

Housing Strategy 2009-2014

healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city



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Published by

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About this Strategy

The Housing Strategy has been developed to address important citywide issues that affect the population of Brighton & Hove – both now and in the future.

This is a strategy for everyone living in Brighton & Hove. Housing has a fundamental effect on our lives and it is important that we identify those key housing needs that matter the most and take action that will make a real difference to local people and the city.

The Housing Strategy identifies the main housing issues for the city that the council and its partners are working to address. To consider specific priority areas, additional strategies have been produced on Homelessness, Supporting People and Temporary Accommodation.

Alongside this strategy we have also produced the city's first Older People's Housing Strategy and LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Trans) People's Housing Strategy to address the needs of particular communities in the city. A BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) People's Housing Strategy will be developed over 2010.

During the development of this strategy there has been a significant change in the state of the economy, housing market and people's needs as a result of the credit crisis and recession. This final version of the strategy has been updated since consultation on the draft strategy to ensure that it effectively reflects and addresses the challenges currently faced by local people.

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Foreword

For many people our city is a wonderful place to live – we have a unique shopping district, restaurants that cater for all tastes, a few miles of seafront, the Downs on our doorstep and a vibrant night life.

However, for some their housing circumstances can make life a daily challenge – whether it's the high cost of housing, maintenance and repair issues, the need for support to remain independent or not having a home.

Unsuitable housing is recognised to affect other aspects of people's lives, harming education, health, employment and social networks. Through our strategy we want to help as many people as possible overcome their housing challenges to improve their wellbeing and overall quality of life.

Low cost home ownership will help many local families aspiring to get their feet on the property ladder and the development of new homes for rent will help those who find home ownership out of reach.

We want to help vulnerable home owners and people renting privately maintain and improve their homes, particularly ensuring they have efficient heating systems for the winter.

We also want to help support those people with learning disabilities, health and mobility problems to enable them to remain in their home as part of the community rather than see them have to move to more institutional types of care.

The new Housing & Regeneration Bill has allowed us to set up a Local Delivery Vehicle – Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes that will give us an opportunity to raise funds against a small proportion of the social housing stock.



Councillor Mary Mears
Leader of the Council & Chairman of the Strategic Housing Partnership



Councillor Maria Caulfield
Cabinet Member for Housing

This money can be used for a variety of purposes such as developing new affordable housing, providing more adaptations and most importantly, it can be used to bring tenants homes up to the Decent Homes Standard.

This work could also be a springboard for wider neighbourhood regeneration to help improve the quality of life in some of our most deprived neighbourhoods and help deliver excellence in our housing management services.

Over the life of this strategy we will help improve the lives of many people. However, we have to be realistic and accept that we can not help everyone. Through this strategy we will provide advice and assistance to those who may need a steer in the right direction and target our support at those who need it most.



Councillor Mary Mears
Leader of the Council
& Chairman of the
Strategic Housing Partnership



Councillor Maria Caulfield
Cabinet Member for Housing

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Our Strategic Housing Vision for Brighton & Hove

Brighton & Hove is a city with a quarter of a million residents living in 120,000 homes. For many people, Brighton & Hove is an attractive place to live providing a high quality of life.

Successful action in the city over the last few years to enable the development of new affordable housing, prevent homelessness, provide support, implement choice based lettings and improve housing quality in the private sector have helped to secure Brighton & Hove City Council as a lead authority, widely respected in working to address the needs of local people and the sub-region.

However, pressures from an expanding population, high property prices, pockets of poor quality housing and the effects of the recession are having a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of many residents, particularly amongst the most vulnerable members of our communities.

We recognise that the strategy will not be a success if carried out in isolation. It sits at the heart of the city's 2020 Community Strategy and shows how the Council and its partners are working together to address the region's housing pressures and also the needs and aspirations of the city. Ultimately, our Housing Strategy is aimed at:

Enabling healthy homes, healthy lives and a healthy city that reduces inequality and offers independence, choice and a high quality of life

The Housing Strategy is an overarching document that focuses and co-ordinates a number of other housing related strategies enabling us to maintain our momentum as we address the housing needs of the city into the next decade and providing a consistent drive towards our goals.

Our Strategic Priorities

The citywide housing strategy has 3 overall priorities that reflect the basic housing needs of the city:

- **Strategic Priority 1:** Improving housing supply
- **Strategic Priority 2:** Improving housing quality
- **Strategic Priority 3:** Improving housing support

Action to address these priorities will ensure we have enough of the right type of high quality housing in the city to meet the needs of local people and that those in need are provided with appropriate support to enable them to maintain their independence.

Making a Difference

Over the lifetime of this strategy we would like to achieve:

- An increase in the amount of housing available for low cost home ownership and affordable rent
- An increase the number of affordable family homes
- Essential repairs, improvements and energy efficiency measures to around 1,000 homes in the private sector every year
- An Accessible Housing Register of adapted and wheelchair homes
- A Local Delivery Vehicle that will raise funding to help improve the quality of council housing up to the Decent Homes Standard and regenerate deprived areas
- Excellence in our housing management services
- Support being provided to around 5,000 people every year to help them maintain their independence
- The first Extra Care housing scheme for people with disabilities

Our Strategic Principles

The Housing Strategy identifies and subscribes to 6 fundamental principles that underpin all of the work we do. These principles will make sure that our strategy goes beyond the traditional bricks and mortar focus of housing strategies to deliver real change:

- A healthy city
- Reducing inequality
- Improving neighbourhoods
- Accountability to local people
- Value for money
- Partnership working

Health Impact Assessment

We recognise that housing plays an important part of all aspects of people's lives, particularly health and well-being. As part of the development of this strategy, the Primary Care Trust has carried out a Health Impact Assessment. The results of this assessment are helping us to ensure that our strategy and action plans contribute to reducing inequality and improving the health and well-being of local people.

1.2 Engaging Local People

Effective engagement with local people and their representatives is at the heart of this strategy. The strategy has been developed in stages with extensive consultation with stakeholders to ensure that it meets the needs and aspirations of the city's residents.

As well as developing the new housing strategy we developed sub strategies to address important citywide issues that affect many residents. This has resulted in the city's first Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Trans People's Housing Strategy and Older People's Housing Strategy. A Black & Minority Ethnic People's Housing Strategy is also being developed.

Feedback from local people has illustrated how the city's high housing costs combined with lower wages can make daily life a struggle for many, particularly with the effects of the credit crunch and recession. High housing costs are making it difficult for households to take that first step on the property ladder and existing home owners are facing challenges in paying their mortgages.

Whilst the private rented sector provides a welcome and flexible housing choice for many people, shortages of affordable family sized homes are pushing some households into lower quality overcrowded accommodation. There is also a high demand and relatively low supply of affordable housing for rent through the council and housing associations with the lower costs and security of tenure only able to benefit small numbers of people.

Some of those with mobility or health issues are finding it difficult to remain independent at home, being in need of adaptations, suitable housing or some sort of support to remove the need for more institutional types of housing.

Strategy Consultation

The first round of consultation was undertaken over a period of 3 months in summer 2007 giving local residents and stakeholders the opportunity to comment on a Consultation Briefing Pack covering different aspects of housing and support. It was sent out to many stakeholders, voluntary organisations and residents and was available on the council website, libraries and other public places.

To make sure that we spoke to as many people as possible we held a Consultation Fair, officers went out into the community, attended social functions, service user groups, meetings and other events. Where possible we linked in with other research and consultation, such as the *Count Me In Too!* research looking at the needs and aspirations of the city's LGBT population.

The second round of consultation concentrated on the Strategy Framework – our proposed priorities and actions developed from the findings of first round of consultation.

Case Study: Council Housing Chairman's Focus Groups

In tandem with the strategy development process, a number of Chairman's Focus Groups have been considering key issues affecting the council's social housing stock and impacting on the lives of tenants. These groups are looking at a number of issues such as sheltered housing, adaptations and allocations which are also helping to inform our strategies and service provision.

A draft strategy was published in October 2008 with consultation running into 2009. The findings from were used to produce this strategy and help develop the action plan.

Sub groups of the Strategic Housing Partnership have been looking at the role of housing co-ops and issues around student housing. The findings of these groups helped inform our strategy.

We do not want consultation to end with the publication of this strategy, but would like it to be a part of an ongoing process, involving local people and other stakeholders throughout the life of this strategy, helping us to monitor its implementation and review our services.

Case Study: Housing & Support Working Groups

To support the development of the specialist strategies, an **Older People's Cross Sector Housing & Support Working Group** and a **LGBT People's Housing & Support Working Group** were set up. These groups are made up of representatives from a wide range of support and advocacy groups, the community and voluntary sector, the Primary Care Trust and the local authority. The working groups have reviewed each stage of the strategy development process and made many valuable contributions to our strategic priorities, action plan and equality impact assessment. We are working with stakeholders to explore the potential for a similar group to be a critical champion of the BME People's Housing Strategy.

1.3 The Goals of this Strategy

Each priority has a range of strategic goals that will be developed and implemented throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

Strategic Priority 1: Improving housing supply

To make sure that the city has the right type of housing to meet the needs of residents our strategic goals under this priority are to:

- Goal 1 Help households become homeowners
- Goal 2 Provide opportunities for households to move to larger homes or downsize as their needs change
- Goal 3 Identify opportunities to improve and develop deprived neighbourhoods
- Goal 4 Make best use of the housing stock
- Goal 5 Increase the supply of affordable rented housing

Strategic Priority 2: Improving housing quality

To make sure that residents are able to live in decent homes suitable for their needs, our strategic goals under this priority are to:

- Goal 6 Work with home owners and landlords to maintain and improve the quality of their housing
- Goal 7 Reduce fuel poverty and minimise CO₂ emissions
- Goal 8 Develop the Brighton & Hove Standard for high quality and well maintained council housing and improve tenants' homes to ensure that they meet the standard
- Goal 9 Work with owners to bring more of the city's long term empty homes back into use
- Goal 10 Ensure new housing is developed to the latest standards

Priority 3: Improving housing support

To make sure residents are supported to maintain and increase their independence, our strategic goals under this priority are to:

- Goal 11** Support households to make informed choices about their housing options
- Goal 12** Provide adaptations and support to households and their carers
- Goal 13** Work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping
- Goal 14** Contribute to the wider city agendas of reducing worklessness, improving community cohesion, reducing anti-social behaviour and reducing inequality
- Goal 15** Work to ensure student housing provides a positive contribution to students' lives and the city

1.4 Local Area Agreement

The Brighton & Hove Local Area Agreement set out the priorities for the city and has been agreed between the Government, the local authority, the Local Strategic Partnership and other key partners.

The agreement contains 35 key performance indicators that the Government will use to assess how the city is performing and includes additional local indicators to reflect key issues. The city's key LAA housing indicators are:

- NI 141: Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living
- NI 154: Net additional homes provided
- NI 156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- NI 158: Percentage of decent council homes
- NI 187: Tackling fuel poverty
- Bring empty properties back into use
- Reduce the number of rough sleepers

As housing has such far reaching effects on people's lives, our strategy also contributes to a much wider range of national performance indicators than are in the LAA:

The priorities and goals of the Housing Strategy contribute to the following National Indicators for Local Authority Partnerships:

- **NI 1: Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area**
- NI 2: Percent of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- **NI 4: Percent of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality**
- NI 5: Overall/general satisfaction with local area
- **NI 7: Environment for a thriving third sector**
- **NI 17: Perceptions of anti-social behaviour**
- NI 21: Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police
- NI 23: Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and dignity
- NI 25: Satisfaction of different groups with the way the police and local council dealt with anti-social behaviour
- NI 27: Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police
- **NI 32: Repeat incidents of domestic violence**
- **NI 119: Self reported measure of people's overall health & well being**
- NI 125: Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care
- NI 131: Delayed transfers of care from hospitals
- NI 140: Fair treatment by local services
- **NI 141: Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living**
- NI 142: Vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living
- NI 143: Proportion of offenders under probation supervision in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence
- NI 145: Proportion of adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation
- NI 147: Proportion of former care leavers aged 19 who are in suitable accommodation
- NI 149: Proportion of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation
- **NI 154: Net additional homes provided**
- NI 155: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
- **NI 156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation**
- **NI 158: Percentage of decent council homes**
- NI 159: Supply of ready to develop housing sites
- NI 160: Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services
- **NI 187: Tackling fuel poverty**

(Indicators in bold are also included in Brighton & Hove's Local Area Agreement)

Strategy Map



2 Introduction

2.1 Our City's Challenge

Brighton & Hove is a city with a quarter of a million residents living in around 120,000 homes. The importance of the city in the South East Region has strengthened over the last few years. We have seen role of the city as a commercial, educational, tourist and conference, sporting and cultural destination go from strength to strength.

Bounded by the Downs and the sea, Brighton & Hove has limited opportunity for new housing development and population growth. The Census 2001 highlighted how the city had the highest proportion of one person households and smallest average household size in the South East. The city is the 5th most densely populated area in the region and contains pockets of overcrowding, particularly in the private rented sector.

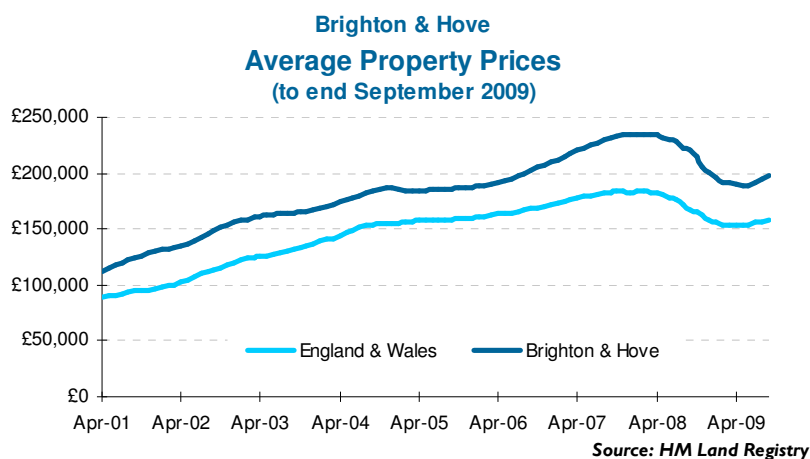
Over the next twenty years the population of Brighton & Hove will grow by around 27,000 people. The city will experience an increase in working age residents; but also be an older and more diverse population then ever before. By 2026 the city will need to provide an additional 11,000 homes and according to trend based projections, 8,000 additional residents will need work over the next 10 years to maintain current employment rates.

The city has been characterised by increasing housing costs and high levels of homelessness. The continuing trend of polarisation; with some neighbourhoods experiencing inequality compared to the rest of the city in terms of access to employment, health and life expectancy will also need to be addressed.

These pressures have placed an increased burden on many other public services, such as the community care and health economies.

2.2 Property Prices & Repossession

Since 2000 we have seen property prices more than double in value, with smaller properties traditionally associated with first time buyers seeing the greatest increases. As a result of the recession property prices reduced sharply across 2008/09 but have since started to increase.



The average house price in the city now stands at £197,275 in September 2009, 16% below the high of £235,844 in March 2008. Average prices in the city are still 25% higher than the national average.

Despite the falls in property prices the property market is still largely inaccessible for many of those aspiring to home ownership. One bed flats still cost 5 times median income and 3 bed houses almost 10 times median household income and problems in the mortgage market are resulting in providers increasing the level of deposit required.

Repossessions

Those who have bought a home in the city since April 2006 are likely to be facing negative equity, particularly if they bought with a small or no deposit. This could cause financial difficulty for them if they need to sell or renew their mortgage, particularly if a mortgage interest discount period is due to expire.

Locally, repossession claims between April and September 2008 were 25% higher than the same period in the previous year. In response to this the Council has recently launched a number of schemes to help prevent repossession and homelessness, resulting in a 17% decrease in the number of repossession claims during the latter part of 2008/09 when compared to the same period in 2007/08.

Case Study: Preventing Repossession & Homelessness

During April 2008 to April 2009 the number of households approaching our Housing Options services threatened with homelessness as a result of mortgage arrears has increase by 52% when compared to the previous year.

In anticipation of the recession, all staff had refresher training on debt, benefit advice and preventing homelessness due to mortgage arrears. As a result homelessness prevention for mortgage arrears cases has increased by 140% and the number of households having to make homeless applications due to mortgage repossessions has decreased by 27%.

We recognise the impact that repossession can have on families and are providing a range of additional services in addition to promoting the Government's initiatives specifically aimed at helping local people:

- We have increased grant funding to debt advice agencies in the city by £50,000 to reduce waiting times, train more debt advisers and provide free debt advice to middle income households who would not normally qualify
- We are operating our own local mortgage rescue scheme for households who fall outside of the national schemes where we are satisfied that, by paying off the arrears, continued occupation in the property will be sustainable long term
- We have produce a leaflet and toolkit in partnership with Brighton Housing Trust for people who are beginning to fall into arrears
- We are working with BHT to brief other advice agencies and partners
- We are hosting sub regional meetings with other local authorities to share good practice and we are having regular review meetings with Brighton Housing Trust Advice

2.3 New Affordable Housing

Research¹ shown that more than half of working households in Brighton & Hove are in the intermediate housing market – they can afford to pay more than social housing rent but cannot afford to buy the cheapest 10% of family sized 2 or 3 bed homes. Only 29% of working households were able to buy at lower quartile levels.

Over the last few years the city has been one of the largest provider of new housing in the region. Unfortunately the current instability in the world's financial markets risk putting the city's major developments on hold. As a result, there may be a short term shortage of new homes which is likely to put an increased pressure on local people and our housing options services. However we still aim to develop around 230 new affordable homes each year.

A number of low cost home ownership products have been developed to help people get into home ownership, such as by allowing people to part rent / part buy or by offering a grant or loan to contribute to the price of a home. This assistance is available under the HomeBuy banner and is managed by Moat Housing Group, with more than 450 homes are planned over the next few years.

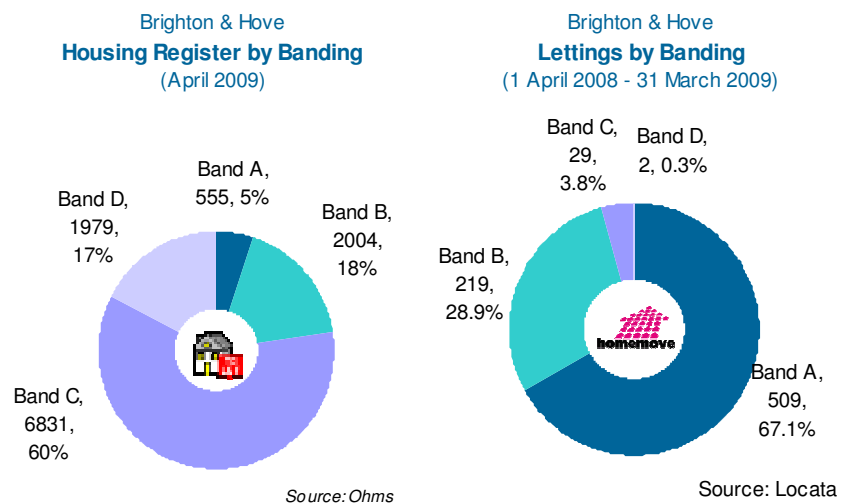
Council tenants still have the Right to Buy. However, sales have declined sharply, again attributed to the high cost of homes. There may be potential for new shared ownership schemes to help tenants.

2.4 Social Housing

The social housing stock in Brighton & Hove represents around 15% of the city's housing, lower than the national average. Of the 19,000 homes in the social rented sector, around 2/3 is owned by the Council, with the rest being owned and managed by housing associations.

¹ The Geography of Affordable and Unaffordable Housing, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2005

A secure tenancy and lower rents than the private rented sector continue to ensure that social housing remains very much in demand. At the beginning of April 2009, there were 11,369 households on the housing register, with 23% in Bands A & B, the highest 2 categories of need. The most common reasons for being on the register were a medical priority and unsatisfactory housing.



Pressure on the city's social housing stock is so great that in 2008/09 96% of all social housing lets went to households in Bands A & B, predominantly to those who were homeless (31%) or had a medical priority (39%).

2.5 Private Renting

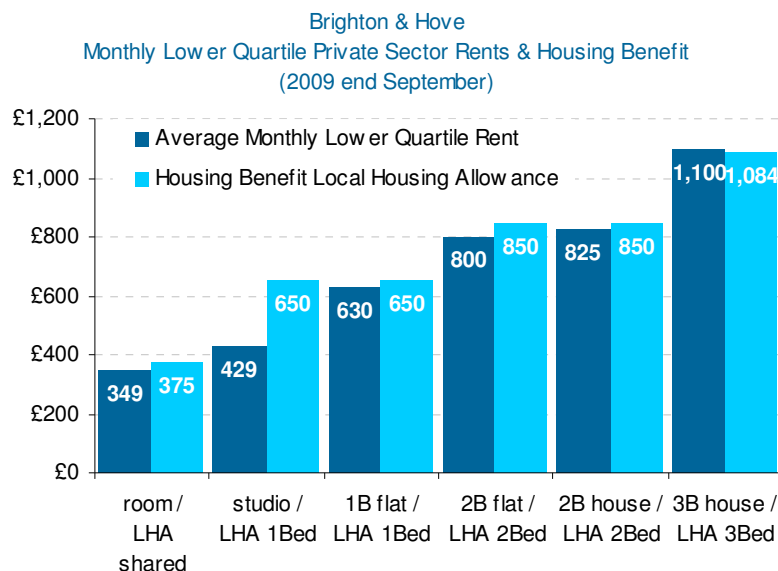
The city has one of the largest private rented sectors in the country comprised of 28,000 homes, almost a quarter of all the city's housing (23%). However, high rental costs, poorer than average housing quality and pockets of overcrowding result in additional housing challenges for the city.

In the year to March 2009, the average cost of renting houses and flats decreased during the year, with most of this reduction happening at the beginning of 2009. The larger the home the larger the decrease in average rents with only rooms in shared houses and studio flats showing an increase in rent over the year.

The average monthly rent on a 1 bed flat in the city during the first quarter of 2009 was £654 with a 3 bed house costing £1,124. When comparing these payments to mortgage costs² we find that the rent payment on a 1 bed flat is similar to the payment of a mortgage of around £101,500 requiring an income of £31,000 to finance. For a 3 bed home, this is a mortgage of around £174,500 requiring a household income of £53,500 to finance. Half of all households in Brighton & Hove earn below £29,950 and are likely to face financial difficulty in renting the average 1 bed flat.

Local Housing Allowance

Those who are on low income or benefits may be entitled to help with rental costs. The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is a standard housing benefit rate based on the number of people in the household and the number of rooms that the household needs. The LHA is a maximum amount payable, which may be reduced due to income and savings.



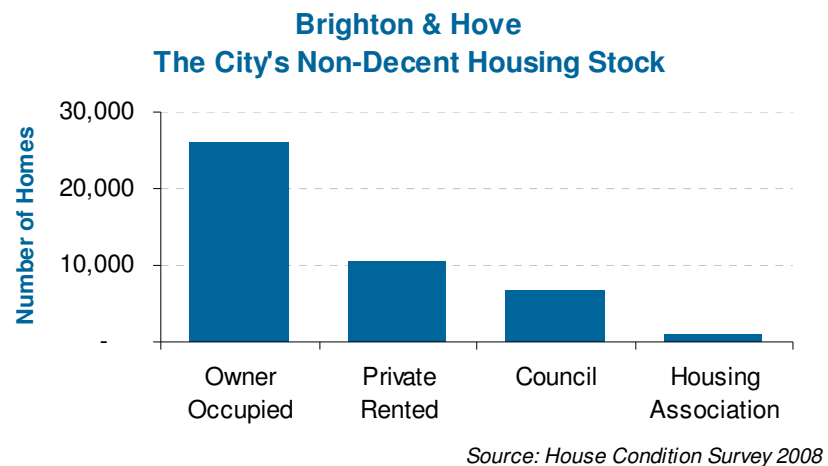
Note: The allowance is calculated based on the number of rooms required, which includes lounges and dining rooms. To avoid confusion we have assumed that all homes have one lounge / dining room with the remainder being bedrooms.

² Assuming a mortgage at 3.25 times income over 25 years with 6% interest

We have compared the LHA to lower quartile rental prices (the average rent of the cheapest 25% of properties). Our research indicates that those looking to 3 bed homes may have the greatest difficulties in finding an affordable home.

2.6 Decent Homes

Overall, around 36% of the city's housing stock is considered to be non-decent. The highest proportion of non-decent housing is in the council housing stock, however, 85% of non-decent homes are in the private sector, outnumbering non-decent council homes by 5 to 1.



The private sector stock condition survey recently completed highlighted how 35% of private sector homes in the city are considered non-decent in comparison to 27% nationally.

Many of the 36,000 non-decent private sector homes are occupied by vulnerable people, with the oldest and poorest more likely to live in the worst quality housing. We are working with owners and landlords to improve more than 2,000 of these homes every year to help bring them up to standard and improve the quality of resident's lives.

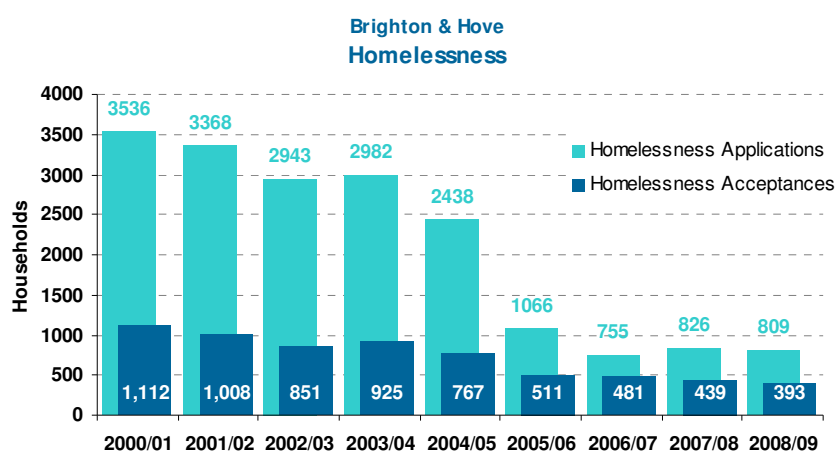
More than half of the Council's stock of social housing does not meet the Decent Homes Standard. We are looking at new partnering arrangements and ways of raising

investment capital that can ensure we are able to bring these homes up to standard in addition to providing wider social benefits to help tackle the pockets of deprivation and worklessness concentrated in some parts of the city.

The energy efficiency of the city's housing is considered to be above average however fuel poverty is estimated to affect 5,100 (5%) households, with the highest proportion concentrated across Hollingbury & Bevendean (13.8%).

2.7 Homelessness

The city's housing problems have necessitated new thinking and joined up solutions to creatively make the best use of existing resources and work towards addressing the root causes of many problems rather than crisis managing the symptoms.



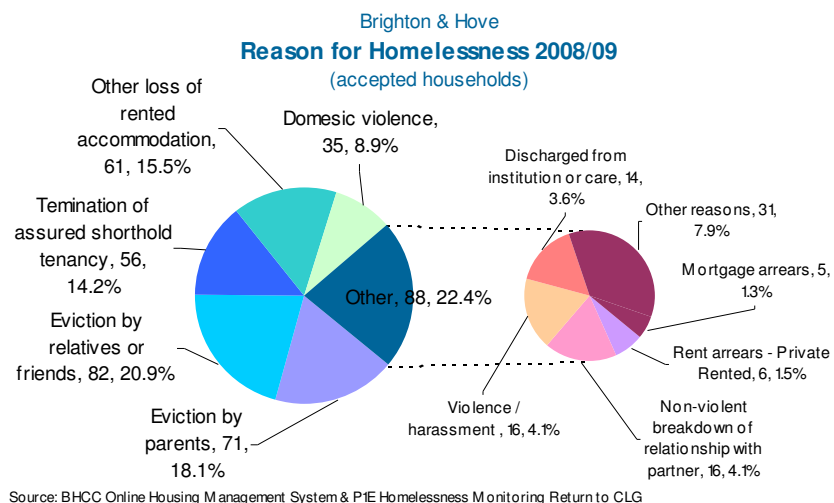
Source: BHCC P1E Homelessness Monitoring Return to CLG

Through our Homelessness Strategy we have changed the way we dealt with homelessness, moving from crisis intervention to a homelessness prevention service, helping households to find solutions to their housing needs without having to go down the homelessness route. This approach has led to a halving of homelessness since 2004 and avoided significant upheaval and distress for those affected.

Causes of homelessness

Historically, loss of private sector rented accommodation was the main cause of homelessness, responsible for almost half of all cases. However, the last few years have seen much better working between the council and landlords that has reduced homelessness from this sector to 31%. In many ways, the flexibility, mobility and size of the private rented sector in the city makes this tenure is a key tool in helping to address the city's housing needs.

Over the last few years, the main cause of homelessness, resulting in almost 39% of all cases is as a result of eviction by parents, family or friends.



Since the introduction of the Youth Homelessness Strategy in 2007 we have seen a 60% reduction in homelessness amongst 16 & 17 year olds through new services targeting young people in crisis providing support and crash pads.

Whilst a smaller proportion of our homelessness relates to people with children or are pregnant than the national average, we have a much higher proportion of our homelessness comprised of those with mental health problems and physical disabilities.

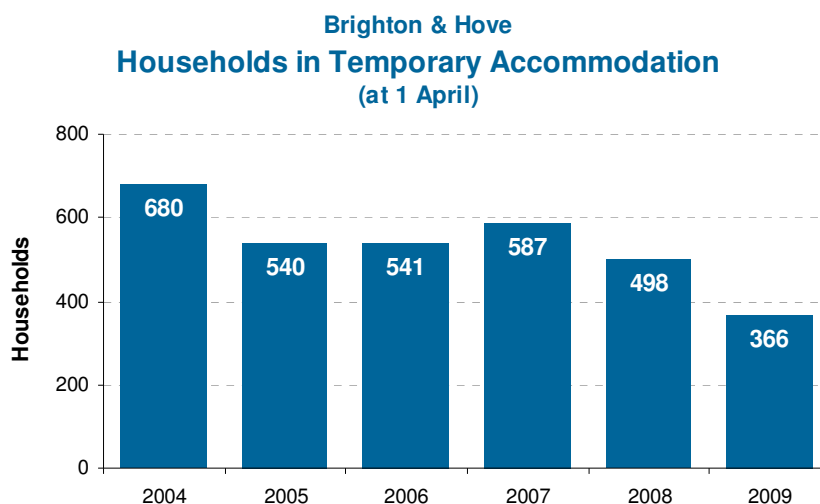
Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping remains a visible presence, particularly in the city centre. Efforts by the local authority and its partners have sustained a reduced level of rough sleeping from 66 people in March 2001 to 6 in March 2009.

Key areas of work include supporting those from other areas to return home and providing intensive support to help those with a local connection engage in work and learning. In all, the service sees around 500 new rough sleepers every year.

Temporary Accommodation

We are exceeding our target to halve the use of temporary accommodation by 2010. In particular we have ended the long term use of B&B for families with children and ensure that 16/17 year olds are only placed in B&B in an emergency, with 3 16/17 year olds in B&B during March 2009.



Source: BHCC Online Housing Management System & P1E Homelessness Monitoring Return

An issue highlighted during our strategy consultation was the shortage of temporary accommodation suitable for those with disabilities which has led to new accessible units of temporary accommodation being procured during 2008/09.

2.8 Supporting People

Our Supporting People Strategy has provided a clear link between Housing, Health, and Social Care enabling the strategic housing function of the authority to become the accommodation commissioner for all services. The Supporting People programme costs around £11m each year and, despite annual funding cuts from central government, provides support to more than 5,000 people in the city to help them live independently, such as:

- Young people who are homeless or young parents
- People with mental health problems
- People with substance misuse problems
- Older people with support needs
- Women and children fleeing domestic violence
- Single homeless people
- People with learning disabilities
- Ex-offenders re-integrating into the community

Homelessness and mental health problems are also closely linked and during 2008/09, 16% of people who were accepted as homeless by the Council had a mental health problem. We also know that certain groups are at an increased risk of mental illness such as the LGBT community and people with drug and alcohol problems.

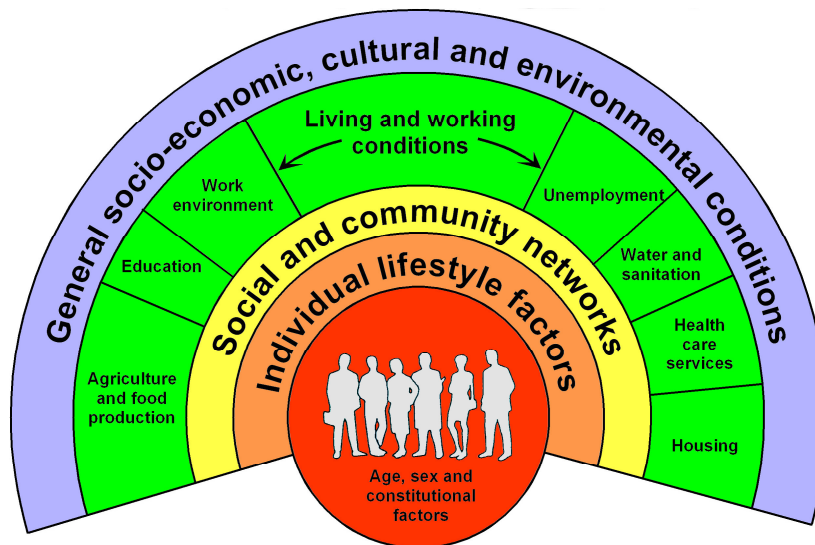
Our monitoring highlights that there are a number of people in supported accommodation ready to move on to the next stage in their lives in a more independent less supported environment. However we recognise the challenges in moving people on in Brighton and Hove due to extremely limited availability of accommodation.

Supporting People has been instrumental in enabling people to leave institutional type care, increased the level of accommodation and support to teenage parents, has contributed to the expansion of women's refuge services, and the first extra care housing in the city.

2.9 Health Impact Assessment

The general health and wellbeing of individuals is affected by a range of factors, the wider **Determinants of Health** including the conditions for living and working, the environment, social factors, and in particular a person's housing circumstances.

Determinants of Health



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

To help ensure that the new housing strategy contributes to improving health, the Public Health Directorate of NHS Brighton & Hove has been carrying out a Health Impact Assessment of the city's housing strategy.

A key outcome of the Health Impact Assessment has been the partnership working between Brighton & Hove City Council and NHS Brighton & Hove to make sure the range of public health considerations are embedded throughout the development and implementation of the Housing Strategy.

The findings from the Health Impact Assessment have helped shape the new housing strategies. They are ensuring that our strategic priorities will help to reduce inequality and enhance the health and well-being of local people.

Overall, the Health Impact Assessment found that:

the Housing Strategy is working towards improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities

Case Study: Responding to the needs of the 'hidden' population

One of the most significant areas highlighted by the Health Impact Assessment focussed on the needs of the most vulnerable and isolated members of the community – those that may slip through the net.

Housing, health, social care and the community & voluntary sector deal with many thousands of people in the city, however, there are some who may not link into any services or may not be connected to all of the services they need. This could be for a variety of reasons such as through choice, a 'make do' approach, a mistrust of agencies or lack of information on support available.

For example, a resident may be receiving home care support in their day-to-day living but their health may be being affected by poor heating at home. We want to ensure that those working in the community are able to recognise the wider needs of local people so that they can discuss this with the resident and broker an appropriate referral to services which can help.

Research by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and Building Research Establishment suggests that in a city the size of Brighton & Hove there are around 1,200 accidents each year relating to falls and excess cold problems in the home. These accidents often affect the older population and it can result in lengthy hospital stays or periods in intermediate care whilst improvements are made to their home or a more suitable home is found. The worst cases can result in death or a life-changing condition. Additionally, the research estimates that these accidents costs the NHS in Brighton & Hove around £8m each year but the cost to the local authority to improve the homes to reduce the chance of the accident is around £2m per year.

We want to work in a partnership that will bring together Brighton & Hove City Council, NHS Brighton & Hove, Southdowns Health and the Community & Voluntary Sector to identify and work with those who are not receiving the support they need.

3 Our Strategic Principles

We want to make sure that our strategy goes beyond the traditional bricks and mortar approach of housing strategies to deliver a real change. To ensure this happens, we have identified 6 fundamental principles that will underpin all of the work we do.

3.1 Principle 1: A Healthy City

We want to make sure that our services improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of local people. Lack of suitable housing, poor quality housing or lack of appropriate support all have a negative impact of the health and emotional wellbeing of residents and local communities. In turn, this places an increased burden on other services in the city such as health and social care.

Brighton & Hove was involved in the **World Health Organization Healthy Cities Programme** (Phase IV) which focused on healthy ageing, healthy urban planning and health impact assessment.

Brighton & Hove has been working through the Healthy Cities network, led by the Primary Care Trust with the Council being a member of the Healthy City Partnership.



Phase IV has now come to an end and the city is looking at the potential to be involved in Phase V which has the overarching goal of *Health and Health Equity in all Local Policies* and focuses on:

- Caring and supportive environment
- Healthy living
- Healthy urban environment and design

The development of a **Healthy City Strategy** is planned that will bring key services together and co-ordinate work to improve the health of local people.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments

In recent years there has been a much bigger focus on working with the Primary Care Trust to ensure health considerations and included in our social care and housing work, with strategic public health officers from the PCT now physically working alongside social care and housing colleagues.

The JSNA process is an integrated needs assessment across social care, education and health that describes future health, care and well-being needs of the local population and the strategic direction of service delivery to meet these needs.

Assessments have recently been carried out on the needs of children and young people in the city and the needs of those with physical disabilities. Future assessments are likely to look at the needs of older people, those with mental health issues and those with sensory disabilities.

3.2 Principle 2: Reducing Inequality

We need to make sure that our services are welcoming and responsive to the needs of our communities, tackling discrimination and disadvantage to help improve the lives of local people.

Inequality can arise as a result of discrimination, or can be a cause of discrimination resulting in a wide variety of disadvantage, such as economic, educational or health. In turn the inequality experienced by local people has a negative effect on the community and the city as a whole.

Reducing Inequality Review

The Council's Reducing Inequality Review carried out at the end of 2007 highlighted disadvantage on a range of indicators (notably low income families with young children) concentrated in particular neighbourhoods but also significant numbers of disadvantaged people living outside these areas across the city.

Other facets of inequality relate to people with multiple needs, those out of work and dependent on a range of benefits such as Incapacity Benefit, lone parents, people with low or no skills, disabled people, those with mental health conditions, BME and LGBT communities, vulnerable children and young people, and older people on low incomes.

The evidence review also highlighted related issues such as substance misuse and the incidence of violent and hate crime, with the shortage of affordable housing and labour market factors affecting the ability of residents to overcome the disadvantages they experience.

We recognise the role that housing plays in helping to reduce inequality. Through the Housing Strategy we hope to address these issues, reducing deprivation and worklessness and improving health and quality of life.

3.3 Principle 3: Improving neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods play an important part in providing a sense of community, integration and support. Through our housing strategy we want to help ensure that our neighbourhoods are safe, attractive and accessible places to live. Access to safe green spaces is important to encourage active living, recreation areas for all ages and a place for people to meet. Local communities need the mix of high quality housing and support to ensure that they are able to cater for the changing needs of local people.

Local Development Framework

Local Development Frameworks have been introduced by the Government to replace Local Plans. Brighton & Hove City Council has been working on its LDF for the last few of years, primarily undertaking research and consultation. The LDF is expected to be formally adopted in July 2011.

Key elements of this work have included the Housing Needs Survey carried out in 2005 and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment completed in 2008. The main housing aspects of LDF are expected to include:

- the planned location of the 570 new homes per annum required to meet the South East Plan target
- the mix of housing based on the assessment of residents' current and future needs and aspirations
- an annual average of 230 new affordable homes
- to secure up to 40% affordable housing on larger suitable development sites
- requirements to ensure the highest standards of design and sustainability
- provision to meet the need for gypsy and traveller caravan pitches in accordance with the South East Plan

A planning advice note (PAN03) to support the Local Plan policy **HO13 'Accessible Housing & Lifetime Homes'** has recently been adopted to help ensure all new housing in the city meets Lifetime Homes Standard with all larger sites including a proportion of Wheelchair Accessible Housing.

Case Study: Social Landlords Forum

This Forum brings together the main social landlords in the city to help meet housing needs, to secure thriving neighbourhoods and to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness. The forum has a strong history of joint working which includes anti-social behaviour initiatives on multi-landlord estates, jointly funding the mediation service, working to reduce under occupancy, work to reduce homelessness in the city and benchmarking performance to drive up standards.

Key priorities of the Forum include:

- develop neighbourhood agreements for good housing management in multi-landlord areas
- jointly funding a mediation service for tenants involved in neighbour disputes
- develop a joint protocol for dealing with hate crime
- work together to help those wanting to downsize and free up family homes

East Brighton New Deal for Communities (ebndc)

The East Brighton New Deal for Communities programme started in 1998 with partnership from the local community, statutory services and businesses. It was awarded £47.2m to regenerate East Brighton and funded more than 300 projects. The **ebndc** programme has come to an end and the **East Brighton Trust** has been created, run by local people, to work for the ongoing regeneration of the area.

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

Ten neighbourhoods were prioritised for Neighbourhood Renewal funding based on relative levels of deprivation. Neighbourhood action plans were produced for these areas which outline local priorities for the period 2007-2010 and detail the action being taken.

3.4 Principle 4: Accountable to Local People

The Housing Strategy has to take into account the needs and aspirations of everyone living in the city – a quarter of a million people. To ensure that our work improves the lives of local people, we need to make sure that local people are involved in decisions about the services that affect them.

This strategy and related sub-strategies have been developed with extensive consultation with the public, service users and other stakeholders at each stage.

Having launched the strategy, we need to regularly review its progress and delivery of our services with local people and other stakeholders to make sure that it is achieving its aims and adapting to the changing needs of the city.

Local Area Agreement (LAA)

These are new agreements, introduced in the **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007**, that set out the priorities for a local area, agreed between Government, the local authority, the Local Strategic Partnership and other key partners.

Key housing action relating to the LAA includes increasing the number of new homes, improving the quality of social housing, supporting vulnerable people to maintain their independence and tackling fuel poverty.

Additional local indicators focus on reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation, bringing empty properties back into use and reducing the number of rough sleepers. The targets in the Local Area Agreement are monitored regularly and reported to government and local partners.

City Inclusion Partnership

The Council has been working with partners in the city to develop new arrangements to oversee and lead the strategic direction of equalities and diversity work.

This is taking the form of a new City Inclusion Partnership, to sit within the Local Strategic Partnership and provide the basis for partnership work between the city council and our statutory and community / voluntary sector partners.

This Partnership will work actively with communities of interest and community / voluntary groups across the city and will provide a mechanism to hold the statutory sector to account in relation to equalities work.

3.5 Principle 5: Value for Money

The council spends more than £700m of public money each year. We must ensure that it is well spent. Services delivered by the Council and its partners are affected by constant funding pressures and competing demands.

A programme of Value for Money Reviews is in progress, initially targeted at services we have identified as being of higher cost than those provided by comparable authorities, to identify areas where we can reduce costs without compromising on the quality of the outcomes we achieve.

We need to make sure that the services we deliver are the right services, that they are delivered efficiently and targeted in such a way that will provide maximum impact and benefit for the resources available.

3.6 Principle 6: Partnership Working

The Housing Strategy recognises that we cannot address the city's housing needs in isolation. We need to make sure that we work with all those who can help improve the quality of life in the city. Success depends on joint working with local people and a range of public, private, community and voluntary services across the city, and also by working in wider partnerships at a regional and national level.

We must work with all those that have a knowledge and stake in our local communities to achieve the aims of this strategy and make real improvements to the lives of the city's residents. In many cases the providers of specialist advice and services will understand the needs of parts of the community much more than the Council.

Brighton & Hove Strategic Partnership

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is a multi-agency partnership that brings together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. Its role is to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of local people in the City of Brighton and Hove. The LSP has developed the Community Strategy which sets out the vision and plans of the agencies, organisations and communities who work together to improve the quality of life in this city.

Public Service Board

The Public Service Board sits alongside the LSP and is the main forum for the Council and its partners to work together on joint and national priorities. It has members from the Primary Care Trust, Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals, the Police and business leaders. It oversees progress against the targets in the Local Area Agreement.

Strategy Statement: Families

The 2001 Census reported there were around 29,000 families with children living in Brighton & Hove. Around 20% of those families were living in socially rented accommodation, 65% in owner-occupation and 14% living in the private rented sector. The census also identified that 32% of families lived in overcrowded homes.

Although Brighton & Hove has experienced a large percentage growth in households aged 25-44 years there has been a decline in families with children. This may be due to the high cost of housing in the city and families who need to move to larger homes can not afford to trade up and remain living in the city. For BME households who often have larger, extended households, trading up within the city is likely to be a particular problem due to the nature and prices of the housing stock.

Our needs survey highlighted that 31% of housing demand that could not be met through the existing housing stock was for homes with 3 or more bedrooms. These findings are backed by the average waiting times for those being rehoused in social housing. In 2008/09, those needing 3 bedroom homes waited on average more than 1½ years to be rehoused against 9 months for those needing 1 bedroom homes.

We are working through our planning policies to maximise the amount of family homes that are built on new developments. As space is at a premium however, our options are limited so we need to make best use of the existing housing stock. During 2008/09 our Under-Occupation officer was successful in helping 81 households downsize. As a result, this freed up more than 80 family homes for reletting, helping both homeless households and existing overcrowded households in social housing.

In addition we have negotiated long-term leasing in the private rented sector. This provides the opportunity for homeless households to move into higher quality temporary accommodation than traditional B&Bs and has given more opportunity for existing council tenants to transfer, alleviating some overcrowding.

We work closely with other agencies to help families and young people find housing solutions that avoid the need for making a homeless application that would lead to a placement in temporary accommodation. These include working with private rented sector landlords, mediation services and other agencies. Our benefit take-up team not only helps households to maximise their housing benefit but supports households to maximise all their entitlements.

Case Study: Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership

Affordable housing meets two primary aims in the city – it enables some households to take their first step on the property ladder through low cost home ownership and it also provides homes for affordable rent where home ownership is not a viable option. Over the next few years Brighton & Hove has one of the largest affordable housing programmes in the South East outside London and a target to deliver 230 new affordable homes per annum, almost triple the national average.

The Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership is a partnership of seven Registered Social Landlords, the Homes & Communities Agency and Brighton & Hove City Council. The partnership has a proven track record in delivering a range of affordable housing in the City including low cost home ownership, rented and intermediate rent to meet housing needs and improve people's quality of life

Working in partnership we delivered 1,894 new affordable homes between 2001 and 2009. We are committed to the future delivery of a significant number of affordable homes in the city, meeting high quality and design standards, and maximising those opportunities on brownfield sites ranging from large, mixed use developments to smaller, more suburban sites.

The partnership has representation on the Local Strategic Partnership, Economic Partnership, Neighbourhood Renewal and Strategic Housing Partnership

Partnership members:

- Hyde Martlett
- The Guinness Partnership
- Southern Housing Group
- Places for People
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Downland Housing Association
- Moat Housing Group
- Amicus Horizon
- Housing Corporation



City Point, Moat



Monarch's View, Downland



Gordon Road, Hyde Martlett

4 The Strategy in Context

4.1 Linking to International, National and Regional Policy

There has been a wide range of international, national and regional research and policies produced in response to the changing aspirations and demographics of the population.

International Policy

Article 25 of the United Nations **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (Resolution 217 A (III), 10 December 1948) has clear parallels with the strategic housing function:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) was approved in 1951 with the United Kingdom being a founder member. These rights were strengthened in UK legislation through the Human Rights Act 1998 with Article 8 of the ECHR having particular relevance for housing:

Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life

- 1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.***
- 2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.***



National Policy

The 2006 Local Government White Paper ***Strong and Prosperous Communities*** recognised the importance of the strategic housing role of authorities as being:

at the heart of achieving the social, economic and environmental objectives that shape a community and create a sense of place

This was followed by the ***Local Government Public Involvement in Health Bill 2007*** which enabled local authorities to engage their citizens, lead their communities, and find new and more effective ways to deliver high quality services with their partners.

A new White Paper was published in July 2008.

Communities in control: real people, real power sets out how the government plans to give citizens and communities more rights and more power through becoming more involved in decision making, service delivery and holding politicians and councils to account.

The Housing Green Paper ***Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable*** published in July 2007 highlighted the importance of the strategic housing role, which saw the government committing to deliver 2 million new homes by 2016, and 3 million by 2020. This increases the 200,000 target to 240,000 new homes being built every year by 2016 and increasing the supply of affordable housing to 70,000 homes per year by 2011.

To support the Green Paper, the 2007 ***Comprehensive Spending Review*** prioritised funding towards the delivery of new housing, yet despite the overall increase in funds from £8.8bn in 2007/08 to £10bn in 2010/11, funding allocations to other housing activities such as Supporting People have been limited.

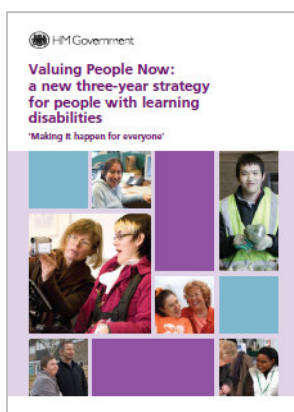


The government recently updated its housing strategy for older people, ***Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society.***

This national strategy brings together priorities from across government departments, in particular the 2007 Green Paper ***Homes for the Future***, the Department of Health's 2006 White Paper ***Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*** and the 2007 concordat on adult social care ***Putting People First***. These documents are also feeding into the new social care Green Paper ***Shaping the Future of Care Together*** and new ***Independent Living Strategy***.

The new ***Housing & Regeneration Act 2008***, based on the Green Paper, takes forward the recommendations made by Professor Martin Cave in his report ***Every tenant matters: A review of social housing regulation*** published in 2007. The Bill has 3 main elements:

- to make it easier for local authorities to build new council homes to meet local needs
- to create the Homes & Communities Agency that will focus on the delivery of new affordable housing and work to regenerate run down areas
- to set up the Tenant Services Authority that will ensure social housing providers improve standards and give tenants a greater say in the management of their homes



In January 2009 the Government published ***Valuing People Now***, its new three year strategy for people with learning disabilities. This strategy updated the ***Valuing People*** white paper published in 2001. The strategy aims to transform the lives of those with a learning disability, to offer more independence, self directed support and improve access jobs, services and settled homes. As a result of Valuing People Now, the Brighton & Hove ***Learning Disabilities Partnership Board*** was created to help the planning and development of services for local people with learning disabilities.

Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)

The **Homes & Communities Agency** is a new housing and regeneration agency which will create opportunities for people to live in affordable homes in places that they want to live in, and for local authorities and communities to deliver the ambitions they have for their area.



The HCA joins up the delivery of housing and regeneration under one organisation, bringing together English Partnerships, the investment functions of the Housing Corporation, the Academy for Sustainable Communities, and key housing and regeneration programmes previously delivered by the Government.

This integrated approach will enable the HCA to hold a '**single conversation**' with local authorities and other partners on the specific housing and regeneration needs of their individual areas to ensure that communities receive the best outcome for them.

Tenant Services Authority (TSA)

The **Tenant Services Authority** is the new regulator for social housing, dedicated to raising the standard of housing services by putting tenants first. Taking over the Housing Corporation's responsibility for regulating housing associations and social landlords, the TSA will set high standards of management across these areas and, later, local authority social homes and will:



- champion tenant's needs and aspirations from housing
- promote choice for tenants and providers
- challenge providers to meet or exceed standards
- shape standards, utilizing informal and formal consultations
- adopt a co-regulatory and proportionate approach
- be independent
- work to create more choice about the way housing is managed and the landlords who provide it

Future Policy

Alongside the Bill, the government is carrying out a review of council housing finances and, at the time of writing, a **Housing Reform Green Paper** is also anticipated in 2009 which may link housing services to economic dependence and social mobility, including the potential introduction of different forms of tenure.

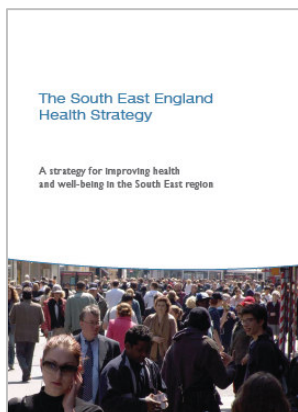
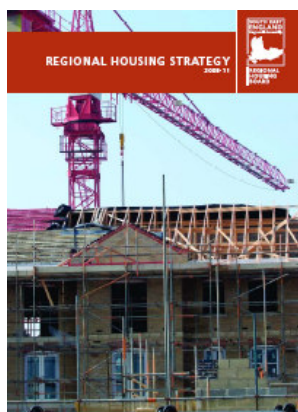
A new **Welfare Reform Bill** is also expected to focus on helping people get back into work. These will build upon the work of the Hills Review ***Ends and Means: The future roles of social housing in England*** that was published in 2007. Hills recognised the problem of high levels of worklessness in social housing and the need to retain tenants with mixed incomes.

Regional Policy

The ***Regional Housing Strategy 2008-2011*** was published in April 2008 by the South East England Regional Assembly. Funding priorities concentrate on the delivery of new affordable housing, improving the quality of housing and improving provision for gypsy and traveller groups.

In particular, the strategy is encouraging the construction of larger family sized homes and expects that new and refurbished homes should meet level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The strategy also recognises the importance of the private sector and targets funding at improving the quality of the homes of vulnerable households, particularly in respect of heating systems.

The first ***South East England Regional Health Strategy*** was published in February 2008. Key themes in the strategy that link to housing include a focus on reducing Health Inequalities, developing a Sustainable Region and developing Safer Communities.



4.2 Working Across the Region

Multi Area Agreements take the notion of Local Area Agreements a step further – with different local authorities working together in partnership to address common issues. Whilst Brighton & Hove is not involved in a Multi Area Agreement at present, Brighton & Hove is already leading a number of regional initiatives and partnerships:

Sussex Empty Homes Forum

Brighton & Hove works with other local authorities in Sussex through the Sussex Empty Homes Forum (SEHF) with East Sussex and West Sussex County Councils and the Housing Corporation to reduce empty properties across the region through partnership working. The Forum has developed the Tackling Empty Homes in Sussex Empty Homes Forum Strategic Framework 2008–2011.

Sussex Homemove

Sussex Homemove is an expansion of Brighton & Hove's successful choice based lettings system to eight Sussex Authorities and 12 major housing associations. It is one of the largest and most successful schemes of its type in the South East. The partnership provides opportunities for sharing good practice to improve customers' access to social and other housing across the region. Initially this project was funded by the Government but partners now jointly fund the work, led by the Regional Housing Partnerships Team at Brighton & Hove City Council.



Brighton & Hove, East Sussex Together

The Brighton & Hove, East Sussex Together Partnership (BEST) has been allocated £18.6 million over three years by the South East England Regional Housing Board (RHB) to tackle some of the region's worst housing conditions.



The Partnership, led by Brighton & Hove City Council, received the largest allocation of funds in the region and brings together the local authorities of Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne, Hastings, Wealden, Lewes and Rother.

The partnership is focused on improving the living conditions of vulnerable households in the private sector and will aim to improve the condition of housing to the decent homes standard, address more widespread regeneration needs and foster improvement in domestic energy efficiency to combat fuel poverty and reduce the region's carbon emissions.



Southern Home Loans Partnership

The Southern Home Loans Partnership (SHLP) was launched in 2005 to offer low cost loans to assist homeowners finance essential works to their properties. SHLP joined together South Coast Moneyline, a not-for-profit loans company and the local authorities of Brighton & Hove, Chichester, Eastleigh, Gosport, Portsmouth, Eastbourne, Hastings, Wealden, Lewes and Rother.



4.3 Organizing to Meet the Challenges

Brighton & Hove City Council has recently moved to the cabinet model of political leadership, with politicians being more directly responsible for the services under their remit. New scrutiny committees are able to hold councillors to account for their decisions.

A new Council Constitution includes a commitment to openness and involvement and the council's new priorities, centred on delivering core services efficiently and making a real and lasting difference to local people's quality of life:

- protect the environment whilst growing the economy
- better use of public money
- reduce inequality by increasing opportunities
- fair enforcement of the law
- open and effective city leadership

Delivering effective housing services for the city requires a co-ordination of services across planning, health, social care, housing, the community and voluntary sector.

Adult social care and housing services are located in the same department within the council, enabling us to develop shared goals and understanding amongst staff delivering the services. The overall vision for these services is to:

***Provide excellent services to
increase independence and quality of life***

4.4 Strategy Co-ordination

Our Housing Strategy does not operate in isolation but its aims and objectives are interrelated to a wide range of other plans and strategies within the Council, its partner agencies and stakeholders.

Key plans and strategies include:

- 2020 Community Strategy
- Local Area Agreement
- LGBT People's Housing Strategy 2009
- Older People's Housing Strategy 2009
- Homelessness Strategy 2008
- Single Homeless Strategy 2009
- Youth Homelessness Strategy 2007
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2008
- Empty Property Strategy 2007
- Brighton & Hove Affordable Warmth Strategy 2002
- Supporting People Commissioning Strategy 2008
- Learning Disabilities Commissioning Strategy 2009
- Housing Strategy for People with a Learning Disability 2007
- Multi Agency Carers' Strategy 2006-2009
- Physical Disability Commissioning Strategy 2009
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Draft Local Development Framework (Local Plan)

Copies of these strategies and plans are available from the council's website.

Strategy Statement: Achieving Excellence in Council Housing

The Service Improvement Plan **Achieving Excellence in Housing Management** sets out the vision, strategic framework and delivery plan for services provided to council tenants and leaseholders in Brighton & Hove.

The overall objective is to provide excellent Housing Management services, with residents at the heart of everything we do, recognising that social housing cannot be divorced from the wider economic, social and environmental objectives it helps to achieve and aims to:

- **Priority 1:** Improving services to an excellent standard, with residents at the heart of everything we do
- **Priority 2:** Improving the quality and sustainability of our homes and neighbourhoods
- **Priority 3:** Delivering value for money services and maintain a sustainable 30 year business plan
- **Priority 4:** Making best use of our housing stock to address housing need
- **Priority 5:** Ensuring that social housing provides a platform for reducing inequality and creating opportunity

Everyone deserves to live in a decent home, yet currently around half of all council homes in Brighton & Hove fall below the Decent Homes Standard. We recognise that the Decent Homes Standard is a minimum and have been working with tenants and leaseholders to develop a Brighton & Hove Standard to reflect resident aspirations.

With the involvement of our residents, we are transforming our Housing Management services and pursuing two key strategies to raise the investment required to bring our home up to the Decent Homes Standard:

- Procurement Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy

Strategy Statement: Excellence in Council Housing (2)

Procurement Strategy

We are procuring a long term partnership arrangement for the maintenance and improvement of our housing stock to start from 2010/11. This will bring substantial savings which will help reduce the gap between our available resources and the investment needed to achieve the decency standards and carry out other works to meet our tenants' aspirations:

- Prosperity - increasing the number of residents in employment
- Tackling worklessness - reducing the number of working age people on out of work benefits and the percentage of 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET)
- Sustainability – using retrofitting and other opportunities to reduce per capita CO₂ emissions in the area by 12% and increasing the number of households living in properties with a SAP rating of 65 or over
- Affordable Family Housing - decreasing the percentage of non - decent council homes
- Strong communities and engaging people - increasing the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality.

Asset Management Strategy

This strategy includes leasing over five years up to 499 homes which become empty and are in need of investment to a Local Delivery Vehicle set up by the council. **Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes** is a charitable housing company with a Board made up of 1/3 tenant representatives, 1/3 council appointments and 1/3 independent members and will:

- bring in additional investment of up to £45 million from the lease premiums to bridge the investment gap and improve council homes to the Decent Homes Standard and meet tenants wider aspirations for improvement of the council housing stock;
- provide a stable supply of accommodation for homeless households and other groups for whom the council has a duty to provide housing from Children and Young People's Trust, Learning Disabilities and Adult Social Care; and
- refurbish the leased stock as some have outdated shared facilities or are currently unlettable due to their investment needs.

Strategy Statement: Excellence in Council Housing (3)

Audit Commission Advice and Assistance Visit

In March 2009, the audit commission completed an advice and assistance visit on three key areas – resident involvement, income management and the HRA business plan. Feedback was very encouraging and concluded that:

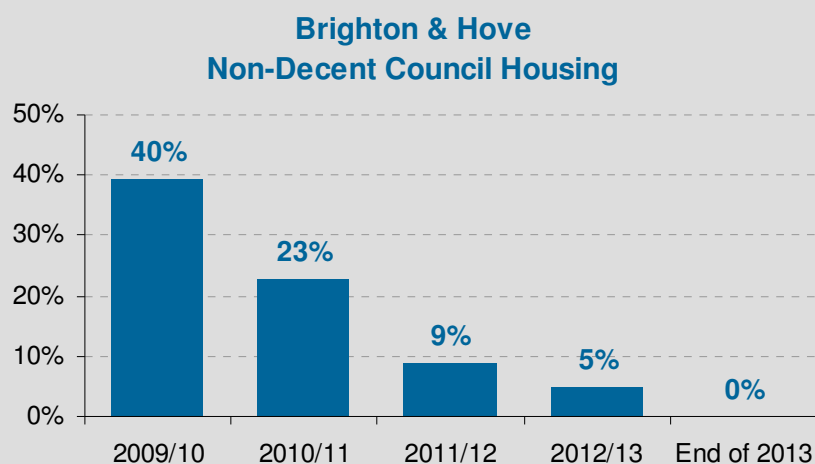
- Significant progress had been made in strengthening and rebuilding trust with the tenants since the ballot
- There is a strong self awareness of current service delivery and areas that need to improve
- There has been solid progress in improvement in these areas
- The business plan reflected the principles of effective service planning and the full range of housing management challenges faced by the council.

A number of recommendations were made for improvements and we have developed an action plan to meet these recommendations.

Achieving Decent Homes

Our goal is to reach the decent homes standard in all council housing in 2013. From April 2010 the new partnering agreement to deliver the repairs and maintenance service will be in place and we will be in a strong position to deliver the programme to achieve this.

Our projections for meeting the decent homes standard are:



5 Strategic Priority 1: Improving Housing Supply

5.1 Improving Choice

Through our Housing Strategy we need to make sure that the city has the right type of housing to meet the needs of current and future residents, whether it be owner occupation, private renting, or social rented housing.

To achieve this aim, we need to develop new housing and make best use of the city's existing housing stock. To provide a greater choice for residents looking to buy or rent, new housing needs to include homes for outright sale, low cost home ownership, intermediate rent and social rent. We also need to bring empty homes back into use and help provide opportunities for those wishing to move to larger or smaller homes as the needs of their households change.

Our strategic goals under this objective are to:

- Goal 1 Help households become homeowners
- Goal 2 Provide opportunities for households to move to larger homes or downsize as their needs change
- Goal 3 Identify opportunities to improve and develop deprived neighbourhoods
- Goal 4 Make best use of the housing stock
- Goal 5 Increase the supply of affordable rented housing

Actions to meet Objective 1: Improving Housing Supply will contribute to the following National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships

- NI 5: Overall/general satisfaction with local area
- NI 119: Self reported measure of people's overall health & well being
- NI 124: People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition
- NI 141: Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living
- NI 154: Net additional homes provided
- NI 155: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
- NI 156: Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- NI 159: Supply of ready to develop housing sites

5.2 Strategic Goal 1: Help households become homeowners

As a nation we aspire to home ownership above any other tenure. However, high property prices and changing mortgage markets have put traditional home ownership out of reach of many households.

Our own research³ shows that a 90% mortgage on the average 1 bed flat in the city would require an income of £42,000 (plus a £15,000 deposit) and a 3 bed house would require a £78,500 income (plus a £28,000 deposit). The CACI Wealth of the Nation Report 2007 shows that half of the city's households earn less than £29,950 per year.

These challenges have led to a range of low cost home ownership products where households can either buy at a reduced rate or buy on a part rent / part buy basis. In 2008/09, 80 households were helped to become homeowners through the HomeBuy initiative.

Case Study: HomeBuy

HomeBuy offers a range of schemes to help people who wish to buy a home but are unable to raise a mortgage large enough to do so. Two of the most popular options are:

- **New Build HomeBuy**

The opportunity to purchase a share between 25% to 75% on a brand new property, with a subsidised rent on the unowned share

- **HomeBuy Direct**

Equity loans available toward the purchase of a new build home on selected developments with the purchaser buying a minimum of 70% of the market value of a property.

Other schemes include; Rent to HomeBuy, Resales and Intermediate Rent. The next few years will see more than 450 homes in development across the city available for HomeBuy. For more information, please contact MOAT on 0845 359 6161 or at www.homebuy.co.uk



³ Property Price Report 2009 Q1 (Jan-Mar), Brighton & Hove City Council

Historically the Right to Buy and Cash Incentive Scheme has been the low cost home ownership solution of many thousands of social housing tenants. However, the current market climate has made these schemes unaffordable for many so we would like to look at other ways of helping tenants buy a share in their home.

Many households have built up a sizeable equity in their homes as a result of the property market boom, yet their children or other relatives are unable to access home ownership due to the same boom. We would like to look at the possibility of an equity release scheme to help households pay deposits for other family members.

Case Study: Westbourne

In partnership with Downland Housing Association, this new mixed tenure development that will provide 25 general needs shared ownership 1 & 2 bed flats plus an additional 24 supported housing units for people with a learning disability.

The supported housing units will offer a mixture of Short Break services, flats for those with learning disabilities combined with physical disabilities and shared accommodation for 5 younger people with learning disabilities where they will develop their independent living skills and be supported to move on to other housing options when they are ready.

A high demand has been seen for the shared ownership homes and completion of the development is due in November 2009.

5.3 Strategic Goal 2: Provide opportunities for households to move to larger homes or downsize as needs change

Pockets of overcrowding and the Housing Register illustrate how many households in the city require larger accommodation than they currently can afford or access. Conversely, we also know there is a group of residents who wish to 'downsize' and move to smaller homes but have not been able to do so as either suitable alternative housing is not available or they need support with the moving process.

Whilst low cost home ownership schemes have helped many younger households buy flats and take their first step into home ownership, we can see a problem arising in the future if there are not sufficient larger low cost home ownership homes available as they want to have children and expand their family.

Almost half of the city's housing is comprised of 1 and 2 bedroom flats with development space being very limited. New developments have also tended to concentrate on smaller homes. The Regional Housing Strategy recognises the need for family sized homes and is making it more financially viable for these to be developed.

Case Study: Social Housing Under–Occupation and Downsizing

Brighton & Hove City Council has appointed a dedicated Under-Occupation Officer to support tenants wanting to downsize. The Transfer Incentive Scheme offers a financial reward of up to £3,500 to those who want to downsize from a family home or wheelchair adapted property that they no longer need. Practical help is given to identify a suitable new home and support is given through the moving process.

In 2008/09 the Under-Occupation Officer's work has supported households wanting to downsize to release more than 80 family sized homes.

The homes that have been freed up are being let through Choice Based Lettings and have helped overcrowded tenants move to larger homes, provided new homes for homeless families and helped house families with disabled members.



To increase opportunities for people to move to larger or smaller homes as their needs change we need to ensure that new developments include family sized housing and desirable options for those wanting to downsize. We also need to support those wishing to move to smaller homes, freeing up existing family sized housing.

5.4 **Strategic Goal 3: Identify opportunities to improve and develop deprived neighbourhoods**

The Reducing Inequality Review 2007 carried out on behalf of the council identified that whilst deprivation was spread across the city there were pockets of more pronounced inequality, particularly in the social housing areas of East Brighton, Queens Park, Moulsecoomb and Bevendean.

Selective redevelopment of areas of deprivation and poor quality housing can be a catalyst for change, providing opportunities to develop a range of housing types and tenures, improving housing quality and promoting more mixed and sustainable communities. We will be exploring the potential for housing development and redevelopment in deprived and other parts of the city particularly on land that we own to identify opportunities to help deliver solutions to the challenges faced by local people.

Supported by the new **Turning the Tide** Social Exclusion Strategy being developed during 2009/10, initiatives to improve residents health and help people get back into work can be linked to regeneration opportunities to ensure that everyone in the community benefits.

5.5 **Strategic Goal 4: Make best use of the housing stock**

The pace of new housing development is not able to meet the demand arising from an increasing population, homelessness and those unsuitably housed. To meet this excess demand we need to make sure that we are maximising the potential of the existing housing stock.

Brighton & Hove has the sixth largest private rented sector in the country at more than 20% of all housing. We have utilised this resource to assist households in housing crisis, with many homeless households benefiting from properties leased on a long term basis from private sector landlords, offering homes with a higher quality and greater level of stability than households were receiving from traditional temporary accommodation.

Case Study: Homemove

Our Homemove magazine advertises council and housing association homes for rent and shared ownership. A future Homemove improvement will see the inclusion of homes for rent in the private rented sector, which will enable accredited landlords to advertise their properties and so increase housing choice to households seeking to move. Homemove has now also incorporated a mobility rating that indicates whether an available property is suitable for a wheelchair user or someone with limited mobility and all new affordable housing that meets the wheelchair standard is advertised before it is built in order to ensure that the features installed are designed around the specific needs of the future occupants.



The Housing & Regeneration Bill provides an opportunity to set up a Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV). Up to 499 homes can be leased to the LDV, which can then be used as an asset to borrow money. This can be used for a range of purposes including improving the housing stock. In addition, the properties could be used for homes for those who may find it difficult to access housing through traditional routes, including those with a learning disability, those with mental health problems and those with physical disabilities.

To ensure the best use of our housing stock, we are also developing an Accessible Housing Register listing all wheelchair accessible homes and those which have been adapted. This will help to ensure that they are aimed at households who need adapted homes when they are available for reletting.

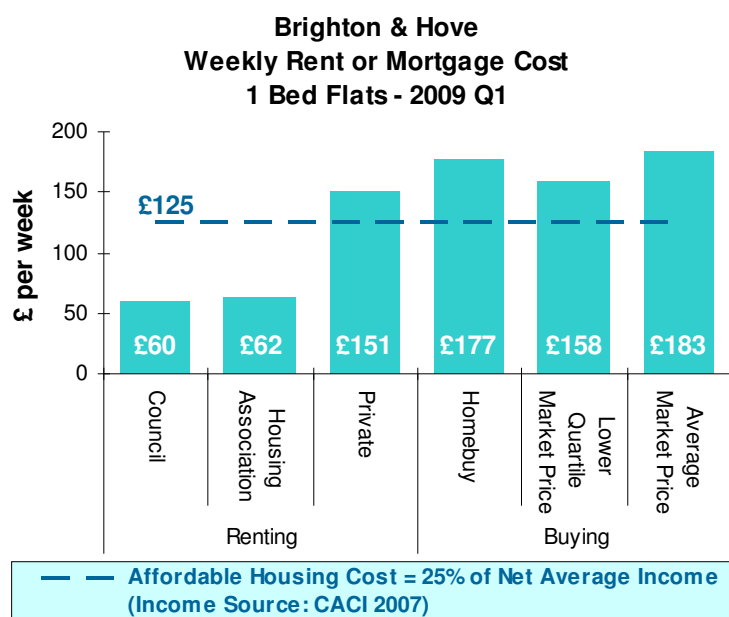
Each year we spend almost £2m on adaptations and Disabled Facilities Grants to improve the accessibility of people's homes across the public and private sectors, helping around 500 households.

5.6 Strategic Goal 5: Increase the supply of affordable rented housing

Affordability indicators suggest that households should not spend more than 25% of their income on property rental or mortgage costs.

The CACI Wealth of the Nation Report 2007 gave the city's average household income at £35,123, a take home pay of £501 per week and an affordable housing cost of £125 per week. However as the city's average income is affected by a small number of high earners, two thirds of households earn below this amount.

This chart shows that nearly 7 in 10 households in the city cannot effectively afford to buy or privately rent a 1 bed flat:



Brighton & Hove has one of the largest affordable housing programmes in the South East and supports the development of a mix of new homes for affordable rent and low cost home ownership. We aim to deliver an average of 60% as new affordable rented housing and 40% as new low cost home ownership housing.

Action Plan Summary: Strategic Priority 1: Improving Housing Supply

Strategic Action	Target	Current Position	Lead Partner
Goal 1	Help households become homeowners		
Develop new homes for low cost home ownership	Average of 100 low cost home ownership homes per annum	2008/09 80 low cost home ownership homes completed	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
Coordinate and deliver a range of low cost home ownership products	Effective uptake of low cost home ownership options by local people	Range of HomeBuy schemes in operation	Moat Housing
Explore potential for a new type of equity release product enabling family members to provide deposits for relatives	New scheme piloted and launched if viable	On hold due to downturn in the property market	Brighton & Hove City Council
Explore potential for a new type of product that enables social housing tenants to buy a stake in their home	New scheme piloted and launched if viable	On hold due to recession but links with HomeBuy being explored	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 2	Provide opportunities for households to move to larger homes or downsize as their needs change		
Develop new family sized homes	Minimum of 10% of new affordable homes (25% on suitable sites)	2008/09 17 new family homes (7%)	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
Ensure home ownership pathways contain a range of property sizes and types	Low cost home ownership does not trap households in unsuitable homes	New developments required to have a mix of property sizes	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
Target a proportion of new developments at those wishing to downsize	Local lettings plans reflecting need to attract downsizers and free up family sized homes	Being explored through the 'Cash up to Downsize' project	Brighton & Hove City Council
Support households wishing to downsize through the 'Cash up to Downsize' project	Secure underoccupation funding and free up 80 larger homes per annum	2008/09 more than 80 households helped	Social Landlords Forum
Goal 3	Identify opportunities to improve and develop deprived neighbourhoods		
Ensuring new developments contribute to improving the tenure mix of an area	Mix of housing based on assessment of residents current and future needs and aspirations	Local Development Framework consultation Summer 2009	Brighton & Hove City Council
Identify suitable sites and progress the development and regeneration of land suitable for housing under local authority ownership	Pipeline of sites suitable for housing from being available through to being in development	Feasibility studies in progress	Brighton & Hove City Council

Strategic Action	Target	Current Position	Lead Partner
Link the Council housing procurement strategy to reducing worklessness	New maintenance procurement contract to include requirements on reducing worklessness	Specification developed and tender in progress	Brighton & Hove City Council
Ensure developments are accompanied by local lettings plans that take into account the needs of local people and the area	Reduced deprivation and improved resident satisfaction with their neighbourhood	Explored on a development by development basis	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 4	Make best use of the housing stock		
Unlock the capital in the social housing stock	Local Delivery Vehicle able to access market funding	Funding partner being sourced	Brighton & Hove City Council
Secure accommodation for non-homeless households that have difficulty accessing the market	Local Delivery Vehicle providing long term temporary accommodation	Ongoing discussions with Communities & Local Government to obtain consent	Brighton & Hove City Council
Improved use of the private rented sector as a viable option for homeless households	Reduced use of temporary accommodation – target of 333 households by 2010	March 2009, on track with 388 households in temporary accommodation	Brighton & Hove City Council
Make better use of adapted and wheelchair accessible homes	Housing suitable for those with mobility needs ringfenced for those with disabilities	All homes available for reletting now mobility coded	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 5	Increase the supply of affordable rented housing		
Ensure all new developments contain a mix of housing for sale and for rent	Mix of housing based on assessment of residents current and future needs and aspirations	Local Development Framework consultation Summer 2009	Brighton & Hove City Council
Develop new affordable rented homes	Average of 130 per annum	2008/09 152 new affordable rented homes completed	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
Develop new affordable rented family sized homes	Minimum of 10% of new affordable homes (25% on suitable sites)	2008/09 17 new family homes (7%)	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
Develop new affordable rented housing for wheelchair users	10% of all new affordable housing to meet wheelchair standard	2008/09 16% of new affordable homes met Accessible Homes standard	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership

Case Study: Decent Homes in the Private Sector

The city's Private Sector Stock Condition Survey carried out during 2007/08 identified that 35% of private sector homes (36,400 homes) can be classified non decent higher than the England average (27.1%). Despite the level of non-decency, the survey found that 89.5% of households were either satisfied or very satisfied with their home. In addition, 93.5% of households were either satisfied or very satisfied with the area in which they live.

The Decent Homes Standard contains 4 criteria. The table below gives a breakdown of the reasons for homes not meeting the Standard. 30.3% have more than one issue under the Decent Homes Standard:

Reason for Decent Homes failure	Dwellings	Percent (of non decent)	Percent (of stock)
Category 1 hazard	19,200	52.7%	18.5%
In need of repair	8,000	22.0%	7.7%
Lacking modern facilities	4,600	12.6%	4.4%
Poor degree of thermal comfort	17,600	48.3%	16.9%

(Source: 2007 House Condition Survey)

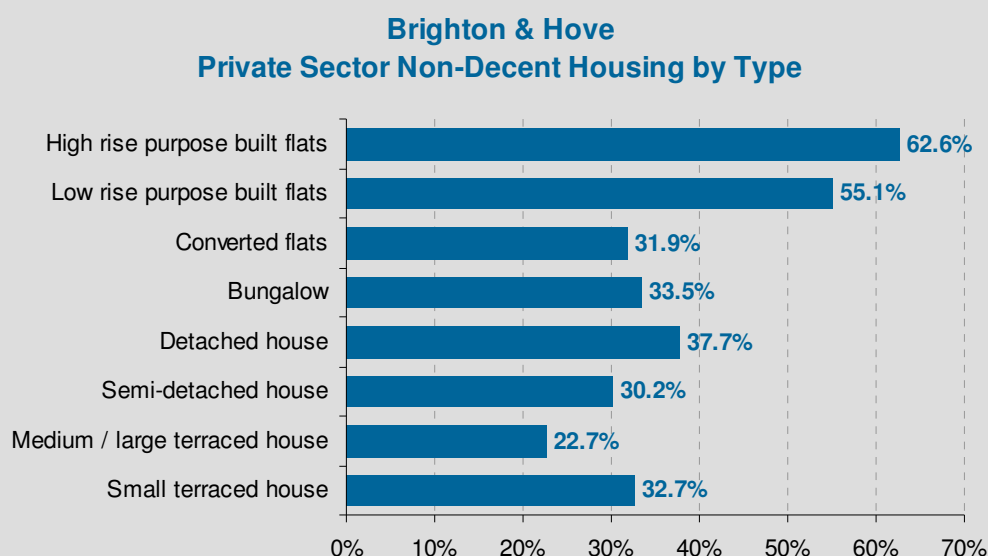
Poor degree of thermal comfort is usually the primary reason for failure of the Decent Homes Standard, but in Brighton & Hove it is Category 1 hazards, although thermal comfort follows very close behind. Category 1 hazards have a high proportion of excess cold failures which overlap heavily with poor thermal comfort. The estimated cost to bring these homes up to the Decent Homes Standard is outlined below:

Reason for Decent Homes failure	Total Cost (£ million)	Cost per dwelling (£)
Category 1 hazard	£ 52.3	£ 2,720
In need of repair	£ 20.3	£ 2,540
Lacking modern facilities	£ 44.9	£ 9,760
Poor degree of thermal comfort	£ 21.4	£ 1,215
Total	£ 138.9	£ 3,810

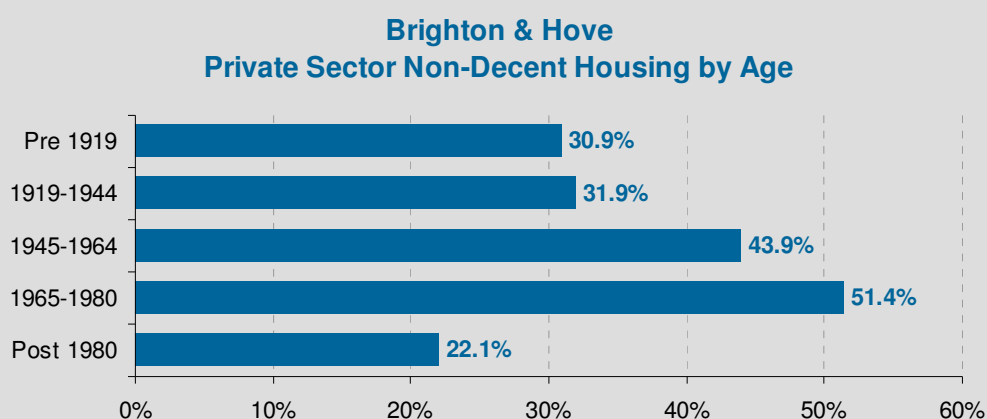
(Source: 2007 House Condition Survey)

Case Study: Decent Homes in the Private Sector (2)

The highest rate of non decency is found in purpose built flats which have high proportions of thermal comfort failure. However, it is important to note that mid floor flats will fail if they do not have cavity wall insulation, but may still be energy efficient due to the insulating factors of the flats above, below and possibly beside them.



In contrast to the national picture, it is not the oldest homes but those built between 1945 and 1980 that show the highest level of non-decency which can be linked to the high numbers of purpose built flats built during this period.



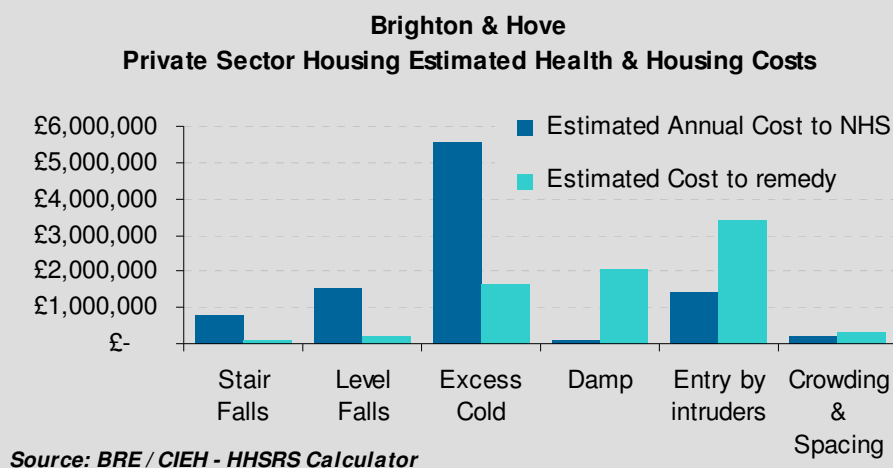
The highest level of non decency is found in the central Hove area (43.8%) which also has a high proportion of purpose built flats. The next highest rate is for the Hollingbury & Bevendean area (36.4%). The lowest rate of non decency is for the Portslade, Hangleton, Knoll and Mile Oak area at 29%.

Case Study: Private Sector Housing & Health

The council commissioned Private Sector Stock Condition Survey in 2008 found that Brighton & Hove's private sector housing stock has a higher level of non decency than that found nationally, particularly with the lack of modern facilities and thermal comfort.

Age and income were key factors relating to the quality of people's housing. Those aged 50 or more were more likely to live in non decent housing with more than half of those aged 85+ living in non decent homes. 15% of households aged under 25 live in non decent housing, almost twice the city average. Fuel poverty is also a particular issue amongst households aged under 25 with 1 in 6 being fuel poor against a city average of 1 in 20. Not surprisingly, those on lower incomes, particularly £10,000 or less per annum were more likely to be fuel poor and live in non decent homes.

The Building Research Establishment in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health have developed a calculator to estimate the likely annual cost to the NHS from incidents with housing related issues and the potential cost of carrying out works to homes to prevent these conditions.



Using this calculator, falls and excess cold are expected to result in more than 1,200 incidents each year at a likely cost to the NHS of £7.87m, yet the cost to remedy the housing issues relating to this are estimated at £1.96m. Excess cold and falls have a much higher health impact on local people and we are in discussions with NHS Brighton & Hove to see if there are ways to accurately identify those residents who are at highest risk so that we can target our private sector adaptation and improvement works more effectively.

6 Strategic Priority 2: Improving Housing Quality

6.1 Decent Homes

The Government has set a target for all Council Housing and Housing Association homes to reach the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. Additionally, the government wants to halve the proportion of vulnerable households living in non-decent private sector housing.

Poor quality housing is known to have a detrimental effect on a household's health, educational and emotional wellbeing. Our Housing Strategy will work to make sure that more residents are able to live in decent high quality homes that are able to meet their changing needs.

To achieve this aim, we need to work with owners and landlords to retrofit the existing housing stock with modern energy efficiency and other features across the private and public sectors and make sure new homes are developed to the very latest sustainability and accessibility standards.

Our strategic goals under this objective are to:

- Goal 6** Work with home owners and landlords to maintain and improve the quality of their housing
- Goal 7** Reduce fuel poverty and minimise CO₂ emissions
- Goal 8** Develop the Brighton & Hove Standard for high quality and well maintained council housing and improve tenants' homes to ensure that they meet the standard
- Goal 9** Work with owners to bring more of the city's long term empty homes back into use
- Goal 10** Ensure new housing is developed to the latest standards for quality, accessibility and sustainability

Actions to meet Objective 2: Improving Housing Quality will contribute to the following National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships:

- NI 5: Overall/general satisfaction with local area
- NI 119: Self reported measure of people's overall health & well being
- NI 131: Delayed transfers of care from hospitals
- NI 158: Percentage of decent council homes
- NI 160: Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services
- NI 187: Tackling fuel poverty

6.2 Strategic Goal 6: Work with home owners and landlords to maintain and improve the quality of their housing

For home owners, whether owner-occupiers or landlords, their properties are likely to be the most valuable thing they own. Maintaining and improving the quality of their home not only sustains and increases its value but it also improves quality of life for the resident and enhances the local neighbourhood.

Unfortunately home owners, particularly the vulnerable can sometimes find themselves in a situation where they do not have enough money to maintain and improve their home. This could be for a number of reasons such as ill health, a reduced income as a result of retiring and moving to a pension or unemployment.

To help owner-occupiers, landlords and tenants on low incomes, the council provides means tested loans and grants. In 2009/10, £4.4m will be spent on private sector renewal, including adaptations, making properties decent and improving energy efficiency to more than 2,000 homes, many occupied by vulnerable residents.

A Community Finance Initiative has been developed with a private sector partner and other authorities to focus on equity release and low cost loans to unlock the capital in people's homes, reducing reliance on limited grants.

A Home Safety & Security Scheme is being established to deliver home safety and security measures for the benefit of older householders and families with children.

Case Study: Southern Home Loans Partnership

The Southern Home Loans Partnership (SHLP) was launched in 2005 to offer low cost loans to assist homeowners finance essential works to their properties. SHLP joined together South Coast Moneyline and nine local authorities – Brighton & Hove, Chichester, Eastleigh, Gosport, Portsmouth, Lewes, Wealden, Rother and Hastings. The loans are subsidised by the councils and are available to home owners for works to homes that have been assessed as having failed the Decent Homes Standard. If a loan option is not affordable, a referral will be made back to the relevant Local Authority to see if any other assistance is available.



The Brighton & Hove, East Sussex Together Partnership (BEST), led by Brighton & Hove City Council has been allocated £18.6 million over three years to improve the living conditions of vulnerable households in the private sector and will aim to improve the condition of housing to the decent homes standard, address more widespread regeneration needs, and foster improvement in domestic energy efficiency to combat fuel poverty and reduce the region's carbon emissions.

6.3 Strategic Goal 7: Reduce fuel poverty and minimise CO₂ emissions

Keeping warm at home can be a major problem for households living on low incomes and many households face the harsh decision of whether to heat their homes adequately or eat healthily. This can lead to poor health and, in some cases, even death.

With the ever increasing awareness regarding climate change, investing in energy efficiency measures not only reduces fuel costs but also reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

We are committed to reducing fuel poverty and improving the energy efficiency of homes in the city. Through retrofitting social housing and our Home Energy Efficiency Strategy, working in partnership with local organisations, we plan to improve the energy efficiency of properties across the city through eight major aims:

- improving housing energy efficiency
- eliminating fuel poverty and providing affordable warmth for all
- reducing the incidence of illness and early deaths caused by fuel poverty
- promoting energy saving in households and raising awareness of its benefits
- using the least environmentally damaging forms of energy and reducing carbon dioxide emissions
- avoiding unnecessary use of energy
- increasing the efficiency of energy conversion
- conserving natural resources

There are a number of grants or discount schemes available to people of all ages and incomes which can help improve energy efficiency in the home.

6.4 Strategic Goal 8: Develop the Brighton & Hove Standard for high quality and well maintained council housing and improve tenants' homes to ensure that they meet the standard

Everybody deserves to live in a decent home. Currently around half of all council homes in Brighton & Hove fall below the Decent Homes Standard and the financial situation is such that the authority could not, under its own resources, achieve the Standard. However, in a ballot of tenants early in 2007, the majority made it very clear that they would like their homes to remain with the council.

As a result, the council is looking at additional options for meeting the standard with two key approaches:

- A long term partnership arrangement for the maintenance and improvement of our housing stock to start from 2010/11 that will bring in substantial savings
- Leasing up to 499 empty homes to Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes, a not-for-profit independent company set up by the council to be used as an asset to lever in funding for decent homes work

6.5 **Strategic Goal 9: Work with owners to bring more of the city's long term empty homes back into use**

Despite Brighton & Hove being a popular city with high levels of demand for housing, there are a number of homes in the city that remain empty over long periods of time. These homes are a wasted opportunity that can blight neighbourhoods by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

The majority of empty property in the city is privately owned, with owners living out of the area and not being aware of the effect it may be having on the community. We are committed to reducing the number of long-term empty properties in the city and our key objectives are to:

- Identify residential and non-residential empty property and vacant land that provides potential residential use
- Encourage owners to act, by offering advice and assistance on Empty Property Assistance funding and letting or leasing, and to those looking to purchase and/or develop, or those experiencing a problem living near an empty property
- Take enforcement action and use Compulsory Purchase powers where the property is unlikely to be brought back into use without action

Our work is resulting in improved neighbourhoods, a property prevented from becoming rundown or brought back from disrepair and another home for someone. Since 2001 the council has worked with owners to bring more than 1,000 empty homes back into use.

Case Study: Co-operative Housing

Local Housing Co-operatives are groups of people that have united voluntarily to meet their housing needs and aspirations. They can negotiate with private owners to renovate and bring empty homes back into use in return for a lease at a reduced rent and also work with RSLs to secure short life accommodation where viable. Co-operatives also provide opportunities for self development with members believing in a set of ethical values based around shared responsibility for their housing.

The Council and Strategic Housing Partnership recognise the beneficial role that local housing co-operatives can play in offering housing and support to their members and also in community building and tenant empowerment. The Council have engaged and had an on-going dialogue with Co-operative Housing in Brighton & Hove (CHIBAH) over recent years on a number issues. Within the context of the Housing Strategy, we will continue to engage with local housing co-operatives and will review any opportunities that may arise to develop their role.

6.6 Strategic Goal 10: Ensure new housing is developed to the latest standards

We work with Planners, the Homes & Communities Agency and our housing association partners in Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership to make sure that new affordable housing meets high standards of design and layout:

- Schemes must meet or exceed the Homes & Communities Agency Design and Quality standards.
- All affordable homes must be built to Lifetime Homes standards and comply with recommendations on avoiding additional CO₂ emissions
- New homes should reflect the character and local distinctiveness of an area and we require private outdoor amenity space to be provided
- We also want to make sure that new affordable housing is 'tenure blind' so that it is not visually distinguishable from the market housing on the site
- Developments should discourage crime and anti-social behaviour by meeting Secure by Design principles
- At least 10% of new affordable homes must be built to the council's wheelchair accessible standard

Strategy Statement: Private Rented Sector

Brighton & Hove has the 6th largest private rented sector in the country. It is estimated that around 22% of dwellings in the city are privately rented, double the proportion found across the South East region and nationally. The sector has the advantages of being able to cater for a highly mobile population but renting privately in the city can be expensive with an average 1 bedroom flat costing around £650 per month and a 3 bed house more than £1,100 per month.

The profile of households living in the private rented sector shows that they are more likely to be younger and smaller households, many with one-person, who are economically active. Despite this, there are high instances of overcrowding with an estimated 28% of households having at least 1 room fewer than needed. A high percentage of households from BME groups rent in the private rented sector and a high percentage of private rented accommodation in the city is rented by students.

Brighton & Hove has a significant number of houses in multiple occupation (HMO), some are small bed-sits others large shared houses. Many of the small bed-sits are concentrated in the centre of the city and often provide accommodation for the more vulnerable households.

Over recent years, the booming property market has seen a surge in buy to let investors which has impacted on the property market. The affects of a slowdown in the housing market may deter investment but it is expected that demand for the private rented sector will remain strong because more households may delay becoming owner-occupiers and rent in the private sector.

We are committed to improving housing in the private rented sector and we are working with landlords to make properties decent and improve energy efficiency. Where landlords fail to engage, however, enforcement action will continue to be taken where appropriate. Through our housing renewal funding we have administered a wide range of loans and grants to improve private sector properties including properties in the private rented sector.

The response to the HMO licensing scheme has been very good and over many years we have maintained a very successful HMO improvement programme. Our future activities include assistance to HMOs and private landlords which includes landlords' accreditation and training. These initiatives will either achieve decent housing standards or will move towards decency.

Action Plan Summary: Strategic Priority 2: Improving Housing Quality

Strategic Action	Target	Current Position	Lead Partner
Goal 6	Work with home owners and landlords to maintain and improve the quality of their housing		
Improved promotion of Housing Renewal Assistance, Loans and Grants	Improved housing quality reduction of vulnerable households living in non-decent homes	Marketing exercise to publicise assistance available at planning stage	South Coast Money Line
Extend eligibility on Decent Homes Assistance and Loans	70% of all vulnerable people in the private sector living in decent homes by 2010	Revised Housing Renewal Assistance Policy. Increased availability of assistance	Brighton & Hove City Council
Extend eligibility on Common Parts Assistance and Loans	Improved quality of common areas of buildings comprised of flats	Revised Housing Renewal Assistance Policy. Increased availability of assistance	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 7	Reduce fuel poverty and minimise CO₂ emissions		
Improve energy efficiency of existing social housing stock	Develop Retrofit Strategy to improve social housing	Preliminary discussions	Brighton & Hove city Council
Improve awareness of assistance available to owners and tenants	Reduced fuel poverty & excess winter deaths	2008/09 saw home energy efficiency grants help 663 private sector households (worth more than £1.3 million) aimed at older people and/or those on low incomes	Climate Energy
Improve Temporary Accommodation and allow HMO tenants to access Energy Efficiency Innovation Grants	Improved energy efficiency, lower fuel costs, reduced CO ₂ emissions	New grant schemes have been established	Climate Energy
Goal 8	Develop the Brighton & Hove Standard for high quality and well maintained social housing and improve tenants' homes to ensure that they meet the standard		
Develop a quality standard for the city's council housing in partnership with tenants	Brighton & Hove Standard agreed	Standard developed for homes available to relet	Brighton & Hove City Council
Enter into a long term partnership contract for maintenance and improvement of the housing stock	Reduce maintenance and improvement costs	Specification developed and tender in progress	Brighton & Hove City Council

Strategic Action		Target	Current Position	Lead Partner
Use a Local Development vehicle to raise investment capital		Funding to contribute to carrying out Decent Homes work	Ongoing discussions with Communities & Local Government to obtain consent	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 9	Work with owners to bring more of the city's long term empty homes back into use			
Bring long term empty homes back into use		153 empty homes per year brought back into use	2008/09 saw 156 empty homes returned into use	Brighton & Hove City Council
Identify non-residential vacant land and buildings with a potential residential use		New development opportunities	Ongoing	Brighton & Hove City Council
Use enforcement powers when other avenues have failed		Minimise long term empty homes	Two Compulsory Purchase Orders awarded in 2009 – one home back in use and second due by end of year	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 10	Ensure new housing is developed to the latest standards			
Ensure all new housing meets Lifetime Home Standard		Planning Policy HO13 'Accessible housing and Lifetime Homes': 100% of all new homes meet the standard	2008/09 99.6% of new affordable housing developed to Lifetime Homes Standard	Brighton & Hove City Council
Develop new homes to accessible housing (wheelchair) standard		Planning Advice Note PAN03 'Accessible housing and Lifetime Homes': 10% of all new affordable housing meets the standard	2008/09 7% of new affordable housing was to accessible housing (wheelchair) standard	Brighton & Hove City Council
New affordable homes developed to Homes & Communities Agency Design and Quality standards		100% of all new affordable housing meets the standard	This is a HCA requirement that must be met to receive funding	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
Code for Sustainable Homes		New housing meets or exceeds Level 3 of the standard (Level 4 preferred)	A new (award winning) sustainability checklist launched	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
Secured by Design		100% of all new affordable housing meets the standard	Ongoing	Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership

Strategy Statement: Disabilities

Brighton & Hove is recognised for having higher levels of physical disability in its general population than the national average. Housing problems are compounded by much of the city being hilly preventing full wheelchair accessibility. Many homes were built in the 19th century and subsequently converted into flats, often with small rooms and narrow stairways making accessibility and adaptation difficult.

Brighton & Hove City Council and its partners are forerunners in adopting policies and working practices that support the needs of people who have a physical disability and their carers. In 2001 the city council adopted the **Lifetime Homes Standard** to ensure that all new housing built in Brighton & Hove is accessible and adaptable to changing household needs. The government has stated that it would like the standard adopted nationally by 2013 - more than 10 years after Brighton & Hove adopted it. We are also ensuring that 10% of all new affordable homes are built to the authority's new wheelchair standard **Accessible Housing & Lifetime Homes**, adopted in March 2008 which sets standards higher than national requirements.

The Council and Hanover Housing Association have successfully bid for funding from the Department of Health to help support the development of an Extra Care housing scheme specifically for younger people with disabilities. Extra Care Housing offers residents their own self-contained flat with a range of facilities such as shops, cafés and in some cases a cinema and has the benefit of a 24 hour on-site care team. This enables those who need care and support to live independently rather than having to move to residential care.

Choice Based Lettings has evolved since its conception and now incorporates a **mobility rating** that indicates whether an available property is suitable for a wheelchair user or someone with limited mobility. All new affordable housing that meets the wheelchair standard is advertised before it is built in order to ensure that the features installed are designed around the specific needs of the future occupants. To ensure the best use of our housing stock, the council is developing an **Accessible Housing Register** and has an officer who is working with people wanting to downsize or release an adapted home they no longer need.

Each year the council spends almost £2m on **adaptations** and **Disabled Facilities Grants** to improve the accessibility of people's homes across the public and private sectors, helping around 500 households.

Strategy Statement: Equalities & Inclusion

Life should be a positive experience, however inequalities can arise from a range of factors such as heritage, life experiences or health can have a profound impact on the quality of people's lives. We must ensure that all the city's residents are offered support appropriate to their needs so that they are enabled to be full and active members of the community.

In its basic form, equality is about ensuring that as a local authority, service provider and employer we comply with the various strands of equalities legislation and our duties around race, disability, gender and age. However, we have a professional and moral obligation to go much further to include the other key equalities strands of religion/belief and sexual orientation.

Equalities and inclusion issues are often linked to deprivation. We need to remove the barriers to equality and tackle discrimination but we must also address deprivation to help bring about equity and a city of opportunity for all.

Three strategies are being developed to complement the ***Housing Strategy 2009-2014: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city*** to focus on the particular needs and concerns of those communities:

- Older People's Housing Strategy
- Black & Minority Ethnic People's Housing Strategy
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans People's Housing Strategy

As well as recognising the particular needs of these communities we must also recognise and plan for the needs of all the other communities living in the City. Policy statements within this strategy and the other linked strategies highlight the particular needs of carers and those with physical disabilities.

Travellers

Travelling communities can often be overlooked in strategy and service development. Those living in the travelling communities are more likely to suffer ill health at a younger age and have higher mortality rate than the rest of the population. We must ensure that our services are accessible and welcoming to all those in need. The Council published its ***Traveller Strategy*** in summer 2008 and has identified a preferred site for a new permanent gypsy and traveller site.

7 Strategic Priority 3: Improving Housing Support

7.1 Independence

Being able to live as independently as possible is essential in enabling households to have a high quality of life as part of the local community. For some households this can only be achieved with support.

Households have many different levels of need and there is no one solution that fits all housing need and so we seek to take advantage of every opportunity and provide a range of services to support households back to independence.

Households unable to access support when required are more likely to disengage with services and suffer ill health. This will be detrimental to education and employment opportunities, resulting in further inequality and isolation.

The Housing Strategy will help make sure residents are supported to maintain their independence, minimising the need for more intensive institutional or residential type care.

Our strategic goals under this objective are to:

- Goal 11** Support households to make informed choices about their housing options
- Goal 12** Provide adaptations and support to households and their carers
- Goal 13** Work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping
- Goal 14** Contribute to the wider city agendas of reducing worklessness, improving community cohesion, reducing anti-social behaviour and reducing inequality
- Goal 15** Work to ensure student housing provides a positive contribution to students' lives and the city

Actions to meet Objective 3: Improving Housing Support will contribute to the following National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships

- NI 1: Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI 17: Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- NI 125: Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care
- NI 141: Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living
- NI 142: Vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living
- NI 145: Adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation
- PSA16: The Socially Excluded Adults Public Service Agreement

7.2 Strategic Goal 11: Support households to make informed choices about their housing options

Over the last few years our Choice Based Lettings scheme, Homemove, has allowed households on the Housing Register to state an interest and 'bid' for the social housing available for rent. Priority is then given to the household bidding that has the highest level of need who has been on the list longest. This process ensures homes go to those who want them, in areas they desire.

In addition to advertising social rented properties in the Homemove magazine, we now include homes available for low cost home ownership and new mobility indicators highlight those homes which are adapted or particularly suitable for wheelchair users.

In the future we are also looking to include the private rented homes of accredited landlords through Homemove to provide a greater range of housing to households seeking alternative accommodation.

We are working to support those with a Learning Disability in exploring their full range of housing options. To help with this, a guide to the wide range of housing options for those with a learning disability will be launched during 2009/10.

Independent living may not be appropriate for some people and so they need to be provided with housing with support. For some people this may be their housing for an indefinite length of time but for others it may be for a transitional period until they are able to live independently.

Housing Strategy works closely with its colleagues across the other council departments, health, social landlords and other service providers to ensure there is a choice of appropriate housing and support available and to ensure that as the person's needs change they are able to move to accommodation that will better meet those changing needs.

7.3 Strategic Goal 12: Provide adaptations and support to households and their carers

Many households in the city are in need of some adaptation to their property and the demand for adaptations is projected to increase as the population ages and the care of both younger and older disabled people is increasingly provided at home.

The Census 2001 reported that 18% of the total population of Brighton & Hove have a limiting long-term illness and the Department for Work and Pensions reported in November 2007 that 5% of the population were in receipt of Disability Living Allowance. Over the last few years the proportion of homelessness acceptances that are related to a physical disability are around 3 to 4 times the national average.

The nature of the city and its housing is in part to blame for the difficulties faced by those with disabilities. Much of the city is hilly and many properties were built before 1919, having a design that makes adaptations difficult.

The Council spends more than £1m every year on adaptations to homes through loans, Disabled Facilities Grants, Minor Adaptations Grants and other works to help owners and tenants across all housing tenures.

Additionally, Anchor Staying Put provides guidance and assistance to carry out whatever repairs, improvements or adaptations are necessary to help older and disabled homeowners to continue to live in their own home.

In addition to meeting the needs of households and their carers within the built environment, the council and partners provide personal and housing related support to enable those in need to maintain a good level of independence.

7.4 Strategic Goal 13: Work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping

Our Housing Options team offers a range of services to help people of all ages and circumstances and it aims to prevent homelessness whenever possible. During 2008/09 our Housing Options teams saw 4,600 households requesting help in preventing them becoming homeless.

We were successful in preventing homelessness in around 3,800 of these cases. Of the remaining cases, around half were accepted as homeless. However, we are very aware that despite this success, the reality is that a household still becomes homeless every day.

The key to their success has been in setting up specialist teams able to focus on the needs of particular client groups, links with Housing Benefit services, support providers and being able to work with households as soon as their housing situation is at risk to give enough time to explore all possible solutions and prevent a crisis.

Case Study: Young Persons Respite Scheme

The Council and Hove YMCA have been working together to provide a new Respite Scheme that was launched in October 2008. The Respite Scheme allows young people to stay temporarily in a hostel for 3 weeks.

During this time, a 'whole families' approach is taken to provide support and mediation to help repair the relationships between young people and their families.



Since the development of our Single Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy in 2002, rough sleeping has been reduced from more than 40 people on any one night to around 10, although services see up to 500 people every year. Despite this success, there is a core of people with a deep rooted history of street life that previous initiatives have not been as successful with.

We are developing services with our colleagues from other service providers to provide a range of housing and support in an Integrated Support Pathway to help households back to living independently. The Pathway provides a route from crisis into intensive support, with support reducing as people's health, skills and confidence improves.

Alongside the housing related support we are developing specialist services to improve people's quality of life through healthy eating, accessing life skills training, education, psychological intervention, employment opportunities and other support services. Key to this is ensuring that move-on accommodation is available for people in the pathway when they have completed a package of support and are able to move on to more independence.

7.5 Strategic Goal 14: Contribute to the wider city agendas of reducing worklessness, improving community cohesion, reducing anti-social behaviour and reducing inequality

The Reducing Inequality Review 2007 highlighted the concentrations of worklessness and deprivation in a number of predominantly social housing areas – particularly in East Brighton, Queens Park and Moulsecoomb & Bevendean. For those subject to prolonged or repeat homelessness the need to learn or regain lost skills is most acute. Work, learning and skills increase confidence, increase prospects for tenancy sustainment, widen social networks, increase employability, and help to address factors linked to homelessness such as mental ill-health, substance misuse and offending.

Case Study: Social Exclusion

Turning the Tide is our new a Social Exclusion Strategy in development which is expected to be published during 2009/10. The strategy outlines the Council's aims and objectives to address intergenerational social exclusion, anti-social behaviour and improve quality of life experience for residents in social housing living in areas of multiple deprivation in Brighton and Hove; using a balance of support and enforcement to address behaviours that impact negatively on individuals, families and the community and promote the achievement of better life chances.

The **Family Pathfinder** project is one of 15 pilots around the country funded by the Department of Children Schools and Families until 2011. The project aims to work with families facing multiple disadvantage and risk which could include a parent having mental health problems, parents without qualifications or one parent having a longstanding illness or disability. The project will initially work with parents under the age of 25 in East Brighton and will encourage professionals to 'Think Family' by creating a new support pathway that involves a Lead Professional and a team focussed on the specific needs of the family. It is hoped that this will result in better outcomes for those families, such as engagement with education and training programmes, and focused solutions for parents facing generational disadvantage.

The **Supported Housing for Teenage Parents** project is being developed in partnership between Housing Strategy, the Children and Young People's Trust and a voluntary sector provider. The project will provide self contained flats and an enhanced package of support for teenage parents. There will be key work support around parenting, engagement with specialist health visitors, entering into education, training or employment and moving on from the project into independent private rented accommodation. In addition to this, there will be a Life Coach attached to the project who will provide psychological interventions to the young parents, assisting them to raise their aspirations, improve relationships with partners and their families, and to improve self esteem. This is one of only seven pilot projects in the country and the resulting good practice and successful new ways of working will then be rolled out to other local authorities around the country.

Housing and employment go hand in hand. We aim to support those residents who have difficulty getting into work, through poor health or lack of skills. With our partners across the city, we will aim to support the most disadvantaged into stable employment.

7.6 Strategic Goal 15: Work to ensure student housing provides a positive contribution to students' lives and the city

Brighton & Hove is home to two major universities and several further education colleges resulting in large numbers of students living in the city. The universities only have capacity to offer campus-based accommodation to some of their students which means that finding an affordable place to live is an issue for many students.

Although there is a large private rented sector, many of the students are unable to afford to rent their own home and so shared housing is often the only choice for them. This can sometimes result in poor quality housing or conflict with other parts of the community.

In some areas large numbers of family homes are being converted to student housing, affecting the character and nature of the area. This is putting pressure on the supply of larger family sized housing in the city, with families and landlords competing for the same homes.

The universities and colleges add to the dynamics of the city. We are helping Brighton University with research into the extent of the problems and possible solutions to ease the tensions between the housing needs of students' and the housing needs of the rest of the city's population.

The University of Brighton is carrying out extensive research into the impact student housing has on the city, local communities and students lives. The research has primarily focussed on the Bevendean, Moulsecoomb and Hanover areas, parts of the city favoured by students. Students themselves acknowledge these issues and are keen to help identify practical solutions, particularly with so many remaining after their studies to become long term residents.

Case Study: Student Housing – Research by the University of Brighton

The Strategic Housing Partnership commissioned the University of Brighton to work on a student housing strategy for the city. The strategy seeks to harness the many benefits of a large student population for the long-term health and well-being of the city, and engender mixed, cohesive and sustainable communities.

The strategy includes four main principles:

- To effectively support and enhance the quality and management of housing and residential environments within HMO-dominated studentified neighbourhoods, in conjunction with the recognition of the need to continue to support private sector landlords to supply high-quality student accommodation
- To reduce the over-concentration of HMO in some neighbourhoods by promoting and enabling the appropriate development of purpose-built student accommodation at suitable locations within the city, that will appeal to the locational and residential preferences of students
- To make sure that new developments of student accommodation are well-managed, and do not impact on existing residential communities in negative ways
- To monitor the changing geographic patterns of student housing in the city and identify signs of destudentification

The strategy draws on a number of University of Brighton and Sussex research projects and combines this with new consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including local communities, landlords and students. In addition, the strategy draws on the main findings and recommendations of the 2009 Adult Social Care & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee report into student housing.

Drawing upon evidence-based research, the strategy emphasises the need for an area-based perspective of student housing to acknowledge the different contexts of local neighbourhoods across the city.

Action Plan Summary: Strategic Priority 3: Improving Housing Support

Strategic Action	Target	Current Position	Lead Partner
Goal 11	Support households to make informed choices about their housing options		
Develop and publish a housing options guide for people with a Learning Disability	Guide published and launched 2009/10	Guide drafted	Brighton & Hove City Council
Improve the range of homes offered through the Homemove magazine	Private landlords offering homes for rent through the magazine	Long term objective. Discussions ongoing	Sussex Homemove
Develop a register of adapted properties	Accessible Housing Register implemented in 2009/10	Homemove mobility codes implemented with Band A & B households assessed	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 12	Provide adaptations and support to households and their carers		
Improve workflow within the adaptations services	Reduced time from adaptation request to completion of work	New Adaptations Policy in development	Brighton & Hove City Council
Introduce grants to improve accessibility of temporary accommodation	Increased supply of accessible temporary accommodation for those in need	Specification developed for adaptations works to temporary accommodation	Brighton & Hove City Council
Introduce Disabled Facilities Assistance	Support households to move to more suitable housing when it is not feasible to adapt the existing home	New caseworker to help families with adaptations needs to move to more suitable homes	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 13	Work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping		
Prevent homelessness wherever possible	More than 780 homelessness preventions per year	New services developed aimed at those facing risk of repossession	Brighton & Hove City Council & Brighton Housing Trust
Improve housing options for those at risk of homelessness	Reduced homelessness amongst young people Increasing use of the private sector as an alternative to social housing	'Crash Pads' developed for use by young people in a crisis linked to new family mediation service	Brighton & Hove City Council & Hove YMCA

Strategic Action	Target	Current Position	Lead Partner
Prevent Rough Sleeping wherever possible	Reduce rough sleeping to as near to zero as possible	Street count of June 2009 found 8 rough sleepers. New Single Homeless Strategy launched 2009.	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 14 Contribute to the wider city agendas of reducing worklessness, improving community cohesion, reducing anti-social behaviour and reducing inequality			
Improve life chances of local people by reducing social exclusion and deprivation in social housing areas	Develop Turning the Tide the city's new social exclusion strategy in 2009/10	Strategy drafting in progress	Brighton & Hove City Council
Build on the success of lifeskills and meaningful occupation programmes	Develop a new Work & Learning centre	First Base development underway. Surveys completed on Palace Place	Supporting People Providers Forum
Ensure new housing strategies address community safety issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBT People's Housing Strategy • BME People's Housing Strategy • Single Homelessness Strategy 	Community safety a key feature of the LGBT Housing Strategy. Other strategies in development	Brighton & Hove City Council
Goal 15 Work to ensure student housing provides a positive contribution to students' lives and the city			
Support and enhance the quality and management of HMO-dominated studentified neighbourhoods	Effective area based management and support	Ongoing discussions between stakeholders	Brighton & Hove City Council
Sustainable development of affordable and appropriately-designed, purpose-built student accommodation	Reduce or halt over-concentrations of HMO across studentified neighbourhoods	Ongoing discussions between Council and Universities	Brighton & Hove City Council & Universities
Effective management of the impact(s) of high-density student populations within large purpose-built student accommodation	Improved environment in student areas and surrounding neighbourhoods	Ongoing discussions between stakeholders	Brighton & Hove City Council & Universities
Monitor the effects of the movement of students	Maximise opportunities for former student areas to	Ongoing discussions between	Brighton & Hove City Council &

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment Summary

The strategy has been developed through a staged process that has enabled us to engage with service users, service providers and the wider community and take into account their views, concerns and aspirations. To ensure that the Housing Strategy is truly inclusive we carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment to identify the positive and negative impacts that our strategic objectives and goals will have on service users, staff and the community. These findings have helped shape our objectives and goals to help mitigate potential negative impacts.

Below is a summary of our approach to the six equality strands:

- **Race:** BME Housing Strategy in development.
- **Disability:** Strategy Statement on Physical Disabilities incorporated in Housing Strategy and Older People's Housing Strategy. Disabilities of all kinds, including physical disability, learning disability and mental health issues, are also a key feature of the Supporting People and Learning Disability Housing Strategies.
- **Gender and gender identity:** Actions from the Gender Equality Scheme have been fed into the strategic development process. Gender Identity is also a key feature of the LGBT Housing Strategy.
- **Age:** Older People's Housing Strategy in development. Youth Homelessness Strategy developed in 2007. Supporting People Strategy links to older people's services, youth homelessness services and services for young people at risk.
- **Religion / Belief:** The BME Housing Strategy framework includes community safety objectives around religion / belief.
- **Sexual Orientation:** LGBT Housing Strategy in development.

There were no fundamental negative impacts identified that directly result from the strategy, a reflection of how the strategy has been developed in response to the overwhelming disadvantage faced by many of the city's residents.

Appendix 2: Strategic Housing Partnership

The Strategic Housing Partnership (SHP) aims to improve housing, access to housing, and support to maintain the independence of vulnerable residents within the City. It reports to the 2020 Community Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership).

The SHP is also linked to the Brighton & Hove Home Energy Group which aims to develop and support the implementation of action plans to reduce fuel poverty and to promote energy efficiency and sustainability use.

The Strategic Housing Partnership has overseen the development of the Housing Strategy to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole city.

Membership of the Strategic Housing Partnership

- Councillor Mary Mears Chairman & Leader of the Council

City Stakeholders:

- Tony Mernagh Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership
- Lydie Lawrence Brighton & Hove Primary Care Trust
- Arthur Wing Probation
- Stephen Woodbridge Supporting People Provider Forum
- David Standing Hove YMCA
- Catherine Bancroft-Rimmer University of Sussex
- Paul Bonett Brighton & Hove Estate Agents Association
- Rhys Daniel Brighton & Hove Housing Partnership
- Kaiser Mirza National Federation of Residential Landlords

Brighton & Hove City Council:

- Simon Newell 2020 Community Partnership Officer
- Joy Hollister Director of Adult Social Care & Housing
- Jugal Sharma Assistant Director of Housing
- Martin Reid Head of Strategy, Development & Private Sector Housing

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