Hove in 2001/02 demonstrated that keyworker salaries fell short of being able to afford home ownership by approximately £20,000, which was contributing to the recruitment difficulties and turnover of staff in these professions. We will be expanding on our analysis over the lifetime of this strategy to build up a comprehensive picture of key worker housing need.

The Starter Home Initiative continues to assist people throughout the county to buy affordable homes. In Brighton & Hove, the average price of a property found through the scheme is £115,000, and the average salary of those assisted is £25,752. It is clear that this scheme is playing a major role in allowing keyworkers to settle in the city. The scheme aims to assist 175 key worker households.

4. Organising to Meet the Challenges

Modernising local government places emphasis on 'strong local leadership' and 'quality services'. In moving towards these aims the organisational arrangements in the city have undergone, and continue to undergo, change.

This reshaping is particularly significant in respect of addressing the housing challenges we face, in ensuring that housing, regeneration and community participation move forward in partnership.

A fresh set of corporate commitments has been identified as part of the re-invigorated approach to addressing local issues of concern in pursuit of the council's long term vision:

"The Council wants Brighton and Hove to be a cosmopolitan, successful city by the sea, where people have a high quality of life in a decent environment."

Since the launch of our Housing Strategy 2001-2006, significant changes have been made to the structure and constitutional processes of the council.

The improvements recognise the effectiveness of councillors' action on behalf of the communities that they represent, and the importance of increasing the involvement of local residents in council matters.

- **Housing Committee**

In September 2003 the Culture, Regeneration & Housing Committee has been replaced with a new focussed Housing Committee with overall responsibility for the Council's housing functions. The committee's remit includes the strategic housing and housing investment programme, homelessness and lettings, private sector housing and renewal, tenancy relations, and overall responsibility for Supporting People.

- **Housing Management Sub-Committee**

This Sub-Committee of the Housing Committee discharges the Council's functions as a housing landlord, including residential leases granted by the Council. The Sub-Committee includes non-voting tenant and leaseholder representatives.

Further information on councillors and our committee system can be found on the council website, www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

Another of the pivotal changes has been the creation of a new directorate: Housing & City Support. For the first time, key services providing housing and support for those in need have been brought together in one department to facilitate joint strategic planning and service provision:

- **Housing Strategy**

The Housing Strategy division manages the strategic city-wide housing role, including:

- Housing Strategy
- Private Sector Housing
- Homelessness Services
- Temporary Accommodation & Lettings
- Supporting People
- Housing Support

- **Housing Management**

Housing Management services are focussed on tenancy management and repairs and maintenance to the council's stock of almost 13,000 homes and 2,000 leasehold flats. A revised Business Plan will be published in 2004 to partner this strategy, outlining the way forward for the future ownership and management of our council homes to ensure they are brought up to the Decent Homes Standard by 2010.

- **Adult Social Care**

Adult Social Care services protect, care for and support vulnerable people to enable them to live as full and independent lives as possible. Services include those for:

- people with physical or sensory disabilities
- people with learning disabilities
- people with mental health problems
- older people (65+)
- people recovering from being in hospital
- people with HIV or AIDS
- people with alcohol or drug problems
- people who are carers

The services work closely with local health services in the city. Some services are integrated with the NHS and 'hosted' by South Downs NHS Trust and jointly commissioned with the Brighton & Hove City Primary Care Trust.

- **Customer Services**

A wide range of life events services including Social Justice, Housing Benefits and the new Housing Benefit Local Housing Allowance pathfinder, Council Tax and Electoral Services.

A structure diagram for the Housing & City Support directorate has been included as Appendix A.

5. A Partnership Approach

We have always acknowledged the value of partnership work in achieving our housing targets and goals, recognising that we will not succeed alone. Brighton & Hove City Council will continue to develop partnership work with a wide range of agencies, including, for example:

- **Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership**

During 2002, we reviewed arrangements with Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations) involved in the development of new affordable housing in the city, resulting in a renewed Housing Partnership.

We have placed greater emphasis on meeting targets to deliver new affordable housing for local people in housing need, and shaping the broader housing strategy for the City. We are on track to achieve our targets, which include:

- Develop an average of 300 new affordable homes per year
- Develop an average of 30 homes for Low Cost Home Ownership per year
- Develop an average of 100 Lifetime Homes Standard dwellings per year
- Develop an average of 10 wheelchair standard homes per year
- Maintain a forward pool of development opportunities
- From April 2006, all new build schemes will have the 'very good' EcoHomes rating
- From April 2006, all LA/RSL led new affordable housing developments will meet Secured by Design standards

Detailed progress on our targets is outlined in the chapters detailing the five Priority areas for our work.

Our RSL partners have representation on groups such as the Local Strategic Partnership, Economic Partnership and Neighbourhood Renewal Group, raising the profile of affordable housing across the City.

Current membership of the partnership include:

- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Housing Corporation
- Downland Affinity Group
- CDHA / Hyde
- Moat Housing Group
- Southern Horizon Housing Limited
- Guinness Trust
- Southern Housing Group
- Places for People

- **Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership**

The Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership was formed in April 2001 and provides a strong independent business voice, vital to the development of initiatives and strategies that impact on the local economy.

The partnership is primarily funded through the Southeast of England Development Agency (SEEDA), which sees the South East Economic Partnerships as being a key focus in developing Regional and Sub-Regional economic strategies. Our Economic Strategy *Building on Success - the First Steps* was published in December 2002.

Housing is included as one of the 7 strategic issues identified as being key to the future of the local economy, with the following action points:

- Audit all potential living accommodation, including vacant buildings with non-housing planning designations
- Explore whether/to what extent economic success has affected homelessness levels
- Develop live/learn accommodation for those without a permanent residence
- Investigate, identify and support large employers with affordable housing schemes
- Develop a student accommodation strategy to meet the needs of students and address broader housing issues
- Organise a major conference to explore means of intervention in the housing market that might address the City's problems

- **Area Investment Framework - Brighton & Hove and Adur**

During 2003, an Area Investment Framework (AIF) is being developed in partnership with Adur District Council, SEEDA, and a range of service providers, community and business stakeholders. The report will map the spending plans of key public, private and voluntary sector organisations against the agreed shared economic development and regeneration priorities of the area over a 3-5 year period.

Further information will be published on the council's website as the AIF is developed.

- **Supporting People**

Supporting People is the new national structure to commission and monitor housing-related support services for people in all sections of the community. "Housing-related support" is a term covering many services, for example community alarm systems or budgeting help.

We run Supporting People in Brighton & Hove on behalf of the Commissioning Body, whose members include the chief executives of Brighton & Hove City Council, South Downs Health NHS Trust, and senior representation from the probation service.

Supporting People co-ordinates services to a vast array of local residents with different needs. Key client groups include:

- Older people
- People with mental health problems
- People with learning difficulties
- People with a physical or sensory disability
- Former rough sleepers and single homeless with support needs
- People with drug and/or alcohol problems
- Young people at risk/young people leaving home
- Offenders or people at risk of offending
- Young offenders
- People at risk of domestic violence
- People with HIV/AIDS
- Homeless families with support needs and teenage parents
- Travellers
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Black and minority ethnic groups

- **Single Homelessness Strategy Steering Group**

This group has been functioning for over 3 years now and consists of senior strategic managers from the statutory sector with executive representation from the voluntary sector. It seeks to be the reference body for the rough sleepers agenda and strategy, and to be a point of reference for treatment options for our rough sleepers. Key to its success is the involvement of the Primary Care Trust (PCT) commissioners and the community safety team. The steering group keeps check on the progress of related sub groups, such as the day and street services sub group and the meaningful occupation sub group, and also seeks to influence cross city strategic planning for the benefit of this vulnerable client group.

- **Teenage Pregnancy Strategic Partnership**

We continue to act in partnership with the governments Teenage Pregnancy Unit to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies in Brighton & Hove, and ensure that enough support is available to those in need. Action Point 29 of the Social Exclusion Unit's Teenage Pregnancy Report 1999 sets our target of accommodating all lone parents under 18, who cannot live with family or a partner, in supervised semi-independent housing.

Recent initiatives designed to meet this target include Beaconsfield Road, a new supported housing development of 4 one bedroom flats for teenage parents, and an increased level of support available from the point of housing application. We recognise that more supported accommodation suitable for teenage parents is required and are exploring development possibilities in the city.

The aims of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy for Brighton include the following:

- To develop a register of housing provision
- To increase the provision of floating support
- To ensure that temporary accommodation is adequately provided
- To provide housing advice, tenancy support and practical advice for young parents waiting in B&B's and in their accommodation
- To link young parents into other support services as necessary

6. Engaging Local People

Our Housing Strategy 2001-2006 was compiled after extensive consultation with local residents and stakeholder groups to ensure it met the needs and aspirations of the city.

Ongoing consultation with local people is at the heart of strategy and policy formulation, playing a vital role in a number of strategic partnerships and projects, for example:

- **Local Strategic Partnership**

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) launched in January 2002 is a city-wide body that works with the council to develop and monitor strategic operational functions, and is accredited to draw down Neighbourhood Renewal Funds. The LSP has six sectors representing providers of public services, the private sector, the community and voluntary sector, resident and community networks, and the council in its community leadership and democratic role. The Government Office for the Southeast (GOSE) and the Southeast England Development Agency (SEEDA) also play a major role.

The Brighton & Hove's Community Partnership (LSP) has launched the *2020 Community Strategy "Creating the city of opportunities"* in 2003, and our housing aims underpin its city-wide priorities for to 2008. Significant amongst these enhanced city priorities are actions to:

- reduce homelessness (focussing on families and rough sleepers and reducing reliance on bed and breakfast)
- improve housing support to vulnerable residents, with particular emphasis on developing links with health and social care services
- develop a minimum of 1,200 new build and refurbished affordable housing units and key worker accommodation from 2002 to 2007
- work with owners to bring at least 60 empty properties back into use each year (this Housing Strategy recognises our progress on empty properties and doubles the target)
- ensure council homes in Hollingdean meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2008, two years ahead of the city-wide 2010 target, which has been embedded in a Local Public Service Agreement and also linked into our Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy objectives.

- **Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2002–2010**

Initially Brighton & Hove was awarded three years of Neighbourhood Renewal funding, a total of £3.08 million over the period 2001-2004. We have been successful in obtaining a further two years' funding, of £1.36 million per year for 2004/05 and 2005/06.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy adopts a combination of approaches to responding to neighbourhood deprivation, from holistic neighbourhood programmes to specific interventions tackling identified problems related to the Government's priority themes. The strategy aims at improving the quality of life for residents in deprived areas of the city.

We recognise that effective community participation is at the heart of successful community planning and renewal. Key priorities include getting people into work, making neighbourhoods safer, improving educational achievement and improving homes.

The strategy identified 27 areas within Brighton & Hove as deprived. Of these 27, three were initially prioritised for NRF funding, East Brighton (eb4U), Hollingdean and Tarner. Extensive work has been done to assess the needs of these neighbourhoods and create Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs), focussing in particular on those targets that relate to Neighbourhood Renewal.

Future targets within the Implementation Plan include:

- Bring local authority homes in Hollingdean up to the Decent Homes Standard by the end of 2008, with 70% by the end of 2005
- Establishing a network of community accessible buildings in all 27 neighbourhoods and train at least 5 community work apprentices by March 2005
- Identify neighbourhoods with the most serious problems with anti-social behaviour, and reduce anti-social behaviour in prioritised areas by March 2005
- Increase the provision of neighbourhood based training in basic skills and/or ICT by April 2005; 300 residents to improve skills through community activity and training using global grants funding by March 2004.

- **eb4U Neighbourhood Management**

The eb4U Neighbourhood Management project has been implemented to enable local people to have more control over service priorities, provision, and targets. An elected Neighbourhood Management Board includes representatives from the statutory groups, voluntary groups, local businesses, and local residents, together with the Neighbourhood Manager and team run the project.

The project is about working with local people and statutory services to change the way services work together and to make sure local people have more control on how services are run for them and working to a locally agreed public service agreement (PSA). The Board have developed a framework for monitoring the performance of local services and increasing their accountability at a local level. The PSA sets out the key outcomes and targets across underpinned by service level agreements setting out standards on how services will work together.

The eb4U 'Three Year Strategy 2002-2005' provides a framework through which it is intends to implement the eb4U vision. The document provides information about the 'big picture' aims as well as details of projects that have already developed that will help achieve long-term goals.

Amongst a range of initiatives, eb4U are working with the local authority to:

- Assist the local authority to achieve the Decent Homes Standard by 2010
- Increase retention of the population to that of the Brighton and Hove average
- Reduce the number of empty council property to at least the local average by the end of 2004
- Reduce the level of teenage conceptions by 25% by 2005 and the number of teenage births by 25% by 2005
- Reduce the number of tenants who have left their homes as victims of harassment or anti-social behaviour to 10 in 2005
- Develop new service delivery mechanisms that improve the quality effectiveness of local services
- Develop an eb4U Housing Strategy to compliment this citywide strategy and focus on specific items of concern in East Brighton

Further information on East Brighton is available at: www.eb4u.co.uk

- **Best Value Review of Council Housing**

The Best Value Review of Council Housing was completed in August 2002. The review involved wide ranging consultation with residents, staff, councillors and external agencies covering all aspects of the services provided to council housing residents.

In 2002, as part of the review, the Housing Inspectorate from the Audit Commission spent a week examining housing repair and maintenance services, which involved staff and resident interviews, carrying out mystery shopping, and examining working processes and procedures.

Feedback from the consultation sessions helped inform and develop the Implementation Plan. Comments include:

- *"The council has left homes empty and full of rubbish for months, it is no wonder that the only people prepared to accept tenancy are problem tenants"*
- *"Estate development budget is a good way to get tenants priorities addressed"*
- *"Not just about the rights of vulnerable tenants, regular tenants have rights to"*
- *"The council does not act firmly enough or consistently in response to anti-social behaviour"*
- *"Many homes are well maintained, but others are in poor condition. The Council should be given credit for the investment it has put in. Warmth and security are priorities"*
- *"Involvement needs to be improved, as Tenants Associations aren't everywhere so many people are left out"*

The outcome of the inspection was a "fair" one-star rating for the council's services.

Changes have been or are in the process of being implemented as identified in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), Repairs & Maintenance Improvement Plan, and Neighbourhood Services Improvement Plan.

Regular Performance reports are presented to Area Panels whose membership includes Tenant Representatives and Councillors.

All the above comments have been addressed in the Implementation Plan, which is available on our website.

- **Council Housing Stock Options**

As part of the Best Value Review of Council Housing, we are considering the different options for the future management and ownership of council housing to ensure we can bring in the finance to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

There are four options to be considered for the ownership and management of our council homes, each offering different possibilities for delivering the investment needed to meet tenants needs and expectations:

- the council keeping ownership and continuing to manage council housing
- transferring ownership to a housing association
- using the 'Private Finance Initiative' to raise investment
- setting up an 'arms-length' organisation to manage council housing, with the council still being landlord

Given the size and nature of the city's council housing stock, it is possible that a mix of options is required to suit particular areas or dwelling type. This is a very complex project with the following provisional timetable:

- 2003/04 winter – options appraisal
- 2004 spring – tenants, leaseholders, officers, and members examine options
- 2004/05 – detailed resident consultation
- 2005 – tenant ballot
- 2006 – implementation of preferred option(s)

The range of options will be presented to tenants early in 2004 and they will be assisted by an Independent Tenants Advisor to guide them through the process of determining which option, or options, is the most appropriate for the city.

A consultation strategy has been developed outlining how staff, residents, Members, and other stakeholders will be fully involved and consulted throughout the process.

More detailed information on our council housing stock condition and the various possible stock options can be found in Appendices C to E.

- **Best Value Review of Homelessness**

A Review of Homelessness services was carried out in 2003, partly to address our desire for undertaking a Best Value Review and Audit of the service, and also to ensure we comply with the governments Homelessness Act 2002 their services.

During the review, extensive consultation, through focus groups and surveys, was conducted with service users, Members, employees, external organisations, and government agencies, including the ODPM's Homelessness Directorate.

At the consultation events with services users comments that were shared covered all aspects of homelessness procedure. These comments have helped shape the implementation plan that will steer the future of the service:

- *"I was interested in relocation but had some difficulties with timing, the offer was not available when I wanted it"*
- *"I needed the decision to be made quicker and would have liked to be kept informed as to how my case was progressing. Without this information I was left feeling very vulnerable"*
- *"I lost my accommodation due to rent arrears but was not aware that the council may have been able to offer help and advice to enable me to keep my tenancy. I saw the council as being on the other side"*
- *"Found that social services and the housing department worked well together"*
- *"Would like the suitability of the B&B rooms checked, for example have rooms with a bath for children"*

Key target in the implementation plan include:

- Earlier identification and intervention of potential homelessness cases, in particular reduce the numbers of homeless arising from the main causes identified
- Reduce expenditure on temporary accommodation and the numbers staying in Bed & Breakfast
- Keep service users better informed at all stages of the process
- Improve provision and suitability of temporary accommodation
- Maximise income
- Work with Social Services to deal with intentionally and repeat homelessness cases
- Encourage greater input from other agencies, partners and service users on a variety of issues

The findings of the review informed the new Strategy for the Prevention of Homelessness 2003-2006 and the Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008, adopted in July 2003. Copies of these together with the implementation plan are available on our website.

- **Best Value Review of Allocations**

The Best Value Review of Allocations commenced in July 2003. The review examines the way in which we allocate social housing to those in need. Our aim is to maximise housing and tenure choices for all residents in the city including those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Extensive consultation with service users, Tenant Representatives, Members and employees, and with representatives of external organisations and the government is being conducted. The review will be completed by March 2004 with a detailed improvement plan. Early indications are that residents feel the current system is not transparent and offers little or no housing choice, leading to the option for delivering Choice Based Lettings. A copy of the implementation plan will be available on our website when published.

- **Choice Based Lettings**

The council has been looking at the example of other local authorities that have abolished their point based housing allocations system and now operate successful letting services that advertise available properties and enable eligible residents to express an interest in a home of their choosing.

Pilot projects across the country have shown that tenants are greatly in favour of the new 'choice based' systems and understand more clearly the basis on which properties are let, and how long they will have to wait for a property of their choice.

As part of its research, the council's Choice Based Letting Project Officer is leading on city-wide consultation with tenants, housing staff, councillors and local organisations. Four public consultation events were held in August 2003, two for council staff, one for the Tenants' Area Panels, and one open to the public and other organisations, attended by over 200 people.

The programme for the events an introduction to the Best Value Review of Allocations, how people access housing today, and choice-based lettings. This was followed by workshops covering the creation of sustainable communities, supporting choice amongst vulnerable tenants, improving staff roles and responsibilities, and methods and use of IT and property advertising.

Discussions highlighted disagreement about the existing points based allocations system, some people felt it was *"fair as it was based on need"* whilst others felt it *"favoured those who could shout loudest"*. The current system was

considered *"not clear and transparent"* and it was felt there was *"a lack of choice"*. The majority of participants felt that a choice based lettings system would create greater transparency, improve customer satisfaction, and would make clear the range of housing choices available.

Choice Based Lettings facilitates the development of sustainable communities by allowing properties to be targeted at particular client groups depending on the locality. We are keen to explore these possibilities, initially focussing on the issues identified in eb4U.

The success of choice based lettings will depend on the identification of suitable finance, enabling effective public access, and most importantly, ensuring vulnerable residents are not disadvantaged. A great deal of work is being undertaken to ensure that the mechanisms of any new Choice Based Lettings system implemented in Brighton & Hove enables equality of access for all residents.

- **Developing the Housing Strategy 2004-2007**

Beginning with the wide ranging focus groups and consultation undertaken when developing the city's Housing Strategy 2001-2006, through to our detailed Best Value Reviews, and consultation and Choice Based Lettings, we have built up a wealth of information outlining local residents needs, aspirations, and views on the services we provide.

We have utilised this increased understanding of local resident's needs to provide a firm foundation for the development of this strategy. The results of consultation and customer feedback have been incorporated within our actions and service development plans throughout this strategy.

This strategy has been developed as a partnership between customers, front line officers, external agencies, and those responsible for decision making. In addition to the consultation already undertaken, we have also encouraged specific feedback regarding our strategy and progress through a variety of media, including, amongst others, seminars for Councillors, briefings for staff, and additional public consultation through our web-site.

The results of consultation and feedback from those receiving, providing, funding and guiding our services has resulted in this complete reworking of our housing strategy, to provide the first 'fit for purpose' housing strategy for the residents of Brighton & Hove.

7. Linking to National & Regional Policy

National Policy

- **Sustainable Communities Plan**

The Sustainable Communities Plan is a new initiative from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister linking existing programmes and new policies, to improve communities by making them, safer, more prosperous and better places to live. The central themes are around housing, planning, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal. Within this agenda a framework for the South East has been published and is discussed in the next section.

- **More than a Roof**

This government report outlines a new approach to tackling homelessness, building on policies set out in the Government's Housing Green Paper, *'Quality and Choice: A decent home for all'*, in *'Supporting People, policy into practice'*, and in the Rough Sleepers Unit's strategy, *'Coming in from the Cold'*. The report stresses that any new approach will only work if action is taken by all key partners, and that central government, local authorities, housing associations, mortgage providers, private landlords and the voluntary sector all have a vital role to play. The key theme to this report, and also our Housing Strategy is the central premise that simply putting a roof over someone's head does not always solve their housing situation, recognising that living in poor quality accommodation with a lack of support can be detrimental to health and wellbeing.

- **National Service Framework**

The government National Service Framework (NSF) was introduced to set new national standards of care and health improvements, which enable the NHS to be built and developed around the needs of the patients. The NSF focuses on different 'zones' or areas, including Older People and Mental Health. Our Homelessness Strategy supports the principles of the NSF in working to keep people within their own homes, provide appropriate support services, to treat individuals with respect and dignity, and combat discrimination. As part of our work to implement the NSF for Older People, we have worked in partnership with social care and health providers, and the Primary Care Trust to develop a commissioning strategy for older people. We are now working on a Housing & Support Strategy for Older People that will be launched in 2004.

- **Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century**

The proposals in the strategy for learning disabilities are based on four key principles: civil rights, independence, choice and inclusion. Its proposals are intended to result in improvements across a range of areas including housing and support for people with learning disabilities, their families, and carers, giving people a greater choice and control over where, and how, they live, from childhood through to enabling a purposeful adult life. To provide a co-ordinating focus for services, we are working with the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board to developing a Housing & Support Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities.

- **Homelessness Act 2002**

The Homelessness Act 2002 has expanded the categories of households to whom the local authority would now have to consider as being in priority need, and has abolished the 2 year duty so that there is a full duty to provide settled accommodation. The local authority can no longer discharge that housing duty by a tenancy in the private sector unless the applicant is in agreement. This act enables us to help more local residents, however, it does place an additional burden on our limited finances.

- **Draft Housing Bill 2003**

A draft Housing Bill was published for consultation in March 2003 and could become legislation in 2004. Its key elements include:

- New Housing Health & Safety Rating System to replace the Fitness Standard
- National licensing of Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Powers to license landlords in low demand areas
- Improving the home-buying process with Home Information Packs
- Modernisation of the Right to Buy

We will be implementing the provisions contained within the Act when they become law, and are especially looking at HMO licensing to ensure it builds upon our already successful local scheme.

- **Local Government Act 2003**

Amongst a range of actions, the Act paves the way for a new prudential financial system for local authorities. It also makes the production of a 'fit for purpose' housing strategy a statutory function of the authority and allows councils to reduce the Council Tax discount on second and empty homes, which we are now implementing to complement our Empty Property Strategy.

Regional Policy

- **Sustainable Communities in the South East**
Sustainable Communities in the South East was published alongside the national document *Sustainable Communities: building for the future* in February 2003. It is a regional programme of action that sets out the governments proposals for maintaining and creating sustainable communities in the region. An essential focus of the government's plan is the decentralisation of housing policy giving the regions a real say.

In the South East the action plan is being taken forward with regional partnerships and local government, and the production of a Regional Housing Strategy that aims to provide a decent homes for all. The government's acknowledges the need to create sustainable communities in which people want to live that:

- Are economically prosperous
- Have decent homes at a price people can afford
- Safeguard the countryside
- Enjoy a well-designed, accessible and pleasant living and working environment
- Are effectively and fairly governed with a strong sense of community

The key issues identified for the South East also reflect local needs, and are focussed on increasing the housing supply, making housing more affordable, and improving transport. Additional key challenges and actions for the South East include the skills and the labour market, tackling deprivation, renewing communities, improving community engagement and developing partnership working and neighbourhood renewal issues.

- **Regional Housing Board**
Regional Housing Boards have been established in response to the Sustainable Communities Plan with specific responsibility for the preparation and management of Regional Housing Strategies and the allocation of housing resources. In the South East the Regional Housing Board includes five members of the Regional Assembly, as well as board members from English Partnerships, the Housing Corporation, SEEDA and GOSE.
- **Regional Housing Strategy 2004/05-2005/06**
The South East Regional Housing Strategy has been developed from the Regional Housing Statement for the South East and is an interim strategy covering the first two years of the Regional Housing Board, setting out the regions approach to housing investment and gives a

clear framework for spending decisions. The strategy aims to achieve quality and choice in housing for everyone in the South East, sustainability in terms of quality of life and the local environment, and continuity in the positive work which is already taking across the South East. These aims will be realised through five key themes, overall housing supply, affordability, regeneration and renewal, homelessness and supported housing and quality and sustainability of the housing stock.

Brighton & Hove City Council has been actively involved in the development and shaping of the regional strategy through its membership of sub-groups of the Regional Housing Forum.

Funding priorities for the strategy include affordability and homelessness, urban regeneration and priority for key housing groups such as key workers, supporting people and the homeless. Financial resources will come from a new single regional housing fund created by combining the old housing investment programme and the approved development programme funding lines.

The Regional Housing Strategy has identified 5 areas of focus, with the welcome inclusion of Brighton & Hove, for private sector renewal that have particular needs, such as our large supply of pre-1919 housing. Each of the 5 areas will be allocated an additional £0.5 million each to address particular local issues of concern. We are working with the Regeneration Sub Group of the Regional Housing Forum to identify the possible uses and tools to measure our performance with this funding.

- **South East England Regional Assembly**
The South East England Regional Assembly is the representative voice of the region. It comprises of 111 members, including elected councillors nominated by the region's local authorities, and regional representatives chosen by the voluntary sector, environmental groups, faith communities, business and economic partnerships, education and cultural networks and town and parish councils. The Assembly's responsibilities include advocacy, accountability and regional planning.

Simon Fanshawe, Chair of the Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership, is a member of the Assembly, along with Councillor Don Turner who was nominated by the local authorities and is one of the vice chairs of the Assembly's Executive Committee and a member of the Regional Housing Board.

8. Strategy Co-ordination

We recognise that the Housing Strategy will not be a success if carried out in isolation. Our Housing Strategy's aims and objectives are interrelated to a wide range of other plans and strategies within the Council, its partner agencies, and stakeholders. The Strategy is also an overarching document that focuses and co-ordinates a number of other strategies and action plans that relate to housing services and provides a consistent drive towards achieving our goals.

The table below summarises our main objectives, and other key strategies and action plans that relate to the Housing Strategy:

Aims	Linked Key Strategies & Action Plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that local people have somewhere to live [Linked to: 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30] • Raise housing quality toward a decent home for all [Linked to: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30] • Improve housing care and support [Linked to: 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 30] • Make homes warm, energy efficient and more affordable [Linked to: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30] • Strive for equal access to housing and services [Linked to: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 30] • Make neighbourhoods safe, attractive and sustainable [Linked to: 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30] • Widen housing choices for local people [Linked to: 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 30] • Ensure good housing contributes to city regeneration and renewal [Linked to: 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 30] • Promote health, well-being and learning through appropriate housing solutions [Linked to: 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Empty Property Action Plan (social housing) 2002 East Brighton for You, Three Year Strategy 2002-2005 HRA Training & Development Plan 2002 (2004) Supporting People Strategy (draft) Repairs & Maintenance Strategy & Action Plan Private Sector Strategy 2002 (draft) ICT Action Plan (draft) Positive Action Plan (Equalities) Capital Strategy & Asset Management Plan Sustainability Strategy & Action Plan 2001 Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2002-2010 Best Value Review of Care & Support 2001 (draft) Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2001 Single Homelessness Strategy 2002-2007 Empty Property Strategy 2005-2005 (private sector) East Brighton for You, Public Service Agreement 2002 Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Community Safety & Crime Reduction Strategy 2002-2005 Teenage Pregnancy Strategy 2001 Drug & Alcohol Action Team Plan 2001 (2004) Older Persons Housing Strategy (2005) BME Housing Strategy Home Energy Efficiency Strategy 2001 Affordable Warmth / Fuel Poverty Strategy 2002 Best Value Review of Council Housing & Action Plan 2002 Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008 Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2003-2006 Race Equality Scheme Impact Assessments Local Public Service Agreement

9. Priority 1: Affordable Housing

With more people looking for somewhere to live in Brighton & Hove than the supply of accommodation available, the pressure on providing affordable and sustainable housing continues. In response to the needs and wishes of the city's residents, we are working towards maximising the supply and tenure options of affordable housing in the city.

Our research and analysis of the local housing market confirms that private rented and owner-occupied accommodation remains at a level that people on an average income are unable to afford.

Amongst the range of options considered, our strategic actions listed below were chosen after extensive local research and consultation. If we do not provide more affordable housing:

- The level of homelessness within the city will increase causing greater hardship
- Average income, and possibly even higher income earners will be unable to access suitable housing of their choice
- More people will live in poverty to the detriment of their health and well being, and will experience social exclusion
- Retaining and recruiting valued and experienced workers will be increasingly difficult
- We will fail to control spending on homelessness which will impact on Council Tax and services

In maximising the supply of affordable housing in the city, our key strategic actions work to:

- Develop a mix of new affordable homes to meet identified housing need achieving sustainable mixed communities
- Maximising the development of affordable housing through the adoption of appropriate planning policies
- Enabling easier access to suitable private rented accommodation
- Seeking changes to Housing Benefit regulations
- Increase availability of Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO)
- Reduce home fuel costs and make adequate heating more affordable

The draft Local Plan provides a detailed framework for the use of land and buildings in the city is now at the Public Inquiry stage. The Inspector's report is expected shortly and we looking adopt the plan by the end of 2004.

The draft plan underwent extensive consultation and has defined affordable housing in Brighton & Hove as:

“Residential accommodation that is provided with a subsidy to ensure that rents/prices remain at a level that is genuinely affordable to local people whose income means that they are unable to meet their housing needs through the housing market. In Brighton & Hove, affordable housing will typically be for rent and will be managed by a Registered Social Landlord”

Targets for the level of affordable housing in the city to be developed through planning gain have been included in the draft local plan to help maximise the amount of available affordable housing:

- 40% affordable housing must be provided on residential developments of 10 or more units
- 25% affordable housing must be provided on residential developments of 4-9 units

We continue to work with our preferred housing providers in Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership and a range of agencies, to explore opportunities for developing a mix of new homes. From 2001 to 2003, 495 new affordable homes were completed. Funding streams include a range of sources, for example, the local authority, Housing Corporation, English Partnerships, Challenge Fund, and the Single Regeneration Budget.

In 2003/04 a total of 586 units are in development, and significantly, a forward pool has been identified giving the opportunity for developing over 1,000 additional units in the near future. Significant sources for these home include a range of major regeneration projects in the city providing a mix of residential, retail, and leisure facilities for the city including the King Alfred site, Brighton Station, Preston Barracks, and Brighton Marina.

We recognise that we cannot deliver these major projects alone, and are working in partnership with the Regional Housing Board and our other key housing, economic, and business stakeholders to ensure we are able to deliver on these high profile opportunities.

Working with a range of agencies, we are continuing to secure a variety of Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) schemes to help key workers and other residents who have difficulty in purchasing due to gap between incomes and house prices.

Through the Starter Homes Initiative and working with MOAT Housing, up to 175 key workers, including Social Workers, Teachers, and health workers, have been assisted into owner-occupation. In addition we are supporting other LCHO schemes and have assisted 98 key worker households to live and provide some of the essential services in the city since 2001.

Working with eb4U in East Brighton, we are developing LCHO initiatives linked to neighbourhood renewal, with the mapping of estate based LCHO development opportunities completed in 2002/03.

One project, the 'demountables' scheme is in development to replace 29 old prefabricated dwellings with 36 modern houses and flats, some for shared ownership, which also incorporate solar panels to reduce home heating and fuel bills.

We are seeking to implement the development programme of 'infill' LCHO developments by 2005, which will allow tenure diversification in the area and improve the use of land resources. We have already identified one 'infill' site and are waiting potential funding.

In order to improve our understanding of the local housing situation and its impact on residents quality of life, we will be undertaking a new Housing Needs Survey, updating the information provided in our survey completed in 2000. In partnership with other local authorities undertaking similar surveys in the region, we are seeking to co-ordinate the methodology used to help us develop a more detailed regional picture of housing need and the impact of travel to work areas on peoples housing choices.

We know that if we are going to provide a wide range of housing options to people within the City, then we need to look at the private rented sector and how people are able to access accommodation.

We have two rent-in-advance and deposit schemes, aimed to help local people access accommodation in the private rented sector. The first is Access, and is focussed on families who are at risk of becoming homeless in a way that we are unable to prevent.

The second, Link-Up is offered to single people who have demonstrated an ability to maintain their own accommodation in the private rented sector but become homeless through no fault of their own. We

aim to assist 10 people per year through the Link-Up scheme. Both options operate as loans, and financial assessments are carried out before a tenancy is offered.

We are currently investigating the possibility of developing options in partnership with Working Links to expand on the scheme for many people who are single and able to work, but are being prevented from doing and improving their own quality of life because they are insecurely housed.

We have been working with our colleagues in Customer Services to implement changes to housing benefit, which will have positive impact on people who have difficulty affording to rent in the city. The key achievements in 2002/03 include revising the methodology used by the Rent Services to determine local reference rents which has increased Housing Benefit limits, implementing changes associated with Working Tax Credits, and abolishing annual Review Dates for all claimants of working age by April 2004.

In addition in being, we are a pathfinder authority for the new Housing Benefit system, the Local Housing Allowance, and have a major influence in shaping the national system during the pilot project. The pathfinder will run for 2 years from February 2004 and complete in early 2006.

The *Affordable Warmth / Fuel Poverty Strategy* was adopted in November 2002 and details our action through to 2010 that will improve home energy efficiency and reduce heating and fuel costs. Our work has also been nationally recognised in 'A Review of English Local Authority Fuel Poverty Reports and Strategies' launched by the Eaga Partnership Charitable Trust in 2003, identifying good practice for tackling fuel poverty amongst 'hard to reach' groups.

Some of our key energy efficiency actions highlighted in our annual Home Energy Conservation Report 2003 include:

- A programme is in place to provide cavity wall and loft insulation, draughtproofing and low energy lightbulbs to a further 7,000 council homes is being undertaken
- Joint activities with the local health service continued to develop with a campaign to encourage people eligible for free flu vaccine to also apply for grants for insulation or heating in their homes
- A mailshot encouraging those receiving Housing Benefit to apply for a government energy efficiency grant for the installation of heating or insulation measures in their homes.

KEY:
P= Funding Priority, @= Action from resident consultation, eb4U = eb4U objective,
BVPI = Best Value Performance Indicator, 2020 = 2020 Community Strategy Objective,
NRS = Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Objective

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2004- 2007
Priority 1: Affordable Housing

Linked to:
Regional Housing Strategy
Themes: 1: Overall Housing Supply, 2: Affordability

Strategic Option	Action	Completion Target	Funding Source	Responsible Officers	Current Position	Key Links
Develop a mix of new affordable homes to meet identified housing need achieving sustainable mixed communities (for example, general needs, shared ownership, supported housing, keyworker) P1 @ 2020 NRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an average for 300 affordable homes per annum Maintain a forward pool of future development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001-2006 complete 1,500 affordable homes ensuring a mixed range of types and tenure Target to be updated following Housing Needs Survey 2004/05 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Housing Board Housing Corporation (2003/04 £17m) RSL & Private finance (2003/04 est. £7m) Housing Investment (2003/04 £3m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Development Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001/03 – 495 units completed (including 98 LCHO, 99 Lifetime Homes Standard, 24 Wheelchair Standard) Forward pool of over 1,000 units identified and awaiting funding approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Housing Board Government Office for the South East Housing Corporation 2020 Community Strategy Affordable Housing Agenda 21 Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership eb4U East Brighton New Deal for Communities Department for Work & Pensions Economic Partnership Housing Corporation Housing Renewal Reforms Independent Housing Ombudsman Key Workers Landlord Accreditation Link-up Scheme Moat HA Older Peoples Services Planning Policy Private Sector Landlords Private Sector Strategy Regeneration Partnership Rent Office SEEDA Single Capital Pot Starter Homes Initiative Sustainability Voluntary sector Fuel Poverty Strategy Home Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme providers Home Energy Efficiency Strategy
Maximising the development of affordable housing through the adoption of appropriate planning policies P1 2020 NRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft appropriate affordable housing planning policies Implement policies HO1, HO2, EM3, EM5, EM9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable housing targets adopted in local plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 40% affordable on developments of 10 or more - 25% affordable on developments of 4-9 units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal resources Increase supply of affordable housing from robust planning policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Development Manager City Planner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies implemented including HO2 Local plan inquiry complete and awaiting Inspector's recommendations 	
Enabling easier access to suitable private rented accommodation P1 @ 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a range of options and schemes to support people to find and access accommodation 2003/04 Access Scheme 2003/04 Link-Up Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004/05 possible working Links project Ongoing project development in response to changing local housing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link-up scheme - Churches Together in Brighton & Hove funding reduced pressure on homelessness services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness Prevention Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 people helped to secure accommodation since November 2002 investigating additional funding 	
Seeking changes to Housing Benefit regulations P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the Local Housing Allowance as a pathfinder authority, going 'live' on 2 February 2004 The pathfinder will run for two years to 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced homelessness from those on benefits not able to access private rented sector If successful we will seek the permanent mainstreaming of the new system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Work and Pensions are funding all implementation associated with the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target with Project Plan, overseen in partnership with the Rent Service, landlord, and tenant representatives 	
Increase availability of Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) P2 @ 2020 NRS eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop LCHO initiatives linked to neighbourhood renewal 2001/2006 assist 30 households per year 2002/03 develop mapping of estate based LCHO development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2005 implement development programme of 'infill' LCHO developments April 2006 - 150 households assisted 10 households per year helped into home ownership via Cash Incentive Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Housing Board Housing Investment Programme MOAT Housing Association RSL and private finance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Development Manager Housing Initiatives Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001/02 38 households assisted with LCHO 2002/03 60 households assisted with LCHO One infill identified - awaiting potential funding Cash Incentive Scheme funding increased 	
Reduce home fuel costs and make adequate heating more affordable P3 2020 NRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1999/00 launch 10 year strategic Home Energy Efficiency Strategy 2001/02 review strategy 2002 launch of Affordable Warmth – Fuel Poverty Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2010 substantially improve energy efficiency and reduce home fuel and heating costs The targets for average energy efficiency rating of council owned dwellings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2004/05 - 68.24 - 2004/05 - 70.00 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HECA Home Energy Efficiency Grants European and other similar funding Housing Investment Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Energy Efficiency Officer Planned Maintenance Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched Affordable Warmth – Fuel Poverty Strategy 2002-10 Private Sector stock condition survey 2005 will measure improvements since 2000 Council Housing target subject to stock options appraisal 	

10. Priority 2: Decent Homes

Situated between the sea and the downs, with scarce opportunities for new build, and an ageing social and private sector stock, we are committed to improving standards and making best use of existing buildings and development opportunities.

We are working to ensure that all the residents of Brighton & Hove have access to decent quality affordable housing that is wind and watertight, free from damp, efficient to heat, and providing modern services and facilities. If we do not implement the options to improve the city's housing stock, developed through consultation, national, and regional priorities:

- We will fail to meet the Government's targets for Decent Homes
- We will not meet the needs and aspiration of the city's residents
- We will fail to improve the quality of private rented accommodation, in particular that occupied by low income vulnerable residents
- The health, safety and well being of the city's residents will not be improved

To achieve this priority, our key strategic options are to:

- Raise the quality of all council housing to the Decent Homes Standard, whilst improving neighbourhoods and the built environment
- Reducing the number of vulnerable households in the private sector living in non-decent housing
- Make best use of land and buildings, and developing an understanding of the urban capacity for residential development
- Promoting and supporting the role of the private sector in meeting housing need
- Raising the standards of accommodation and management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The Government has set a target to ensure that by 2010, all social housing meets the Decent Homes Standard. An independent stock condition survey was carried out during 2003 and found that the stock has been well maintained over time given the levels of available resources, however, 52% of our homes, whilst providing adequate housing, does not currently meet the new Standard.

Some £177 million over the next five years would bring all our social housing properties up the Decent Homes Standard, after which the stock could be maintained with a steady level of investment. Current

spending levels on the stock would amount to around £110 million over the same period.

The results of the stock condition survey will help inform the HRA Business Plan, due in 2004, and work on the stock options appraisal to determine the future of council housing in Brighton & Hove and the options for ownership and management which will lever in the necessary funding. The range of stock options will be presented early in 2004, and we will work with residents groups, assisted by an Independent Tenants Advisor, to determine and progress a preferred option.

Since the launch of the Private Sector Housing Strategy in 2002 we have continued to develop innovative ways of improving housing conditions within the private sector. Following the government's reforms of Home Improvement Grants, a new Housing Renewal Policy has been developed setting out ways to help those in need of assistance, which will be reviewed every year in line with resident needs. It is particularly targeted to help vulnerable people in non-decent properties, enabling them to continue to live safely in their homes, together with Disabled Facilities Grants for improvements and adaptations to make homes more suitable for people with disabilities.

Large sections of the housing in Brighton & Hove is comprised of pre-1919 dwellings which, whilst providing some of the charm of our city and a reminder of its Regency past, are more difficult to maintain and keep in line with modern standards. An estimated 10,200 dwellings are unfit due to mainly age or disrepair, accounting for 10% of the housing stock, compared to national unfitness rate of 7%.

The Regional Housing Board through its Regional Housing Strategy, has identified this particular issue, and amongst only 4 other authority areas in the South East, is providing additional funding to help us improve conditions. To help inform our private sector investment priorities we will be carrying out a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey to update the information obtained in the 2000 survey.

In 2003 we developed a local landlord accreditation scheme to recognise high management standards and promote good practice in the private rented sector. Owners are provided with benefits, including representation at a national level, discounted rates with contractors, builders' merchants and paint suppliers and discounted building insurance rates. Such is the appreciation of the scheme that Southern Private Landlords Association has recommended it to all of its members.

KEY:
P= Funding Priority, @= Action from resident consultation, eb4U = eb4U objective,
BVPI = Best Value Performance Indicator, 2020 = 2020 Community Strategy Objective,
NRS = Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Objective

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2004-2007 Priority 2: Decent Homes

Linked to:
Regional Housing Strategy

Theme: 5: Quality and Sustainability of the Housing Stock

Strategic Option	Action	Completion Target	Funding Source	Responsible Officers	Current Position	Key Links
Raising the quality of all council housing to the Decent Homes Standard, whilst improving neighbourhoods and the built environment P1 @ BVPI 2020 eb4U NRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2002 Best Value Review of Council Housing 2004 1/3 reduction of non-decent council homes 2004 identify preferred stock option to achieve investment and standard 2005 ballot tenants on preferred option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2006 implement preferred stock option 2008 100% of council's housing stock in Hollingdean meets Decent Homes Standard (Local NRF PSA) 2010 100% of the council's housing stock meets Decent Homes Standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future investment to be determined through stock options appraisal £177.7m required 2003-2008 Average of £45,075 per home required over 2003-2032 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Director (Housing Management) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best Value Review Completed, action plan being implemented and monitored Stock condition survey completed Options Appraisal in progress Independent Tenant Advisor appointed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Housing Board Regional Housing Strategy 2020 Community Strategy Local Strategic Partnership Government Office for the South East SEEDA / SEERA
Reducing the number of households in the private sector living in non-decent housing <small>(The 2001 Private Sector House Condition Survey estimated 10,200 dwellings unfit for human habitation. No figure for the number of non-decent (which goes beyond fitness standard) dwellings –2005 survey to inform)</small> P1 BVPI 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2003 launch new Private Sector Renewal Policy Develop renewal policy toolkit to facilitate equity loans and other schemes 2005 undertake private sector stock condition survey to determine number of non decent homes in the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual reduction in the number of households in the private sector living in non-decent housing Figure to be revised following new stock condition survey Awaiting government guidance in respect non-decent housing targets for vulnerable residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Investment Programme (c.£3m per annum) Additional funding from Regional Housing Board (£0.8m 2004/05) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector Housing Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Private Sector Renewal Policy launched 2003 Homes made fit: - 2001/02 – 209 - 2002/03 – 243 - 2003/04 – 173 (to 31 Dec '03) Working in partnership through the Regeneration Sub-Group of the Regional Housing Forum to develop priorities, targets, and monitoring system for funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Corporation Best Value Review Council Housing Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership Corporate Asset Strategy Decent Homes Standard Empty Property Strategy Housing Investment Programme
Making the best use of land and buildings, and developing an understanding of the urban capacity for residential development P3 BVPI 2020 eb4U NRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Private sector housing to identify flats over shops Urban Capacity Study review underway CityStats geographical mapping system 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database to include actual / potential flats over shops information by April 2005 Geographical mapping to provide a new tool to assist in the identification future service needs and priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matched funding with partner public, private, and voluntary agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empty Property Officer (co-ordinating) Corporate Demographer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityStats Common Database Geographical Information System in development – partners include Health Authority, Primary Care Trust, Fire Service, eb4U, Registered Social Landlords, and all authority services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Renewal Reforms HRA Business Plan Housing Inspector's recommendations Local Plan Neighbourhood Renewal
Promoting and supporting the role of the private sector in meeting housing need P2 @ 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2003 Launch Landlord Accreditation Scheme 2004 Review Landlord Accreditation Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing subject to funding Funding shortfall 2004/05 – service reviews in progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding from ODPM Homelessness Directorate (£900k 2004/05) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Needs Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 landlords joined scheme and a further 128 expressed an interest Scheme recommended to landlords by Southern Private Landlords Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Deal for Communities (eb4U) Planing policy Private Sector Housing Strategy Public Service Agreements
Raising the standards of accommodation and management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) <small>(There are an estimated 15,000 HMOs in the city with approx. 5,000 that fall under the HMO registration scheme)</small> P3 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of city wide HMO registration scheme Launched April 2002 100 HMOs registered by 2003 100 HMOs to be registered per year until HMO Licensing is introduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be encompassed by HMO Licensing as part of Housing Bill Awaiting publication of the Bill which could become law towards the end of 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees received since beginning of the pilot scheme in April 2000 have helped finance the administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector Manager (Central) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National HMO Licensing scheme in draft Housing Bill 2003 Local scheme: (to end December 2003) - 131 full registrations - 225 conditional registrations - 55 new applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regeneration Partnership Single Capital Pot Sustainability Strategy Tenant Compacts

11. Priority 3: Care & Support

The Census 2001 reported that 18.3% of the population of Brighton & Hove had a limiting long-term illness. This figure includes any long-term illness, health problem or disability, which limits daily activities or work.

At present, there are around 5,600 people in Brighton & Hove currently receiving housing related support, and studies have shown that there is a further sizeable group which would benefit from additional help. In consultation with providers and those in need, a range of options have been developed to improve support and best reflect the most pressing needs within the city. If we do not do this:

- Our partners will not be able to deliver their services effectively
- We will risk the health, safety education, life prospects and social inclusion of local people
- We will fail to support the needs of vulnerable young people and older people within the community
- There will be unnecessary admission into hospital and delayed discharge and into unnecessary long-term care

To improve housing related care and support for those in need our key strategic options are to:

- Provide an enhanced range of better targeted and better quality support services
- Meet housing support needs of vulnerable homeless people
- Develop a new approach to homelessness and reducing rough sleeping
- Reduce the use of emergency bed and breakfast accommodation
- Improve access to health services
- Provide appropriate housing and support for young vulnerable people
- Provide a range of housing options to meet the needs of older people

In April 2003 Supporting People was introduced, bringing all housing related support services under one umbrella to improve the co-ordination of services that were originally commissioned through a range of agencies. In total, joint working helped identify £13.8m of housing related support services. Each service commissioned is reviewed on a three year basis to ensure that the services remain relevant to local residents needs and value for money.

A new Supporting People Strategy will be launched in 2004. This strategy will establish demand and funding priorities in the city for specialist accommodation and support those in need, for example, pregnant teenagers, older people, people with learning disabilities, physical and sensory disabilities, and drug and alcohol problems.

We continue to work with RSLs to improve the range of support services for vulnerable residents. Using enabling funding and supporting people funding we are increasing the supply of supported housing for vulnerable homeless people. In 2002/03 a total of 42 supported homes were completed, with a further 49 due to complete during 2003/04. During 2003 have recently completed the development of a new housing project, providing some of the much needed supported accommodation for vulnerable single female teenagers and mothers.

The city's Single Homeless Strategy & Rough Sleepers strategy has been developed around two core principles. Firstly, homelessness is not merely a housing issue and secondly, that no one agency can solve homelessness and rough sleeping alone. The partnership formed has had significant successes both operational and strategically.

To meet the target of placing no families with children in B&B except in an emergency by April 2004, we have worked in partnership with agencies to secure alternative forms of temporary accommodation and continue to expand this provision. In addition a Temporary Accommodation Strategy will be produced in 2004 to review the overall supply provision.

Supporting young vulnerable people continues to be an important focus for housing services. Recent developments include the provision of a more tailored service provided by our Housing Advice Centre and Hove YMCA's Youth Advice Centre (YAC) who offer an assessment interview and provide a range of housing options for young people to pursue. Working in partnership with the Youth Offending Team we have jointly funded an Accommodation Officer, whose role is to find suitable accommodation for young people who have a history of offending, to help them reintegrate within the community.

Our CareLink community alarm service provides 24 hour 365 days a year personal alarm monitoring for over 4,000 residents and also assists with the provision of a range of out of hours emergency council services across the City. The quality of the service provided has recently been officially recognised as meeting the standards set by Association of Social Alarm Providers (ASAP).

KEY:
P= Funding Priority, ©= Action from resident consultation, eb4U = eb4U objective,
BVPI = Best Value Performance Indicator, 2020 = 2020 Community Strategy Objective,
NRS = Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Objective

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2004-2007
Priority 3: Care & Support

Linked to:
Regional Housing Strategy

Theme: 4: Homelessness and supported housing

Strategic Option	Action	Completion Target	Funding Source	Responsible Officers	Current Position	Key Links
Providing an enhanced range of better targeted and better quality support services through Supporting People P1 © 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004 launch new Supporting People Strategy Review services every 3 years Supporting People Needs Mapping 2003/04 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First 3 year review timetable to be completed by 31st March 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yearly savings of £290k to be achieved in 2003/04 Awaiting announcement on future years funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing needs mapping methodology for 5 year strategy 1st round of service reviews commenced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Affordable Housing ODPM Homelessness Directorate Best Value Review of Care & Support
Meeting housing support needs of vulnerable homeless people P1 © 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review services over 3 year cycle to maximise availability and range of support services and accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise availability and range of services in line with Supporting People Strategy 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding via planning social care, PCT, RSLs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing 50 bed for vulnerable homeless plus 49 supported housing for vulnerable people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership CareLink Children's Services Plan 2001-2004
Developing a new approach to homelessness and reducing rough sleeping P1 © 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 2003 implement homelessness strategy July 2003 implement Homelessness Prevention Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement, monitor, review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008 Homelessness Prevention 2003-2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional ODPM Homelessness Directorate funding support of £900k for 2004/05 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Needs Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008 launched July 2003 Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2003-2006 launched July 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime Reduction Initiative Drug & Alcohol Action Team Homelessness Strategy
Reducing the use of emergency bed and breakfast accommodation P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual increase in temporary accommodation Increased activity in rent/deposit schemes by 50% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No households with children placed in B&B from April 2004 (except in an emergency) 2004 develop Temporary Accommodation Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced B&B costs and use of lower cost temporary accommodation (2003/04 £1m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary Accommodation Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary Accommodation expanded by 70 units to March 2004 to help meet B&B target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Deal for Communities (eb4u) Older Persons Housing Strategy Quality Protects
Improve access to health services for vulnerable residents and homeless households P2 BVPI 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish partnership to provide new and improved services between Housing & City Support and Health care providers 2003/04 CareLink Introduce the concept of telecare and telemedicine to potential partner service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide services and key projects with Health, Adult Social Care and integrated services. Consolidated links with Sure Start, Children's Fund, Connexions and Extended Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinated funding from housing, care and health providers CareLink, mainly self financed via alarm rental income. Bids to be made for equipment funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy Manager CareLink Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morley Street GP surgery released as base for Sure Start and family support in addition to providing service for people who have no fixed address or are in temporary accommodation Joint working with PCT, social care on teenage pregnancy, children, older people, people with support needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regeneration Partnership Primary Care Trust (PCT) Adult Social Care Rough Sleeper Strategy Rough Sleeper Unit Single Homeless Strategy Supporting People Teenage Pregnancy Strategy
Providing appropriate housing and support for young vulnerable people P2 © 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2002 agree protocols for looked after people 2003 develop supported accommodation for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2006 Ensure all homeless young vulnerable people are able to access appropriate supported housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting People Homelessness Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy Manager Supporting People Manager Homelessness Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint protocol with Children, families & Schools / Hove YMCA for care-leavers adopted Supported accommodation for pregnant teenagers developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported Housing Forum
Providing a range of housing options to meet the needs of older people P2 © 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2003 Develop older persons commissioning strategy with the Primary Care Trust 2004 Develop older persons strategy to outline housing care and support options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004 launch Older Persons Housing Strategy 2006 develop a minimum of 37 extra care housing units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing budgets Department of Health funding application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently developing the commissioning strategy and the housing strategy framework 	

12. Priority 4: Equality

Our applauded Celebrating Diversity campaign aimed to value differences and challenge discrimination in Brighton and Hove has come to an end, however, it has been successful in helping to mainstream the equalities message and ethos throughout the full range of our services.

The new Equalities Policy contained within our revised corporate constitution is in no way an end product, but part of an ongoing approach to improving services delivery and employment. It will be regularly monitored and reviewed, in consultation with those it affects, especially community groups, schools, individuals, local agencies, and businesses.

If we are unable to mainstream our agreed equalities options effectively:

- We will fail to ensure our services are delivered to meet the needs all our local residents
- We will be unable to assist people to remain in their own homes
- There will not be full social inclusion and participation within local community
- We will be unable to sustain our acclaimed approach to diversity and miss opportunities that arise from our diverse community

To improve services and access to services, our key strategic options seek to:

- Enable disabled people to live in homes that are best adapted to meet their needs
- Meet the needs of black and ethnic minority residents and ensuring equality of opportunity
- Enhance opportunities for under-represented groups to have a say in service delivery
- Improve the safety of homes and neighbourhoods and providing housing services to support the victims of crime
- Promote social inclusion through training and employment opportunities
- Mainstream equalities through Impact Assessments

Even though there is a shortage of suitable sites in the city, we are on target to achieve our aim of developing 50 new wheelchair suitable homes through 2001-2006 with a total of 24 wheelchair units completed by April 2003. In addition 99 new homes meeting lifetime homes standards have been developed with at least another 400 planned throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

An audit of access to existing council stock and a database of properties with adaptations is due to be completed by April 2004. Through a partnership with social care services, an Occupational Therapist

works with the allocations team utilising their expertise and the database to ensure properties are suitably matched and adapted for those in need.

In response to The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 we are undertaking Race Equality Impact Assessments of our services to identify and overcome barriers restricting access to BME groups. In recognition that service barriers can affect many groups, such as those with a disability, the Impact Assessments have been expanded to cover the whole equalities agenda. The first assessments will be completed by April 2004 and integrated into a detailed action plan to improve our services that will be monitored and reassessed on a 3-year cycle.

In response to our equalities work and the new Government publication, *"Tackling Racial Harassment: Code of Practice for Social Landlords"* we have fully incorporated recommendations into our revised Racial Harassment policy and procedures, with additional training to assist with implementation. As part of the Council's commitment to supporting greater involvement by Black and Minority Ethnic community tenants, the Tenant Compact Monitoring Group has sponsored two BME TARAN conferences in the city and we will be launching our Black & Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy in 2005.

We are working towards addressing the housing needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community outlined in the *"Count me in" LGBT Community Strategy 2001-2006*. This will be revisited as part of our Equality Impact Assessments.

Domestic Violence has been identified as the third major cause of homelessness. In response, we have been expanding the city's Women's Refuge, with Phase 1 completing in 2004 and Phase 2 in 2005. We are also working to improve services that assist those who have experienced domestic violence, to enable them to remain safely in their own home.

In helping local residents obtain suitable training, the Whitehawk Inn training centre in the eb4U area recently celebrated its 2nd anniversary. Over 1,000 local residents have used the centre since it opened to develop new skills and abilities.

Through the Single Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy we are seeking to develop 'Meaningful Occupation' of homes to support former homeless individuals into employment opportunities with either voluntary or paid work. This is facilitated through development of life skills training, supported work-experience placements, supported employment and training opportunities in a wide ranging partnership.

KEY:
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STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2004-2007

Priority 4: Equality

Linked to:
Regional Housing Strategy

Theme: 5: Quality and sustainability of the housing stock

Strategic Option	Action	Completion Target	Funding Source	Responsible Officers	Current Position	Key Links
Enabling disabled people to live in homes that are best adapted to meet their needs P1 @ eb4U 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual monitoring of developments to manage programme Integrate private and public sector teams and processes from April 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2001-2006 aim to achieve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 lifetime homes 50 wheelchair homes 500 completed adaptations per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Housing Board Housing Investment Programme HRA Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Development Manager Private Sector Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 99 lifetime homes standards and 24 wheelchair units provided 2001/03 Adaptations target increased from 400 to 500 to reflect improvements (c.£850k DFG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Anti-Victimisation Initiative Best Value Review of Council Housing & Action Plan BME Housing Strategy Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Census 2001 Community Safety Plan Equalities Action Plan Homelessness Strategy Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Strategy 2001-2006 National Service Framework for Older People New Deal for Communities (eb4U) Older Persons Council Primary Care Trust Private Sector Strategy Quality & Choice for Older Peoples Housing Quality of Life
Meeting the needs of black and ethnic minority residents and ensuring equality of opportunity P1 BVPI 2020 eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to develop a Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy 2004/05 development / consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Equality Scheme Impact Assessments in 3 yearly cycles (Round 1 2003/04) Launch BME Housing Strategy 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awaiting detailed ward level Census 2001 analysis and impact assessment action plan to enable effective strategy and service development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Anti-Victimisation Initiative Best Value Review of Council Housing & Action Plan BME Housing Strategy Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Census 2001 Community Safety Plan Equalities Action Plan Homelessness Strategy Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Strategy 2001-2006 National Service Framework for Older People New Deal for Communities (eb4U) Older Persons Council Primary Care Trust Private Sector Strategy Quality & Choice for Older Peoples Housing Quality of Life
Enhancing opportunities for under-represented groups to have a say in how services are delivered P2 2020 eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2003 establish ways of involving traditionally hard to reach groups in tenant participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2007 10% increase in representation to 81% of all tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within existing budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Services Manager (North) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing work across all neighbourhoods eb4U Neighbourhood Management Board established Dec 2001 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Anti-Victimisation Initiative Best Value Review of Council Housing & Action Plan BME Housing Strategy Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Census 2001 Community Safety Plan Equalities Action Plan Homelessness Strategy Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Strategy 2001-2006 National Service Framework for Older People New Deal for Communities (eb4U) Older Persons Council Primary Care Trust Private Sector Strategy Quality & Choice for Older Peoples Housing Quality of Life
Improving the safety of homes and neighbourhoods and providing housing services to support the victims of crime P2 @ 2020 eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop CareLink support services for the vulnerable and repeat victims of crime 2003/05 expand the Women's Refuge Develop new affordable homes to Secured by Design standard Participate in the Burglary Reduction Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2005/06 Develop and provide support services and key projects with partners within police divisions and other community safety agencies From 2006 100% of all new affordable homes developed will be to Secure by Design standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainly self financed via alarm rental income. Bids to be made for equipment funding. Housing Investment Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CareLink Manager Housing Development Manager Private Sector Housing Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bogus caller pilot discussed with East Brighton policing team Part of the multi-agency Burglary Reduction Group To Q3 2002/03 37 units meeting secure by design standard New Private Sector Renewal Policy launched 2003. Discussions beginning with Burglary Reduction Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Anti-Victimisation Initiative Best Value Review of Council Housing & Action Plan BME Housing Strategy Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Census 2001 Community Safety Plan Equalities Action Plan Homelessness Strategy Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Strategy 2001-2006 National Service Framework for Older People New Deal for Communities (eb4U) Older Persons Council Primary Care Trust Private Sector Strategy Quality & Choice for Older Peoples Housing Quality of Life
Promoting social inclusion through training and employment opportunities P3 2020 eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 'Meaningful Occupation' programme Explore training and employment opportunities for local residents Being worked through with partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the number of vulnerable single people caught in the cycle of repeat homelessness Ongoing development of new projects to be explored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness Directorate Funding HRA Maintenance Programme eb4U funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single Homeless & Rough Sleeper Manager Head of Housing Repairs Project Director eb4U 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaningful Occupation project in place involving key local employers and support agencies eb4U is open to consider further opportunities with new repairs contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Anti-Victimisation Initiative Best Value Review of Council Housing & Action Plan BME Housing Strategy Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Census 2001 Community Safety Plan Equalities Action Plan Homelessness Strategy Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Strategy 2001-2006 National Service Framework for Older People New Deal for Communities (eb4U) Older Persons Council Primary Care Trust Private Sector Strategy Quality & Choice for Older Peoples Housing Quality of Life
Mainstreaming Equalities through Equality Impact Assessments <small>(expansion of Race Equalities Scheme Impact Assessments to cover whole equalities agenda)</small> P1 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2004 all housing strategy division services to have completed 1st assessment with action plan 2004/06 monitor and implement action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Equalities Impact Assessments for all services (to be reassessed on a 3 year cycle) Implement Action Plans in accordance with 3 year timetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Director (Housing Strategy) All staff and managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and responsible officers identified Scoping for all services completed end 2003 Consultation Winter 2003/04 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Anti-Victimisation Initiative Best Value Review of Council Housing & Action Plan BME Housing Strategy Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Census 2001 Community Safety Plan Equalities Action Plan Homelessness Strategy Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Strategy 2001-2006 National Service Framework for Older People New Deal for Communities (eb4U) Older Persons Council Primary Care Trust Private Sector Strategy Quality & Choice for Older Peoples Housing Quality of Life

13. Priority 5: Neighbourhoods & Communities

With a number of neighbourhood related strategies in place we are actively pursuing policies of inclusion and renewal within our neighbourhoods and communities. We are working with local residents to help them improve the local environment and quality of life and aim to:

- Work with eb4U, New Deal for Communities and the East Brighton Community Partnership, to regenerate East Brighton
- Working with local communities to develop neighbourhood management
- Improve neighbourhoods by bringing empty buildings back into use as dwellings
- Delivering continuous improvement in housing management and maintenance
- Promoting housing tenure and tenure choice to better reflect the identity and wishes of communities
- Promoting educational attainment and life long learning through better housing services

Failure to undertake the agreed range of options would seriously affect efforts to improve local communities. If these actions are not implemented:

- Quality of life in local communities will be detrimentally affected
- Vulnerable people will be denied the opportunity to live safely in their communities
- Local people will be unable to participate fully in community life and fulfil their potential
- Regeneration programmes will be undermined
- Empty properties will remain an eyesore and hotspot for crime and antisocial behaviour

We are working with local residents and our partners, through eb4U East Brighton New Deal for Communities, to develop a Housing Strategy to compliment this city-wide housing strategy and address specific issues relevant to the people and communities in East Brighton. Major focuses of the strategy are developing Choice Based Lettings to improving housing mobility and choice, tenure diversification, and more effective land use. This strategy will be launched in 2004.

We have continued to support the eb4U Community Safety Team in joint initiatives in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour within the eb4U community and reducing the fear of crime for the residents and businesses. Total crime figures have fallen by 13% and domestic burglaries fell from 234 in 1999/2000 to 160 in 2001/02. The success to date of the team has been such that funding for the dedicated Police Officer has been mainstreamed ahead of schedule.

The Brighton and Hove Regeneration Partnership manages and oversees all of Brighton and Hove's Single Regeneration Budget schemes. So far, the Partnership has been successful under 6 bidding rounds of the SRB and has won grants totalling £41.04 million. The grants have enabled over 150 projects to be funded over the last seven years.

In 2004 we will publish a revised Tenant Compact, to set out a clear-recorded agreement of how residents in social housing will be involved in local and strategic decisions and so strengthen local communities, increase democracy and improve services. Tenants are also being encouraged to join Tenant Associations, which are part of the overall consultation structure, which tenants have developed with the council. Tenants' Representatives attend the Area Panels and the Housing Management Sub-Committee, helping to decide the council's policies.

The Census 2001 reported that there were 3,571 vacant properties in the city, 3% of all housing. The majority of the empty homes are vacant for only a short period of time, leaving an estimated 800 to 900 long-term empty properties. Our Empty Property Strategy seeks to co-ordinate action to bring these homes back into use and has been so successful that we doubled the target after the first year.

As part of our moves to increase housing choice, 2002 saw the launch of 18 HomeWire kiosks in public locations throughout the city. On average, 700 people use the service every week, obtaining advice and assistance in looking for a suitable home.

We are currently carrying out a Best Value Review of Allocations, which is due to complete in December 2003. Choice Based Lettings will be an important element to the future of allocations and the city-wide scheme will be developed during 2004/05. We are also exploring the scope for expanding our Choice Based Lettings project to other local authorities and housing associations partners in the region.

Working closely with our colleagues in Primary Care Trusts, Children, Families & Schools, Adult Services we are aiming to achieve the creation of sustainable communities which will give people opportunities to develop skills and improve their quality of life through education and life long learning.

Through the Teenage Pregnancy Working Group we are working with colleagues to support teenagers back into education. Within our sheltered schemes we have re-structured staffing to enable the recruitment of development officers to encourage tenant participation and the development of new skills amongst older people through ICT training.

KEY:

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BVPI = Best Value Performance Indicator, 2020 = 2020 Community Strategy Objective,
NRS = Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Objective

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2004-2007
Priority 5: Neighbourhoods & Communities

Linked to:
Regional Housing Strategy
Theme: 3: Regeneration and Renewal

Strategic Option	Action	Completion Target	Funding Source	Responsible Officers	Current Position	Key Links
Working with New Deal for Communities and the East Brighton Community Partnership to regenerate East Brighton P1 © 2020 eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Service Agreement published 2001 eb4U three year strategy launched in 2002 Ongoing: details on the work and targets of eb4U can be found at www.eb4u.co.uk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary targets detailed in the chapter entitled 'Engaging Local People' eb4U Housing Strategy to be completed during 2004/05 Subsequent targets subject to eb4U Housing Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Investment Programme New Deal for Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eb4U Director Housing Strategy Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eb4U, Brighton & Hove City Council, Government Office for the South East, residents, and stakeholders working together to complete draft strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy Local Strategic Partnership eb4U Regional Housing Board Housing Management Local Government Act 2003
Working with local communities to develop neighbourhood management P1 © 2020 NRS eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2003 elections of residents to eb4U Neighbourhood Management Board 2003 Develop Neighbourhood Action Plans in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing: details on the work and targets of eb4U can be found at www.eb4u.co.uk 2004 launch Neighbourhood Action Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing budgets Neighbourhood Renewal Fund eb4U 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development Officer Head of Localities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 Community Strategy launched under the Local Strategic Partnership eb4U Neighbourhood Management Board elected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership Best Value Review of Council Housing Best Value Review of Allocations Children, Families & Schools East Brighton Community Partnership Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy & Fund New Opportunities Fund
Improve neighbourhoods by bringing empty buildings back into use as dwellings P1 © 2020 BVPI NRS eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004 Review and re-launch the Empty Property Strategy Implement changes to Council Tax on Second and Empty Homes through the Local Government Act 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targets for bringing empty homes back into use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004/05 – 126 properties 2005/06 – 129 properties 2006/07 – 129 properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Investment Programme Private Sector Renewal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empty Property Officer (co-ordinating with private sector housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2002/03 – 121 empty residential properties brought back into use 2003/04 - 123 empty residential properties brought back into use Local Government Act 2003 in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector Leasing Private Sector Strategy Public Service Agreements Residential & Commercial Letting Agents SEEDA Sure Start
Delivering continuous improvement in housing management and maintenance P2 2020 NRS eb4U BVPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best Value Review of Council Housing 2002 Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2003 encouraging private sector landlord accreditation Improve re-let time for empty council homes from 65 days to 36 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best Value Review implementation plans on council website with annual milestones and targets 2007 Aim to become a top performing 3* housing management authority 2005 average council housing re-let time of 36 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Investment Programme Decent Homes (Stock options) HRA Management & Maintenance Allowances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Director (Housing Management) Housing Needs Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best Value Review of Council Housing completed, with action plan being implemented Landlord Accreditation recommended by Southern Landlord Private Landlords Association Re-let time decreasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sussex Police Sustainability Strategy Tenant Compacts Urban Task Force
Promoting housing tenure and tenure choice to better reflect the identity and wishes of communities P2 © 2020 NRS eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a Choice Based Letting System 2004/05 August 2003 Consultation commences Autumn Implementation Plan developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2005 city-wide scheme operational 2005/06 increased customer satisfaction, reduced demands for transfers 2005/06 exploration of regional expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bid for funding from eb4U and other partners (2003/05 £500k) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager, Choice Based Lettings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of HomeWire pilot project Draft Business Plan Facilitation of consultation and awareness briefings 	
Promoting educational attainment and life long learning through better housing services P3 2020 eb4U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve joint working between Housing, Primary Care Trusts, Children, Families & Schools, Adult Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes being agreed Joint housing, social care, and health work around improving service transition from child to adult life being explored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects focussing various issues Children's Trust in development 	

14. Resourcing Our Housing Priorities

Housing – a significant element of city-wide funding

It is important that the range and variety of our financial resources are aligned to support local, regional, and national objectives.

Housing resources for the city are provided through both the city council and a wide variety of partner agencies. In determining the priorities for council investment, housing is a major priority in the *Single Capital Pot* and revenue funding sources.

Our Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan outline Brighton & Hove City Council's strategic capital aims and provide the priorities and mechanisms for allocating funding to specific priority areas which have been developed in consultation with stakeholders and partners.

The Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan are part of an integrated approach linked to the Housing Strategy, corporate priorities, and needs of our residents.

The key areas of capital investment work towards the council's priorities and aim to maximise investment in the city. Our Capital Investment Priorities aim to make the city more attractive, build and improve more homes, improve leisure and cultural facilities for residents and visitors, maintain the city's historic buildings, and make best use of schools and other community facilities.

Capital investment in housing over the next 3-5 years will be targeted to our 5 priority areas, and will specifically be aimed at:

- Increasing the supply of appropriate and affordable housing
- Realigning and expanding the provision of supported housing to meet the priorities identified in the Supporting People Strategy, to be published in November 2004
- Improving housing conditions in the private rented and owner occupied sectors and the number of vulnerable households in non decent homes
- Upgrading all council housing to the Decent Homes Standard by 2010, and reduce the repairs backlog
- Reducing the use of temporary and bed and breakfast accommodation and continue to avoid placing families with children in B&B for longer than 6 weeks
- Improving housing support to assist residents in maintaining meaningful occupation of their home
- Improving and enabling housing choice across all tenures
- Making Brighton & Hove a safe and attractive place to live

Stretching our resources across these areas is the preferred option of our stakeholders, tenants, members and officers. By doing so, resources best impact on these significant areas of housing need.

Revenue Funding and Expenditure

The revenue account represents funding which is used to finance the provision of our day-to-day services, including staffing costs and other expenses.

In all, we have projected a total revenue income of £528.1m for 2003/04. Funding comes from a wide variety of sources, with almost half coming from government grants. Council Tax accounts for only 16%, or 16p, of every £1 we spend on daily services to the community.

Rents from our social housing stock are projected to make up 7% of the council's revenue income, a total of £34.9m, which is 'ring-fenced' for spending only on services and maintenance for council tenants and leaseholders.

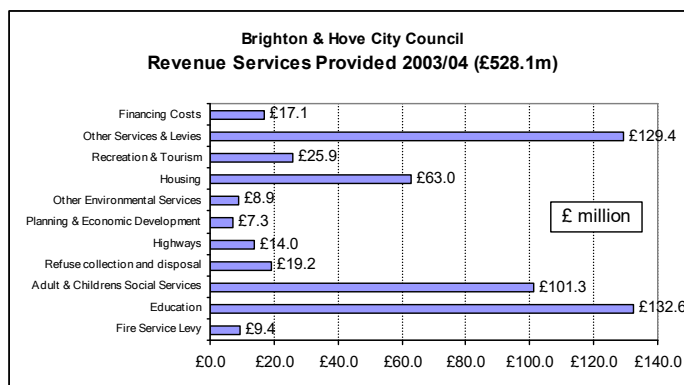
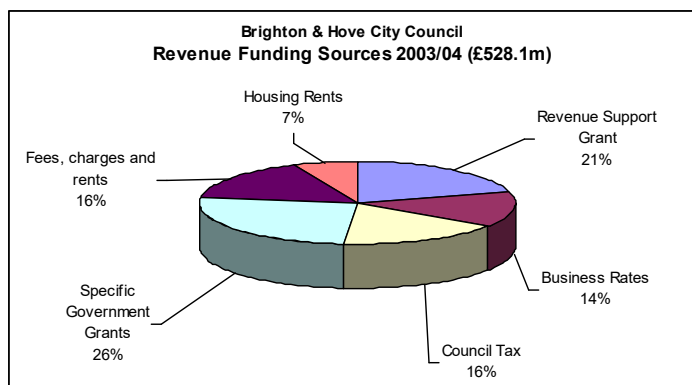
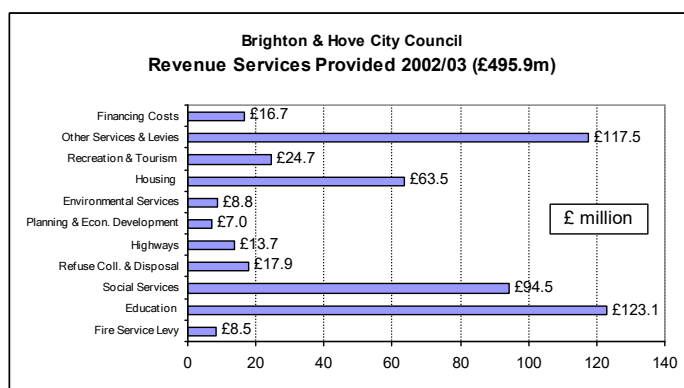
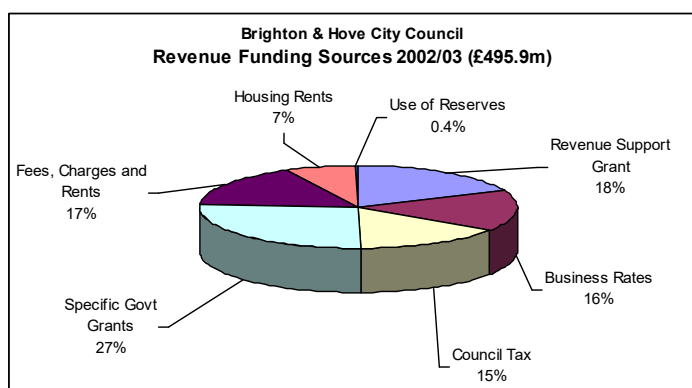
Likewise, funding such as Council Tax, which is provided by everyone in the community, cannot be spent on our stock of social housing, but must be

spent on services for the benefit of all the city's residents, such as the parks and seafront, or homelessness and housing advice services.

Day-to-day expenditure provides for a wide array of services and benefits, having a daily effect on the quality of life of every resident and visitor to the city.

Difficult decisions have to be made in prioritising the allocation of funding to ensure that essential services are provided, and the council's commitments and long term vision for the city are carried out.

In order to minimise funding pressures on residents Council Tax bills, the revenue funding to cover the lifetime of this strategy is currently undergoing comprehensive review. Details on our future revenue funding will be published as soon as the information is available.



Capital Funding and Expenditure

Capital funding provides for the maintenance of the city's infrastructure, such as school buildings, museums, the housing stock (both the public and private sectors), and the environment.

The council's capital strategy, developed as part of the Single Capital Pot regime, sets out the council's approach to capital resource allocation, prioritising, monitoring and partnership working. In association with the asset management plan, the capital strategy aims to optimise the performance of our capital assets to ensure that our strategic priorities are delivered.

The main sources of our capital funding come from borrowing and contributions from our revenue budgets, and much of the budgetary work goes into balancing the need to provide services with the need to maintain the buildings and equipment which provide these services.

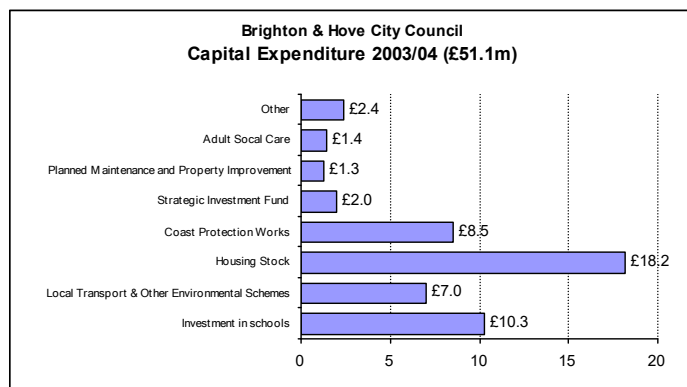
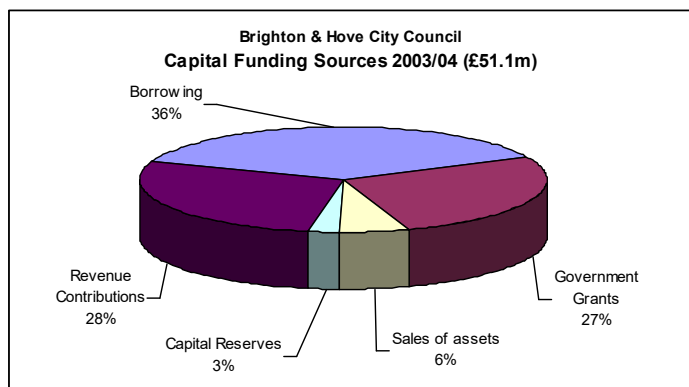
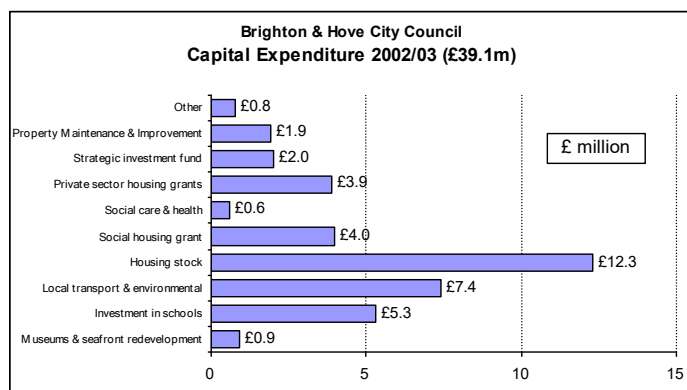
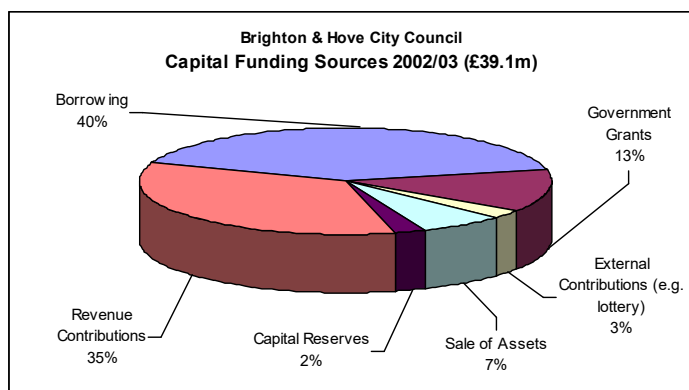
Overall capital expenditure is around 9% of the council's total expenditure, giving little flexibility on our ability to invest in new technology, facilities and equipment.

The Local Government Act 2003 introduced the 'prudential capital regime', giving authorities the scope to borrow additional capital resources above their approved supported borrowing level, subject to the availability of revenue to finance the borrowing.

With a city such as Brighton & Hove there are significant demands on our limited resources, and additional prudential borrowing, above supported levels, will have due regard to the authorities overall strategic priorities.

In all, capital investment in housing, including both the public and private sectors amounts to 38% of the council's total capital expenditure at £19.3m in 2002/03.

The weighting of investment in favour of housing recognises our housing strategy's vision, the council's overall commitments and priorities for the city, the regional housing statements priorities, and government priorities for the nation.



Housing Strategy Revenue Funding

Revenue funding finances our day to day expenditure on the provision of housing related services to the whole city, which for 2003/04 amounted to approximately £8 million. With this funding we provide city wide homelessness services, enable the development of new affordable housing, private sector renewal, commission housing related support, and also provide housing support to those in need.

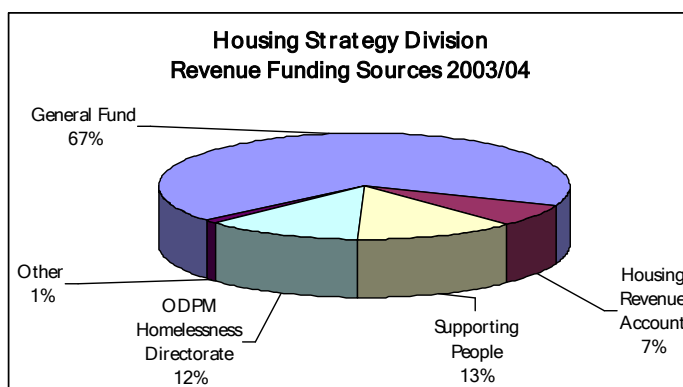
Housing Management services, provided to our stock of council housing are funded separately through government grants and tenants rents. Details can be found in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, available on the council's website.

Our funding comes from four main sources, with the General Fund (financed via Council Tax) making up two thirds of our income at £5.3m. Half of this money is used to pay for temporary accommodation for homeless households. It is very easy to see how even small increases in the overall levels of homelessness in Brighton & Hove can have significant budgetary and Council Tax pressures on the city.

Other key sources of funding include almost £1m from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Homelessness Directorate to finance our rough sleeper and new homelessness prevention services.

We receive a further £1m from the Supporting People grant to provide services to single homeless, rough sleeper's, and others in need; and £566k from the Housing Revenue Account (Council Housing) to pay for services we undertake on their behalf

Currently the Council is facing significant budgetary pressures from a variety of sources, and is looking at ways to reduce costs, limiting Council Tax increases. As part of this exercise, we are examining at all areas of our expenditure to develop ways of saving money. As a result of this, we have not been able to include revenue projections for the lifetime of this strategy, however, we will include revised projections when we produce updates to this strategy.



Housing Strategy Division	Revenue Funding Source	Amount £	Key Services Provided
Housing Strategy	General Fund Housing Revenue Account Total	286,910 153,870 440,780	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Management of the Service & Projects Development of Housing & Related Strategies Enabling new affordable housing
Private Sector Housing	General Fund Housing Revenue Account Total	1,153,610 60,030 1,213,640	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector Renewal & Enforcement Adaptations / Disabled Facilities Grants CareLink Community Alarm
Housing Needs	General Fund Housing Revenue Account ODPM Homelessness Directorate Total	822,130 243,550 966,454 2,032,134	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness Advice & Prevention & Initiatives Single Homelessness / Rough Sleepers Homelessness Assessment
Temporary Accom. & Lettings	General Fund Housing Revenue Account Total	2,618,340 108,880 2,727,220	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary Accommodation Allocations & Lettings
Supporting People	General Fund Supporting People Grant Total	486,000 50,000 536,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Services Commissioning Housing Support Assessment
Housing Support Provision	Supporting People Grant Other Total	983,500 94,000 1,077,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Housing Related Support
2003/04 Revenue Funding	General Fund Housing Revenue Account Supporting People Grant ODPM Homelessness Directorate Other	5,366,990 566,330 1,033,500 966,454 94,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total £ 8,027,274

The Housing Investment Programme

The Housing Investment Programme details our proposed income and expenditure on housing capital assets to 2007. The total capital expenditure we have planned for 2003/04 amounts to £19.3m, rising to a provisional estimate of £20.2m in 2006/07.

To improve our effectiveness in managing capital resources, we have now set up a Capital Monitoring Group to co-ordinate the housing investment programme and ensure effective working links to the corporate capital and asset strategy. This revised approach will ensure our investment is focussed on strategic delivery and will enable us to use our resources more flexibly to address local needs.

The majority of our capital income is raised through borrowing from the government, the Major Repairs Allowance for council housing, and contributions from revenue income. Our borrowing approval, which now comes from the Regional Housing Board is the key source of funding for our city wide, non council housing investment, such as developing new affordable homes and private sector renewal.

We have projected capital income and expenditure levels throughout the lifetime of this strategy based on previous years funding levels and our overarching

strategic priorities. These are provisional figures as there are many other factors that may affect our annual funding levels, with revised information being published in updates to this strategy. Significant amongst the range of issues we are monitoring that may impact on our future investment levels include:

- council housing stock options outcome
- major regeneration initiatives such as the King Alfred and Brighton Marina developments
- possibility of moving to a capital grant allocation
- opportunities under the prudential capital regime
- the government's 2004 Spending Review
- changing views and aspirations of local residents
- changing regional and national priorities

In a city such as Brighton & Hove, with a wide range of challenging needs, we recognise we could invest far greater sums of money than we are currently able to access. For example, we have a pipeline of new affordable housing developments worth £64m, requiring approximately £40m of public subsidy, which do not have identified funding. We will be working with the Regional Housing Board, Housing Corporation, and other key partners to identify resourcing options for these important projects.

Housing Capital Income (£'000s)	2002/03 planned	2002/03 actual	2003/04 planned	2004/05 provisional	2005/06 provisional	2006/07 provisional
Borrowing from the Government	8,373	8,040	5,948	6,403	6,659	6,920
Capital Grants	435	1,071	642	495	495	510
Useable capital receipts (from sale of assets)	0	458	220	0	0	0
Major Repairs Allowance (Council Housing)	8,195	8,195	8,426	8,525	8,629	8,842
Other HRA (Council Housing Revenue Contribution)	3,565	3,623	4,205	4,014	4,114	3,916
Adjustments & Other finance	-137	-301	-83	0	0	0
Total £'000s	£ 20,431	£ 21,086	£ 19,358	£ 19,437	£ 19,897	£ 20,188

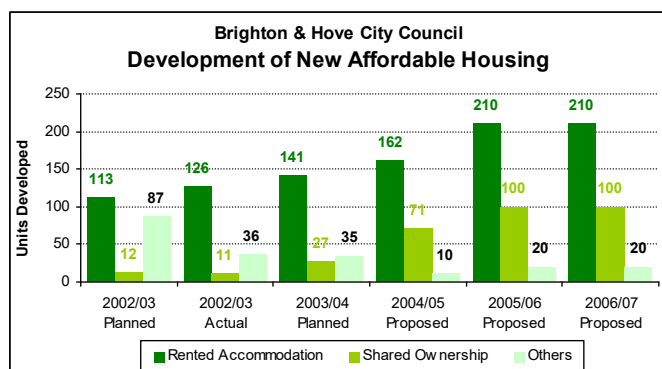
Note: The Government and Regional Housing Board is consulting on changing supported borrowing approval to a capital grant allocation, which could provide scope for unsupported borrowing under the 'prudential capital regime'.

Housing Capital Expenditure (£'000s)	2002/03 planned	2002/03 actual	2003/04 planned	2004/05 provisional	2005/06 provisional	2006/07 provisional
Council Housing	12,449	13,241	12,808	12,539	12,743	12,758
Social Housing Grant (LASHG)	4,000	4,003	2,094	632	0	0
Other support for Housing Associations	0	0	968	2,468	3,409	3,780
All other housing (includes Private Sector Renewal, Disabled Facilities Grants, & Cash Incentive Scheme)	3,982	3,842	3,488	3,798	3,745	3,650
Total £'000s	£ 20,431	£ 21,086	£ 19,358	£ 19,437	£ 19,897	£ 20,188

Note: Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG) funding for 2003/04 and 2004/05 is comprised of transitional funding. With central governments removal of LA SHG we are seeking to continue funding a local authority sponsored affordable housing programme, in accordance with our strategic priorities, through borrowing approvals as 'other support for Housing Associations'.

- Developing new affordable housing**

Our commitment of £3m to a local authority funded enabling programme has helped lever in an additional £17m from the Housing Corporation and a further estimated £7m from RSL and private finance. In all, during 2003/04, we estimate that around £27m will be spent on new affordable housing for local residents, with almost 600 new homes currently in development.



Despite the Local Authority Social Housing Grant system stopping, we still aim to maintain funding for a local authority programme, transferring funding from LASHG to 'other housing' uses. This investment enabled the delivery of 38 units during 2002/03, with a further 120 and 47 planned for 2003/04 and 2005/06 respectively.

With our involvement in major regeneration sites such as the King Alfred and Brighton Station, we anticipate an expansion in the number of units delivered with local authority financial assistance to 250 in 2005/06 and 300 during 2006/07. These major developments will increase the number of affordable units delivered through the ever more important planning gain, to an estimated 169 in 2005/06 and 220 in 2006/07. The total level of investment required to achieve these objectives is expected to exceed £40m per annum.

- Private Sector Renewal**

Our Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy aims to provide better advice and information for private home owners across the city. The policy aims to ensure that financial assistance is targeted to help those who are vulnerable or on a low income maintain the structure of their home to reduce the need for more expensive care.

The planned expenditure for 2003/04 is £2.6m, which will fund an estimated 866 grants. To 2007 we wish to maintain the number of grants / loans awarded and households helped, although as our focus moves from grants to equity loans, we expect there to be a decrease in the demand for funding, which may facilitate a move in resources towards our empty property initiatives.

Private Sector Renewal	Total Expenditure	Average Grant / Loan	Number Awarded
2002/03 planned	£ 3,157,000	£ 4,209	750
2002/03 actual	£ 3,170,000	£ 2,843	1,115
2003/04 planned	£ 2,638,000	£ 3,046	866
2004/05 proposed	£ 3,175,000	£ 3,528	900
2005/06 proposed	£ 3,000,000	£ 3,333	900
2006/07 proposed	£ 2,800,000	£ 3,111	900

- Disabled Facilities Grants**

Disabled facilities grants play a vital role in assisting residents to remain in their own homes as their needs increase, help people in hospital return home, and reduces the number of people who need to move into residential care. An Occupational Therapist now works closely with the team to help address the backlog of enquiries and funding underspend. For every 40p we spend on these grants, the Government provides an additional 60p to help maintain this priority.

Disabled Facilities Grants	Total Expenditure	Average Grant	Number Awarded
2002/03 planned	£ 825,000	£ 8,250	100
2002/03 actual	£ 579,000	£ 8,642	67
2003/04 planned	£ 825,000	£ 10,312	80
2004/05 proposed	£ 825,000	£ 10,312	80
2005/06 proposed	£ 850,000	£ 8,500	100
2006/07 proposed	£ 850,000	£ 8,500	100

- Cash Incentive Scheme**

The Cash Incentive Scheme assists council tenants to enter home ownership and buy a property on the open market, with the provision of grants up to £25,000. This scheme releases much needed family sized homes for households in housing need. To improve the turnover of council housing, we are seeking to expand resources on this initiative in coming years.

Cash Incentive Scheme	Total Expenditure	Average Grant	Number Awarded
2002/03 planned	£ 130,000	£ 26,000	5
2002/03 actual	£ 86,000	£ 21,500	4
2003/04 planned	£ 71,000	£ 23,667	3
2004/05 proposed	£ 250,000	£ 25,000	10
2005/06 proposed	£ 250,000	£ 25,000	10
2006/07 proposed	£ 250,000	£ 25,000	10

15. How We Measure Up

As an organisation we continue to recognise the importance of clear and effective performance management and employ a model which is a continuing cycle of planning, implementing, reviewing and re-adjusting our activities. Feedback from a broad range of those involved in housing activity has an important role to play in this process.

Monitoring and measuring

Examples of the monitoring and measuring systems that we regularly use include:

- Best Value Performance Indicators
- Best Value Reviews
- Performance Management
- Local Performance Indicators
- Customer Surveys
- Stakeholder Consultation

The Housing Strategy Action Plan links into a wide range of partner strategies and targets, all reviewed and reported on at regular intervals.

To ensure we maintain a clear overview of our housing work, our action plan is monitored quarterly throughout the service, via the Directorate Development Plan, Team Plans, and individual officers Performance Plans. Key targets, which can vary significantly, are monitored more regularly, for example, B&B use which is scrutinised weekly.

Best Value Performance Indicators (Appendix B)

Our Performance Plan sets out the council's aim to continually improve all of its services. Following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) some services have been prioritised to ensure that resources are focused on the most important areas for improvement first.

In Housing, the challenges we will seek to meet are:

- improving services, particularly in the areas of homelessness, turnaround times on empty council housing, and rent collection
- meeting the Government's 'decent homes standard' for council housing
- strategic appraisal of long term supply side solutions across the city (all provider sectors)

Best Value Reviews

Best value reviews continue to be the main way that we review our services and make improvements. In the last year we have completed reviews of Homelessness, Information & Communications

Technology (ICT), Children Families and Young People's Services, Council Housing, Waste Management, Economic Development and Regeneration, Grounds Maintenance and Leisure Facilities Management. A review of Housing Allocations is currently being carried out and is due to complete in December 2003. Our complete review programme and Performance Plan is available on the council's website, www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

Performance Management

The Government White Paper *"Strong Local Leadership – Quality Public Services"* (2001) sets out the national comprehensive and integrated performance framework for local authorities. It includes:

- Clearly defined priorities and standards
- A framework for performance assessment including regular comprehensive assessments of each Council's overall performance and proportionate inspection
- Extra freedoms and flexibility's
- Local Public Service Agreements
- A streamlined best value regime

Customer Surveys

Customer surveys are an invaluable way of gauging the effectiveness of individual parts of our service and setting standards for continuous improvement. During 2003/04, we will complete our Tenants Satisfaction Survey, which will monitor satisfaction with overall quality of service and with opportunities for participation by ethnic group.

Stakeholder Participation

Our housing performance is monitored through both formal council committees and stakeholder groups.

Progress on housing strategy objectives and actions are reported to council committees, and information is shared across a range of relevant fora, for example the Local Strategic Partnership and the Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership. The council's performance as a landlord is continually reviewed via the Housing Management Sub Committee, which includes formal tenant representation. In addition, service delivery reports are provided to the city's 'area panels', which are made up of residents groups representatives.

Regular features on housing actions and update bulletins are reported to residents through press releases, information journals, and council publications such as 'City News' and 'Homing In'.

16. Conclusion

In 2001 we reworked our housing strategy objectives in producing the Housing Strategy 2001-2006 “Housing – the wellbeing of the city”. This strategy for 2004-2007 updates the progress achieved in pursuit of our housing vision for the city and sets out goals for the years ahead.

We recognise and believe that our housing strategy is not a static document, but an ongoing process, changing over time to meet cultural and aspirational needs, and addressing the housing challenges we face. As we implement and review our strategy throughout the next few years, the needs of local people are firmly seated as the focus of our decision making process.

Housing sits in a backdrop of a fast changing socio-economic policy context. The housing market itself, and the range of government policy initiatives continues to have significant effect and influence on our approaches.

Good housing is at the core of community and individual wellbeing. Housing actions are fundamental to the regeneration and renewal of our city by the sea.

Housing is pivotal to ensuring that those disadvantaged or excluded members of the community share in the economic prosperity and generation of wealth in the city.

In pursuit of our objectives, we face a real dilemma in securing the scale of impact we require for the city. We recognise that part of the answer lies in the imaginative use of existing housing resources and opportunities.

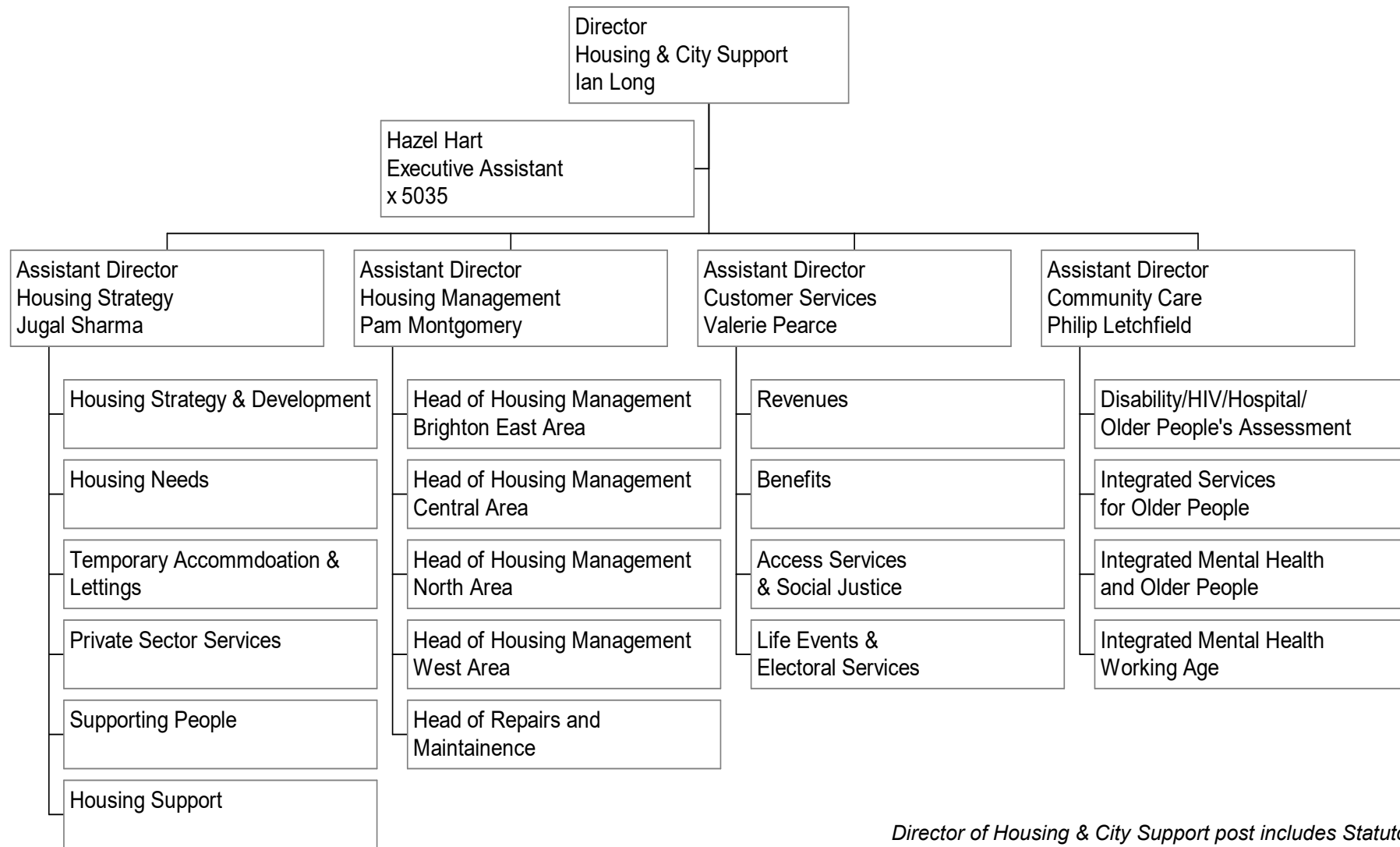
We continue to seek a significant increase in housing resources from central government and enhanced local powers that will enable us to deliver the scale of activity to meet our housing challenges expected by the residents of the city.

Meeting the city's housing challenges will not come overnight. High levels of commitment and investment are required to ensure that the residents of Brighton & Hove are able to enjoy a high quality of life in a decent environment.

Our housing vision is inter-linked with a wide range of issues. If housing needs are not addressed, other needs will develop, placing a greater burden on health and social care services, the police, the education system, and the voluntary sector.

In securing suitable housing for our residents, we are providing the essential, most basic, foundation with which to improve the quality of life in the city.

Appendix A: Housing & City Support Structure Diagram



Director of Housing & City Support post includes Statutory Director function for Social Services

Appendix B: Housing Performance Indicators 2002/03 - 2005/06

During 2001/02 the Government and Audit Commission undertook an extensive review of the Best Value performance indicators. As a result of the review, a range of indicators were deleted and new indicators have been introduced to reflect changing Government priorities.

Our performance against the housing related indicators, together with a summary of new indicators is detailed in the table below:

PI	Housing Best Value Performance indicators	B&H 2002/03 annual result	B&H 2002/03 target	B&H 2003/04 target	B&H 2004/05 target	B&H 2005/06 target	Top 25% 2001/02 England = e Unitary = u	Notes
62	The proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the council	3.27%	2%	3.51%	3.7	3.8%	4.2%e	
63	The average energy efficiency rating of council owned dwellings	Nil return	65	66.5	68.25	70	60e	The Council has recently carried out a stock condition survey and the results will provide accurate data for this indicator from April 2003.
64	The number of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during 2002/03 as a direct result of action by the council	143	120	123	126	129	Amended indicator	
66a	Proportion of rent and arrears collected by the council	95.8%	95.95%	95.5%	96.8%	97.2%	96.8%u	
156	The % of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	12%	12%	12%	12%	13.5%	36%u	
164	Does the council follow the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice in rented housing?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	Amended indicator	Indicator amended from 2002/03
183a	The average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need.	10.43	Not set	6	6	6	New indicator	New indicator from 2002/03. No baseline data available
183b	The average length of stay hostel accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	Nil return	Not set	Not set	Not set	Not set	Not applicable	Brighton & Hove does not use hostel accommodation for homeless households
184a	The proportion of LA homes which were non-decent at 1 April 2002 (2003)	Nil return	Not set	50%	41.5%	33.25%	New indicator	The Council has recently carried out a stock condition survey and the results will provide accurate data for this indicator from April 2003
184b	The percentage change in proportion of non-decent LA homes between 1 April 2002 and 1 April 2003	Nil return	Not set	20.63%	17%	19.9%	New indicator	The Council has recently carried out a stock condition survey and the results will provide accurate data for this indicator from April 2003

PI	Housing Best Value Performance Indicators	B&H 2002/03 annual result	B&H 2002/03 target	B&H 2003/04 target	B&H 2004/05 target	B&H 2005/06 target	Top 25% 2001/02 England = e Unitary = u	Notes
185	% of responsive repairs (but not emergency) during 2002/03 for which the authority both made and kept an appointment	Nil return	Not set	47%	67%	90%	Not applicable	Brighton & Hove did not have an appointment system during 2002/03. A new appointment system is being introduced from 2003/04 and targets have been set for the next three years
L13	Average number of days to decide whether to accept as homeless	25.1	33	24	To be set	To be set	Local result only	Not a BVPI, however, it is reported monthly to senior officers and staff within the authority
L14	The proportion of homeless applications on which the authority makes a decision and issues written notification to the applicant within 33 working days	81.9%	90%	90%	To be set	To be set	Local result only	Not a BVPI, however, it is reported monthly to senior officers and staff within the authority
New internal indicator	Percent of Housing Benefit collected in respect of Temporary Accommodation	79%	Not set	85%*	85%*	85%*	Local result only	Not a BVPI, however, it is reported monthly to senior officers and staff within the authority (* Provisional targets subject to final confirmation)

PI	Customer Satisfaction Surveys	B&H 2000/01 annual result	Confidence interval	B&H 2003/04 target	English 2000/01 top 25% results	notes
74a	Satisfaction of all tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord	86%	(1.1%)	88%	83%	Next surveys 2003/04, 2006/07, and every 3 years
74b	Satisfaction of black and minority ethnic tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord	*	*	*	*	New indicator – 1 st surveys to be completed in 2003/04, then 2006/07 and every 3 years
74c	Satisfaction of non-black and minority ethnic tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord	*	*	*	*	New indicator – 1 st surveys to be completed in 2003/04, then 2006/07 and every 3 years
75a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlords	48%	(1.6%)	52%	66%	Next surveys 2003/04, 2006/07, and every 3 years
75b	Satisfaction of black and minority ethnic tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlords	*	*	*	*	New indicator – 1 st surveys to be completed in 2003/04, then 2006/07 and every 3 years
75c	Satisfaction of non-black and minority ethnic tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlords	*	*	*	*	New indicator – 1 st surveys to be completed in 2003/04, then 2006/07 and every 3 years

Appendix C: Council Housing Stock Condition Survey – initial findings

The first results from the council housing stock condition survey were published towards the end of 2003. The survey was carried out by FPD Savills between February and April 2003 and identified the range of works and investment needed across the stock over the next 30 years. The results will be used to inform the stock options appraisal as well as shape our planned maintenance programme.

FPD Savills surveyed a sample of 14% of the stock, carefully selected on property type and location to be representative. This provides an accurate picture of stock condition and how it relates to the Decent Homes Standard, the council's repair and maintenance obligations, and tenants' aspirations.

The survey has revealed that, while the stock has been well maintained on a day to day basis and there are few outstanding repairs, there has been a lack of planned maintenance investment. Together with the age profile of the stock, this means that a significant financial injection is now required to bring the properties up to modern standards.

It was also revealed that many of our properties of non-traditional construction (pre-fabs etc) require major structural repairs and that there are potentially significant costs for the mechanical and electrical installations to some of our high-rise blocks. FPD Savills are investigating these matters further to provide a more detailed picture.

We now know that 52% of our stock currently does not meet the Decent Homes Standard and most of the rest could potentially be 'non-decent' by 2010. Virtually half of social housing in the country is 'non-decent'.

The major findings of the survey are that:

- many roof coverings will need replacing during the next 20 years
- the majority of properties have double glazing but the older windows are beginning to deteriorate
- many properties will require re-rendering/re-pointing during the next 15 years
- a programme of door replacement is required
- most properties have some form of central heating but some are partial systems and others need replacing with a modern system
- many kitchens and bathrooms are usable but are basic and would benefit from modernisation
- over half of the stock needs re-wiring or upgrading of wiring within the next 10 years
- there is a need for general environmental improvements such as landscaping, car parking, security measures, improved lighting and fencing

Consultants Pricewaterhouse Cooper have been appointed to look into the financial implications of four different options, or mix of options, for the future management and ownership of our council homes, currently being considered by council tenants, councillors and housing staff.

They will prepare a detailed breakdown of the financial implications of each of the options and whether they will provide the levels of investment needed to maintain and improve the city's 13,000 council homes.

The initial results of the financial study are expected in January 2004 and will help tenants and the city council to weigh up the options in more detail as they consider the best way forward for Brighton & Hove.

Brighton & Hove Council Housing Stock Condition Survey 2003 - Summary of Costs

Element	Years 1-5	Years 6-10	Years 11-15	Years 16-20	Years 21-25	Years 26-30	30 Year Total
Catch-up Repairs	1,662,334	0	0	0	0	0	1,662,334
Programmed renewals	76,954,890	47,371,015	47,880,370	51,889,600	42,158,100	31,324,335	297,578,310
Improvements	12,611,350	0	0	2,937,200	0	0	15,548,550
Contingent Major Repairs	2,736,857	1,421,130	1,436,411	1,644,804	1,264,743	939,730	9,443,676
Related Assets	1,750,000	1,750,000	1,750,000	1,750,000	1,750,000	1,750,000	10,500,000
Asbestos Contingency	6,496,000	6,496,000	0	0	0	0	12,992,000
Responsive / Void Maintenance	21,073,666	22,736,000	22,736,000	22,736,000	22,736,000	22,736,000	134,753,666
Cyclical Maintenance	9,744,000	9,744,000	9,744,000	9,744,000	9,744,000	9,744,000	58,464,000
High Rise Structure and M&E	10,415,000	0	0	0	0	0	10,415,000
Non traditional properties	21,265,000	0	0	0	0	0	21,265,000
Environmental Improvements	12,992,000	0	0	0	0	0	12,992,000
Grand Total (£)	177,701,097	89,518,145	83,546,781	90,701,604	77,652,843	66,494,065	585,614,536
Total per annum (£)	35,540,219	17,903,629	16,709,356	18,140,321	15,530,569	13,298,813	19,520,485
Cost per home over 30 years (£)	45,075						

All costs are exclusive of Professional Fees, VAT, management and administration costs and are based on today's prices.
Costs are inclusive of preliminaries.

Appendix D: Council Housing Stock Options – Advantages & Disadvantages Summary

Further information on the Council Housing Stock Options is available on our website: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

Stock Retention	Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)	Housing Revenue Account Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	Stock Transfer to a (new or existing) Registered Social Landlord (RSL)
Advantages			
<p>Builds upon existing arrangements; continuing Council ownership, management and control of services.</p> <p>Enables tenant involvement through Tenant Participation Compact.</p>	<p>Council retains ownership of – and therefore direct access to - the stock.</p> <p>Focuses on housing management services.</p> <p>Enables tenants to become active in the governance of the service delivery vehicle.</p> <p>Tenants remain as secure tenants.</p> <p>Larger authorities like Brighton & Hove are able to set up locally based ALMOs.</p> <p>For excellent authorities, provides access to additional borrowing and retention of revenue income.</p>	<p>Council retains ownership of – and therefore direct access to - the stock.</p> <p>Housing management/ maintenance services provided under contract.</p> <p>Enables investment in the Council stock over and above that available in the “stock retention” option.</p> <p>Tenants remain as secure tenants.</p>	<p>Provides funding to meet the backlog and continuing investment needs of the stock.</p> <p>Council can shape the new organisation in its initial development.</p> <p>Continuing Council involvement in the new organisation, particularly if the local housing company model is adopted.</p> <p>Enables tenants to become active in the governance of the organisation.</p> <p>Continuing links with the Council providing support services, at least in first year.</p>
Disadvantages			
<p>Spending falls within the public sector borrowing rules and limits.</p> <p>Investment in the stock limited to the availability of public finance.</p> <p>Rent convergence and government rent policy means that tenant rents will increase without necessarily seeing a matched increase in investment due to the local authority subsidy system.</p>	<p>Additional borrowing only available for Councils accepted as or moving towards “excellent” rating (2* minimum required).</p> <p>New approach – first Councils will need to develop the processes.</p> <p>Likely to be complex contractual arrangements, stakeholder consultation and administrative issues to be dealt with.</p>	<p>PFI has so far only been available for small transactions – (around 2,500 properties maximum) so does not provide whole stock solution for Brighton & Hove</p> <p>Compared to stock retention and stock transfer may not offer value for money.</p> <p>Must be able to establish majority of risk passes to the private sector</p>	<p>Council no longer the owner of the stock.</p> <p>Might be constrained financially depending on loan finance terms and unable to diversify.</p> <p>Tenants lose some statutory rights although assured tenancy rights are compensated through contractual rights.</p>