



Building more than just houses, helping people, changing lives



Introduction

It has been said in numerous publications, that ‘bad housing wrecks lives’, which is why Mendip District Council’s Housing Strategy 2010-2015, is entitled ‘Building more than just houses, helping people, changing lives’. Housing is vital if we are to achieve economic development, increase educational achievement and ensure community cohesion. The impact of housing on the overall wellbeing of the community is hard to overestimate. Good quality homes in desirable and sustainable neighbourhoods have a major impact on the health, educational achievement and welfare of the people who live in them and the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the communities in which they are located. Suitable housing is vital to enable people to meet their full potential, to live independently and to integrate with the community.

This strategy is about building links and recognising the impact that housing has on the local area, infrastructure and economy. Housing contributes to the local economy by making localities and neighbourhoods attractive to businesses and residents. Access to appropriate housing supports labour markets by improving mobility to access employment. Designing and building housing through major development or refurbishment schemes creates employment and training opportunities within local communities *“CIH Housing and the Economy August 2008”*.

Overcrowding can increase incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour, new housing can place pressure on already over-subscribed local services, homelessness is closely linked with worklessness and enclaves of affordable housing can cause pockets of deprivation. Mendip District Council recognises that it cannot meet its objectives by working in isolation and this strategy places huge importance on the involvement of partners and customers in the delivery of housing services.

This strategy has been influenced through feedback via questionnaires, face to face interviews with key stakeholders and engagement with members, parish councillors and residents to produce a strategy that is truly reflective of the housing needs of the Mendip District and to meet our vision of:

“A decent home for all”

Our mission to enable us to achieve this vision is:

“Working in partnership to ensure that every household in Mendip has access to housing across all tenures that is of decent quality, affordable and sustainable, in order to enable residents to maximise the opportunities to live, learn, work and invest in Mendip”.

To achieve this, our four strategic housing priorities will be the focus for the period 2010 to 2015. These priorities are:

1. Preventing homelessness
2. Making better use of existing stock
3. Increasing the supply of well-designed market and affordable housing that is appropriate for the town or village within which it is delivered
4. Improving partnerships and building community engagement.

This strategy explains the role that housing will play in delivering sustainable communities across the district, which links with the Sustainable Communities Plan.



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Building a Picture of Mendip

OVERVIEW

The District of Mendip is located in the North Eastern part of the county of Somerset, not far from the cities of Bath and Bristol. It shares borders with South Somerset District Council, Sedgemoor District Council to the West, North Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset Councils to the North and Wiltshire Council to the East. The District spans 285 square miles from the summits of the Mendip Hills to the Somerset Levels. Some of the regions best known tourist attractions are located in the District of Mendip, these include Wells Cathedral, Glastonbury Abbey and the Wookey Hole, making tourism a vital part of the District's economy.

The economy is essentially a service based one and is characterised by a predominance of small to medium sized enterprises. Mendip has seen a progressive decline in the traditional manufacturing activity.

It should be noted that the data used in this Strategy differs from the data contained within the Sub-regional Homelessness & Prevention Strategy (Somerset Homelessness Review & Prevention Strategy 2008-2011). The West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment has been carried out since the production of the homelessness strategy, the report having been published in June 2009.

69% of Mendip residents in employment work locally with 9% commuting to workplaces in Bath & North East Somerset, 5% to West Wiltshire and 3% to Bristol (West of England SHMA). The economic activity and unemployment rates have been summarised in Table 1 below. Economically Inactive Not available for work and / or not actively seeking work. Example Women with families who choose to stay at home.

Table 1 – Economic Activity and Unemployment Rates

	Economically active (% of working age population)	Unemployment (% of economically active)	Economically inactive (% of working age population)
Mendip	81.6%	3.7%	18.4%
South West	81.8%	4.1%	18.2%
Great Britain	78.8%	5.7%	21.2%

Source: Nomis Jan 2008 – Dec 2008

Mendip experiences slightly higher economic activity than the national average and lower unemployment despite the slowing of the economy and recent recession.

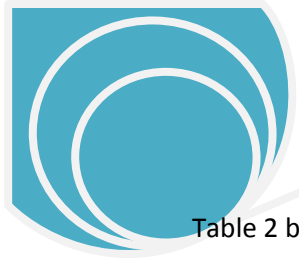


Table 2 below shows a summary of all benefits claimants in the Mendip District.

Table 2 – Benefit Claimants in the Mendip District

	Mendip	South West	Great Britain	No. of Claimants (Mendip)
Total Claimants	12.1%	13.2%	15.7%	7,830
Job Seekers	2.6%	2.9%	3.9%	1,690
ESA & Incapacity	5.6%	6.2%	7.0%	3,630
Lone Parents	1.3%	1.5%	2.0%	820
Carers	0.9%	0.9%	1.1%	580
Others on income related benefits	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	270
Disabled	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	660
Bereaved	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	180

Source: Nomis Feb 2009

The number of benefits claimants in Mendip is lower than the national average and this remains true for those claiming job seekers allowance, employment support allowance or incapacity benefit and lone parents. Its statistics on benefits claimants are overall very similar to that of the trend for the South West.

However, with the impact of the recession, the Mendip District has seen a 152% increase in the number of Job Seekers Allowance claimants between June 2007 and June 2009. These figures can be cross-referenced against the number of unfilled Job Centre vacancies between June 2007 and June 2009. There were 41% fewer jobs in Mendip during this period – 710 job vacancies in June 2007, falling to 561 vacancies in June 2008 and further reducing to 418 vacancies in June 2009.

There has also been an increase in the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit caseload. As at 30th September 2008 there were 7,998 cases. As at 22nd September 2009, the caseload had risen to 8,528. This is an increase of 530 claims or 6.63%. This has been coupled with an increase in the number of new Housing Benefit and Council Tax claims. Between 3rd September 2007 and 24th March 2008, the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Department dealt with 991 new applications. Between 1st September 2008 and 23rd March 2009, the department dealt with 1,448 new applications. This is an increase of 457 applications or 46.12%.

Key Issue	It has recently been reported that there are generations of families who have never sustained employment living in social housing. As quoted in <i>“Building better lives, Audit Commission September 2009”</i> where people live is a prime influence in their quality of life, their life expectancy and the opportunities available to them to work, study and access leisure, sport and cultural activities. This strategy will address the links between housing and the economy in terms of economic development educational achievement and community cohesion.
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Key Issue	The recession appears to have caused a number of households to make new claims for benefits who may have never made such a claim before. Efforts will be concentrated on targeting such households and ensuring that they have access to timely advice and assistance.
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Mendip is home to over 100,000 people, living in over 45,000 households. Mendip has seen its population and its number of households increase over past years, a trend that is set to continue at pace. Between the years of 2001 and 2006, the population of Mendip grew by 4,300 people, a percentage increase of 4.1%. This can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – Population of Mendip 2001-2006

Year	Population of Mendip
2001	104,000
2002	104,900
2003	105,800
2004	106,800
2005	107,600
2006	108,300
2001-2006 Change	+4,300
2001-2006 % Change	4.1%

Source: ONS Population Estimates 2006

The continued increase in the population of Mendip is expected to rise by a further 17,000 people between the years of 2006 and 2026, this is a growth rate of 15.6%, according to the Office of National Statistics (ONS), population projections which are unconstrained. However, the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) as proposed to be changed by the Secretary of State constrains these population projections to a growth of less than half the ONS figure. This is illustrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – Population Projections to 2026

Year	Projected Population of Mendip (ONS Projections Unconstrained)	Projected Population of Mendip (RSS Projections Constrained)
2006	108,700	108,270
2011	112,500	110,210
2016	117,000	111,980
2021	121,500	113,800
2026	125,700	115,950
2006-2026 Change	17,000	7,680
2006-2026 % Change	15.6%	7.1%

Source: ONS Revised 2004-based Population Projections & RSS Population Projections



The ONS predicted population change to 2026 has been broken down by age range in Table 5 below and the RSS predicted population change by age range to 2026 in Table 6.

Table 5 – Predicted Population Change to 2026 by Age Range – ONS Projections

Age group	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	Change 2006-2026	% Change 2006-2026
0-14	19,600	19,400	19,500	19,800	20,200	600	3.1%
15-24	12,500	12,800	12,300	12,200	12,200	-300	-2.4%
25-44	27,700	26,600	26,400	27,400	28,100	400	1.4%
45-64	29,600	31,900	33,300	33,800	33,900	4,300	14.5%
65-74	9,700	11,400	13,900	14,500	14,500	4,800	49.5%
75+	9,600	10,400	11,600	13,800	16,800	7,200	75.0%

Source: ONS Revised 2004 Population Projections

Table 6 – Predicted Population Change to 2026 by Age Range – RSS Projections

Age group	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	Change 2006-2026	% Change 2006-2026
0-15	21,410	20,870	20,560	20,440	19,790	-1,620	-7.6%
16-64	67,700	67,550	65,550	64,320	63,660	-4,040	-6.0%
65+	19,160	21,790	25,870	29,030	32,500	13,340	69.6%

Source: RSS Population Projections

The greatest change in population age group is that of those aged 75 and over, according to the ONS estimates. Between the years of 2006 to 2026, those in this age range are expected to increase by 75%, an increase of 7,200 people. The second largest change is that of those aged 65 to 74, an increase over the 20 year period of 49.5%, and 4,800 people. This translates as an increase of 12,000 people over 20 years of those who are above retirement age or an increase of 62.2%. This is in comparison to the RSS population projections where those aged 65 and over are expected to increase by 13,340 in the period to 2026, an increase of 69.6%.

As stated in the South West Housing Learning and Improvement Network “Putting older people first in the South West” market survey, there is already a higher proportion of older people than in any other English region with the number of people aged 85 and above projected to increase by more than 57% between 2008 & 2025. Practical help is needed to enable older people to maintain independence and live active lives. Existing housing no longer meets the aspirations of older people. Client expectations have changed over time. In addition to this it is anticipated that we will see a projected increase of 49% in the number of older people with dementia between 2008 and 2025 which will have a major impact on the demand for specialist accommodation and support. Access to services and other facilities is increasingly difficult in rural areas such as ours where there is an over-representation of older people.

Given this, housing provision for older people across all tenures and housing support services need to be given careful consideration. The ageing population is a major issue for housing services in Mendip that requires a coordinated strategic response to plan for the future.



The ONS age group predictions also show that those in the 15 to 24 year age group will decrease in number over the 20 year period by 2.4%, a loss of 300 people and those in the 25 to 44 year age range will remain relatively the same in number, albeit a small increase of 400 people. The RSS projections similarly show a decrease to 2026 in the age range, 0-15 by 7.6% and also a decrease in the number within the age group, 16-64 by 6.0%. It is thought that these figures can be attributed in part to those leaving the Mendip District to pursue higher education and then not returning to employment within Mendip District.

By making a comparison with the number of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants by age range, as shown in Table 7 below, it is possible to see that the percentage of JSA claimants in Mendip who are aged 16 to 24 is 37%. This is 6% higher than the national average. This suggests that there may be limited employment opportunities in Mendip for this particular age range and gives credibility to the idea that those within this age range leave the District to pursue higher education and fail to return for employment.

Table 7 – Job Seekers Allowance Claimants by Age Range

	Mendip	South West	England
Claimants Aged 16-24	320	14,770	233,410
Claimants Aged 16-24 (%)	37%	32%	31%
Claimants Aged 25-49	390	23,950	398,320
Claimants Aged 25-49 (%)	45%	51%	53%
Claimants Aged 50+	160	7,840	113,090
Claimants Aged 50+ (%)	18%	17%	15%

Source: ONS Neighbourhood Statistics August 2008

Key Issue	An ageing Mendip population and its effect on future housing & housing related support
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Key Issue	Attracting young people back to the Mendip District through increased employment opportunities and available housing for younger people and families
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The number of households in Mendip is also set to increase from 2006 to 2026. This change is estimated by the ONS to be an increase of 11,000 households, 24.4%, as shown in Table 8 over the page. This is higher than the national average of 20.7% but slightly lower than that for the South West, estimated at 26.0%. The RSS projections also show an increase in the number of households but not to the same extent, an increase of 8,320 households to 2026 or 18.2%. The increase in the number of households can be a result of a number of contributing factors, but most notably these include family breakdown and the rise in single parent households, the effects of migration, both nationally and internationally, and the ageing population.

Table 8 – Household Projections to 2026

	Mendip (ONS Projections)	Mendip (RSS Projections)	SW	England
2006	45,000	45,640	2,214,000	21,518,000
2011	46,000	47,670	2,356,000	22,646,000
2016	49,000	49,770	2,508,000	23,836,000
2021	52,000	51,850	2,656,000	24,973,000
2026	56,000	53,960	2,789,000	25,975,000
2006-2026 Change	+ 11,000	+8,320	+ 575,000	+ 4,457,000
2006-2026 % Change	24.4%	18.2%	26.0%	20.7%

Source: ONS Revised 2004-based Household Projections

The effects of migration on the District of Mendip can be seen in the next Table 9.

Table 9 – The Effects of Migration

		Mendip	South West	England & Wales
Migration 2001-2006	IN	27,670	698,650	694,540
	OUT	24,710	543,280	747,470
	NET	+2,960	+155,380	-52,930

Source: ONS Mid 2006 Population Estimates

Between the years of 2001 to 2006, migration accounted for an increase in population of the Mendip District of just under 3,000 people.

The population of Mendip has the following ethnic composition, illustrated in Table 10. It has a higher than the national average white population and a lower than the national average ethnic minority population.

Table 10 - Ethnicity

	Mendip	South West	England
White	96.9%	95.7%	88.7%
Mixed race	0.9%	1.1%	1.6%
Asian	0.9%	1.4%	5.5%
Black	0.6%	0.9%	2.8%
Chinese	0.7%	0.9%	1.4%

Source: ONS Mid 2006 Population Estimates

Mendip's character is predominantly rural, characterised by its network of five main settlements; Shepton Mallet, Frome, Street, Glastonbury and Wells. The settlements are key employment and service centres for their surrounding rural areas and their future competitiveness is key to the development of the rural economy. Each of the five settlements is unique and faces different challenges.



Frome is the largest settlement in Mendip with a population of 24,500 people. Frome has the greatest number of jobs, shops, leisure and cultural facilities of all the Mendip towns. It is located on the Eastern edge of the District and has functional relationships with neighbouring Bath, Trowbridge and Warminster.

Street has a population of 11,100 people with good accessibility to shops, further education and leisure facilities. It experiences a lot of in commuting from Glastonbury and other wards and has recently experienced high employment growth as a result of wholesale and retail trade.

Wells is the third largest settlement with a population of 10,400 people. It has a good range of shops and leisure facilities and is well served by bus services to other towns and larger centres outside the District. Houses in Wells tend to be a lot more expensive than in other parts of the District and the supply of affordable homes has been relatively low over the past few years.

Shepton Mallet has a population of 9,000 people. The town centre has suffered from major decline but it is currently witnessing high investment. It provides a lot of employment for its size and has good economic potential. In 2003, a group of interested members of the community, known as Shepton 21, obtained grant funding from the South West Regional Development Agency for Shepton Mallet and the surrounding parishes under the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTI). A scoping study of the needs and opportunities for the area was carried out and this has resulted in the community plan for the area.

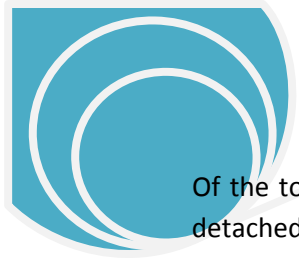
Glastonbury is the smallest of the Mendip settlements with a population of 8,800 people. It is located only 2 miles from Street and because of this, there are strong inter-relationships between the two towns with regards to shopping, work, education and health facilities. Glastonbury has benefited from the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) programme which received funding to “Bring Glastonbury Together” socially and economically, focusing on improving the quality of life in two of the highest deprivation wards. With the cessation of the programme, a new town plan has been established in order to continue the achievements of the original project.

The rural economy is vulnerable, currently facing change and uncertainty. Low productivity, a concentration of activity in declining sectors (manufacturing, agriculture and extraction industries) and a limited range of employers are key issues accompanied by the high house prices widespread in the rural areas. This tends to encourage rural areas to become small enclaves for the wealthy as well as commuter dormitories with declining local services and housing that is unaffordable for local people.

Key Issue	Providing affordable housing and sustaining the local economy in rural areas
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THE HOUSING STOCK & CONDITION

As at 31st March 2009, the District of Mendip had 47,682 dwellings. The West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) reports that the housing market is split between 76.5% owner occupiers, 12.3% who socially rent and 11.2% who privately rent.



Of the total housing stock, 10.5% of properties are flats, 24.5% are terraced properties, 32.7% are detached properties and 31.9% are semi-detached. In 2006, there were 5,386 social rented dwellings and 267 intermediate housing stock.

Mendip has 1,406 empty properties of which 572 have been vacant for more than 6 months. As a proportion of the total Mendip housing stock, the number of empty properties equates to 2.98% of the stock. This is similar to the national rate which is 3% of total housing stock.

Key Issue	Bringing empty properties back into use
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Table 11 below shows the average house prices for the Mendip District as well as those for the South West region and nationally from the first quarter in 2007 to the first quarter in 2009.

Table 11– Average House Prices 2007/08 and 2008/09

Mendip District		
Qtr	2007/08	2008/09
1	£219,458	£219,749
2	£229,120	£210,408
3	£225,099	£194,629
4	£215,343	£192,733
The South West		
Qtr	2007/08	2008/09
1	£225,488	£225,153
2	£237,314	£228,669
3	£232,878	£210,796
4	£224,058	£200,845
England		
Qtr	2007/08	2008/09
1	£218,899	£222,441
2	£232,345	£227,182
3	£224,467	£207,372
4	£221,270	£201,133

Source: Land Registry 2009

The average house price in Mendip is less than that for the South West which in turn is less than the national figure for average house price. In Table 12 over the page, the average gross annual pay for Mendip, the South West region and England are compared. The average gross annual pay for the Mendip District is roughly £700 less than the average for the South West and more than £4,000 less than the national average. Compared to the fourth quarter 2008/09 average house price figures, it is shown that the average house price figure for Mendip is 8.54 times the average gross annual pay. This is compared with 8.62 for the South West and 7.53 for England.

Table 12 – Average and Median Gross Annual Pay

	Average Gross Annual Pay 2008	Median Gross Annual Pay 2008	Annual Pay Multiplier (Average Pay)
Mendip	£22,580	£18,668	8.54
South West	£23,307	£19,545	8.62
England	£26,719	£21,147	7.53

Source: ONS ASHE 2008

It should be noted that Average House prices and salaries have been used in place of Lower Quartile figures as they were not available at the time of production of this strategy.

Key Issue	Low average earnings in relation to average house prices - affordability
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Table 13 below shows the Local Housing Allowance rates for September 2009 for the area of Mendip District. The Local Housing Allowance rates are set on a monthly basis by the Valuation Office Agency for each Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA) in England and are the median private sector rent levels for market rents in those BRMA areas based on evidence of rent levels collected by the Valuation Office Agency. There are four BRMAs covering the District of Mendip, although the majority of rental properties will fall within the “Mendip” BRMA.

Table 13 – Local Housing Allowance Rates – September 2009

	BRMA £ per week (£ per calendar month)			
	Mendip	West Wilts	Bath	Yeovil
1 bedroom with shared facilities	£61.00 (£264.33)	£60.00 (£260.00)	£75.00 (£325.00)	£68.08 (£295.01)
1 bedroom self-contained	£98.08 (£425.01)	£103.85 (£450.02)	£137.31 (£595.01)	£96.92 (£419.99)
2 bedrooms	£126.92 (£549.99)	£126.92 (£549.99)	£171.92 (£744.99)	£126.92 (£549.99)
3 bedrooms	£155.77 (£675.00)	£153.46 (£664.99)	£190.38 (£824.98)	£150.00 (£650.00)
4 bedrooms	£206.54 (£895.01)	£207.69 (£899.99)	£260.77 (£1130.00)	£207.12 (£897.52)
5 bedrooms	£242.31 (£1050.01)	£230.77 (£1000.00)	£346.15 (£1499.98)	£334.62 (£1450.02)

Source: Valuation Office Agency 2009

The Government introduced a “Decent Homes” target in 2005 that all social tenants and 70% of Private tenants would have a decent home by 2010. A decent home is one which is wind and weather tight, warm and has modern facilities. A decent home meets the following four criteria:

- It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing – dwellings below this standard are those where a Category 1 hazard exists under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- It is in a reasonable state of repair – dwellings that fail to meet this criterion are those where either; one or more of the key building components are old and need replacing or a major repair or; two or more of the other building components are old and need replacing or a major repair.
- It has reasonably modern facilities and services – dwellings that fail to meet this criterion are those which lack three or more of the following; a reasonably modern kitchen, a kitchen with adequate space and layout, a reasonably modern bathroom, an appropriately located



bathroom and WC, adequate insulation against external noise, adequate size and layout of common areas for blocks of flats.

- It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort – a dwelling should have effective insulation and efficient heating.

Social housing stock across Mendip is on target to meet the Decent Homes Standard with the exception of a small number of properties that are scheduled for re-development of Precast Reinforced Concrete dwellings that will not have been demolished by 2010.

A private sector housing stock condition survey was commissioned by Mendip in the summer of 2009. The survey measured the physical condition of the housing stock.

The survey also identified the number of decent homes in the area and found that of the total private sector stock of 42,415 homes 15% were found to fail the decent homes standard which equates to just under 7300 dwellings.

The Affordable Warmth Strategy 2009 reports that 8% of private properties in 2009 in the Mendip area showed a low energy efficiency rating (SAP Rating) of less than 35. The average SAP Rating in Mendip has risen to 57, two points higher than the national average which is 55.

Key Issue	Improving energy efficiency and ensuring affordable warmth for households
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The Council’s housing stock of 4,333 homes was transferred to Mendip Housing Limited in March 2001 along with the contracts for Homelessness, Housing Advice and the Common Housing Register. These contracts returned to the Council in March 2005.

NEW HOUSING SUPPLY

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) requires the District of Mendip to provide an additional 8,300 dwellings within the 20 year period, 2006 to 2026. This is at an annual average rate of 415 dwellings. This requirement is summarised in Table 14.

Table 84 – RSS Requirements for Additional Dwellings 2006-2026

Policy	Dwellings
Draft RSS Allocation 2006-2026	7,200
Draft RSS Panel Modifications 2006-2026	8,300
Secretary of State Proposed Changes 2006-2026	8,300
Draft RSS Allocation 2006-2026 Annual Average	360
Draft RSS Panel Modifications 2006-2026 Annual Average	415
Secretary of State Proposed Changes 2006-2026 Annual Average	415

Source: Local Authority Data

Completions of new build housing during the years 2001 to 2008 are summarised over the page in Table 15. The number of dwellings completed during 2006/07 and 2007/08 are both above the annual average rate required of 415 dwellings producing a total of 1,149 dwellings.

Table 15 – Completions and projected completions of New Build Housing 2001-2011

2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
407	306	492	369	584	546	603	574	539	579
Annual Average 2001-11 = 500									

Source: Local Authority Data

By reducing the 8,300 dwelling requirement by the number of properties already completed during 2006/07 and 2007/08, 7,151 dwellings are still required to be built by 2026 in order to meet the Regional Spatial Strategy requirement. Baker Associates, in completing the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, identified the potential new housing supply for Mendip to 2026, based on the existing policies of the Council. This is illustrated in Table 16.

Table 16 – Potential New Housing Supply in Mendip to 2026

Source of Housing Potential	2008-13	2013-18	2018-26	2008-26
Sites with Planning Permission				
Large sites	1538	289		1827
Small sites	466			466
Total permissions	2004	289		2293
Site specific sources (identified through survey)				
Large sites	735	882	190	1807
Non site specific sources (windfall)				
Large sites			1352	1352
Small sites			776	776
Total windfall			2128	2128
Total housing	2739	1171	2318	6228
Average per annum	547	224	289	346

Source: Local Authority Data

The Assessment identified housing potential for 6,228 new dwellings from 2008 to 2026. This leaves a shortfall of sites for 923 dwellings to be addressed through the Local Development Framework.

Key Issue	Working in partnership with the Local Development Framework to increase housing supply to ensure that the RSS targets are met
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The division between the main settlements of the potential housing supply to 2026 for site specific sources is illustrated in Table 17 over the page. It should be noted that the distribution of future housing development across the District will be determined through the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy and that the identified potential housing supply may not match this distribution.



Table 17 – Potential New Housing Supply by Settlement to 2026

Town	2008-13	2013-18	2018-26	2006-26
Frome	353	589	0	942
Glastonbury	82	65	0	147
Shepton Mallet	106	129	50	285
Street	61	8	0	69
Wells	18	85	140	243
Town Total				1686
Village Total	115	6		121
Overall Total	735	882	190	1807

Source: Mendip Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Mendip District Council, March 2009

HOUSING NEED & ARISING HOUSING NEED

A backlog of need for affordable housing already exists within the Mendip District and this backlog of need is split between the backlog of need for social rented housing and the backlog of need for intermediate housing. The definitions for affordable housing, social rented housing and intermediate housing are the definitions used by Planning Policy Statement 3 and are given below.

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

Social rented housing is rented housing owned and managed by Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

Intermediate affordable housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents....these can include shared equity products (for example, Homebuy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

The assessment of the backlog of need in the West of England SHMA is based primarily on the number of households on the housing register. There are a total of 1,478 units required to meet existing backlog need and this is summarised in Table 18.

Table 18 – Backlog of Need

As at 2007	Unit Need
Backlog of need for social rented housing	1,363
Backlog of need for intermediate housing	115
Total backlog need	1,478

Source: West of England SHMA

The total newly arising need for the Mendip District is summarised in Table 19 over the page. The total annual average of newly arising need is made up of four categories of household; newly forming households in need of social rented housing, in-migrants unable to afford to buy or rent in the market, existing owner occupiers falling into need and newly forming households in need of intermediate housing. The total annual average of newly arising need is 480 units from 2009 to 2021.



Table 199 – Total Newly Arising Need

Annual Average 2009-2021	Unit Need
Newly forming households in need of social rented housing	252
In-migrants unable to afford to buy or rent in the market (net)	92
Existing owner occupiers falling into need	74
Total newly arising need	417
Newly forming household need – intermediate	63
Total newly arising need – intermediate	63
Total newly arising need	480

Source: West of England SHMA

Annual supply of affordable housing to meet affordable housing need comes from two different sources, new build affordable housing supply and re-lets/re-sales. In Table 20 below, there is a summary of the committed new supply of affordable housing for 2007 to 2009 for the Mendip District. A total of 265 units have been committed to affordable housing, 160 to rental accommodation and 105 units to intermediate housing.

Table 20 – Committed New Supply of Affordable Housing

2007-2009	Units
Committed new supply – rented	160
Committed new supply – intermediate	105
Total	265

Source: HSSA forecasts as at April 2007

The estimations of re-lets and re-sales of affordable housing from 2009 to 2021 are summarised in Table 21 below.

Table 21 – Estimations of Re-lets and Re-sales of Affordable Housing from 2009-2021

Annual average 2009-2021	Units
Supply of social re-lets	263
Additional re-lets from Tenants moving into intermediate housing	3
Total social rented re-lets	266
Supply of re-sales from intermediate stock	10

Source: West Of England SHMA

By putting all the data together in the following Table 22 on the next page it is possible to establish the average annual net need for affordable social housing.



Table 22 - Average Annual Net Need for Affordable Social Rented Housing

2009-2021	
Total current backlog need	1,363
Less committed new supply	160
Equals net backlog need	1,203
Annual flow @10%	120
Annual average newly arising need	417
Plus annual flow	120
Equals annual need	538
Less	
Annual supply	266
Total annual net need 2009-2021	271

Source: West of England SHMA

Similarly by putting all the data together in Table 23 below, it is also possible to establish the average annual net need for intermediate housing.

Table 23 – Average Annual Net Need for Intermediate Housing

2009-2021	
Total current backlog need	115
Less committed new supply	105
Equals net backlog need	10
Annual flow @10%	1
Annual average newly arising need	63
Plus annual flow	1
Equals annual need	64
Less	
Annual supply	10
Total annual net need 2009-2021	54

Source: West of England SHMA

By combining the annual net need for affordable social housing (271 units) and the annual net need for intermediate housing (54 units), a total of 325 units are required annually for households in need.

Key Issue	Increase affordable housing provision
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The RSS requirement for the Mendip District is 415 new homes per annum and if 325 units are required annually for households in need, then affordable need as a share of new supply is 78.3%.



ALLOCATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mendip District Council, in partnership with the four other Somerset Local Authorities, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, Taunton Deane and West Somerset introduced a Somerset wide Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme called Homefinder Somerset in December 2008. A common housing register between the five Councils was developed as a result.

All applicants for social housing across Somerset complete the same application form and are assessed against the same set of criteria laid out in the 'Banding' structure. Depending on their circumstances, applicants are placed in one of four bands, Gold, Silver and Bronze or in a very small number of cases, an Emergency Priority Band.

All homeless households accepted by Somerset Local Authorities are placed in Gold Band; all other homeless households are placed in Silver. The exceptions are those single homeless placed in time-limited supported accommodation. This group will be assigned to the Bronze Band (the lowest band) until such time as they are ready to leave supported accommodation; at this time they will be transferred to Gold Band as 'Move On' applicants with their original date of application.

Once the application has been registered, applicants are advised of their banding, application date, size of the property they are eligible for, together with a personal reference number which will enable them to bid for social housing vacancies being advertised across the whole of Somerset. All re-lets and new built properties are advertised using the common website Homefindersomerset.co.uk. There are plans to incorporate affordable housing, including shared ownership and private sector vacancies at a later date.

Once the bidding deadline has passed, the successful applicant will be the person in the highest band with the earliest application date. In certain circumstances the property may not be allocated to the successful bidder, as detailed in the Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy.

Mendip District Council and the other Somerset Local Authorities recognise the need to regularly review the Countywide Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy, having been recently introduced in December 2008. When undertaking such a review Mendip DC will give due consideration to "Fair and Flexible" draft statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England.



HOMELESSNESS

The number of homeless applications accepted by Mendip District Council between 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2009 are shown in Table 24 below. Mendip District Council accepted 94 homeless applications in 2007/08 and 102 applications in 2008/09. This is a percentage increase of 8.5%.

Key Issue	Preventing homelessness in partnership with other agencies including providing enhanced housing options to make the links between homelessness, creating employment opportunities and promoting the financial inclusion agenda
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Table 104 – Accepted Homeless Applications 2007/08 and 2008/09

2007/08				2008/09			
Apr – Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar
28	23	20	23	25	28	24	25
94				102			

Source: P1E Returns 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2009

Table 25 below shows the split of homeless acceptances by ethnicity between 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2009 in comparison to the homeless acceptances by ethnicity in England. Mendip has a much higher than the national figure number of homeless acceptances of white households and a much lower than the national figure number of homeless acceptances of other black and ethnic minority groups. Mendip’s figures are comparable with those for the whole of Somerset.

Table 25 – Number of Homeless Acceptances by Ethnicity 2007/08 and 2008/09

	Mendip		Somerset		England	
	2007/08	2008/09	2007/08	2008/09	2007/8	2008/09
White	93 (98.9%)	96 (94.1%)	464 (93.2%)	442 (96.1%)	45,500 (72.0%)	37,310 (69.8%)
African/Caribbean	1 (1.1%)	1 (1.0%)	2 (0.4%)	2 (0.4%)	6,910 (10.9%)	6,630 (12.4%)
Indian/Pakistani/ Bangladeshi	0	0	1 (0.2%)	0	3,870 (6.1%)	3,310 (6.2%)
Other Ethnic Origin	0	1 (1.0%)	3 (0.6%)	3 (0.7%)	3,410 (5.4%)	3,360 (6.3%)
Ethnic Origin Not Known	0	4 (3.9%)	28 (5.6%)	13 (2.8%)	3,520 (5.6%)	2,820 (5.3%)

Source: P1E Returns 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2009

In 2005, the Government introduced a target of halving the number of households living in temporary accommodation by December 2010. The target for Mendip District Council is to have 38 households living in temporary accommodation. The Table 26 over the page Mendip’s progress against this target.

Table 26– Households in Temporary Accommodation

	Bed & Breakfast	Hostel Accommodation	Local Authority / RSL Stock	Private Sector Leasing	Other (including with a PS Landlord)	Total
2007 Apr – Jun	9	21	12	13	5	60
2007 Jul – Sep	9	17	14	15	2	57
2007 Oct – Dec	5	13	14	18	12	62
2008 Jan – Mar	5	18	12	16	3	54
2008 Apr – Jun	7	16	11	16	3	53
2008 Jul – Sep	10	14	10	18	3	55
2008 Oct – Dec	9	11	9	19	1	49
2009 Jan - Mar	9	11	4	24	2	50

Source: P1E Returns 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2009

As at the 31st March 2009, there were still 50 households residing in temporary accommodation. This number needs to be reduced by 11 households for Mendip to reach the target set by Government by December 2010. Within the Somerset Homelessness Review and Prevention Strategy 2008-2011, specific actions have been allocated to focus on this government target, including production of a Countywide Temporary Accommodation Strategy by December 2009 and ongoing improved management of temporary accommodation and lets. In addition we recognise the specific need for a Temporary Accommodation Strategy and this has been included in the action points within the Countywide Homelessness strategy. Efforts historically have been concentrated on reducing the number of households temporarily being placed in hostel accommodation and local authority/residential social landlord stock, however, this has been coupled with an increase in households temporarily re-housed in private sector leased property. The recession is also now having an impact by placing additional pressures on the housing team for example increased demands on temporary accommodation provision.

Key Issue	Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation to meet the Government target by December 2010
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Data has been analysed between 1st April 2007 and 30th June 2008 on the main reason for the loss of the last settled home for households in the Mendip area found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need. This breakdown is shown in Table 27 over the page.



Table 27 – Main Reason for Loss of Last Settled Home for Households Accepted as Homeless

Main Reason	Apr – Jun 2007	Jul – Sep 2007	Oct – Dec 2007	Jan – Mar 2008	Apr – Jun 2008
Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	8 (28.6%)	5 (21.7%)	3 (15.0%)	6 (26.1%)	3 (12.0%)
Other relatives no longer willing or able to accommodate	0	0	2 (10.0%)	1 (4.3%)	0
Relationship breakdown	2 (7.1%)	3 (13.0%)	0	2 (8.7%)	2 (8.0%)
DV/Other violence	6 (21.4%)	3 (13.0%)	4 (20.0%)	3 (13.0%)	5 (20.0%)
Loss of tenancy (assured shorthold tenancy or tied accommodation)	7 (25.0%)	9 (39.1%)	7 (35.0%)	6 (26.1%)	6 (24.0%)
Rent arrears	1 (3.6%)	0	0	1 (4.3%)	1 (4.0%)
Mortgage arrears	1 (3.6%)	1 (4.3%)	0	2 (8.7%)	0
Harassment	0	0	1 (5.0%)	1 (4.3%)	2 (8.0%)
Left Institution	0	0	0	0	0
Left HM Forces	0	0	0	0	0
Other reason	3 (10.7%)	2 (8.7%)	3 (15.0%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (4.0%)
TOTAL	28	23	20	23	25

Source: P1E Returns

The most common reasons for the loss of the last settled home for households in the Mendip area found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need are parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate households, violence and loss of tenancy (either an assured shorthold tenancy or tied accommodation).

Key Issue	Focusing homeless prevention activities at the main reasons for loss of last settled home.
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THE CREDIT CRUNCH AND RECESSION

This Housing strategy is being produced at a time of current and ongoing economic uncertainty that has seen a sharp deterioration in the housing market “lenders won’t lend, borrowers won’t borrow, builders can’t build and buyers can’t buy”.

Source: “The credit crunch and regeneration Impact and implications An independent report to CLG January 2009”

The credit crunch has had a significant effect on the housing market- mortgages are more difficult to obtain, reasonably priced mortgages are scarce without a large deposit, developers have reacted by slowing down the rate of building or even mothballing projects and redundancies could result in more people losing their homes due to loss of income



The current economic climate places new pressures on the Housing Services at Mendip District Council. Data provided by the Council of Mortgage Lenders in May 2009 suggests that the number of properties taken into possession during the period 2008, nationwide, was 40,000 properties. This is an increase of 13,800 properties on the figures available from 2007 (26,200 properties). Consideration will be given to the impact that the recession is having on the residents in Mendip ensuring that assistance is targeted at households who face increased risks of homeless as a result of the credit crunch / recession. They are a previously unknown group and still a group of unknown quantity and as such, consideration should be given to how this group may access help and housing services as well as any barriers this group may experience in accessing services.

As a result of a change in economic circumstances due to the credit crunch, availability of credit has reduced. This will have an impact on both middle-income highly-g geared households that may rely on the ability to refinance their obligations in order to keep up with repayments, and low-income families who have come to rely on credit on a regular basis to make up any shortfall.

Key Issue	Providing timely and targeted housing assistance at households affected by the credit crunch/recession.
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ACCOMMODATING THE NEEDS OF GYPSIES & TRAVELLERS

Mendip District Council has done a lot of work engaging with the Gypsy and Traveller community. A local working group has been set up consisting of officers from various internal departments, Members and Gypsy and Traveller representatives. A strategy for the Gypsy and Traveller community is currently in draft format and a Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment is soon to be undertaken in partnership with the other four Somerset District Councils and Somerset County Council. This work is supported at a county level by an Officer employed by Somerset County Council. The West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment recommended the following level of additional provision for Gypsies and Travellers over the period 2006 to 2011. This is shown in Table 28 below.

Table 28 – Recommended Level of Additional Provision for Gypsies & Travellers in the Mendip District 2006-2011

Pitches on permanent sites	57
Pitches on transit sites	30

Source: West of England SHMA

Key Issue	Improve the provision of sites for Gypsies & Travellers
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Mendip District Council and its Members are committed to Gypsy and Traveller work which is ongoing having focused specific resources to this which will allow the Council to make effective progress in this area of work.



ACCOMMODATING THE NEEDS OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH DISABILITIES

The West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment produced the following table, table 29 below, with regards to the backlog of need for households with disabilities. The Assessment did not have adequate District level information in relation to the number of households actually requiring housing that could accommodate wheelchairs. As a working hypothesis it has been assumed that 20% of households containing a family member with a disability will require wheelchair accommodation.

Table 29 – Backlog of Need for Households with Disabilities

No. on Register with a Disability or Ill Health	No. on Zone Agent List with a Disability or Ill Health	Total Backlog Need	No. Requiring Wheelchair Housing (estimated 20%)	Backlog Apportioned over 5 Years
125	9	134	27	5

The Assessment provided a model for annual need of wheelchair housing for the period 2009 to 2014 which can be seen in Table 30 below.

Table 30 – Annual Need for Wheelchair Housing for 2009-2014

Annual Need 2009-2014	No. of Households
Backlog Need	5
Newly Forming Households	7
Existing Households falling into Need	25
Total Annual Need	37

Key Issues	Creating a better understanding of the local need for wheelchair housing, providing targeted and timely property adaptations for households wishing to remain in their existing home and ensuring a partnership approach between housing providers and support agencies in meeting the needs of households with disabilities.
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Building Links with Partner Strategies

NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR HOUSING

The Government believes that everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home at a price they can afford, in sustainable communities where they can live and work. In partnership with the Government, regional bodies, the public, private and voluntary sectors, the Local Authority strategic housing role is to deliver this objective at a local level. *The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities: Powers and Duties 2008*, summarises the Local Authority strategic housing role as:

- Assessing and planning for the current and future housing needs of the local population across all tenures
- Making the best use of existing housing stock
- Planning and facilitating new supply
- Planning and commissioning housing support services which link homes and housing support services
- Working in partnership to secure effective housing and neighbourhood management on an ongoing basis.

The national priorities for housing have been outlined in a number of Government documents which are summarised below in publication date order. A more detailed look at the various documents can be found in Appendix B.

The five year plan, *Sustainable Communities: Homes for All, 2005* set out the Government's priorities for improving the quality of housing, establishing more choice across tenures and meeting housing need. This plan introduced the Decent Homes target, that all social tenants and 70% of private tenants would have a 'Decent Home' by 2010. A 'Decent Home' is one that is warm, weatherproof with reasonably modern facilities.

The *Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives* agenda, published by the Government in 2005, outlines the Government's targets to achieve reductions in homelessness and halving the number of households living in temporary accommodation by December 2010. The key strategy aims are to:

- Encourage homeless prevention
- Support vulnerable people
- Tackle the wider causes and symptoms of homelessness
- Help more people to move away from rough sleeping
- Provide more settled homes.



The Local Government White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities 2006*, encourages Local Authorities to take a more strategic approach to housing as part of a place shaping role. Local Authorities should enable effective local services through new relationships and better governance by:

- Promoting more responsive services
- Advocating a stronger role for Local Authorities as leaders and place-shapers, by developing and reinforcing the Local Strategic Partnerships and the Local Area Agreements
- Promoting stronger and more stable Local Authority leadership
- Promoting community cohesion
- Developing the economic prosperity of our towns, cities and regions.

The Housing Green Paper, *Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable 2007*, sets out the Government's proposals to improve the housing fabric of society by working with partners to provide more homes to meet growing demand, well-designed and greener homes, linked to good schools, transport and affordable homes to buy and rent. The Government has set new targets in this document of 240,000 additional homes per year to meet growing demand and address affordability issues with 2 million new homes to be built by 2016 and 3 million by 2020. Greener homes with high environmental targets are also included as a priority within this document with the new target of all new homes being carbon neutral by 2016.

In 2007, the Government asked Matthew Taylor, MP for Truro to carry out a review on how land use and planning can better support rural business and deliver affordable housing. Matthew Taylor published his review in July 2008. Large scale migration to rural areas has pushed house prices substantially above the national average whilst those working in rural areas earn significantly less than their urban counterparts. This makes rural housing out of reach of many who work in the countryside. If better opportunities are not created for people who live in small rural communities to find quality work and affordable housing, then rural areas will become commuter dormitories, exclusive enclaves of the wealthy and retired, at the expense of fewer local jobs, declining local services and loss of community life. The review makes 48 recommendations to the Government in respect of rural housing and supporting rural business.

In 2008, the Government published *Delivering Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods – A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society 2008*, which sets out the priorities for older people over a five year period:

- Older people will have housing that supports healthy, active and independent living in welcoming communities
- Housing, neighbourhoods and communities will be more inclusive, attractive and sustainable for an ageing population
- More mainstream and specialist homes of the right type in the right location for older people
- New housing will be planned and built to Lifetime Home Standards and new communities will be built to be Lifetime Neighbourhoods
- Excellent information and advice for all
- Many more homes warm and comfortable



- Major and minor adaptations more easily obtained
- Home improvement and handyperson schemes will be widely accessible

Also in 2008, the Government introduced a commitment via a fifteen point action plan to end rough sleeping by 2012, *No One Left Out – Communities End Rough Sleeping*. The plan calls on communities to get more involved in supporting those in their area at risk of rough sleeping, ensuring that the right resources reach the right people at the right time.

During the period January to May 2008, Julie Rugg and David Rhodes conducted an independent review of the Private Rented Sector. During this review they identified a number of issues arising in the Private Rented Sector, including the lack of professional management within the sector, the poor quality of some privately rented housing and a lack of security of tenure. As a result they made recommendations to the Government on proposed policy “directions of travel”. The Government produced a response to the review in 2009 and have made the following proposals for the Private Rented Sector:

- Proposal to establish a national register of Private Landlords
- All tenancies should take the form of written agreements
- Proposal to regulate all Letting Agents
- A system of improved redress for both Landlords and Tenants
- Increased investment in the sector via a Private Rented Housing Investment Fund
- Improved engagement with the Private Rented Sector from Local Authorities
- A more co-ordinated approach by Local Authorities to secure Private Sector Tenancies for low income households
- Using the Private Rented Sector to complement/unify with Choice Based Lettings
- Improved coverage for Landlord Accreditation Schemes

REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR HOUSING

Brief summaries of the regional documents can be found in publication date order below, however, a more detailed look at the various regional documents can be found in Appendix C.

The *South West Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2016* mission is “to work in partnership to ensure that everyone has access to a good quality home within a sustainable and inclusive community”. This mission statement will be achieved by the delivery of three strategic aims:

- Improving the balance of housing markets
- Achieving good quality homes
- Supporting sustainable communities

The *Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10)* provides a Regional Spatial Strategy within which Local Authority development plans in the South West should be prepared. This document is soon to be replaced by the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West, as proposed to be changed by the Secretary of State. It sets out a broad development strategy for the period to 2016 and beyond. The document sets out the objectives for housing as follows:

- The need to provide everyone in the South West with the opportunity for a decent home
- Giving priority to the re-use of previously developed land in urban areas



- Bringing empty properties back into use and promoting the conversion of existing buildings within urban and rural areas
- Creating and sustaining mixed communities, including providing a greater choice and a better mix of the size, type, tenure and location of housing in all areas
- Creating more sustainable patterns of development by building in ways that deliver accessibility by public transport to jobs, education and other local facilities and local services
- Promoting new housing and residential environments that are well-designed and a make a significant contribution to promote urban renaissance and improve quality of life.

The *South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy 2008* focuses on housing under the broader context of the local economy. It recognises that the South West needs realistic and affordable plans for homes that will deliver sustainable growth and that support the Public Service Agreement 20, “increase long term housing supply and affordability”.

SUB-REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR HOUSING

Brief summaries of the sub-regional documents can be found in publication date order below, however, a more detailed look at the various regional documents can be found in Appendix D.

The Supporting People (SP) Programme was introduced by the Government in 2003, drawing together a number of different funding streams that provided “housing related support” to a wide range of adults. The Programme is funded nationally but administered locally by the Somerset SP Partnership. The *Somerset Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010: “The Big Picture”* outlines the vision to “support vulnerable people to live with dignity and independence in their community, either in their own homes or in supported housing”.

In 2007 the District Authorities of Somerset campaigned against the removal of two tier government in the county. As part of this debate a joint submission was made outlining efficiencies that could be made through partnership working. Having won the argument the council’s in Somerset are now working to achieve the £20 million savings it proposed. Under the banner of “Pioneer Somerset” the authorities are working to achieve the following vision :

“ By 2013, the County and five District Councils of Somerset will be working in a seamless and fully integrated way, delivering services of consistently high quality, generating substantial efficiency savings and making life better for our residents and diverse communities. We will be recognised as a national leader, innovator and pioneer in enhanced multi-tier working”.

In line with the Pioneer Vision, our housing strategy will look at opportunities for joint working with the other Somerset authorities to deliver services, efficiency and budget savings. Where we find transferable best practice from our service we will share this for the benefit of all the county’s residents.

The *Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2026* sets out the long term vision for Somerset in 2026, bringing together views of local people and local organisations. The “overall vision is of a dynamic, successful modern economy that supports, respects and develops Somerset’s distinctive



communities and unique environment". The main aims of the strategy centre around six themes and their relevance to housing, as outlined below:

- Making a positive contribution – closer working between organisations and engaging local people and communities in decision making
- Living sustainably – making Somerset an affordable place for people to live
- Ensuring economic well-being – planning for new sustainable communities to be built in Somerset
- Enjoying and achieving – promoting and supporting independent living
- Staying safe
- Being healthy.

A countywide Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan was produced in 2008, *Making Homes, Helping People, Changing Lives*, in order to achieve positive outcomes in the support for vulnerable people, tackle the wider causes and symptoms of homelessness, reduce rough sleeping, provide more settled homes and provide a context for tackling homelessness through joint working. Sub-regional priorities arising from the homelessness strategy include:

- Improving floating support services
- Improving homeless prevention
- Improved access to the Private Sector
- Improved access to appropriate housing
- Improved protocols and partnerships to tackle homelessness.

The *West of England Housing Market Assessment (HMA)* was completed in June 2009. This provides a detailed sub regional market analysis of housing demand and housing need for the West of England HMA; Mendip, Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and West Wiltshire. The HMA provides a robust evidence base for the development of local policy for planning and strategic housing.

Somerset: The Single Conversation with the Homes and Community Agency (HCA), July 2009 relates to a 'Single Conversation' about the comprehensive coverage of housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community activities. The outcome of the 'Single Conversation' will be the shared vision of the ambitions for an area supported by a Local Investment Plan, a place based investment strategy tailored to the needs of the local area and a Local Investment Agreement. The following priorities are outlined in the document:

- Broaden and strengthen the local economy
- Plan for new sustainable communities to be built in Somerset
- A stronger and more diverse market town and rural economy
- Strong and effective local leadership through working together and aligning delivery plans: Building the capacity to deliver improved housing and regeneration activities
- Prepare for and respond to the impact on Somerset of climate change.



DISTRICT STRATEGIES RELEVANT TO HOUSING

Brief summaries of the relevant District strategies can be found and ordered according to importance below, however, a more detailed look at the various regional documents can be found in Appendix E.

The *Mendip Community Strategy* has been produced by the Mendip Strategic Partnership. The long term vision outlined in the strategy for the District is “by 2021, Mendip will be a thriving, just and sustainable place to live in, work in and visit”. There are currently eleven long term themes and five shorter term priorities. However, the Mendip Strategic Partnership is currently drafting a new strategy, the *Sustainable Community Strategy* and has just adopted a new set of eight objectives:

- Economic prosperity
- Skills for life
- Thriving market towns and vibrant villages
- Strong cohesive communities
- Safe communities
- Healthy people
- Suitable, decent, affordable housing
 - Increase the supply of and improve the mix of homes, including affordable homes and intermediate rented housing, to reflect the diverse and changing housing needs of the district
 - Minimise levels of homelessness, with an emphasis on preventing it occurring in the first place
 - Promote sustainable construction and design in new homes, promoting high levels of energy efficiency
 - Ensure homes are located and designed in ways to encourage safe and cohesive communities with access to jobs & services
- Environment

The Mendip Strategic Housing Partnership which is a multi-agency sub-group of the Mendip Strategic Partnership will take the lead on developing and delivering the actions to achieve the new Sustainable Community Strategy’s housing objectives. It is important that these objectives are reflected in this strategy’s action plan.

The *Mendip Corporate Plan 2009-2012* sets out the Council’s corporate goals for the next three years. The vision for Mendip is “Mendip – a place to be proud of – where people, communities and businesses are encouraged to achieve their potential”. The Plan sets eight goals for the future under the headings:

- Supporting the local economy through uncertain times
 - Work with others to promote the local economy, create new jobs and develop skills
 - Help to regenerate our larger areas and local villages
- Support communities and individuals to maintain and improve the quality of life
 - Work with others to ensure there is a range of homes, and to give those searching for homes greater choice
 - Encourage people to play an active part in their communities
 - Encourage healthier lifestyles
- Enhancing Mendip as a place to live



- Continue to make our local area safer
- Maintain and enhance the District's buildings and environment
- Reduce the environmental impact of pollution and waste

The Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the *Mendip Local Plan 1991-2011*. A number of studies have been conducted and documents produced to support the development of the Core Strategy. The *Local Development Scheme* sets out Mendip District Council's programme and timetable for preparing the policy documents that will guide future planning decisions in the District. The *Mendip Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2008* has been conducted to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. The *Affordable Housing Viability Study 2009* provides an understanding of the percentages of affordable housing that will be routinely viable in different parts of the District and the *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009* identifies potential housing sites so that the LDF may then determine the distribution strategy and which sites should be allocated to housing development.

The *Core Strategy* is the primary part of the LDF in that it sets out the main decisions about development in the area, namely what, how much and broadly where. The draft strategic objectives for the emerging Core Strategy are:

- To diversify and strengthen the local economy
 - Deliver suitable employment land and premises at the towns to enable forecast job growth potential to be realised, with additional provision in Frome to promote a better balance of jobs and economically active people
 - Deliver a mixture of modern and flexible employment premises with an emphasis on providing small business/incubator space and the needs of emerging sectors
 - Deliver modern and flexible office development within the heart of each town
 - Retain jobs on redundant employment sites through mixed use re-development
 - Support proposals which improve and extend tourism in each of the Mendip towns
- To equip people and local businesses with the skills they need
 - Deliver new vocational training and skills development facilities at the towns and the expansion of Strode College in Street
 - Deliver new primary schools in Shepton Mallet and Street, new first/middle/primary schools in Frome (the Local Authority for Education is clarifying its position with regard to education in Frome), and the replacement of Crispin School in Street
 - Provide for expansion in secondary education facilities in Frome on a site which could also fulfil potential for further education opportunities
- To promote greater vitality and viability in our market towns and rural communities
 - Develop and reinforce the distinctive identities and specialisms of the Mendip towns
 - In line with regional policy, concentrate the majority of jobs, housing, cultural activity and services within the district's towns
 - Maintain and enhance town centres to make them attractive places to visit at any time of the day, and promote sensitive redevelopments, particularly in Wells and Frome, that make them the first choice shopping destination for the widest range of goods that their catchment areas can support
 - Ensure that the rural population has better access to basic community facilities such as shops, schools and social venues, as well as housing to meet local needs
 - Support and enable diversification of the rural economy in suitable and sustainable locations
- To enable people to maintain and improve their state of health



- Deliver additional or replacement healthcare facilities in Frome, Glastonbury and Shepton Mallet
- Maintain and extend the networks of open spaces, particularly in the towns, to improve their use as a means to promote more active lifestyles
- Avoid development in locations which would impose risks to life or the health of the public
- To provide adequate levels of decent housing which is accessible to all
 - Deliver new housing in line with the levels prescribed for the District in the Regional Spatial Strategy
 - Maximise the delivery of affordable housing
 - Deliver levels of housing at each town which maintains, or in the case of Frome, improves the balance between jobs and economically active people
 - Deliver rural housing that is clearly related to identified local needs
 - Deliver a range and mix of house types and sizes to meet the variety of local housing needs in both the open market and affordable housing sectors
 - Provide for sites to accommodate the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities
- To improve accessibility by means other than the private car
 - Ensure that the majority of new developments, particularly major traffic generators, are located to be accessible by a range of transport modes
 - Create safe and convenient footpath and cycleway networks, ensuring that new development encourages walking, cycling and the use of public transport
- To maintain and enhance the quality of the local environment and contribute to international climate change goals.
 - Create well designed places that are safe and responsive to their surroundings, whether built, natural or cultural and maintain and enhance the historic environment
 - Deliver new development that makes efficient use of land, using sustainable methods of construction and utilising technologies that minimises their environmental running costs
 - Maintain and improve water and air quality and ensure that other natural resources available in the area are efficiently used and that waste and pollution are minimised
 - Protect sensitive wildlife habitats and valued landscapes from development and enhance biodiversity and local scenery through an integrated network of green spaces, corridors and protected areas
 - Recognise and manage development in the light of emerging climate change impacts with particular regard to the location of new development away from areas of flood risk and developments that would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere”

An Economic Strategy for the Mendip Area 2006-2011 sets out the economic strategic aim for the Mendip District – “to create a more enterprising and business friendly culture in the Mendip area”. There are six strategic objectives to achieve this aim:

- Promoting Mendip as an attractive, sustainable location for business
- Ensuring that businesses are effectively supported
- Improving skills
- Improving prosperity and vibrancy in the towns, villages and the countryside
- Developing the tourism sector in a sustainable way
- Proactively addressing transport and infrastructure.



The *Private Sector Housing Strategy 2009-2012* “Improving the Private Sector, helping people, changing lives” sets out the following priorities for the Private Sector Housing Team:

- Improve the quality of the Private Sector Housing stock
- Improve the conditions of the Private Rented Sector
- Improve partnerships and community empowerment
- Improve the knowledge of Private Sector Housing in the District.

The *Empty Homes Strategy 2009-2012* sets out how the Council will continue to work with owners of empty homes to assist them in bringing properties back into use.

The *Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy 2009-2012* sets out how the Council will facilitate Private Sector Housing renewal via financial assistance and advice services.

The *Affordable Warmth Strategy 2009* sets out the Council’s key aims in achieving affordable warmth as it believes that no household should have to spend more than 10% of their disposable income to keep comfortably warm.

Mendip Housing Tenant Business Plan 2009 is a strategy that has been produced by Mendip Housing, the Council’s stock transfer partner, which sets out the priorities for the organisation for a five year period. Mendip Housing’s mission is “to be customer focused and forward thinking”. The five year objectives are set out under the following headings:

- Income and funding
- Tenant involvement
- Customer service
- Environmental
- Investment in homes.

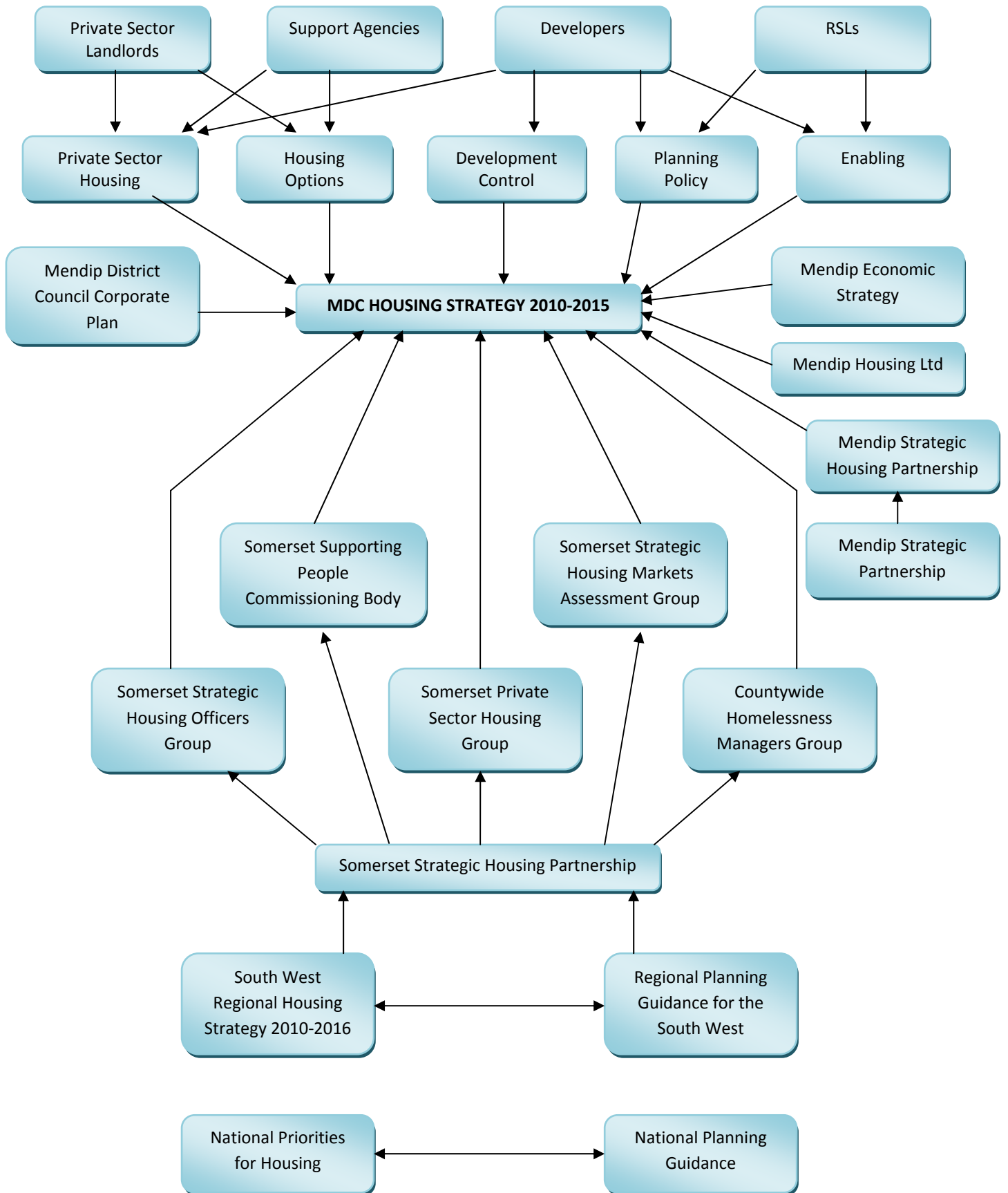
At a Crossroads – Shepton Mallet and Surrounding Areas Community Strategic Plan 2006-2021 is a strategy devised by the Shepton 21 group, a community led group of business people, community groups and organisations planning for Shepton Mallet and the surrounding areas. The plan has the following strategic goals:

- Enhance the Town’s distinctiveness and identity
- Boost the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre
- Improve transport routes and traffic flows in and around Shepton Mallet
- Provide a sustainable future for the community.

Housing will play an important part in the delivery of this strategic plan, most notably in ensuring that design and location of new housing enhances the Town’s distinctiveness and identity and that a sustainable future is created for the community because they are living in housing that they can afford.



Figure 1: Visual Representation of the Key Influences on the Mendip District Council Housing Strategy





Building the Strategy

THE AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTION – MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL STRATEGIC HOUSING SERVICES

Mendip District Council's strategic housing service was inspected by the Audit Commission in June 2008 and rated as a poor service with uncertain prospects for improvement. The strategic housing service will be re-inspected in March 2010. The Auditors main criticisms of the service are summarised as follows:

- Access to the service is weak with limited service standards and written information for customers.
- Under-developed consultation and customer feedback arrangements.
- A weak approach to equality and diversity with a limited understanding of some sections of the community.
- Poor information on local housing markets, housing condition and housing need.
- Lack of strategic housing planning and direction.
- Failure to meet the Council's own targets on the delivery of affordable housing.
- Weak approach to managing value for money.

The service was praised by the Auditors for the following positive elements:

- Opportunities to access the service in person are good with five accessible offices across the District, the offer of home visits and access to related services via partnership working.
- The Council was on plan to meet the overall house completions identified in the Local Plan with positive outcomes in the delivery of rural housing.
- The service is successfully preventing homelessness and improving the quality of temporary accommodation.
- There are good relationships with Private Landlords and local Housing Associations.
- The delivery of Disabled Facilities adaptations has improved but the delivery is still not well managed and can take a long time.
- There is a reasonable range of help for homeowners to improve their homes.

THE AUDIT COMMISSION RE-INSPECTION – LANDLORD SERVICES, MENDIP HOUSING LIMITED

Mendip Housing Limited was re-inspected by the Audit Commission in October 2006 and rated as providing a 'fair', one star service that has promising prospects for improvement. The Auditors main criticisms of the service are summarised as follows:

- The organisation does not systematically use feedback to learn what customers think about the quality of its services
- The profile of customers is not known and therefore services take little account of their diverse needs
- The repairs appointment system did not appear to be working properly
- The adaptations service kept people waiting too long
- Empty properties took a long time to let



- Some services could not demonstrate value for money
- The delivery of services had not been subject to review or consultation with residents and other stakeholders

The organisation was praised by the Auditors for the following positive elements:

- The service is easy to access
- Repairs to Tenants' homes are done on time and nearly all homes have up to date gas safety certificates
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour is a priority and staff work closely with partners to prevent it
- Estates are generally tidy, clean, free from graffiti and dumped rubbish
- Residents have been involved in local schemes
- The management of sheltered housing is being modernised
- Major cost savings on staff and procurement and subsequent efficiency gains have been made

MENDIP LOCAL RESIDENT'S SURVEY 2008

In Summer 2008, Mendip District Council commissioned Ipsos MORI to undertake a local residents' survey in order to enable the Council to have a better understanding of the community's views on

- What people valued about Mendip
- What they thought were important services
- What they thought needed improving
- How they perceived Mendip District Council
- Their sources of information about the Council
- Their experience of contact with the Council

Approximately 3000 households chosen at random received a postal questionnaire. This was supplemented by focus groups to explore further issues that came up through the survey results, and to gather the views of those communities traditionally hard to reach through survey work.

Residents in the survey suggest that the main priorities for improvements should be tackling crime (45%), providing affordable homes (43%), keeping land free of litter (34%) and preventing pollution and public nuisance (34%). All of these issues are seen as priorities by at least a third of the residents. The same issues were raised in the qualitative groups, with the addition of increasing employment opportunities. According to the MORI report, the perception is that limited employment opportunities and the high cost of accommodation combine to raise the relative cost of living in Mendip. The financial impact of the credit crunch may increase residents' concern about the cost of living in Mendip, leading to increasing concern about the Council's work in this area. The MORI report suggested a focus on demonstrating to residents a commitment to tackling the perceived high cost of living in order to alleviate concerns of residents.



SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL PLACE SURVEY 2008

The National Indicator set contains 25 indicators that are informed by citizen's views and perspectives. 18 of these indicators are collected via a "Place Survey" administered by the Local Authority. The results from the Place Survey undertaken in the Mendip District between September and December 2008 became available on 23rd June 2009.

There were 1,444 responses for the Mendip District. 39% of respondents felt that affordable decent housing was the most important factor in making somewhere a good place to live. This was ranked third to 52% of respondents feeling that level of crime was most important and 48% felt that health services were most important.

When asked about services that respondents felt most needed improving, affordable decent housing was ranked 5th with a vote of 32% to 53% voting for activities for teenagers, 42% for pavement repairs, 34% for public transport and 33% for improved job prospects.

HOUSING STRATEGY CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

Housing Strategy Questionnaires were sent out by e-mail and post to all stakeholders in August and September 2009. These included District Council Officers, County Council Officers, Mendip Housing Limited, other Housing Associations and support agencies. The questionnaire was a very simple one, asking for stakeholders' views on housing improvements made in the last three years, areas within which stakeholders felt improvement was required and a list of housing issues for stakeholders to prioritise. A copy of the questionnaire can be viewed in Appendix F.

Respondents were asked to consider a list of housing issues and prioritise them by indicating whether they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed with the issue. The results from the questionnaire are shown in Table 31 over the page. Not all respondents chose to comment on every housing issue listed.



Table 31 – Housing Strategy Questionnaire Responses

Housing Issue	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Providing quality market housing	6	11	8	1	1
Increasing the supply of affordable housing	14	13	1	0	0
Addressing the needs of homeless & potentially homeless households	13	13	2	0	0
Meeting the needs & aspirations of our Tenants (all Tenants including RSL & Private Sector)	7	16	3	0	0
Meeting decent homes standards in all types of housing	10	14	3	0	0
Promoting homeless prevention initiatives	10	15	2	0	1
Increasing opportunities for home ownership (i.e. shared equity)	5	12	9	0	1
Increasing the provision of supported & extra care housing for people with support needs	10	10	7	0	0
Improving the range of housing advice, information & communications provided	7	11	8	1	0
Promoting partnership working to improve services	12	9	5	1	0
Assist people to live independently in their own homes	5	15	5	0	0
Improve the access to services in rural areas/promote sustainable communities	7	16	3	0	1
Maintain an understanding of/respond to local housing needs	9	15	4	0	0
Developing more environmentally friendly housing	5	17	4	0	1
Providing more settled homes & cohesive communities	5	14	7	0	1
Maximise the use of existing Social Rented Housing by reducing the number of properties that are under-occupied by Tenants by developing schemes to encourage Tenants to transfer to smaller units of accommodation	15	11	1	0	0
Bring empty properties back into use	13	13	2	0	0
Improve the condition & quality of private sector properties	3	13	8	1	1
Promote more energy efficient measures in existing housing, tackling fuel poverty & reducing carbon emissions	8	16	2	1	1
Targeted development of appropriate Housing Options for the following groups:					
Gypsies & travellers	6	9	10	2	0
Migrant workers	1	9	9	6	1
Victims of domestic abuse	6	9	11	0	0
Young people (aged 16-24)	8	15	2	2	0
Clients with learning difficulties	6	9	11	0	0
Ex-offenders	2	8	12	4	0
Clients with drug & alcohol issues	5	5	13	3	0
Eligible clients from abroad	0	7	14	3	2
Rough sleepers	6	8	9	2	1



Key Issues:

The housing issues most strongly agreed with were:

- Maximising the use of existing Social Rented Housing by reducing the number of properties that are under-occupied by Tenants by developing schemes to encourage Tenants to transfer to smaller units of accommodation – 15 respondents strongly agreed
- Increasing the supply of affordable housing – 14 respondents strongly agreed
- Addressing the needs of homeless and potentially homeless households – 13 respondents strongly agreed
- Bringing empty properties back into use – 13 respondents strongly agreed.

A further analysis has been conducted on the responses by breaking down the number of people who commented positively (strongly agreed and agreed) on a housing issue in relation to the number of people who commented negatively (disagreed or strongly disagreed) on a housing issue. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 32 over the page.



Table 32 – Observations made in Relation to Housing Issues

Housing Issue	Positively Agreed	% Positive	Negatively Agreed	% Negative
Providing quality market housing	17	62.96%	2	7.41%
Increasing the supply of affordable housing	27	96.43%	0	0.00%
Addressing the needs of homeless & potentially homeless households	26	92.86%	0	0.00%
Meeting the needs & aspirations of our Tenants (all Tenants including RSL & Private Sector)	23	88.46%	0	0.00%
Meeting decent homes standards in all types of housing	24	88.89%	0	0.00%
Promoting homeless prevention initiatives	25	89.29%	1	3.57%
Increasing opportunities for home ownership (i.e. shared equity)	17	62.96%	1	3.70%
Increasing the provision of supported & extra care housing for people with support needs	20	74.07%	0	0.00%
Improving the range of housing advice, information & communications provided	18	66.67%	1	3.70%
Promoting partnership working to improve services	21	77.78%	1	3.70%
Assist people to live independently in their own homes	20	80.00%	0	0.00%
Improve the access to services in rural areas/promote sustainable communities	23	85.19%	1	3.70%
Maintain an understanding of/respond to local housing needs	24	85.71%	0	0.00%
Developing more environmentally friendly housing	22	81.48%	1	3.70%
Providing more settled homes & cohesive communities	19	70.37%	1	3.70%
Maximise the use of existing Social Rented Housing by reducing the number of properties that are under-occupied by Tenants by developing schemes to encourage Tenants to transfer to smaller units of accommodation	26	96.30%	0	0.00%
Bring empty properties back into use	26	92.86%	0	0.00%
Improve the condition & quality of private sector properties	16	64.00%	1	4.00%
Promote more energy efficient measures in existing housing, tackling fuel poverty & reducing carbon emissions	24	88.89%	1	3.70%
Targeted development of appropriate Housing Options for the following groups:				
Gypsies & travellers	15	55.56%	2	7.41%
Migrant workers	10	38.46%	7	26.92%
Victims of domestic abuse	15	57.69%	0	0.00%
Young people (aged 16-24)	23	85.19%	2	7.41%
Clients with learning difficulties	15	57.69%	0	0.00%
Ex-offenders	10	38.46%	4	15.38%
Clients with drug & alcohol issues	10	38.46%	3	11.54%
Eligible clients from abroad	7	26.92%	5	19.23%
Rough sleepers	14	53.85%	3	11.54%



Key Issues:

The housing issues most positively agreed with were:

- Increasing the supply of affordable housing – 27 (96.43%) respondents positively agreed
- Maximising the use of existing Social Rented Housing by reducing the number of properties that are under-occupied by Tenants by developing schemes to encourage Tenants to transfer to smaller units of accommodation – 26 (96.30%) respondents positively agreed
- Addressing the needs of homeless and potentially homeless households – 26 (92.86%) respondents positively agreed
- Bringing empty properties back into use – 26 (92.86%) respondents positively agreed
- Promoting homeless prevention initiatives – 25 (89.29%) respondents positively agreed
- Meeting decent homes standards in all types of housing (88.89%) – 24 respondents positively agreed
- Maintaining and understanding of/respond to local housing needs (85.71%) – 24 respondents positively agreed
- Promoting more energy efficient measures in existing housing, tackling fuel poverty and reducing carbon emissions – 24 (88.89%) respondents positively agreed

The housing issues that most respondents did not feel were a priority were:

- Targeted development of appropriate Housing Options for the following groups:
 - Migrant workers – 7 (26.92%) respondents negatively agreed
 - Eligible clients from abroad – 5 (19.23%) respondents negatively agreed
 - Ex-offenders – 4 (15.38%) respondents negatively agreed

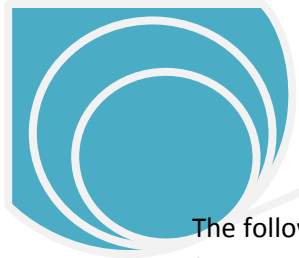
However, it is important to note that negative responses might be based more on the “personal judgement” of respondents and this should, therefore, be taken into consideration when considering the direction of the Housing Strategy.

Respondents also felt that the following housing priorities needed to be considered within the housing strategy:

- The housing needs of people with disabilities
- The housing needs of people with mental health issues
- The use of and reduction of temporary accommodation
- A shortage of housing in Mendip for older single men
- Tenancy support for young people aged 16 to 25 years old
- Supported housing for teenage parents
- Night shelter accommodation
- Supported housing for young people in West Mendip
- A better understanding of the housing issues in Mendip’s rural areas

FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS

As well as being sent questionnaires to complete, stakeholders were also offered the opportunity to meet with the consultants in person to discuss the strategic housing role and where priorities in the new Housing Strategy should lie. A wide range of people either completed questionnaires / had face to face interviews from a wide range of officers, partners, clients and Members.



The following key issues, not already mentioned in the strategy so far were highlighted in the face to face interview process and have informed the strategy action plan.

Key Issues:

- Mendip District council's family mediation service is provided in partnership with the YMCA. It is funded through the council's housing options budget and helps young people at risk of homelessness due to parental eviction return to the family home either permanently or to enable a planned move to be organised with support. The service accepts referrals for 16-25 year olds. However it has been identified that if mediation services were provided across all age ranges and tenures this would assist the local authority in meeting their targets set by government. It was felt that Mendip district Council should investigate the provision of mediation services across all age ranges and tenures for a wider range of reasons (e.g. anti-social behaviour / neighbour disputes).
- Several respondents felt that the Council's enabling service was under resourced and that more of a focus should be placed on rural enabling given the extent of the rural identity of Mendip District. A rural market assessment was suggested to ensure that rural infrastructure supports housing development and that 'village life' is preserved.
- It was suggested that the Mendip Strategic Housing Partnership, a sub-division of the Mendip Strategic Partnership, set up to oversee the housing objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy, would be a well placed vehicle to take forward the action plan of this Housing Strategy.

LOCAL CONFERENCES

During the consultation period, work on the Housing Strategy and stakeholder input was encouraged at the Somerset Private Landlords' Expo, the Somerset Affordable Housing Conference and the Somerset Private Sector Housing Managers' Meeting, which were all held during this time. Valuable information was gathered from these events and has been incorporated within the strategy.

CONSULTING ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY

A draft strategy was produced and circulated to all stakeholders for their comments. After reviewing the comments received from stakeholders, the final draft of the Housing Strategy was completed.



Building the Priorities

Key issues arising from the previous sections through the data analysis, research of partners' strategies and the consultation process have been grouped together under headings to form the priorities for the Housing Strategy for the next five years. The four strategic housing priorities for 2010-2015 are as follows and will ensure that we achieve our vision of

"A decent home for all"

Our mission to enable us to achieve this vision is:

"Working in partnership to ensure that every household in Mendip has access to housing across all tenures that is of decent quality, affordable and sustainable, in order to enable residents to maximise the opportunities to live, learn, work and invest in Mendip".

From this, our four strategic housing priorities will be the focus for the period 2010 to 2015. These priorities are:

1. Preventing homelessness
2. Making better use of existing housing stock
3. Increasing the supply of well-designed market and affordable housing that is appropriate for the town or village within which it is delivered
4. Improving partnerships and community empowerment

Preventing Homelessness

This is an area of work that was praised by the Audit Commission in their 2008 inspection and should remain as a priority for the Council. At a county level, preventing homelessness continues to be a high priority, illustrated by the 2008 jointly commissioned Somerset Homelessness Review and Prevention Strategy (2008-2011) for all five District Authorities exploring joint working initiatives and disseminating best practise for implementation at County level.

Homelessness is known to have impacts beyond the immediate housing issues, having wider social and economic impacts as well. Therefore, activities aimed at the prevention of homelessness, clearly have a wide reaching benefit, including reducing the need for public sector services and costs to public finances as well as the obvious savings to the Council made from reduced use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation. Common themes surrounding homelessness include:

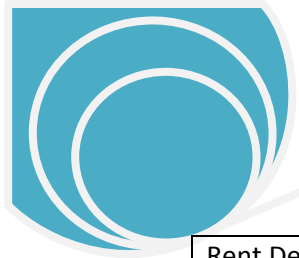
- Loss of connection to support from friends and family
- Disruption to schooling for children
- Physical and mental health impacts
- Worsening of any existing problems, for example, financial, health and addictions
- Difficulties accessing employment
- Increased risk of injury
- Increased risk of being a victim of crime



There are a number of current homeless prevention schemes in operation at Mendip District Council which are summarised in Table 33 below.

Table 33 – Mendip District Council Homeless Prevention Schemes in Operation

Prevention Scheme	Description and Access Criteria
CAB Debt/Welfare Advice	Mendip District Council funds a scheme via homeless prevention monies through the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to deliver debt advice and assistance to clients who are threatened with homelessness as a result of debt. Funded from CLG Homelessness prevention grant monies.
CAB MAAP (Multi Agency Assessment Panels)	If a client is homeless or threatened with homelessness and has multiple needs, a referral can be made to the MAAP. These meetings are facilitated by CAB and the client is expected to attend the meetings along with all relevant agencies whom CAB determine as being essential to resolving the client’s difficulties. The client is expected to contribute to the solution thus taking ownership. The scheme is funded by CLG homeless prevention grant monies.
CAB Warrant Scheme	There is no county court in rural Mendip and research shows that client’s dealing with their rent/mortgage arrears in this district tend not to attend initial court possession hearings. Therefore clients tend to leave repossession issues until the last minute (i.e. at court bailiff stage) – leaving little or no time to make applications to suspend warrants for eviction. The new scheme allows for clients to be referred to CAB who have or are about to receive a bailiff’s warrant for their eviction. The client will then referred on for specialist legal advice and will arrange for legal representation at court and where necessary, arrange transport for the client to attend court along with payment of fees where essential to prevent the eviction. The scheme is funded from CLG monies issued to us due to Mendip’s unique position of not having a court in the district & the difficulties clients face.
Mendip YMCA	(MEAG – emergency accommodation with families; resettlement support for homeless young people; interactive preventative sessions in schools work; Strode College Advice Desk; Family Mediation scheme) For young people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness aged 16-25, accessed through a range of referral agencies across the District. Funded from Mendip DC Housing Options Budget.



Rent Deposit Scheme Deposit Guarantee Scheme	Mendip District Council provide a rent deposit scheme for priority need households who are statutory homeless or threatened with homelessness & without savings or means for a deposit. A dedicated officer has recently been employed to take forward the work generated by this scheme. Funded from Mendip DC Housing Options budget – recycled due to the nature of the scheme. Mendip YMCA administer a 6 month deposit bond to single or childless couples to whom the Council has no statutory duty
Homeshare Scheme	Older & disabled people who wish to remain in their own home but require extra support. Offer of accommodation in that home to anyone who can provide those support needs.
Rent Arrears Protocol	Any RSL tenant facing eviction proceedings is referred to a Housing Options Officer who visits to give independent advice & assistance. No funding necessary – officer time.
Mortgage Rescue	Government scheme aimed at keeping people in their properties via two options; sale and rent back or sale to shared equity. Available to any resident of Mendip who is facing mortgage repossession. No funding necessary – officer time.
Moving Made Easy	Assistance given to any tenant of Mendip Housing limited who wishes to move to smaller accommodation in order to free up larger units of accommodation with the resultant vacancy being offered to a client who is homeless or threatened with homelessness. Funded from CLG prevention grant monies.
Home Visits	Available to any resident who is not capable of accessing services from a central location. Visits are offered by our Choice Based Lettings Co-ordinator for Homefinder advice and assistance and by our Housing Options Officers for homeless prevention, homelessness advice and assistance. No funding necessary – officer time & travel costs.
Housing Benefit Fast Track Scheme	Where Housing Benefit issues are threatening a client with homelessness, Housing Options Officers will work with the client and ask Housing Benefit to fast track the claim. No funding necessary – officer time.
Court Desk	Any Mendip household requiring assistance in defending eviction proceedings. Cross County service – Bath, Bristol, Yeovil and Trowbridge (for all areas covered by these courts). CLG funded schemes – Mendip DC facilitate these schemes.
Client Group Protocols	Mental Health Referral Protocol. No funding necessary – officer time.



In addition to these local level schemes, the following Table 34 highlights homeless prevention schemes in operation across the County:

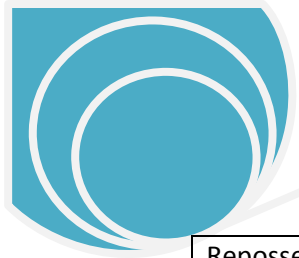
Table 34 – Somerset Countywide Homeless Prevention Schemes in Operation

Prevention Scheme	Description and Access Criteria
NOVAS	Single people floating support service for single people homeless or threatened with homelessness
Move On	Any Supported Housing tenant when ready to leave supported housing is visited and banded into the highest priority band, the Gold Band, and offered other options including a rent deposit to access the Private Rented Sector.
Carr Gomm	Family floating support for families requiring assistance, homeless or threatened with homelessness
Care Leavers	Countywide protocol in place to ensure that care leavers approaching their 18 th birthdays can, where possible remain in their current accommodation until a long term solution is found
Client Group Protocols	Young People’s Protocol Dangerous and potentially dangerous offenders protocol Teenage Pregnancies Protocol
Homestart	Support service for households with at least one child under five years old

The Housing Options Team is also in the process of planning the implementation of future homeless prevention schemes shown in Table 35 below for 2009/ 2010.

Table 35 – Planned Future Homeless Prevention Schemes for Mendip District

Prevention Scheme	Description and Access Criteria
Recession Impact Funding (Countywide work)	Funding awarded to Mendip District Council to mitigate the effects of the recession across the County on a sub-regional basis. Homeless Managers across the County of Somerset have agreed to make best use of this funding by employing a Countywide Recession Impact Co-ordinator. Post-holder appointed and due to commence employment end November 2009. Funded by CLG on sub-regional basis, one off grant issued to Mendip DC on behalf of the County.
CAB Council Tax Arrears Referral Scheme	Referrals will be made either to Housing Options Officers or Mendip CAB direct, in situations where a client is either making unaffordable repayments or has made an unrealistic arrangement for their council tax debt which could lead to them prioritising this debt over rent payments or mortgage payments which could ultimately lead to repossession / eviction. Funded from CLG excess warrant scheme funds with the aim of preventing further repossessions and evictions.



<p>Repossessions & Evictions “Loans” Prevention Fund</p>	<p>Scheme to “loan / grant” monies to clients threatened with homelessness as a result of rent arrears or mortgage arrears to prevent households from becoming homeless. Scheme will be targeted at the “can’t” pay as opposed to the “won’t” pay. Scheme under development as at October 2009 – so delivered scheme may vary. Funded from CLG Repossessions and Evictions funding.</p>
<p>Housing Benefit Referral Protocol</p>	<p>Initial meetings held with the Housing Benefit department to establish a referral system to the Housing Options Team when the Housing Benefit department becomes aware of a notice to quit or potential notice to quit has been/likely to be served so that intervention is undertaken to try and help prevent homelessness. A referral protocol is currently being drafted.</p>

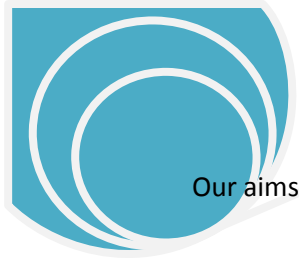
“Private Sector Leasing”: Looking at alternative units for use as temporary accommodation

Working in partnership with Mendip Housing, Mendip District Council operates a very successful private sector leasing scheme for Private Landlords. This has enabled a number of households to move out of less suitable temporary accommodation, like hostels and bed and breakfast accommodation into more suitable, self contained accommodation. There are currently 26 (capped) properties leased from Private Landlords for a period of 3 to 5 years.

Based on the success of this scheme, a longer term leasing option for Private Landlords (over 5 years) has been developed and it is hoped that as these properties are leased for a longer period of time they will form a more settled option for households and will not be classed as temporary accommodation.

“Council Tax Arrears Referral Scheme”: Working with Council Tax & the Citizens Advice Bureau to reduce Evictions

A partnership approach between Housing Options and the Council Tax department has been developed in response to recognising that clients are sometimes making unrealistic repayment arrangements when bailiffs approach them. We have been made aware of at least one client who has lost their home as a result of making payments in this way – rather than making affordable payments, including rent payments. Accordingly a scheme is shortly to be introduced to tackle this in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Housing Options Team – using homeless prevention grant monies. The Citizens Advice Bureau will receive referrals from agencies where Council Tax arrears may result in the client losing their home, affordable repayment plans will be made with the Council Tax team and an officer will attend Magistrates Court monthly to assist clients who present at Court.



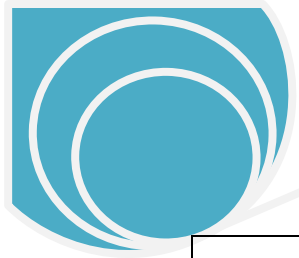
Our aims for 2010-2015 within this strategic housing priority are highlighted in Table 36 below.

Table 11 – Aims for Preventing Homelessness (this will be implemented through Making Homes Helping People, Changing Lives, Somerset Homelessness review and prevention Strategy 2008-2011)

Strategic Priority 1:	Preventing Homelessness
Aim:	Comments:
<p>We will introduce a system of Enhanced Housing Options for Mendip Residents</p>	<p>When a client approaches the Housing Options service for assistance with accommodation, resolving their housing situation may not be the only solution to their problems. Housing, worklessness, skills and education are all interlinked and therefore, any help provided to clients should be viewed as a “package”. Providing a sustainable housing solution also involves looking at other elements of their personal circumstances and having those partnerships and referral procedures to other help agencies set up. For example, an enhanced housing options system may have partnership arrangements with organisations providing benefits advice, debt advice charities, local employment advisors and the job centre, skills plus and other adult education and children’s centres. We will monitor closely the work of the “Trailblazer” Authorities on enhanced housing options and look to build solutions in Mendip to the wider causes of homelessness.</p>
<p>We will reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>In order to meet the Government’s target on reducing the number of households living in temporary accommodation, we will have 38 households in temporary accommodation by December 2010. With 50 households in temporary accommodation at the end of quarter one in 2009, we need to reduce this number by 11 households. Whilst we have not made significant strides at achieving the target in numbers, efforts have been concentrated on ensuring that those residing in temporary accommodation do so in better condition stock and stock that is more efficiently used. Numbers residing temporarily in hostel accommodation and residential social landlord stock have dramatically reduced, with more households being placed in self contained private sector leased property.</p>



<p>We will improve partnership working with the Private Sector</p>	<p>The private rented sector provides a large potential source of accommodation for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The private rented sector is most commonly accessed via the Council's rent deposit scheme. We will consider the creation of a social lettings agency, advocated in the recent Government response to the Rugg Review. We could achieve access to a greater pool of stock by improving partnership working with the Private Sector, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By continuing to hold regular Landlords' Forums• Inviting influential local Landlords and Agents to a smaller Business Club• By continuing to produce a regular Landlords' Newsletter• Improving relations with the Housing Benefit department• Improving the support available to Landlords and Agents• Reviewing existing rent deposit schemes to improve their appeal to Private Sector Landlords
<p>We will provide pro-active Mediation services</p>	<p>Mediation services already exist within the Mendip district. We will investigate whether Mediation services could be expanded to include evictions (encompassing both rent and anti-social behaviour claims) and mortgage repossession cases.</p>



<p>We will take steps to end rough sleeping by 2012</p>	<p>In 2008, the Government introduced a new target for Local Authorities to end rough sleeping in their areas by 2012. A count of rough sleepers will be carried out in Mendip to establish the numbers of rough sleepers in the district. Based on the results, a rough sleeper strategy produced at County level to establish the actions required to achieve this target.</p> <p>In November 2009 the five councils in Somerset will hold a Rough sleeper event to educate agencies (both statutory and voluntary) and to start gathering intelligence to enable each Local Authority to map the numbers of rough sleepers in the County. This event will also enable Mendip District Council to plan and carry out a count in the Spring of 2010 . Mendip District Council was awarded monies as a one off grant in September 2009 to assist the five Somerset Local Authorities in facilitating this work.</p> <p>We recognise that to tackle Rough Sleeping is more than just Bricks and Mortar, it involves untreated mental illness, the criminal justice system to name a few and is an area where partnership working is crucial. The event due to be held in November recognises this fact and will assist us in developing these strong partnerships.</p>
<p>We will improve the accessibility of Housing Options services</p>	<p>We will improve the accessibility of Housing Options services in locations across the Mendip District. Information provided on the Council website will be easily accessible and updated regularly. There will be a good range of leaflets explaining the Housing Options service that will be made available online, in alternative languages and in larger print. We have already reviewed the extension of opening hours for Housing Options services in 2009 and have established that there is currently no demand for providing extended opening hours. We will explore opportunities to work with our largest Housing Provider Mendip Housing to “share” surgeries that they already operate in the main towns of Mendip</p> <p>However this will be reviewed regularly. As part of our corporate review of customer access channels we will explore how we can improve the accessibility of our housing options services.</p>



Making Better Use of Existing Stock

Significant savings are available to Councils that target resources at making better use of their existing housing stock. Examples of where spending resources on existing housing stock can contribute to savings include:

- Every £1 spent on providing housing support for vulnerable people can save nearly £2 in reduced costs of health services, tenancy failure, crime and residential care (Audit Commission, Building Better Lives, Sept 2009)
- If only 5% of empty properties could be brought back into use, Councils could save their annual homelessness costs by £1/2 billion (Audit Commission, Building Better Lives, Sept 2009)
- Spending between £2,000 and £20,000 on adaptations that enable an elderly person to remain in their own home can save £6,000 per year on care costs (Audit Commission, Building Better Lives, Sept 2009)
- By providing assistance to households to improve energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty, homelessness could be prevented as the household has more disposable income for housing related costs
- The cost of building new affordable housing is much greater than renovating existing housing stock
- Mendip Housing Limited estimate that 58% of their residents are living in inappropriately sized accommodation for their household size. Incentive schemes targeted at moving these households will assist in freeing up much needed family sized social rented accommodation, one of the schemes to tackle this issue is illustrated below.

“Moving Made Easy” : An innovative partnership approach between Mendip District Council and Mendip Housing Limited to reduce the number of Tenants under-occupying social rent housing

This scheme encourages households that are under occupying social rented housing to downsize. Each client partaking in this scheme is allocated a dedicated Support Officer to work with the client to help them through the moving process. Whilst financial incentives are offered the scheme also includes services such as, arranging and organising removals, the setting up and closing down of bill accounts for example, as the scheme suggests “moving made easy”. Mendip Housing Limited and Mendip District Council have found that by offering a “package”, households are more likely to consider the downsize, freeing up valuable family sized social rented accommodation.

“Nomination Rights for Empty Properties” : A partnership approach between Mendip District Council and Mendip Housing Limited to bring empty properties back into use

Where the Council is able to provide grant aid to bring an empty property back into use, the requirement placed on the Landlord is then nomination rights for that property for up to 5 years. Mendip Housing Limited is providing assistance in a number of these cases by managing these properties.



Our aims for 2010-2015 within this strategic housing priority are highlighted in Table 37 below.

Table 37 – Aims for Making Better Use of Existing Housing Stock (which will be delivered through the Private Sector Housing Strategy and it’s associated strategies)

Strategic Priority 2:	Making better use of existing Housing Stock
Aim:	Comments:
<p>We will bring empty properties back into use</p>	<p>Mendip has 1,406 empty properties of which 572 have been vacant for more than six months. We have recently published an Empty Homes Strategy for the next three years and have a dedicated Empty Homes Officer. There is grant funding available to bring long term empty properties back into use based on conditions that the property is either managed for a five year period by Mendip Housing Limited or the Council receives five year nomination rights at market rent levels equivalent to those of the Local Housing Allowance.</p> <p>Other methods of bringing empty properties back into use include partnership arrangements with the Council’s Rent Deposit Scheme and Rent Deposit Officer.</p> <p>We will continue to identify empty properties in the Mendip District and provide a range of solutions to owners of empty properties. Larger units of accommodation will continue to be identified by the Empty Homes Officer and potential uses for such buildings explored, including, for temporary accommodation, foyers or private sector leasing.</p> <p>We will provide assistance to Private Landlords in marketing their vacant properties by incorporating private lets within Somerset Homefinder.</p>
<p>We will improve energy efficiency, tackle fuel poverty & reduce carbon emissions</p>	<p>We have recently published an affordable warmth strategy for the next three years, aimed at tackling the issue of fuel poverty and improving the advice, information and assistance that is available to households to improve energy efficiency. We will continue with this work and recognise the wider impact of this topic in relation to housing renewal, homelessness and the environmental impact of housing.</p>



<p>We will reduce the number of Tenants living in in-appropriately sized accommodation for their household size</p>	<p>In partnership with Mendip Housing Limited, we already operate a successful and innovative scheme, “Moving Made Easy”, aimed at reducing the number of Tenants living in inappropriately sized property for their household size. We will encourage such schemes amongst other RSL partners across Mendip and further develop the incentives for Tenants to partake in such schemes.</p>
<p>We will work with our partners to crackdown on unlawful sub-letting of properties in the social housing sector.</p>	<p>In partnership with Mendip Housing Limited we will develop a pilot scheme along with the Council’s Housing Benefit Department to tackle unlawful sub-letting.</p>
<p>We will improve partnership work with the Private Sector</p>	<p>Improving the partnership work with the Private Sector will improve the condition of Private Sector stock. We will do this via a number of mechanisms, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to hold regular Landlords’ Forums • Introducing Landlord Accreditation • Enforcement of sub standard stock where necessary • Grant aid • Improving advice and information available to Private Landlords
<p>We will increase the number of “Decent Homes” in the private sector</p>	<p>We will target assistance at ensuring as many Private Tenants as possible live in a “Decent Home”. The mechanisms for achieving this are the same as for the aim mentioned above.</p>
<p>We will develop “exit strategies” for clients living in supported housing within Mendip</p>	<p>Some clients who are currently living in units of Supported Housing are ready to “move on” into more independent accommodation with appropriate support. However, due to a lack of accommodation for these clients to move into / availability of effective procedures, these clients are not being re-housed efficiently which in turn leads to other households in need of supported housing unable to access them, thus creating a tendency for supported housing to become “silted”. We will work with our partners to effectively tackle this issue.</p> <p>The Mendip YMCA currently operates a “move on” register of individuals looking for new accommodation. We will continue to promote this as best practice</p>



<p>We will continue to monitor the Somerset choice based lettings scheme to ensure that it meets the needs of local Mendip residents & ensure existing stock is let effectively</p>	<p>The Somerset Homefinder choice based lettings system was introduced county wide in late 2008. We will continue to monitor this system across the Mendip District to ensure that no group is disadvantaged by the system, including minority groups, homeless households and the allocation of new affordable housing to local people. The current methods of property bidding are being monitored and we will explore the possibility of introducing bidding by text/digital television.</p>
<p>We will assist independent living of the ageing population</p>	<p>With the ONS population estimates suggesting that the number of people aged between 65 and 74 will increase by 49.5% by 2026 and the number of people aged over 75 will increase by 75.0% by 2026, a strong focus needs to be planning for assisting the independent living of an ageing Mendip population. This will include an impact on budgets for property adaptations, a targeted and timely delivery of adaptations, the provision of housing related support for this population group and the provision of appropriate housing across all tenures.</p> <p>Funding for a countywide Home Improvement Agency has been committed to start from October 2010 offering services for property adaptations throughout Somerset. We will monitor the success of this Agency over the next few years to ensure that it is responding to the needs of the residents by providing a good services which offers value for money.</p>
<p>We will re-develop existing buildings/inappropriate housing</p>	<p>This will be viewed in partnership with the ongoing work on empty properties.</p> <p>We are aware there are also existing units of inappropriate housing across the District that could be adapted for better use. Work has already started by Mendip Housing who have converted bedsits into two bedroom bungalows and lifts have been installed in two storey sheltered accommodation. Where it has not been possible to install lifts, units have been re-designated as non-sheltered accommodation. We will continue to work with our RSL partners on these types of initiatives.</p>



Increasing the supply of well-designed market and affordable housing that is appropriate for the town or village within which it is delivered

"Well-designed" market and affordable housing should ensure that new homes are of a type and size that suits local housing requirements, are of a design that fits with the character of the town or village where they are built and are of a standard that ensures high energy efficiency ratings.

"Appropriate" market and affordable housing should ensure that new homes can be supported by and contribute to the local economy. New housing at the towns should be accompanied by the local infrastructure necessary to support them and their occupiers. In rural areas, the emphasis should be upon rural enabling and new housing aimed at meeting local needs, ensuring that local and young people have access to housing. It should also be aimed at ensuring that people have better access to community facilities to meet daily needs (for example doctors, schools, shop, church) and delivered in a way that respects village character.

"Designing Out Crime": Reducing the Potential for Anti Social Behaviour Issues in New Housing

"Designing Out Crime" is a new partnership protocol between the Police and the Planning Department at Mendip District Council to ensure that the Police are consulted on major new housing developments. The Police offer advice and expertise on limiting the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour by working with the Planning Department and developers on the design of new housing estates.

Our aims for 2010-2015 within this strategic housing priority are highlighted in Table 38 below.

Table 38 – Aims for Increasing the Supply of Well-Designed Market and Affordable Housing that is Appropriate for the Town or Village within which it is Delivered.

Strategic Priority 3:	Increasing the Supply of Well-Designed Market and Affordable Housing that is appropriate for the Town or Village within which it is Delivered
Aim:	Comments:
Ensure that the economy is supported by new Housing	We will work closely with the Mendip Strategic Partnership and the Local Development Framework to give careful consideration to new housing developments to ensure that the local infrastructure exists to support new units and that housing contributes to the local economy by ensuring areas are attractive to businesses as well as residents. We will also work closely with the Transport Authority and through the Local Transport Plan as a means of improving transport links within the District.



<p>We will improve our understanding of rural housing issues</p>	<p>We will carry out a Rural Housing Market Assessment in order to better understand rural housing issues and commit greater resources to the Council’s enabling function to improve rural housing enabling.</p>
<p>We will increase housing supply to meet RSS targets</p>	<p>Research via the Strategic Housing Market Assessment suggests that based on existing Mendip planning policies, the Council will fall short by 923 dwellings in meeting the targets specified within the Regional Spatial Strategy. We will support the Local Development Framework which ensures that the RSS target is met.</p>
<p>We will increase affordable housing</p>	<p>Research carried out during the West of England Strategic Housing Market Assessment suggests that by combining the annual net need for affordable social housing (271 units) and the annual net need for intermediate housing (54 units), a total of 325 extra units are required annually for households in need. This takes into account the backlog need and annual supply of new affordable housing.</p> <p>This aim will be looked at in partnership with the previous strategic objective, “making better use of existing stock”, as this will have an effect on the number of new affordable units required.</p> <p>Officers are currently negotiating affordable housing on schemes of 15 units or more across the District. The evidence provided by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Affordable Housing Viability Assessment will be used to inform a reduction of the threshold through the Local Development Framework’s Core Strategy.</p> <p>A partnership approach between the Council and the Housing Associations is essential to ensure that new housing meets local housing need and demand.</p>
<p>We will increase the opportunities to access homes across all tenures.</p>	<p>We will promote all forms of housing tenure to residents in the Mendip District and host local events aimed at promoting access to homes across all tenures.</p>
<p>We will maintain an understanding of and respond to local housing needs</p>	<p>It is essential that we maintain an understanding of the local housing markets so that we can appropriately respond to changes in local housing needs to the benefit of local people.</p>



<p>We will develop an understanding of future housing need</p>	<p>It is essential that new housing and policy relating to new housing is informed by future housing need. Key considerations will be given to providing for the changes in demographics to 2026. For example, consideration will be given to suitable accommodation for an ageing population but likewise, consideration will also be given to trying to encourage younger people and families back to the Mendip area, an element of which will be by providing well designed, appropriate and affordable housing.</p>
<p>We will create new energy efficient / carbon neutral homes</p>	<p>The Government's requirement is for all new homes to be carbon neutral by 2016. We will encourage all new homes in the Mendip area to be highly energy efficient so as to ensure sustainable housing for the future, lower environmental impact and benefits for residents.</p>
<p>We will improve the provision for Gypsies and Travellers</p>	<p>A working group has been established to ensure that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers are met. We will work with partners to achieve outcomes in this area.</p>
<p>We will develop a better understanding of the local housing need for households with disabilities</p>	<p>We will create a better understanding of the local housing need for households with disabilities including the need for wheelchair housing. We will provide targeted and timely property adaptations to households with disabilities wishing to remain in their own home. We will ensure that there is an improved partnership approach between housing providers and support agencies to meet the needs of households with disabilities.</p>



Improving partnerships and community empowerment

The strategic objective, “improving partnerships and community empowerment”, ensures that over the next five years, all stakeholders of our strategic housing service remain and if they have not been previously, become engaged. This includes:

- Partner agencies
- Residents
- Customers
- Tenants
- Members
- Minority groups
- Other Somerset Authorities

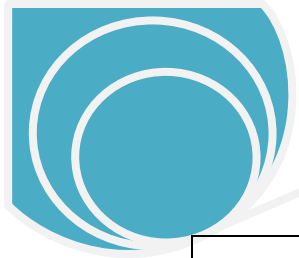
“Changing the Perceptions of Gypsies & Travellers”

Somerset County Council employs a Gypsy Officer for the whole of Somerset. In 2008, in a pilot piece of work with the IDeA aimed at Councils not doing enough on the site provision for Gypsies and Travellers, the Gypsy Officer, in partnership with Mendip District Council did a series of ‘educational’ workshops for Officers and Members of the Council. This included an explanation on the types of Gypsy and Traveller, traditions and in particular the costs to the Council of clearing up unauthorised sites. Part of the work showed how ‘Spend to Save’ policies could assist the Council in cutting costs by over 90% by making appropriate provision, thereby reducing the incidences of unauthorised sites. Since this time Mendip has formed a member led steering group focussed on achieving improved site provision for Gypsies and Travellers.

Our aims for 2010-2015 within this strategic housing priority are highlighted in Table 39 below.

Table 39– Aims for Improving Partnerships and Community Empowerment

Strategic Priority 4: Improving Partnerships and Community Empowerment	
Aim:	Comments:
We will improve referrals and joint protocols between agencies	We want to ensure that housing clients “flow through” the various services and we will work to improve the way in which referrals are made between agencies by developing robust protocols.



<p>We will improve the opportunities for customer & resident involvement</p>	<p>Local Mendip residents and housing customers will be given every opportunity to be consulted on all new housing policy. Means for ensuring that this is effective include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the Council website • Use of the Council’s magazine • Questionnaires • Forums • Leaflets
<p>We will communicate with Members and Partners</p>	<p>It is imperative that “housing” receives the support it deserves and as such Members and other partners must receive up to date and accurate information through various communication mechanisms of the activities of the Housing Department.</p>
<p>We will improve partnership working with Gypsies & Travellers and other minority groups</p>	<p>It is important that accurate information regarding the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and other minority groups, such as migrant workers, is obtained through partnership working with those that represent these groups.</p> <p>A Member working group is now in place and a draft action plan for a Gypsy and Traveller strategy for Mendip has been produced. The working group includes inter departmental representatives, Members and gypsy representatives.</p> <p>A migrant workers forum has been developed which includes representatives from migrant groups, Members, statutory and voluntary agencies. We will continue to support this Forum.</p> <p>We also have a Disability Forum which we will continue to support.</p>
<p>We will encourage joint working across the county for the benefit of residents</p>	<p>There is a commitment through the Pioneer Somerset group to improve joint working across Somerset. We will investigate all opportunities to achieve value for money and efficiency in relation to providing housing services. Best Practice within Mendip and its partners will be replicated where possible.</p>



Resourcing The Strategy

Introduction

To meet the aspirations in this strategy we recognise that we need to ensure that there are suitable resources available to help achieve the outcomes. The priorities in our strategy have been determined through consultation and are a reflection of the feedback we have received, the views expressed to the Council as part of the MORI research and the goals the council has set out in its Corporate Plan.

We must however bear in mind that local government faces an uncertain future financially. Funds available for the public sector are reducing and choices must be made both at local and central government on how this dwindling pot should be spent. Difficult decisions will have to be taken over the next few years.

We recognise that to make the best use of the resources we have now, and in the future, we must act as a provider, a partner, an enabler and a commissioner to get the best value for our customers.

Funding

The council relies upon a variety of funding streams to deliver its housing services. The table below shows the historic finances in recent years and the current financial year. It can be seen that a considerable proportion of income is derived from external sources. The council will be working to ensure that all potential external funding sources are explored but recognise that, should central government alter its focus on housing, this level of support may not be maintained.

Table 40 – Financial table

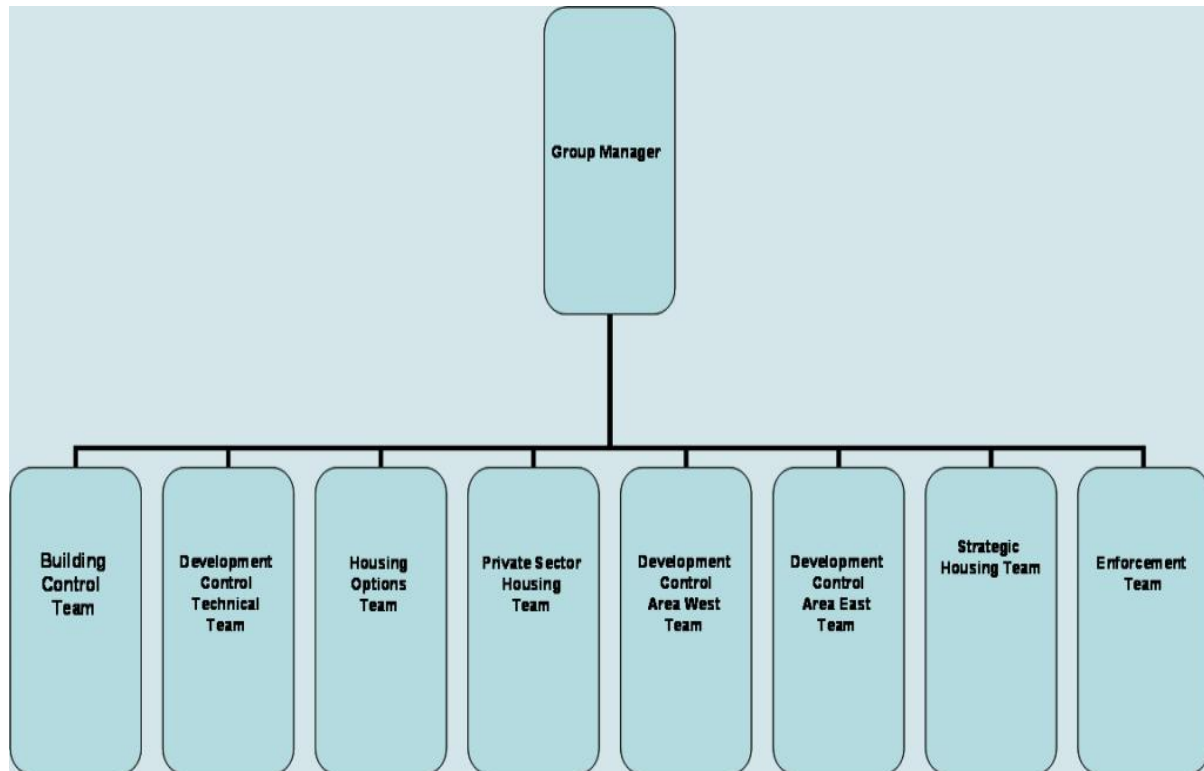
	2007/8 Expenditure	2008/9 Expenditure	2009/10 Budget
Homelessness and Housing Options			
Revenue	1,127,689.45	1,365,494.30	1,179,750.00
Capital	6,590.00	37,760.58	106,280.00
External Grants awarded	-24,850.00	-237,000.43	-164,050.00
Other income	-43,198.01	-93,941.71	-28,200.00
Private sector Housing			
Revenue	526,603.09	515,949.40	645,090.00
Capital	902,796.69	800,915.78	886,850.00
External grants received	-576,898.38	-310,500.00	-654,000.00
Other income	-300.00	-762.00	-90,000.00
Housing Enabling			
Revenue	173,652.52	185,270.22	172,020.00
Capital	330,587.00	333,500.00	537,000.00
External grants	-330,587.00	-333,500.00	-230,000.00
Other income	35,312.00	-50,400.00	0.00

Staff Resources

The main housing services in Mendip are provided through the Built Environment Group. This includes Planning and Building Control as well as Private Sector Housing, Housing Options, Housing Strategy and Enabling. By bringing these professionals together we have been able to gain greater benefit from their skills.

As part of the Somerset Pioneer work on strategic housing across Somerset we are also looking at pooling resources to gain efficiencies.

The structure below shows the current Built Environment Group:



Our Financial Processes

The council's Capital Strategy and Housing Strategy are linked to provide the finance and delivery of improved housing services to our residents.

Our Medium Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) supports the delivery of our Corporate Plan by setting out how capital and revenue funding will be used to meet goals.

The individual service plans then detail how the services will deliver the Corporate Plan. The Housing Strategy is a key council strategy and while the bulk of the service delivery is through the Built Environment Group, the strategy has cross cutting themes that mean many different parts of the council carry out work to contribute to its success.

The council is robust in its management of its resources. Portfolio holders are given monthly reports of progress and our Cabinet receive regular reports on the progress of the capital programme and revenue expenditure ensuring that any deviations are quickly addressed.

Future Resourcing

The resourcing of the Housing Strategy in its current form, throughout its life, cannot be guaranteed in the current financial climate. The council will endeavour to meet all of the aims within the strategy and aim to provide suitable resources to allow work to be carried out. We would however be remiss in our responsibilities if we did not recognise that changes in Government direction and funding over the next few years could greatly affect the funds received by the council and its ability to meet the aspirations in the strategy.

We believe that it is prudent for the council to annually review the progress of the strategy and the resources required to fund the strategy's objectives. This will be done through the medium financial planning that the council carries out as part of the MTRS. We will monitor changes in Government direction and in addition the funding they give us. If necessary we will re-prioritise the outcomes within the strategy and the allocation of resources to meet them ensuring we provide best value for our residents with the resources we have available.



Building the Action Plan

It is anticipated that the Housing Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored by the Mendip Strategic Housing Partnership, a sub group of the Mendip Strategic Partnership. In order for this arrangement to be effective, the Mendip Strategic Housing Partnership must receive cross-departmental support as well as support from local stakeholders. This group will meet regularly to monitor progress against the action plan, including keeping it up to date and relevant to Mendip District Council. Progress against the Action Plan should be reported regularly to the Corporate Management Team. This action plan sits above the other Housing Strategies which, themselves, have subject specific operational action plans.

	Action can be completed in 12 months within existing staffing resource
	Action can be completed in 2 years within existing staffing resource
	Action can be completed in 5 years within existing staffing resource
	Action requires an additional funding commitment

Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
Appoint Mendip Strategic Housing Partnership as the vehicle for delivering the Housing Strategy	To ensure that the Housing Strategy action plan is implemented, the Mendip Strategic Housing Partnership should receive cross-departmental support as well as support from local stakeholders.	Built Environment Group Manager	- Mendip Strategic Partnership	Jan 2010	<u>Measures:</u> Quarterly meetings are held and outcomes are reported back to Mendip Strategic Partnership who oversee the delivery of the strategy <u>Outcomes:</u> The Partnership monitor & drive progress which in turn increases customer satisfaction



Strategic Priority 1: Preventing Homelessness implementation via the Somerset Homelessness Review and Prevention Strategy 2008-2011						
	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
1.1	Introduce a system of Enhanced Housing Options (EHO)	<p>Gain an understanding of the work of the EHO Trailblazer Local Authorities from across the Country and learn from their experiences.</p> <p>Develop partnership approaches and referral systems with other agencies to tackle the wider causes of homelessness.</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Welfare benefits advisors, Debt advice charities, local Employment advisors, Job Centre, Adult Education, Children's Centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy 	Dec 2012	<p><u>Measures:</u> P1E returns to CLG</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Broader range of effective Housing Options available to clients which in turn leads to increase in homelessness prevention</p>
1.2	Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation	<p>Building partnerships with accommodation providers to re-house households in more suitable, sustainable, longer term accommodation.</p> <p>Continued partnership with Mendip Housing on longer term PSL scheme.</p> <p>Continued partnership and development of new partnerships with support agencies to assist clients to live more independently in more suitable, longer term accommodation</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Support agencies, Private Sector Housing, Mendip Housing Ltd, Private Sector Landlords</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy 	<p>Dec 2010</p> <p>Ongoing reductions in numbers post 2010</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Government target for Mendip = 38 households in temporary accommodation by December 2010 P1E homelessness prevention returns to CLG</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Reduction in the use of temporary accommodation – by preventing homelessness leading to enhancing health wellbeing and educational attainment</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
1.3	Improve partnership working with the Private Sector	<p>Continue regular Landlords' Forums</p> <p>Regular Landlords' Business Club</p> <p>Continue regular Landlords' Newsletter</p> <p>Improve working relations with the Housing Benefit Department</p> <p>Improve the support available to Landlords' and Agents</p> <p>Improve the support available to Tenants placed in Private Sector properties</p> <p>Review existing rent deposit scheme to improve its appeal to Private Landlords and Agents</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager & Private Sector Housing Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Private Landlords, Landlords' Associations, Housing Benefit, Support Agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - The Private Rented Sector: Professionalism & Quality 2009 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy 	Jan 2011	<p><u>Measures:</u> P1E returns – increase in number of prevention of homelessness cases via Private Sector</p> <p>Continue hosting bi-annual Landlords' Forums in Mendip</p> <p>Increase number of Landlords attending Landlords' Forums</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Increase in the number of households satisfactorily housed in the Private Sector</p> <p>Improvement in the quality of Private sector Housing</p> <p>Reduction in the number of residents applying for housing through Homefinder Somerset & Homelessness applications</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
1.4	Provide pro-active Mediation services	<p>Include use of Mediation services into written procedures and work with Mediation providers to create a more pro-active service.</p> <p>Investigate and consider expansion of mediation services to include evictions and mortgage repossessions.</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Mediation providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy 	Jan 2012	<p><u>Measures:</u> P1E return - Increase in the number of homeless prevention cases resolved via Mediation</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Less residents applying as homeless</p> <p><u>NI's:</u> BVPI 213</p>
1.5	Take steps to achieve Gov't target of ending rough sleeping by 2012	<p>Countywide production of a rough sleeper strategy</p> <p>Carry out a rough sleepers' count in Mendip</p> <p>Improved understanding of rough sleepers within the local area</p> <p>Improve partnership working with support agencies to improve the options/referrals for rough sleepers</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Sedgemoor, South Somerset, Taunton Deane, West Somerset Local Authorities, Statutory and voluntary agencies, including, Police, Homeless charities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - No One Left Out 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy 	<p>Countywide initiative to be launched Nov 2009</p> <p>No rough sleepers by 2012</p> <p>Countywide rough sleepers strategy and action plan written by December 2010</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Rough sleeper count completed Spring 2010, results analysed and actions taken accordingly.</p> <p>Countywide rough sleepers strategy and action plan written by December 2010. Development of future actions from this monitored & overseen by countywide Homeless Managers group</p> <p>Reduction in the number of rough sleepers reported to CLG on future counts</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Reduction in numbers of rough sleepers</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
1.6	Improve the accessibility of Housing Options services	<p>Carry out a comprehensive review of the current access arrangements for the Housing Options service and give consideration to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the Council's website and its updating Range of leaflets Availability of leaflets in large print/different languages The use/expansion of home visits Provision of housing options surgeries in various locations throughout the District "Housing Information Points" in town/village locations 	<p>Housing Options Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: MDC customer services & Council Information Points, Mendip Housing Ltd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 Somerset Homelessness Strategy Mendip Racial Equality Scheme Mendip Disability Equality Scheme Mendip Equal Opportunities Policy Mendip Corporate Plan 	<p>Review to be carried out by Jan 2011</p> <p>New accessibility arrangements to start to be introduced from Jan 2012</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Review completed and SMART action plan produced following review</p> <p>Increased customer satisfaction through improved customer accessibility to the service</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Residents able to access the services that they need locally</p>
1.7	Implementation of the Somerset Homelessness Strategy	<p>Continued implementation of the Somerset Homelessness Strategy action plan at a local level</p> <p>Progress against the Homelessness Strategy action plan monitored locally via local steering group of stakeholders</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Five Somerset Local Authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somerset Homelessness Strategy 	<p>Ongoing to 2011 when strategy expires</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> All outcomes for the Somerset Homelessness Strategy are achieved within target – monitored by both the Countywide Homeless Managers Group and Mendip's Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group.</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Residents needs are met and levels of homelessness reduced</p>

Strategic Priority 2:		Making Better Use of Existing Housing Stock to be implemented through the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2009 - 2012				
	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
2.1	Bringing empty properties back into use	<p>Grant funding programme to bring empty properties back into use for five year nomination rights or to be managed by Mendip Housing.</p> <p>Increase partnership arrangements with the Rent Deposit Officer to find homeless households to rent empty properties.</p> <p>Continued identification of empty properties with a range of options/solutions offered to owners of empty properties.</p> <p>Incorporate Private Sector lets within the Somerset HomeFinder choice based lettings scheme to help owners advertise their empty properties.</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Housing Options Team, RSL's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities: Powers & Duties 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Mendip Private Sector Housing Strategy - Mendip Empty Homes Strategy - Mendip Economic Strategy 	<p>Ongoing to 2015</p> <p>Dec 2010</p> <p>Ongoing to 2015</p> <p>Jan 2010</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Increased number of empty properties bought back into use across the Mendip District – reported to Members & Senior Officers regularly</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Increased availability of housing in the district giving wider Housing Options for residents in Mendip, Reduction in crime & antisocial behaviour thus enhancing well being & improving quality of life for residents</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
2.2	Improving energy efficiency, tackling fuel poverty and reducing carbon emissions	<p>Grant funding programme to improve the energy efficiency of older properties</p> <p>Improve information available and awareness of grant funding programme</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Somerset Fuel Poverty Partnership, Warm Front, Warming Mendip, Housing Options Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable 2007 - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Climate Change Strategy - Mendip Affordable Warmth Strategy - Mendip Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy 	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Increased take up of energy efficient grants provided</p> <p>Increase the number of households who are no longer in fuel poverty</p> <p>All the above reported to and monitored by Mendip Strategic Partnership</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Enhanced health wellbeing and prosperity, improved quality of life.</p> <p><u>NI's:</u> NI 186 NI 187</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
2.3	Reducing the number of Tenants living in in-appropriately sized accommodation for the household	Introduction of schemes in partnership with registered social landlord partners to entice households to move into more appropriately sized accommodation for their household	Housing Options Team Manager Partners: Mendip Housing Ltd, other RSLs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy 	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Reduction in the number of properties under-occupied</p> <p>Reduction in the number of properties over-occupied</p> <p>Increased numbers of households re-housed due to increase in number of larger sized properties becoming available through introduction of these schemes. P1E returns (homeless prevention households re-housed via this scheme).</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Enhanced health and wellbeing, due to increased numbers of clients being housed / re-housed into more appropriate accommodation.</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
2.4	We will work with our partners to crackdown on unlawful sub-letting of properties in the social housing sector.	In partnership with Mendip Housing Limited we will develop a pilot scheme along with the Council's Housing Benefit Department to tackle unlawful sub-letting.	Housing Options Team Manager Partners: Housing Benefit, Mendip Housing Ltd & other RSL's	- CIH & CLG Best Practice Guidance (due to be released Oct / Nov 09) - CLG / Social Housing Fraud initiative Nov 09	Dec 2010	<u>Measures:</u> Reduction in the numbers of properties unlawfully sub-let. <u>Outcomes:</u> Better use of existing stock for residents in the district.
2.5	Improve partnership working with the Private Sector	Continue to host regular Landlords' Forum Introduction of a Landlord Accreditation scheme Enforcement of sub standard stock where necessary Grants/loans for Private Landlords Improved advice and information made available to Private Sector Landlords	Private Sector Housing Team Manager Partners: Housing Options Team, Private Landlords, Landlords' Associations	- Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - The Private Rented Sector: Professionalism & Quality 2009 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Mendip Community Strategy - Mendip Private Sector Housing Strategy	Better working relationship with Private Sector Landlords by Jan 2011 Grant/loan provision annually to 2015 Introduction of a Landlord Accreditation Scheme pilot from Jan 2010	<u>Measures:</u> Reduction in the number of "non-decent" Private Sector properties Continue hosting bi-annual Landlords' Forums in Mendip Increased number of Mendip properties accepted onto the Landlord Accreditation Scheme <u>Outcomes:</u> Quality of private sector housing is improved with more properties meeting the decent homes standard. Increased health and well being of residents.



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
2.6	Increase the number of “Decent Homes” in the Private Sector	<p>Targeted assistance to ensure that as many Private Tenants as possible live in a “Decent Home”</p> <p>Provision of Decent Homes Grants</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Housing Options Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Mendip Private Sector Housing Strategy - Mendip Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy 	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Reduction in the number of “non-decent” Private sector homes</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Quality of private sector housing is improved with more properties meeting the decent homes standard.</p> <p>Increased health and well being of residents</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
2.7	Develop improved "exit strategies" for clients living in supported housing	<p>Improved partnership working between housing providers and support agencies to assist clients in moving on from supported housing projects more effectively, thus preventing "silting" of supported housing units.</p> <p>Explore, with Mendip YMCA, the expansion of their "move on" private rented scheme and increase publicity of the scheme to both potential new tenants and landlords.</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager & Mendip YMCA</p> <p>Partners: Supported Housing providers, Support agencies, Supporting People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Homelessness Strategy 	Jan 2011	<p>Measures: Homelessness Monitoring Group & CBL working group continually monitor any existing move on schemes / initiatives to ensure they demonstrate effective use of stock</p> <p>Increased number of clients "moved on" from supported housing – making best use of stock ensuring that when client is ready to move on from supported housing this is done so in a timely manner.</p> <p>Outcomes: Supported Housing is used more effectively</p> <p>NI's: NI 141 NI 142 NI 147</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
2.8	Continued monitoring of the Somerset CBL scheme to ensure that it meets the needs of local Mendip residents & ensure existing stock is utilised effectively	Housing Options team to continue to conduct regular CBL policy reviews with LA partners across the County and any complaints made by residents investigated	Housing Options Team Manager Partners: Homefinder Somerset Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mendip Racial Equality Scheme - Mendip Disability Equality Scheme - Mendip Equal Opportunities Policy 	Regular intervals as per Homefinder Somerset Policy	<p><u>Measures:</u> Regular Homefinder Somerset Policy reviews carried out</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Increased Housing Options and choice for residents</p> <p>Improved customer satisfaction</p>
2.9	Assist independent living of ageing population	Provision of property adaptations for the older population Targeted and timely delivery of adaptations Provision of housing related support for those who wish to continue to live independently	Somerset Home Improvement Agency (Mendip Care and Repair) Partners: Private Sector Housing Team, Housing Options Team, Supporting People, Somerset County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Somerset Supporting People Strategy - Mendip Affordable Warmth Strategy - Mendip Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy - Mendip Corporate Plan 	Countywide Home Improvement Agency to start from April 2010 Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Increase the number of property adaptations to assist independent living, thus increasing the number of households supported to live independently.</p> <p>Improve average time taken to perform adaptation</p> <p>Improved satisfaction by residents where adaptations have been carried out</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
	2.9 continued	Develop an Older Person's Housing Strategy	Strategic Housing Team, Housing Options Team Manager Partners: Supporting People, Housing Providers (both RSL's and supported housing providers), Age Concern		June 2012	<u>Outcomes:</u> Increased range of Housing Options available to clients, enabling clients to continue to live independently <u>NI's:</u> NI 141 NI 142
2.10	Re-development of existing buildings / inappropriate housing	Identify empty or inappropriate housing and develop it.	Private Sector Housing Team Manager Partners: Housing Enabling Officer, RSL's, Housing Options Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10) - Somerset Homelessness Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Empty Property Strategy 	Ongoing to 2015	<u>Measures:</u> Increase the number of properties converted / new units provided <u>Outcomes:</u> Quality of housing is improved and increase in numbers of units delivered, enhancing health and wellbeing. Reduction in Anti-social behaviour / crime caused by undeveloped sites / derelict properties. <u>NI's:</u> NI 159 NI 170



Strategic Priority 3:		Increasing the Supply of Well-Designed Market and Affordable Housing that is Appropriate for the Town or Village within which it is Delivered				
	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
3.1	Ensure that the economy is supported by new Housing	Work in partnership with the Local Development Framework to ensure that local infrastructure and space for local infrastructure exists to support new units of housing	<p>Planning Policy Team Manager, Housing Enabling Officer, Development Control Team Managers</p> <p>Partners: Mendip Strategic Partnership, Local Development Framework, Developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong & Prosperous Communities 2006 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Somerset: The Single Conversation - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Economic Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Core Strategy - Mendip Corporate Plan 	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Increase the number of new units delivered supported by the appropriate infrastructure.</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> A thriving economy to which every one can contribute</p> <p><u>NI's:</u> NI 154 NI 155</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
3.2	Improve our understanding of rural housing markets	<p>Carry out a Rural Housing Market Assessment to gain a better understanding of the rural housing markets</p> <p>Commit extra resources to enabling functions to improve rural enabling</p>	<p>Housing Enabling Officer, Planning Policy Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor, West Somerset, Taunton Deane & South Somerset Authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering Affordable Housing 2006 - Strong & Prosperous Communities 2006 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Somerset: The Single Conversation - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Economic Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Core Strategy 	<p>Dec 2011</p> <p>Dec 2012</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Rural housing market assessment completed to support development of rural housing</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Better understanding of rural housing markets. To enable the delivery of suitable affordable across all tenures.</p> <p><u>NI's:</u> NI 154 NI 155</p>
3.3	Increase housing supply to meet Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) targets	Work in partnership with the Local Development Framework to introduce plans to address the shortfall of 923 units as highlighted in the SHMA	<p>Planning Policy Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Development Control Team Managers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering Affordable Housing 2006 - Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable 2007 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Core Strategy 	Ongoing to 2026	<p><u>Measures:</u> Current projected shortfall of 923 homes reduced</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Reduction in the number of residents seeking housing</p> <p>Housing needs Met</p> <p><u>NI's:</u> NI 154</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
3.4	Increase the supply of affordable housing to meet identified local needs	<p>Change Council policy on thresholds for affordable housing</p> <p>Partnership approach between Mendip District council and preferred partners to ensure that new housing developed by Housing Associations meets local housing need and demand</p> <p>Develop and implement a five-year rolling Affordable Housing Development Programme to deliver new affordable homes</p>	<p>Planning Policy Team Manager, Development Control Team Manager</p> <p>Partner: Housing Enabling Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering Affordable Housing 2006 - Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable 2007 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Core Strategy 	<p>Jan 2011</p> <p>Ongoing to 2015</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Increase in the number of affordable housing units completed</p> <p>Affordable Housing Development Programme completed and new affordable housing targets set</p> <p>National indicative thresholds is 15 units and above Mendip is currently in the process of reducing the threshold to 2 units or more which is being formulated through the LDF policy.</p> <p>Reduction in the demand for affordable housing – as measured by numbers of people registering on Homefinder Somerset</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Supply meets demands</p> <p><u>NI's:</u> NI 155</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
3.5	We will increase the opportunities to access homes across all tenures.	We will promote all forms of housing tenure to residents in the Mendip District and host local events aimed at promoting all tenure types including home ownership, Social and Private renting.	Private Sector Housing Team Manager, Housing Enabling Officer, Planning Policy Team Manager, Development Control Team Manager, Housing Options Team Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable 2007 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Core Strategy 	Dec 2012	<p><u>Measures:</u> Annual event hosted by MDC</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> More sustainable communities</p>
3.6	Maintain an understanding of / respond to local housing needs	Maintain up to date market and housing needs data	Planning Policy Team Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - PPS 3 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Somerset: The Single Conversation 	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Collate, monitor and act on national, regional and local data, analyse and act on them accordingly.</p> <p>Review and update this Housing Strategy</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> The Housing needs of residents are met</p>
		Collate national, regional and local data on housing, economic and social trends	Partners: Strategic Housing Team, Housing Options Team Manager			
3.7	Develop an understanding of future housing need	Make plans to provide for the predicted changes in demographics to 2026, i.e. the ageing population and plans to encourage younger people and families back to the Mendip area	Planning Policy Team Manager Partners: Strategic Housing Team, Housing Options Team Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - PPS 3 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Somerset: The Single Conversation 	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Collate, monitor and act on national, regional and local data, analyse and act on them accordingly.</p> <p>Review and update this Housing Strategy accordingly</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> The housing needs of residents are met.</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
3.8	Creation of new energy efficient / carbon neutral homes	<p>Make plans to meet the Government’s target of all new homes to be carbon neutral by 2016.</p> <p>Encourage the provision of high energy efficiency in all new homes so as to ensure sustainable housing for the future and reduce the environmental impact of new housing.</p>	<p>Planning Policy Team Manager</p> <p>Partners: Private Sector Housing Team Manager, Developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - PPS 3 - Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable 2007 - Delivering Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods 2008 - RPG 10 - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Somerset: The Single Conversation - Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy - Mendip Climate Change Strategy 	<p>Ongoing to 2015</p> <p>Ongoing to 2015</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Increase the improvements in the energy efficiency ratings of new build housing</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Increased health wellbeing and prosperity Improved carbon foot print</p> <p><u>NI's:</u> NI 186 NI 188</p>
3.9	Improve the site provision for Gypsies and Travellers	<p>Continue with the Gypsy and Traveller working group</p> <p>Investigate existing provision, map accordingly. Identify future site provision needs and make appropriate bids to HCA, lead on development of these identified sites, work with landowners regarding pre-planning application.</p>	<p>Gypsy & Traveller Working Group</p> <p>Partners: Development Control Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Mendip Equal Opportunities Policy 	<p>Ongoing to 2015</p> <p>Jan 2011</p>	<p><u>Measures:</u> Increase in the provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers</p> <p>RSS targets to meet 87 pitches</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> Improved choice and quality of life for residents</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
3.10	Develop a better understanding of the needs of households with disabilities	Carry out a needs assessment of households with disabilities to evaluate their housing requirements, adaptation requirements and support needs	Disability Forum Partners: Private Sector Housing Team, Housing Enabling Officer, Planning Policy Team Manager, Housing Options Team, Supporting People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Mendip Equal Opportunities Policy 	Jan 2012	<u>Measures:</u> Needs Assessment completed and action plan drafted accordingly and Implemented <u>Outcomes:</u> Enhanced health and well being and improved choices for residents

Strategic Priority 4:		Improving Partnerships and Community Empowerment				
	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
4.1	Improve referrals & joint protocols between Agencies	Improve the ability for housing clients to “flow through” various services and reduce the risk for clients to “fall out” or get lost in the system “Map” all local services	Housing Options Team Manager Partners: Support agencies, Supported housing providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005 - Strong & Prosperous Communities 2006 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - Somerset Supporting People Strategy - Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy - Somerset: The Single Conversation 	Ongoing to 2015 June 2011	<u>Measures:</u> Increased customer satisfaction Mapping exercise completed and any gaps identified by target date <u>Outcomes:</u> Customers needs are met more effectively <u>NI's:</u> NI 141 NI 142



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
4.2	Improve customer & resident involvement	Improve the mechanisms for which local residents and housing customers are able to feedback on their service experience and be consulted on new housing policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the Council website • Use of the Council's magazine • Questionnaires • Forums • Leaflets 	Housing Options Team Manager, Private Sector Team Manager, Strategic Housing Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong & Prosperous Communities 2006 - Somerset: The Single Conversation - Mendip Equal Opportunities Policy 2006 - Mendip Housing Resident Involvement Strategy 	Ongoing to 2015	<u>Measures:</u> Increase in the number of mechanisms by which customers and residents are able to feedback Analyse outcomes of the survey responses regularly and tailor services where appropriate to customer needs <u>Outcomes:</u> Services are developed to meet customer's needs.



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
4.3	Improve communication with Members & Partners	Provision of up to date information of the activities of the Housing Teams to Members and Partners	Housing Team Managers via Built Environment Group Manager	- Strong & Prosperous Communities 2006	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Ensure delivery of regular bulletins/updates at meetings – monitored by Group Manager</p> <p><u>Outcomes:</u> An understanding by members & Partners of the issues residents face in accessing good quality affordable housing across all tenures with support to deliver the outcomes</p>
4.4	Improved partnership working with Gypsies & Travellers and other minority groups	Partnership working with those who represent minority groups, for example, migrant workers by developing appropriate working groups to represent their interests on housing related issues.	Gypsy & Traveller Working Group, Polish Community Group, Disability Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable Communities: Homes for All 2005 - The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities 2008 - South West Regional Housing Strategy - RPG 10 - Mendip Equal Opportunities Policy 	Ongoing to 2015	<p><u>Measures:</u> Production of Gypsy & Traveller Strategy – check date with Tracy</p>
		Continued support for the Gypsy & Traveller Working Group			Ongoing to 2015	Deliver actions within Gypsy and Traveller Strategy – monitored by Gypsy and Traveller Working Group
		Development of a Gypsy & Traveller Strategy			Jan 2011	
		Encourage the take up by Gypsies & Travellers of the Supporting People funded floating support service			Jan 2011	Development of working groups to represent other minority groups on housing issues
						<p><u>Outcomes:</u> The needs of minority groups are understood and met.</p>



	Aim:	Actions:	Responsibility:	Context:	Target Date:	Performance Measures, Outcomes & supporting National Indicators:
4.5	Improve joint working across the county	Explore opportunities to achieve value for money and efficiency savings in relation to the provision of Housing Services	Built Environment Group Manager Partners: Pioneer Somerset, Other Somerset Local Authorities	- Strong & Prosperous Communities - Pioneer Somerset	Ongoing to 2015	<u>Measures:</u> Continually monitor progress with Pioneer Somerset Board <u>Outcomes:</u> Improved level of service and efficiency savings

Appendix A – Tables & Figures

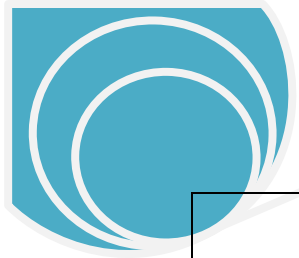
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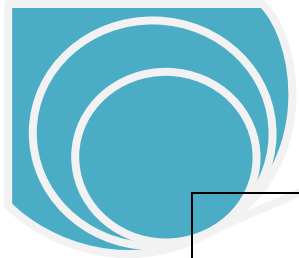


Appendix B – National Priorities for Housing

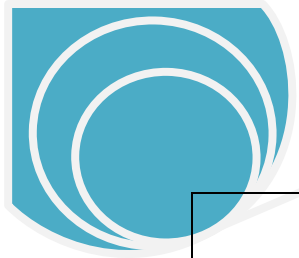
Document	Summary of Main Points
Sustainable Communities: Homes for all 2005	<p>A five year plan setting out the Government's priorities for improving the quality of housing, establishing more choice across tenures and meeting housing need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the environment by introducing a new code for sustainable building • Help 80,000 first time buyers purchase their homes including the development of the Homebuy scheme • Create sustainable and mixed communities • Make sure all social Tenants and 70% of Private Tenants have a 'decent home' by 2010. 'Decent Homes' are warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities. • Provide for those who seek alternative types of accommodation including Gypsies & Travellers • Provide support for people to meet their housing aspirations
Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes, Changing Lives 2005	<p>Outlines how the Government will achieve the halving numbers in temporary accommodation target and achieve further reductions in homelessness. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging homeless prevention • Supporting vulnerable people • Tackling the wider causes and symptoms of homelessness • Help more people to move away from rough sleeping • Provide more settled homes
Delivering Affordable Housing 2006	<p>Government believes that everyone should have the right to a Decent Home, which they can afford, within a sustainable mixed community. This means that a wide choice of housing needs to be provided in terms of tenure and price ranges for the whole community. This should include affordable housing, both social rented</p>



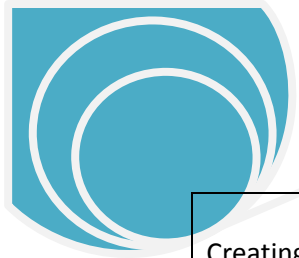
	<p>and intermediate. Affordable housing policy is based around three themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing high quality homes in sustainable mixed communities for those in need • Widening the opportunities for home ownership • Offering greater quality, flexibility and choice for those who rent
<p>Planning Policy Statement 3: 2006</p>	<p>This Planning Policy Statement sets out the national planning policy framework for delivering the Government’s housing objectives. The specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality housing that is well-designed and built to a high standard • A mix of housing to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural • A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice • Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure • A flexible, responsive, supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously developed land, where appropriate
<p>Strong & Prosperous Communities 2006</p>	<p>Enable effective local services and to create better places, through new relationships and better governance, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting more responsive services and empowered communities • Advocating a stronger role for Local Authorities as leaders and place-shapers, by developing and reinforcing the Local Strategic Partnerships and the Local Area Agreements • Promoting stronger and more stable Local Authority leadership • Supporting Councillors in their role as democratic champions • Fundamentally re-balancing the central-local relationship



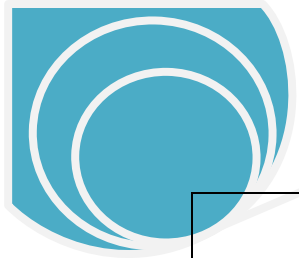
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting community cohesion • Developing the economic prosperity of our towns, cities and regions
<p>Homes For the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable 2007</p>	<p>This green paper sets out the Government's proposals to improve the housing fabric of society by working with partners to provide more homes to meet growing demand, well-designed and greener homes, linked to good schools, transport and healthcare and affordable homes to buy and rent.</p> <p>The Government has set new targets in this document of 240,000 additional homes per year to meet growing demand and address affordability issues with 2 million new properties to be built by 2016 and 3 million by 2020.</p> <p>Other targets in this document include building 70,000 affordable homes per year by 2010-11, 45,000 social rented, 25,000 shared ownership or shared equity.</p> <p>Greener homes with high environmental targets are also included as a priority within this document with the new target of all new homes being carbon neutral by 2016.</p>
<p>Creating Strong, Safe & Prosperous Communities, Statutory Guidance, 2008</p>	<p>Guidance for Local Authorities to work with local partners in the Local Strategic Partnership to create a shared vision and shared sense of priorities for a place. This vision will be set out in a Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement will deliver the strategy, setting out the 'deal' between Central Government and Local Authorities and their partners to improve services and quality of life</p> <p>Housing is seen within this document as being "at the heart of achieving the social, economic and environmental objectives that shape a community and create a sense of place". Housing objectives should focus on delivering new market</p>



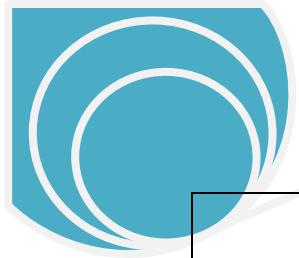
	<p>and affordable housing, making best use of existing stock and responding to the needs of all residents across all housing tenures.</p> <p>Housing strategies should reflect the wider vision of the Authority and its partners, reflect a clear and evidenced approach and provide a strong focus on how partners will deliver their commitments, including on the infrastructure needed to support housing growth.</p>
<p>The Strategic Housing Role of Local Authorities: Powers & Duties 2008</p>	<p>The strategic housing role of Local Authorities is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and plan for the current and future housing needs of the local population across all tenures • Make the best use of existing housing stock • Plan and facilitate new supply • Plan and commission housing support services which link homes and housing support services • Work in partnership to secure effective housing and neighbourhood management on an ongoing basis
<p>Delivering Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods – A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society 2008</p>	<p>This national strategy sets out the priorities for older people over the next five years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people will have housing that supports healthy, active and independent living in welcoming communities • Housing, neighbourhoods and communities will be more inclusive, attractive and sustainable for an ageing population • More mainstream and specialist homes of the right type in the right location for older people • New housing will be planned and built to Lifetime Homes Standards and new communities will be built to be Lifetime Neighbourhoods • Excellent information and advice for all • Many more homes warm and comfortable • Major and minor adaptations more easily obtained • Home improvement and handyperson schemes will be widely accessible



<p>Creating Strong, Safe & Prosperous Communities, Statutory Guidance, 2008</p>	<p>Guidance for Local Authorities to work with local partners in the Local Strategic Partnership to create a shared vision and shared sense of priorities for a place. This vision will be set out in a Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement will deliver the strategy, setting out the 'deal' between Central Government and Local Authorities and their partners to improve services and quality of life</p> <p>Housing is seen within this document as being "at the heart of achieving the social, economic and environmental objectives that shape a community and create a sense of place". Housing objectives should focus on delivering new market and affordable housing, making best use of existing stock and responding to the needs of all residents across all housing tenures.</p> <p>Housing strategies should reflect the wider vision of the Authority and its partners, reflect a clear and evidenced approach and provide a strong focus on how partners will deliver their commitments, including on the infrastructure needed to support housing growth.</p>
<p>No One Left Out – Communities Ending Rough Sleeping 2008</p>	<p>A strategy with a 15 point action plan to end rough sleeping by 2012. The plan calls on communities to get more involved in supporting those in their area at risk of rough sleeping, ensuring that the right resources reach the right people at the right time.</p>
<p>Rugg & Rhodes Review of Private Rented Sector Housing 2008</p>	<p>Rugg and Rhodes conducted an independent review of the Private Rented Sector during the period January to May 2008. They identified a number of issues arising within the Private Rented Sector, including the lack of professional management within the sector, the poor quality of some privately rented housing and lack of security of tenure. Rugg & Rhodes proposed policy "directions of travel":</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a sound evidence base • There needs to be a better understanding of managed rental housing • There should be initiatives aimed at 'growing' the business of letting • Equalising the rental choice so that private rented sector tenancies are equally desirable • Light-touch licensing and effective redress of poorly performing Landlords
<p>Living, Working, Countryside – Matthew Taylor 2008</p>	<p>In 2007, the Government asked Matthew Taylor, MP for Truro to carry out a review on how land use and planning can better support rural business and deliver affordable housing. Matthew Taylor published his review in July 2008.</p> <p>Large scale migration to rural areas has pushed house prices substantially above the national average whilst those working in rural areas earn significantly less than their urban counterparts. This makes rural housing out of reach of many who work in the countryside. If better opportunities are not created for people who live in small rural communities to find quality work and affordable housing, then rural areas will become commuter dormitories, exclusive enclaves of the wealthy and retired, at the expense of fewer local jobs, declining local services and loss of community life.</p> <p>The review makes 48 recommendations to the Government.</p>
<p>The Private Rented Sector: Professionalism & Quality – The Government Response to the Rugg Review Consultation 2009</p>	<p>Consultation document in response to the Rugg & Rhodes Review of Private Rented Sector Housing outlining the following proposals for the Private Rented Sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal to establish a national register of Private Landlords • All tenancies should take the form of written agreements • Increasing the rental threshold of Assured Shorthold Tenancies from £25,000 per annum • Regulation of Letting Agents

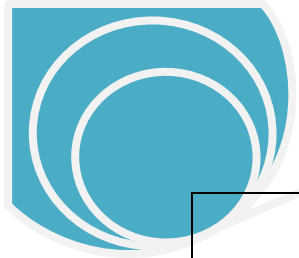


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved redress for Landlords and Tenants • Increase investment in the sector via a Private Rented Housing Investment Fund • Improved engagement with the Private Rented Sector from Local Authorities • Each Local Authority should develop a more co-ordinated approach to securing Private Rented Sector tenancies for low income households • Using the Private Rented Sector to complement/unify with existing Choice Based Lettings • Improved coverage for Landlord Accreditation Schemes
<p>The Government Response to the Taylor Review of Rural Housing & Affordable Housing 2009</p>	<p>This document is the Government’s response to the Taylor Review and outlines their intended actions under each of Taylor’s 48 recommendations.</p> <p>The Government’s principle policy considerations for the countryside are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to create and maintain sustainable communities • The need to develop ways to encourage sustainable economic growth in rural areas • The need to encourage an increase in the supply of housing in the long term, and particularly that of affordable housing; and • The need to plan for economic recovery, in which a streamlined planning system will be a significant factor



Appendix C – Regional Priorities for Housing

Document	Summary of Main Points
<p>South West Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2016</p>	<p>The mission of the Regional Housing Strategy is “to work in partnership to ensure that everyone has access to a good quality home within a sustainable and inclusive community”. This mission statement will be achieved by the delivery of three strategic aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the balance of housing markets • Achieving good quality homes • Supporting sustainable communities <p>The strategy acknowledges a number of issues facing the South West region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High and on-going housing demand • An ageing demographic profile • Under delivery of new homes • Severe market access difficulties to owner occupation • High levels of homelessness and use of temporary accommodation • Shortage of affordable housing particularly in rural areas • High levels of Right to Buy and little re-investment into social housing • Poor quality homes • Social exclusion and disadvantage • Inadequate links between housing affordability, quality and health • The challenge of creating sustainable communities
<p>Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10)</p>	<p>This document provides a regional spatial strategy within which Local Authority development plans in the South West should be prepared. It sets out a broad development strategy for the period to 2016 and beyond. It provides the spatial framework for other strategies and programmes.</p> <p>The document sets out the Housing Objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to provide everyone in the South West with the opportunity for a decent

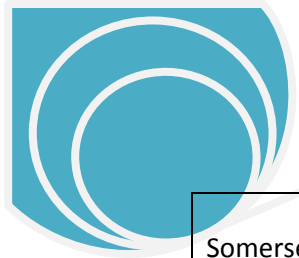


	<p>home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Giving priority to the re-use of previously developed land in urban areas• Bringing empty properties back into use and promoting the conversion of existing buildings within urban and rural areas• Creating and sustaining mixed communities, including providing a greater choice and a better mix of the size, type, tenure and location of housing in all areas• Creating more sustainable patterns of development by building in ways that deliver accessibility by public transport to jobs, education and other local facilities and local services• Promoting new housing and residential environments that are well-designed and make a significant contribution to promote urban renaissance and improve quality of life
<p>South West Regional Improvement & Efficiency Strategy 2008</p>	<p>This strategy focuses on housing under the broader context of the local economy. It recognises that the South West needs realistic and affordable plans for homes that will deliver sustainable growth and that support the Public Service Agreement 20 “increase long term housing supply and affordability”. At the same time it needs to “make communities safer” PSA 23 and “deliver reliable and efficient transport networks that support economic growth” PSA 5.</p>

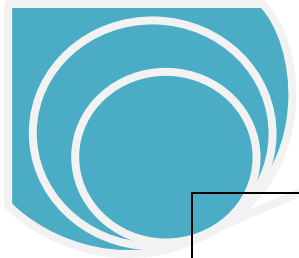


Appendix D – Sub-Regional Priorities for Housing

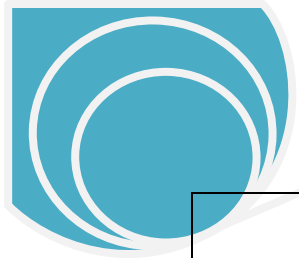
Document	Summary of Main Points
<p>Somerset Supporting People Strategy 2005 – 2010: “The Big Picture”</p>	<p>The Supporting People (SP) Programme was introduced by the Government in 2003, drawing together a number of different funding streams that provided “housing related support” to a wide range of vulnerable adults, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people • People with learning/physical disabilities • Mental health sufferers • Homeless people • Ex-offenders • Young people at risk • Domestic violence victims <p>The programme is funded nationally but administered locally via the Somerset SP Partnership comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County Council • The District Councils • NHS Primary Care Trust • NHS & Social Care Partnership • Somerset Probation Service <p>The vision is to “support vulnerable people to live with dignity and independence in their community, either in their own homes or in supported housing”.</p> <p>The key priorities outlined in the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Shorter-term service developments • Longer-term service developments • Research
<p>Commissioning Strategy: Services for Older People 2006-2008</p>	<p>The strategy deals with the following key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning high-quality services to meet the needs of local communities • Offering greater choice and control • Promoting independence and well-being • Securing Future Care workforce



<p>Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2026</p>	<p>The Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the long term vision for Somerset in 2026. The vision brings together views of local people and local organizations.</p> <p>The “overall vision is of a dynamic, successful modern economy that supports, respects and develops Somerset’s distinctive communities and unique environment”.</p> <p>The main aims of the strategy centre around six themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a positive contribution • Living sustainably • Ensuring economic well-being • Enjoying & achieving • Staying safe • Being healthy <p>Those that directly relate to housing include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a positive contribution – closer working between organizations and engaging local people and communities in decision making • Living sustainably – making Somerset an affordable place for people to live • Ensuring economic well-being – planning for new sustainable communities to be built in Somerset • Enjoying & achieving – promoting and supporting independent living
<p>Somerset Local Area Agreement 2008-2011</p>	<p>The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is the key delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy. It sets out the Government’s and partners’ priorities for Somerset.</p> <p>Success will be measured using 32 of the Government’s national indicators. Somerset Strategic Partnership have added 18 supporting local indicators considered to be of local importance. The Government also added 10 statutory education indicators.</p>
<p>Somerset Homelessness Strategy & Action Plan 2008</p>	<p>The aims of the sub-regional homelessness strategy and action plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve positive outcomes in the support for



	<p>vulnerable people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle the wider causes & symptoms of homelessness • Reduce rough sleeping • Provide more settled homes • Provide a context for tackling homelessness through joint working <p>Sub-regional priorities arising from the homelessness strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floating support services • Homeless prevention • Improved access to the Private Sector • Improved access to appropriate housing • Improved protocols and partnerships to tackle homelessness
<p>West of England Housing Market Assessment (HMA) - June 2009</p>	<p>The HMA provides a detailed sub regional market analysis of housing demand and housing need. It provides a robust evidence base for the development of local policy for planning and strategic housing. It also contains the Housing Needs Model which the Council is required to update annually.</p> <p>Mendip along with Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and West Wiltshire comprise the West of England Housing Market Area. A Housing Market Area is defined as “an area where of people who live in an area, a relatively high proportion also work in the area and, similarly, of people who work in the area, a relatively high proportion also live in the area.”</p>
<p>Somerset: The Single Conversation with the Homes & Community Agency (HCA) – July 2009</p>	<p>The ‘Single Conversation’ relates to a comprehensive coverage of the full range of housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community activities.</p> <p>The outcome of the ‘Single Conversation’ will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared vision of the ambitions for an area • The agreement of a supporting Local Investment Plan (LIP) • A place based investment strategy tailored to the needs of the local area • Followed by a Local Investment Agreement (LIA)

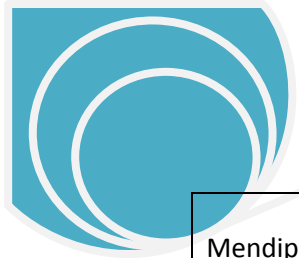


	<p>The following priorities are outlined in the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broaden and strengthen the local economy• Plan for new sustainable communities to be built in Somerset• A stronger and more diverse market town and rural economy• Strong and effective local leadership through working together and aligning delivery plans: Building the capacity to deliver improved housing and regeneration activities• Prepare for and respond to the impact on Somerset of climate change
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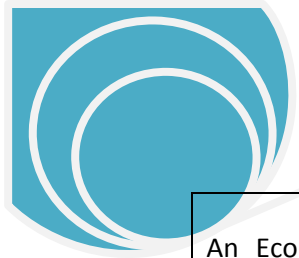


Appendix E – District Priorities

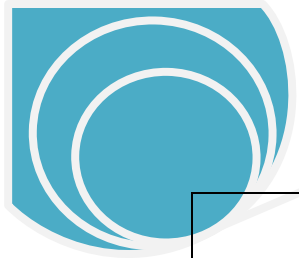
Document	Summary of Main Points
Mendip Local Plan 1991-2011	<p>This Local Plan is due to be replaced by the Local Development Framework.</p> <p>The Local Plan had the following four strategic aims with regards to a focused approach to locating new development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To meet the economic and social needs of all members of the community 2) To contribute to the viability and vitality of the District’s towns and villages 3) To contribute to a reduction in the use of energy resources and promote energy efficiency in both new development and transport movements, including reducing the need to travel 4) To: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protect and improve the built environment •Protect and enhance the cultural heritage •Protect and enhance the natural environment •Protect and enhance critical natural assets •Protect and enhance settlement and countryside character for their own sake, the contribution they make to the quality of life and local communities and to global environmental sustainability
Mendip’s Racial Equality Scheme 2002-2005	<p>An outdated document with the following strategic aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination • Promote equality of opportunity • Promote good relations between people of different racial groups



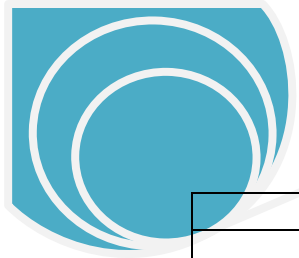
<p>Mendip District Council's Housing Strategy 2005-2008/9</p>	<p>The previous Housing Strategy which will be replaced by this new Housing Strategy.</p> <p>The key priorities were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve understanding of housing markets and housing needs • Increase the supply of new affordable homes in market towns and rural villages • Address issues of fuel poverty • Develop design standards with RSL partners to ensure sustainable development • Continue to work through, monitor and review the homelessness strategy with a focus on the prevention of homelessness • Enable and assist owners to bring empty properties back into use and promote energy efficiency • Continuously review Private Sector Housing Strategy in the light of Government changes to the grant system • Enable the provision of Supported Housing • Work more effectively with all partners to maximize joint resources
<p>Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009</p>	<p>This scheme outlines how the Council will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and others • Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act • Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities • Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons • Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life • Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons



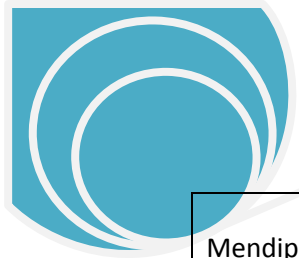
<p>An Economic Strategy for the Mendip Area 2006-2011</p>	<p>This strategy sets out the economic strategic aim for the Mendip District – “to create a more enterprising and business friendly culture in the Mendip area”. There are 6 strategic objectives to achieve this aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Mendip as an attractive, sustainable location for business • Ensuring that businesses are effectively supported • Improving skills • Improving prosperity and vibrancy in the towns, villages and the countryside • Developing the tourism sector in a sustainable way • Proactively addressing transport and infrastructure
<p>At a Crossroads – Shepton Mallet & Surrounding Areas Community Strategic Plan 2006-21</p>	<p>Strategy devised by the Shepton 21 group, a community led group of business people, community groups and organizations planning for Shepton Mallet and the surrounding areas.</p> <p>The plan has the following strategic goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the town’s distinctiveness and identity • Boost the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre • Improve transport routes and traffic flows in and around Shepton Mallet • Provide a sustainable future for the community <p>Housing will play an important part in the delivery of this strategic plan, most notably in ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and location of new housing enhances the town’s distinctiveness and identity • A sustainable future is created for the community because they are living in housing that they can afford
<p>Mendip Community Strategy</p>	<p>The Mendip Community Strategy has been produced by the Mendip Strategic Partnership which is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the Mendip District.</p> <p>The long term vision for the District is “by 2021,</p>



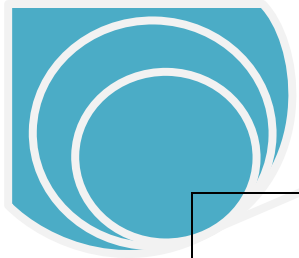
	<p>Mendip will be a thriving, just and sustainable place to live in, work in and visit”.</p> <p>There are 11 long term themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment • A place to live • Energy and waste • Food • A job to do • Ways to learn • Things to do • Getting around • Feeling safe • Staying well • Sense of community <p>There are 5 shorter term priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in children and young people • Affordable decent housing for all • Regeneration of the Mendip economy • Strengthening the voluntary and community sector • Tackling climate change locally <p>This document will be replaced by the Mendip Sustainable Community Strategy.</p>
<p>Mendip Equal Opportunities Policy 2006</p>	<p>Mendip District Council is committed to equality of opportunities and access (physical access and communication of information) for all people particularly those who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees of the Council • Seeking and using Council services • External or internal candidates for a job • In receipt of goods or services from the Council
<p>Mendip Climate Change Strategy 2007</p>	<p>Climate change strategy for Mendip outlining the actions for the District to reduce the effects of climate change. The strategy has 8 key aims around which actions centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy use – mitigating future impacts • Waste • Land management and the natural environment • Planning and the built environment • Business and economy • Health and lifestyle change • Education and promotion • Leading role for the Mendip Strategic Partnership (MSP)



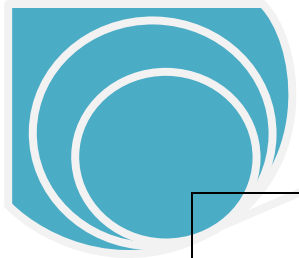
<p>Mendip Local Development Scheme 2008-2011 (LDS)</p>	<p>The LDS, an element of the new Local Development Framework, sets out Mendip District Council’s programme and timetable for preparing the policy documents that will guide future planning decisions in the District 2008-2011. The LDS is a mandatory requirement under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>
<p>Mendip Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2008</p>	<p>A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is necessary to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process, to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.</p> <p>Approximately 6% of properties within the Mendip District are located in areas at risk of flooding or within a short distance of known flooding incidents. Significant flooding in the area is mainly caused by the overtopping of riverbanks and less severe flooding is predominantly from surface water runoff and the blockages of drains and culverts.</p> <p>To minimize the effects of surface water runoff, new developments should have Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs).</p>
<p>Mendip Housing Resident Involvement Strategy 2008-2011</p>	<p>This strategy outlines the new ways that the Housing Association intends to work with residents and engage with the local communities.</p> <p>There are five key aims for resident involvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all residents have the opportunity for resident involvement including ‘hard to reach’ groups, ensuring representation of the wider community • Ensure residents have the required support so that they can have an effective influence on the provision of services and standard of delivery • Develop a menu of options for resident participation that suit the needs and abilities of residents who wish to participate • Demonstrate commitment to working in partnership • Support and deliver a range of community initiatives to improve the quality of involvement for residents’ services



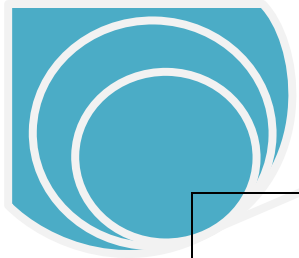
<p>Mendip Affordable Housing Viability Study – Jan 2009</p>	<p>The key objectives of this study were to inform the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing an understanding of the percentages of affordable housing that will be routinely viable in different parts of the District • Reflect the PPS3 requirement that a plan’s approach to affordable housing should reflect an assessment of the likely economic viability of housing development • Consider the impacts and interactions of grant and affordable housing tenure on the viability of housing development
<p>Mendip Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) – March 2009</p>	<p>The purpose of the SHLAA is to identify potential housing sites so that the Local Development Framework (LDF) may then determine the distribution strategy and which sites should be allocated to housing development. The role of the SHLAA is not to prioritise sites, this is the role of the LDF.</p> <p>The key findings outlined in the SHLAA are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The total number of dwellings which are considered to come forward in the 5 year period 2008-2013 is 2,739 units. This is equivalent to 6.6 years’ supply, calculated against the annual requirement of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) of 415 dwellings per annum. • The total potential housing supply arising from this study, taking into account the permissions, SHLAA surveyed sites and windfall projections is 6,228 dwellings. This indicates that the emerging RSS requirement of 8,300 dwellings cannot be achieved from sites within the study settlements and even with 2006-08 completions, a deficit of 923 dwellings remains to 2026 if RSS requirement remains the same. • As a result of the above finding, broad locations for development have been considered to assist in the production of the LDF Core Strategy.
<p>Mendip District Council Affordable Warmth Strategy 2009</p>	<p>Households that spend more than 10% of their disposable income on fuel are termed as “fuel poor” and Mendip District Council believes that</p>



	<p>no household should have to spend more than 10% of their disposable income to keep comfortably warm. This strategy sets out the Council's key aims in achieving affordable warmth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the profile of energy awareness amongst Council staff and other agencies • Ensure that energy awareness and advice reaches the most vulnerable members of the community • Implement the affordable warmth strategy within the Council's commitment to the Local Area Agreement • Encourage affordable warmth strategies in the Private Sector and RSL properties
<p>Mendip District Council Private Sector Housing Strategy 2009-2012</p>	<p>This strategy sets out the following priorities for the Private Sector Housing Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of the Private Sector Housing stock • Improve the conditions of the Private Rented Sector • Improve partnerships and community empowerment • Improve the knowledge of Private Sector Housing in the District
<p>Mendip District Council Empty Homes Strategy 2009-2012</p>	<p>This strategy outlines how the Council will continue to work with owners of empty homes to assist them in bringing properties back into use. The key priorities are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of empty homes in the District • Reduce the levels of homelessness and use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation by providing suitable and a sufficient supply of affordable housing through the Private Sector • Enable affordable homes both in market towns and rural villages • Implement the Decent Homes Standard into the design of empty home conversion projects • Encourage the use of redundant commercial premises and disused space above shops • Continued partnership working to bring empty homes back into use • Continued development of our work with



	Private Sector Landlords
<p>Mendip District Council Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy 2009-2012</p>	<p>This policy document outlines how the Council will facilitate Private Sector Housing renewal via financial assistance and advice services. The following financial assistance will be provided by the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decent Homes Grants • Disabled Facilities Grants • Mendip Housing Limited/Mendip District Council Bathroom Adaptations • Empty Homes Grants • Wessex Home Low Interest Improvement Loans • Energy Efficiency assistance
<p>Mendip Housing Tenant Business Plan 2009</p>	<p>Mendip Housing’s Tenant Business Plan sets out the priorities for the organization over the next five years. Mendip Housing’s mission is “to be customer focused and forward thinking”. The five year objectives are set out under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income & funding • Tenant involvement • Customer service • Environmental • Investment in homes
<p>Mendip Corporate Plan 2009-2012</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan sets out the Councils corporate goals for the next three years. The vision for Mendip is “Mendip – a place to be proud of – where people, communities and businesses are encouraged to achieve their potential”. The Plan sets three goals for the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the local economy through uncertain times • Support communities and individuals to maintain and improve the quality of life • Enhancing Mendip as a place to live
<p>Local Development Framework: Core Strategy <i>Confirming the Spatial Vision & Strategic Objectives – July 2009</i></p>	<p>The Core Strategy is the primary part of the Local Development Framework in that it sets out the main decisions about development in the area, namely what, how much and broadly where.</p> <p>The draft strategic objectives are as follows:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To diversify & strengthen the local economy• To equip people & local businesses with the skills they need• To promote greater vitality & viability in our market towns and rural communities• To enable people to maintain & improve their state of health• To provide adequate levels of decent housing which is accessible for all<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Deliver new housing in line with the levels prescribed for the District in the Regional Spatial Strategy- Maximise the delivery of affordable housing- Deliver levels of housing at each town which maintains or, in the case of Frome, improves the balance between jobs and economically active people- Deliver rural housing that is clearly related to identified local needs- Deliver a range and mix of house types and sizes to meet the variety of local housing needs in both the open market and affordable housing sectors- Provide for sites to accommodate the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities• To improve accessibility by means other than the private car• To maintain & enhance the quality of the local environment & contribute to international climate change goals
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Appendix F – Housing Strategy Questionnaire

Inside Housing Solutions have been contracted by Mendip District Council to produce a new Housing Strategy for the period 2010-2015.

As a key stakeholder, partner, elected member, staff member or service user we would welcome your input into this important piece of work. We would be grateful if you would take the time to answer the following questions and send all comments and responses to george@insidehousingsolutions.com no later than **Friday, 21st August 2009**. Please feel free to answer some or all of the questions below.

Q.1 Please provide your name and a contact e-mail address so that we may invite you to a further consultation meeting once the Housing Strategy has been drafted.

Q.2 Please specify the organisation for which you work or if you are a resident, the area of Mendip in which you live.

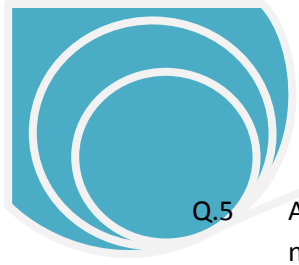
Q.3 What improvements/successes in housing services have you seen in the past 3 years or, alternatively, what do you feel the Council does well/not so well?

Please proceed to the next page.....



Q.4 Do you think the following should be prioritised as part of the new Housing Strategy?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Providing quality market housing					
Increasing the supply of affordable housing					
Addressing the needs of homeless & potentially homeless households					
Meeting the needs & aspirations of our Tenants (all tenures including private sector and Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations))					
Meeting decent homes standards in all types of housing					
Promoting homeless prevention initiatives					
Increasing opportunities for home ownership (e.g. shared equity, low-cost market housing)					
Increasing the provision of supported and extra care housing for people with support needs					
Improving the range of housing advice, information and communications provided					
Promoting partnership working to improve services					
Assist people to live independently in their own homes					
Improve the access to services in rural areas / promote sustainable communities					
Maintain an understanding of / respond to local housing needs					
Developing more environmentally friendly housing.					
Providing more settled homes and cohesive communities					
Maximise the use of existing Social Rented Housing (Housing Association) by reducing the number of properties which are under-occupied by tenants by developing schemes to encourage tenants to transfer to smaller accommodation.					
Bring Empty Homes back into use					
Improve the condition and quality of homes in the private sector					
Promote more energy efficiency measures in existing housing, tackling fuel poverty and reducing carbon emissions					
Targeted development of appropriate Housing Options for the following groups:					
Gypsies & Travellers					
Migrant Workers					
Victims of Domestic Abuse					
Young People (aged 16-24)					
Clients with Learning Difficulties					
Ex-offenders					
Clients with Drugs & / or Alcohol issues					
Eligible clients from abroad					
Rough Sleepers					



Q.5 Are there any other priorities not already listed that you feel should be included within the new Housing Strategy?

Should you wish to discuss any matters relating to the above, please contact:

Georgina Summerfield, Inside Housing Solutions Ltd, South Barn, Capel Road, Rusper, Horsham,
West Sussex RH12 4PY Tel: (01293) 871107 E-mail: george@insidehousingsolutions.com



Appendix G – National Indicators

NI 141 - Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living

aims to measure the extent to which housing related support (Supporting People) helps people move on in a planned way to more independent living. The indicator will measure the number of people receiving a Supporting People Service, who have moved on from supported accommodation, as a percentage of total service users who have left the service.

NI 142 - Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living

The number of service users who have established or are maintaining independent living (ie living in their home or in long stay accommodation), as a percentage of the total number of service users who have been in receipt of Supporting People services during the period.

NI 147 - Care leavers in suitable accommodation

measures accommodation outcomes for young adults aged 19, formerly in care, who were in suitable accommodation. This will help minimise the risk of care leavers being in unsuitable housing or becoming homeless.

NI 154 - Net additional homes provided

aims to encourage a greater supply of new homes in England to address the long term housing affordability issue. The indicator will measure the net increase in dwelling stock (self-contained unit of accommodation) over one year.

NI 155 - Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)

aims to promote an increase in the supply of affordable housing. The indicator will measure the total supply of social rent housing and intermediate housing (ie housing at prices or rents above those of social-rent but below market prices or rents.) This can include shared equity products and pitches on Gypsy and Traveller sites owned and managed by local authorities or registered social landlords.

NI 156 - Number of households living in temporary accommodation

will monitor progress towards halving the number of households in temporary accommodation provided under the homelessness legislation from 101,000 households in quarter 4 2004, to 50,500 households by 2010. This indicator will measure the numbers of households living in temporary accommodation provided under the homelessness legislation.



NI 158 - Percentage of decent council homes

will measure the number of non decent council homes and the proportion this represents of the total council housing stock. This is being calculated in order to demonstrate the progress towards making all council housing decent.

NI 159 - Supply of ready to develop housing sites

will assess the degree to which authorities are maintaining a five year supply of deliverable sites for housing through their Local Development Framework (LDF) as required by Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3).

Further information is available on the [Planning Inspectorate \(PINS\)](#) (external link) website.

NI 170 - Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than five years

will measure the success of local authorities in facilitating the re-use of brown field land as a contribution to regeneration and economic growth. This indicator will measure the proportion of the area of developed land that is vacant or derelict for more than five years.

NI 186

Per capita CO2 emissions in the Local Authority area PSA 27

NI 187 Tackling Fuel Poverty

People receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy

Efficiency rating **Defra DSO**

NI 188

Adapting to climate change PSA 20

BVPI 213 The number of successful Homeless Prevention cases per 1,000 head of population.