

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: ENVIRONMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

Date of Meeting: 29/3/04

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan:

Yes

Inside Policy Framework

Title: HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE
Report of: Head of Environmental Protection Services
Report reference: EPS.14/2004

Summary:

To update members in regard to the development of the Housing Strategy (2004 – 2009) in line with Government expectations and to present the first draft of the strategy to Members for comment.

Recommendations:

That the report is approved, forwarded to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation and that comments are sought relating to the first draft of the Housing Strategy attached to this report as Appendix 3.

Contact Officer: Richard Speirs

Ext: 7325

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

1.1 Carlisle City Council transferred its Housing Stock to Carlisle Housing Association (CHA) in December 2002. The following Housing functions remained with the Authority;

- Homelessness, Housing Aid and Advice
- Homelessness Hostels and Resettlement Services
- Private Sector Housing Regeneration
- Housing Strategy and Development
- Health Partnerships
- Cumbria Energy Advice Centre

1.2 Post transfer of the Housing stock the Council's role as a strategic Housing Authority has been developing with the integration of the services identified in section 1.1. The role requires that the Council functions as the assessor, co-ordinator, facilitator and enabler regarding housing need within the area. The identification and planning of its work within the community is recorded through the development of a Housing Strategy covering the five-year period 2004 – 2009.

1.3 During 2003 the Government made changes relating to the development of Housing Strategies with the requirement that annual update submissions are replaced by a process whereby a Housing Authority needs to develop a robust Housing Strategy that passes a 'fit for purpose' test. This is a set framework of criteria that the Government office for the Northwest (GONW) will mark the Housing Strategy against and identifies processes that the Government wants to see put in place by Housing Authorities. Government guidance is that a timetable has to be agreed between Carlisle City Council with GONW for the submission of the Housing Strategy.

1.4 At an initial meeting held in April 2003 with officers from GONW it was agreed that a significant period of time would be required before the Housing Strategy and related processes would have been developed to satisfy the Governments 'fit for purpose criteria'. Through subsequent meetings a timetable has been agreed with GONW for submission of the Housing Strategy in advance of their deadline of October 2004 together with regular meetings with GONW to discuss and receive feedback on each stage of the developing Housing Strategy.

1.5 As part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) carried out on the Council in June 2003 the role of Housing was assessed by the Audit Commission

under the 'Balancing Housing Markets' diagnostic, which was one of two areas that they focussed on within the inspection. In the final report some areas for improvement were identified for the Housing Service, which are to be addressed through an Action Plan. This Action Plan is a core part of the targeted delivery of the Housing Strategy.

- 1.6 An initial report (EPS21.2003) was brought to Executive on 03/4/03 regarding the Housing Strategy and attached to the report was a structure for the development of the Housing Strategy documentation, which was approved by Executive (EX.067/03). Using this structure officers have worked with GONW and other organisations to develop a first draft of the Housing Strategy which is attached as Appendix three.

2. TIMETABLE

The timetable for the Housing Strategy is as follows;

Initial Strategy document outline approved by Executive	3/4/03
Discussions and agreement held with GONW on the Housing Strategy timetable	Apr – Jul 2003
Development of strategy and consultation through the Housing Strategy Group	June 03 - May 04
Consultation day – First draft launched for public consultation	13/2/04
Housing Strategy Update report to Executive	29/3/04
Report to Community overview &Scrutiny	6/5/04
Proposed workshop with Overview &Scrutiny	8/7/04
Final draft to Executive	19/7/04
Final draft to Council	3/8/04

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Through the BI –monthly Housing Strategy Liaison Group meetings to which representatives from a number of organisations attend, the framework for the strategy's development has been worked on during the summer and autumn of

2003. As a Strategy that is 'owned' by a number of agencies, contributions for inclusion within the document have been made by a variety of organisations.

- 3.2 With consultation being a significant driving force behind the development of the Housing Strategy a 'Consultation Conference' was held on 13/2/04 to bring together representatives from a number of organisations to seek views and comments upon the first draft of the Housing Strategy. Over seventy representatives attended the event with feedback being given through workshops and subsequent individual comments. A list of those organisations invited is provided at Appendix one and a programme for the event is provided at Appendix two.
- 3.3 Following this event it was felt on the day that an annual conference needs to be held regarding the Housing Strategy within the Carlisle area.
- 3.4 The first draft of the Housing Strategy has been distributed widely for consultation and is included with this report at Appendix three. Further meetings are planned with GONW to discuss the development of the first Draft Housing Strategy and it is anticipated that the documentation will change before submission in October this year.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the report is approved, forwarded to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation and that comments are sought relating to the first draft of the Housing Strategy attached to this report as Appendix 3.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 To take forward the development of the Housing Strategy within the timetable agreed externally with GONW and the internal timetable identified in 1.6.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – There will be staffing and resource implications regarding the delivery and implementation of the Housing Strategy.
- Financial – The Housing Strategy highlights areas where future funding requirements may be required and these will be submitted within future reports to Members.
- Legal – The development of a Housing Strategy is a Government requirement.

- Corporate – The Housing Strategy has key links to a number of corporate services and strategies.
- Risk Management – An assessment has been done on this service area.
- Equality Issues – The Housing Strategy will adhere to legal requirements, Government guidelines and corporate policy.
- Environmental – N/A
- Crime and Disorder – The Housing Strategy has links with the Crime and Disorder Strategy.
- Impact on Customers – The development of the Housing Strategy is important for the future development of services for those in housing need within the community.

Organisation
Carlisle City Council
Carlisle City Council
Audit Commission
Persistent Offenders Project, North Area Police
Cumbria Rural Enterprise
Cumberland Building Society
North West Development Agency
Carlisle Housing Association
ODPM
Teenage Pregnancy
Social Services Department
Eden District Council
Carlisle City Council
CART
Wetheral Parish Council
Woodside
Home Housing Association
Carlisle City Council
Impact Housing Association
Carlisle Rural Tenants Federation
Carlisle City Council
Department of Environment and Development
Eden District Council
Carlisle Housing Association
Carlisle City Council
Market Town Initiative Office
Architects Plus
Carlisle City Council
Architects Plus
The Diocese of Carlisle
16 Westrigg Road
Parish Councils Association
Green Design Group
Eden District Council
Carlisle City Council
36a Whinsmoor Drive
Public Health, Carlisle and District PCT
Two Castles Housing Association
Carlisle City Council
Carlisle City Council
Centre for Regional Economic Development
Carlisle City Council
Carlisle Probation Office
Carlisle City Council

Cumbria Energy Efficiency Advice
Carlisle College
Council for Voluntary Services
Carlisle City Council
Carlisle City Council
Carlisle City Council
Persistent Offenders Project, North Area Police
Armstrong Pain Associates
Burgh By Sands Parish Council
Carlisle City Council
Social Services Head Quarters
Skipton Building Society
Carlisle City Council
Cumbria Institute of Arts
Cumbria Community Foundation
Cumbria Social Services
CART
Carlisle City Council
Cumbria Newspapers Ltd

Cumbria County Council
 80 Blackwell Road
 Carlisle Housing Association
 Dart House
 Police Authority
 Persimmon Homes North West Ltd
 Carlisle City Council
 Cumbria Energy Efficiency Advice
 Eden Housing Association
 New Era Housing Association Ltd
 Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency
 Impact Housing
 37 St Martins Close
 Eden Housing Association

Carlisle City Council
 Carlisle City Council
 Cumbria Youth Alliance
 Carlisle City Council
 Carlisle City Council
 Chair PCT
 Carlisle City Council

Home Housing
Carlisle City Council
Carlisle Housing Association
Cumbria Inward Investment Agency
Carlisle & District Primary Care Trust
Youth Offending Team
Nationwide Building Society
Butterworths Property Agents
Government Office North West
Benefits Advice Agency
Community Mental Health
Parish Councils Association
Carlisle City Council
Eden District Council
Carlisle and District PCT
Carlisle Carers
H & H King Estate Agents

Dean of Carlisle
Social Services Department
ODPM
Supporting People

Impact Housing Association
Housing Corporation
University of St Martin's
Cumbria County Council
Green Design Group
On behalf of the Mayor

Carlisle City Council
DAT Cumbria
Carlisle City Council
Montgomery Homes Ltd
Carlisle PCT
Carlisle City Council
DAT Cumbria
Helm Bank
ODPM

Nomad Housing Group Ltd
Two Castles Housing Association
Age Concern
Eden District Council
Carlisle Area Support Team
Action for Blind People

Two Castles Housing Association
Carlisle City Council
Countryside Agency
North West Development Agency
Carlisle City Council
Carlisle City Council
Story Construction Limited
Carlisle City Council
Social Services Department
Carlisle College
Carlisle City Council
Cumberland Building Society
Howard Peter Associates
Tiffens Estate Agents
Tsada Cottage
Eden Valley PCT
CASS
Barratt Homes (Manchester)
Social Services Head Quarters
Cumbria Chamber of Commerce
Carlisle Association of Parish Councils
17a West Tower Street
Northern Rock
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals

Housing Strategy – 2004 – 2009

Draft Consultation day – Friday 13th February

Tullie House

9.00 – 9.30	Coffee and Registration
9.30 – 9.35	Welcome and Overview Maggie Mooney – Executive Director, Carlisle City Council
9.35 – 9.45	Setting the scene and timetable Simon Taylor – Housing and Health Partnerships Manager
9.45 – 10.00	Highlights from the draft Strategy Kamla Pattni – Housing Services Strategy Officers
10.00 – 10.15	Carlisle's Housing Market Professor Frank Peck – Northumbria University
10.15 – 10.30	Supporting People Mike Quille – Development Manager (Probation)
10.30 – 10.45	Local Plan Review Chris Hardman – Chief Local Plan Officer
10.45 – 11.00	Health and Housing in partnership John Unsworth – Senior Commissioner (North Cumbria PCTs)
11.00 – 11.15	Regeneration in Carlisle Neil Griffiths – External Funding Officer & Claire Rankin – Rural Support Officer
11.15 – 11.30	Tea/Coffee break
11.30 – 12.30	Workshops
12.30 – 1.15	Feedback from workshops Questions to panel and general discussion
1.30	Lunch

Panel members to include speakers and the following: -

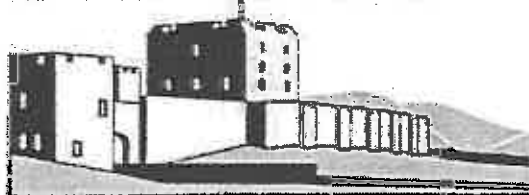
Greg Denwood	–	Home Housing Group
Keith Dobson	–	Impact Housing Association
Steph Murphy	–	Two Castles Housing Association
Laurie Brewis	–	Carlisle Housing Association

**Housing Strategy Seminar
Friday 13th February 2004
Tullie House, Carlisle**

- Workshop 1 Addressing the housing needs of vulnerable needs groups.
(Supporting People, Homelessness) Facilitators – Mike Quille
and Linda Jervis
- Workshop 2 Evaluating the impact of the Strategic Role (Delivery of the
CPA Action plan) Facilitators - Maggie Mooney and Simon
Taylor
- Workshop 3 Balancing Housing Markets (Local Plan Review,
Research) Facilitator – Christopher Hardman and
Alan Taylor

If you would like to discuss the strategy or forward your views please contact
Kamla Pattni, Housing Services Strategy Officer on 01228 817311 or email
Kamlap@carlisle-city.gov.uk

CARLISLE
CITY COUNCIL



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HOUSING STRATEGY 2004-9

DRAFT

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CITY VISION

In developing its vision for the future the Council initiated a comprehensive consultation exercise to identify the important priorities of the public and the Council's partners. In recognising that the condition of existing housing and the provision of new homes are of strategic importance, the Council identified the need to "Co-ordinate a strategic approach to housing" as one its 3 Health and Well Being Objectives within the Corporate Plan.

Since developing this initial Corporate Plan the Council has transferred its housing stock to Carlisle Housing Association and is currently concentrating on developing a new Housing Strategy to embrace all retained housing functions. In developing this Strategy the Council has been aided by the timely Comprehensive Performance Assessment which examined the Council's role in Balancing Housing Markets. An action plan has subsequently been developed which, when fully implemented, will ensure that the Council's housing responsibilities are effectively addressed in future.

LSP ANGLE/FUTURE VISION

- The two district Councils, Eden and Carlisle City, chose to come together to form a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in 2001. This was a response to the special circumstances of the Foot and Mouth outbreak, with the area being particularly affected and the economy and communities requiring recovery measures. Although not funded by the Government, resources are provided by the Councils to fund an Officer and to develop, progress and assume to full responsibilities envisaged for LSP's.
- The LSP brings together, at a local level, the different parts of the public sector as well as private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together. It operates at a level which enables strategic decisions to be determined at community level and is aligned to the local authority boundaries of both authorities. The LSP has developed a joint Community Strategy, which has eight cross-cutting themes including housing. The overarching aim for housing is to 'support the development and maintenance of decent, affordable housing and support services which meet the needs of local people and support economic and community development'. Key issues are property fitness, availability of affordable accommodation, services for homeless persons and the balancing of local housing markets.
(→ examples of the SMART Action Plan?)
- Under the Government's regionalisation agenda, a vote will be held in October 2004 as to whether or not a North West Assembly is to be established. Options regarding a new pattern of unitary Councils in Cumbria will also be voted on, which will impact upon the development of the LSP.

CORPORATE PLAN/PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

(To be submitted)

CAPITAL STRATEGY

1. The Capital Strategy Objectives

1.1 The objectives of the Capital Strategy are to:

- set out the corporate objectives that will determine the Council's priorities and approach to capital investment in support of City Vision;
- inform the bidding for capital resources;
- ensure that capital resources contribute to the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives;
- pull together and determine the strategic capital priorities emerging from service unit business planning and ensure opportunity for crosscutting and joined up investment is maximised;
- manage performance management and decision-making procedures that will help achieve the best use of capital resources;
- monitor the capital spending and projects and schemes to ensure that the City's money is spent wisely.

1.2 The Capital Strategy assessed as good by the ODPM in 2001 and 2002, was considered and developed by the Asset Management Officer Group and will continue to be reviewed and updated annually by the Strategic Financial Planning Group. This group consists of senior officers from corporate services and three Members of the Executive. Corporate Management Team will consider the revisions at the same time as the Asset Management Plan, before recommending both to Members of the Executive, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and full Council.

2. Carlisle City Council Services

2.1 The main service priorities during 2003/04 are: Planning and Economic Development; Recreation and Tourism; Environmental Health; Refuse Collection/Street Cleaning; Housing and Central Services. The estimated Gross expenditure on these services is £47.1million. Of this, £20.6m is met from Grants and Receipts, £11.9m from fees and charges (which includes £3.9m of property income), and £0.6m from the Council's Reserves, leaving a net budget requirement to be financed from Council Tax of £5.3m and Government Grants of £8.7m. The Council employs approximately 788 (full time equivalent) staff.

3. Community Planning and Consultation

3.1 The Capital Strategy contributes to the delivery of the City's community plan, **Carlisle City Vision**, through the **Corporate and Best Value Plan 2002-2005**.

3.2 The Carlisle City Vision Partnership first met in October 2000 to develop a community plan for Carlisle. It has received national recognition from Local Government Minister Nick Raynsford in 2002 for its comprehensive community consultation and engagement process. It feeds into the broader Carlisle and Eden District Local Strategic Partnership, which is currently focussed upon the economic recovery of the area following the 2001 Foot and Mouth crisis.

3.3 The City Vision, which was published in March 2002, identifies five themes:

- Communities
- Economic Prosperity
- Health and Well Being
- Infrastructure, Environment and Transport
- Celebrating Carlisle

- 3.4 Each theme has a number of priorities for action that will be delivered by the multi-agency City Vision Partnership. The Council's contribution to delivering these priorities is detailed in its own Corporate Plan 2002-2005, which was published in June 2002. The objectives in the corporate plan are divided into two sections: Council quality of life objectives (those related to delivering the community plan) and Council management objectives (those related to how effectively the Council is managed).

4. Capital Strategy priorities for the next three years

- 4.1 *From City Vision, the Council's corporate plan and the recent Prioritisation exercise has informed the development of the Capital Strategy by identifying potential future key capital projects. In turn, the Asset Management Plan, is driving the better use of assets to deliver services and in identifying opportunities for capital receipts and partnership working to maximise outcomes from the capital programme. Examples of future capital schemes in the Corporate Plan, to be considered through the Capital Strategy are:*

CITY VISION THEME	CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES	POTENTIAL CAPITAL STRATEGY PRIORITY
Communities Objectives	CO 2 Reduce crime and the fear of crime within our communities.	Seek to increase the coverage of CCTV cameras. Seek to increase the coverage of street lighting.
	CO 3 Tackle poverty & deprivation by ensuring regeneration is focused in areas of greatest need.	Target unfit private properties on an area basis (using the newly completed Housing Condition Survey). Contribute to partnerships in the implementation of the Raffles Vision.
Health & Well Being Objectives	HW 1 Promote healthy living & lifestyles.	To deliver the agreed capital programme identified in the Leisure Services Trust. Sports Development Fund. Undertake feasibility studies into a new ice rink and new sports centre.
	HW 3 Fulfil our statutory requirements for Environmental Health	Complete the BV review of bereavement services and implement findings where appropriate
Infrastructure Environment & Transport Objectives	IET 1 Promote and maintain a sustainable environment.	Increase recycling rates and waste management to meet the government's targets in the Waste Strategy 2000
	IET 2 Promote good access and transportation in and around the City area	Ensure that the local transport plan is effective in partnership with other stakeholders. Undertake feasibility into car parking options (Multi-storey and Park & Ride).
Celebrating Carlisle Objectives	CC 2 Have cultural and educational facilities of a high standard.	Review in partnership the creation of a dedicated theatre and art facility in the Carlisle area. Improve the Sheepmount so as to provide a regionally important facility for athletics football and other outdoor sports.
	CC 3 Make best use of our heritage and natural surroundings	Consider the expansion in use of the river frontage in the City area.
Economic Prosperity	EP1 In partnership, develop, support and modernise the local economy	Establish an asset investment fund £200,000 recurring

5. Council Management Objectives

5.1 The Council has agreed 8 management objectives in relation to the Capital Strategy, these are summarised in the table below:

Council Management Objective	Priorities for Action	Year 1 Targets	Year 2/3 Targets	Responsibility
CM5 To ensure our services are focussed on our customers' needs	Provide a centralised attractive customer contact centre for all services.	Temporary customer contact centre to be completed Summer 2003	Permanent customer contact centre to be developed by Autumn 2004 (dependant upon CHA vacating)	Customer and Information Services
CM7 To effectively manage our resources strategically through 3 year financial planning	Review funding mechanisms (including consideration of 'trust' status) for the museum service (Tullie House) with a view to providing more effective operational control			Culture Sports & Leisure
	Undertake major capital schemes to ensure all Council property is assessed for suitability, sufficiency etc.	£200,000 Major Repairs £220,000 DDA Act	£200,000	Property and Commercial & Technical Services
	Continue to develop and implement Capital Strategy and Asset Plan	Spend £100,000 allocation on a corporate property database and other management initiatives according to District Audit advice	Use in a systematic way to analyse future Council and community needs, particularly to reduce Council property running costs	Property Services in conjunction with Financial Services
	Develop a 3 Year financial strategy reviewing patterns of expenditure across the Authority to seek to identify and reduce areas of regular over-budgeting	Change the financial ledger to provide more flexible financial information by 1 st April 2004		Financial Services
CM8 To ensure our services can be accessed electronically by 2005	Review and introduce (where appropriate) Geographical Information Systems in the Council.	Report due Summer 2003		Planning and Customer & Information Services
	Adopt the government's standardisation of property details by joining the Government's National and Property Gazetteer scheme.			Planning and Customer & Information Services
	To introduce post office payments facility for payment of council tax.			Revenues and Benefits Services

6. Best Value

6.1 The Corporate Plan is annually updated to incorporate the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). The BVPP uses these corporate objectives as the basis for priority setting and performance

management. Best Value Fundamental Performance Reviews are organised on a thematic basis and the outcomes recommend capital needs for the Capital Strategy to address.

7. Partnership Working

7.1 The Council's capital and asset value contributions are used to pump prime other sources of funding to achieve maximum outcomes. Recent examples are:

- **Local Strategic Partnership.** The Council led the formation of the Carlisle and Eden Local Strategic Partnership in response to the economic and community devastation caused by Foot and Mouth disease.
- **Tullie House.** The Council is currently investigating the available options for the future delivery of the Museum service based at Tullie House including the setting up of a Trust as a means of delivering the Councils long term objectives.
- **Housing Stock Transfer.** The Council has selected Riverside Housing Association to be its partner for the transfer of 7200 houses, which will result in £43m of reinvestment in the Housing Stock in the first five years.
- **Leisuretime.** The Council externalised the assets of the Sands Leisure Centre, City Pools and Outdoor Recreation facilities to a partnership. This will provide capital investment in the facilities, as recommended in the Best Value Review of Leisuretime.
- **Sheepmount.** The Council is currently in Round 2 of the bid to Sport England to provide improved facilities at the outdoor athletics facility. If successful, the bid will bring £1.35m from Sports England and will require £725,000 of investment from the City.
- **Lanes Development.** This award winning development is the City Council's main shopping centre and has achieved a further 11 retailers in 2002, enhancing capital value and rental income.
- **Kingmoor Park Development.** This multi-million pound project to develop the only regional strategic employment site north of Lancaster has seen £400,000 of City capital invested in a company partnership with the County, private sector, English Partnerships combined to European monies (KONVER) grant funding.

8. Capital Programme 2003/04 to 2006/07

- 8.1 Council's approach to PPP/PFI and other external funding** - Funding for Capital projects is sought from all sources including emphasis on the attraction of external and competitive funding regimes, considered by the Council's External Funding Officer, appointed in 2001. In respect of PFI, the Council is working with the County Council regarding the proposed Carlisle Northern Development Route. As a sole enabler, the City has not yet made use of PFI funding - but it will be explored as part of the review of assets.

Prudential Code -The Council will ensure that the capital and revenue budget planning processes are integrated so that coherent decision making can take place on the level of borrowing that is prudent, affordable and sustainable for the authority. The capital strategy will therefore form an integral part of the strategic financial and service planning process and will support decisions made on capital investment under the prudential code.

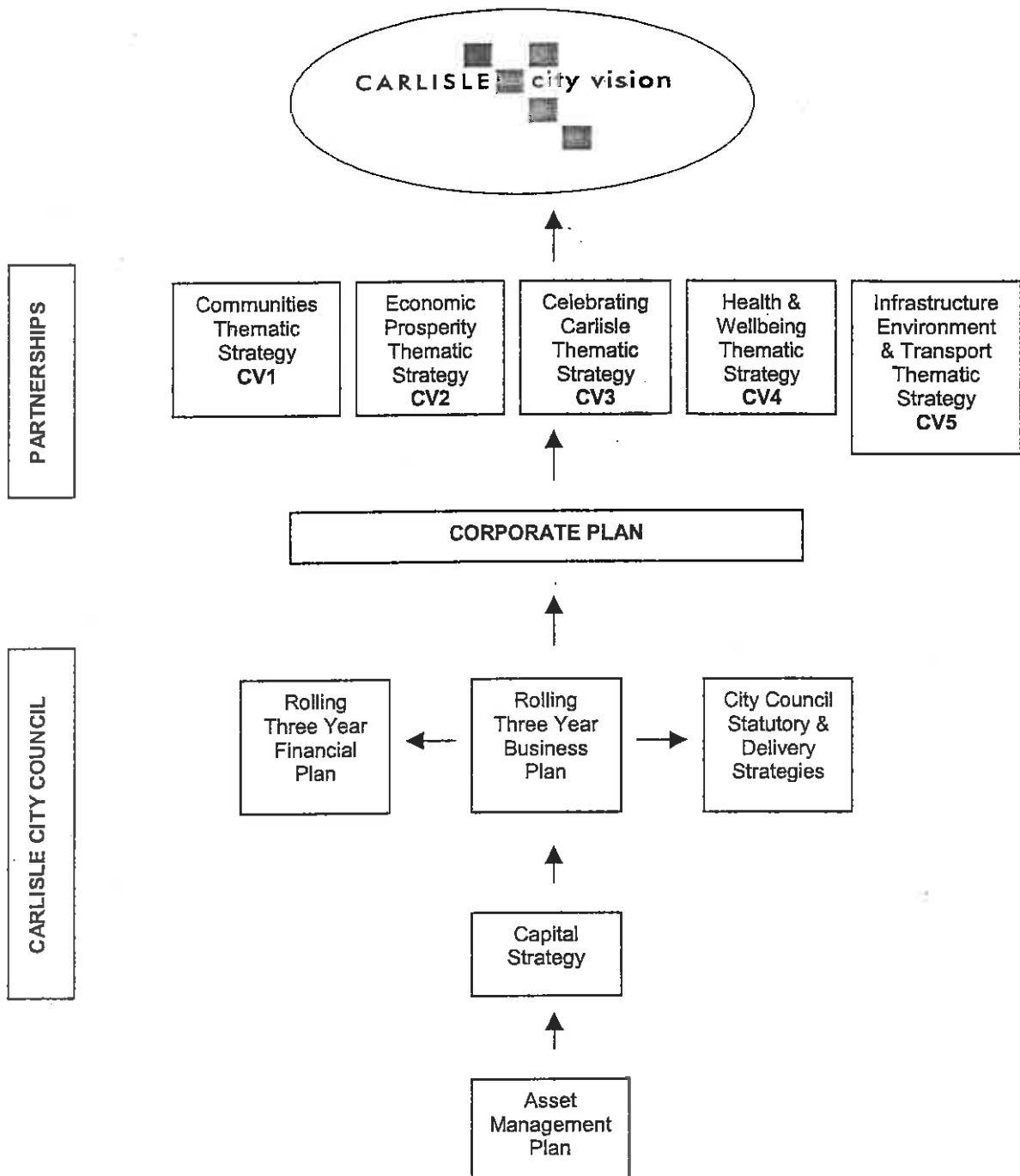
8.2 A summary of the funding of capital schemes is shown below:

Expenditure:	2003/04 Original £	2004/05 Illustrative £	2005/06 Illustrative £	2006/07 Illustrative £
General Fund	4,025,000	3,468,000	1,578,000	1,168,000
Vehicle, Plant & Equip	768,000	632,000	391,000	391,000
	4,793,000	4,100,000	1,969,000	1,559,000
Funded By:				
Capital Receipts	1,461,000	866,000	845,000	845,000
Disabled Facilities Grant	156,000	156,000	156,000	156,000
Loan	1,153,000	1,153,000	1,153,000	1,153,000
Capital Projects Fund	916,000	0	60,000	0
Reserve Funds	1,093,000	632,000	391,000	391,000
Grants	650,000	1,300,000	91,000	0
	5,429,000	4,107,000	2,696,000	2,545,000
Gross Revenue Budget	£47,100,000			
Net Revenue Budget	£14,600,000			

8.3 The programme has reduced substantially from previous years due to the transfer of the Housing Stock, on which the bulk of the expenditure was spent. Capital receipts from Right to Buy Council House Sales, which funded a substantial proportion of the General Fund capital programme, will reduce. A surplus land disposal strategy, with a SMART target of achieving a minimum of £500,000 per year of new receipts, has been introduced to help bridge the gap.

9. Links to Other Relevant Strategies and Plans

9.1 ***The Capital Strategy is cross cutting. It impacts on every Business Plan and strategy of the Council. The Corporate Planning framework provides a mechanism for the prioritisation of investment, with its close links to the Housing Strategy, Economic Prosperity Strategy, Cultural Strategy, Asset Management Plan, and the Regeneration Strategy – the latter emerging from the Best Value review on Regeneration. Each Business Plan for Business Units must include capital, revenue and property asset requirements, which are closely monitored by the Strategic Financial Planning Group. The linkage can be shown as follows:***



10. Approach to Prioritisation of Investment

- 10.1 The Council's rolling three-year budget cycle starts early in each Municipal year and addresses the prioritisation of both its revenue budget and capital programme.
- 10.2 As part of the annual budget process, services, put forward capital bids arising from their strategy documents, business plans and Best Value reviews. A formal system of project appraisal to score and assess capital project applications against set criteria is now used to assess schemes for inclusion in the capital programme.
- 10.3 As part of the appraisal, a ranking score is accorded to each of the bids by the Strategic Financial Planning Group and reported to the Corporate Management Team. The scoring system is based on:
- Linkage to the Council's key corporate objectives and the City Vision
 - Contractual and Legal commitments
 - Financial Implications – including the availability of external funding/partnership working.
- 10.4 Critical within the project appraisal process is the inclusion of both Capital and Revenue implications to identify entire scheme costs.
- 10.5 The objective of the ranking score is to assist the Council to **assess** the bids against the community's priorities in City Vision in relation to Council wide resources. Corporate Management Team includes their recommendations in a report on the total scheme bids, which is then considered by Portfolio Holders of the Executive as part of the budget process.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 11.1 A risk assessed project plan is established for each project. This is subject to regular monitoring against milestones by the nominated project officer for each scheme.
- 11.2 The Capital Programme is monitored and reviewed by the Strategic Financial Planning Group. Quarterly reports are made to the Corporate Management Team, the Executive and critically examined by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees, which considers risk management issues.
- 11.3 Changes in budget positions, scheme costs and removal or inclusion of schemes is reported to the full Council for approval, together with any remedial action necessary.
- 11.4 The monitoring and control of capital schemes also reviews the effectiveness of completed schemes in achieving Council objectives and recommends, where appropriate, changes to procedures to improve delivery.

12. Performance Measurement and Innovation

- 12.1 The Council's corporate planning process, incorporating results and lessons from Best Value Reviews, is used to drive a system of local performance indicators to monitor the effectiveness of service delivery and capital utilisation. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) series of Performance Indicators contributes towards monitoring of assets to identify targets for additional investment.
- 12.2 Each capital project incorporates measures for monitoring. This methodology, along with the utilisation of the ODPM indicator 5 for capital projects, provides the framework.
- 12.3 In relation to Asset Management a series of 15 indicators have been formulated. In particular, 5 ODPM indicators, include the monitoring of capital expenditure (through what is known as the Egan indices).
- 12.4 There is a SMART target for the achievement of capital receipts. Further details about the Council's corporate approach and evidence of plan development and implementation is outlined in the Asset Management Plan.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Asset Management Plan has been written in partnership with the Capital Strategy. The process forms a part of the Corporate Plan, the Authority's statement about how it will use its capital and asset resources to contribute towards fulfilling the themes set out in City Vision.

The Council has a substantial asset base. It is directing the implementation of Asset Planning at a strategic level, using this asset base as a foundation to attract the maximum public / private Capital Strategy investment through partnership working. Particularly, the Council is reviewing all that it owns, whether it is still relevant to own what it does, and review policy to achieve consistency of expression.

	Operational assets	Non operational assets	Surplus assets
No. of asset lots	50	44	22
Total income	£1.1 million pa	£3.9 million pa	£16,400 pa
Total value	£18 million	£61.3 million	£5.3 million
Note: Operational assets now includes income from Council owned car parks (£1,035,010)			
Re-investment budget 03 / 04	£1,070,000	£200,000	£5,000
Estimated backlog of maintenance repairs	£3,000,000	£4,000,000	£ nil

1. The community of Carlisle has developed a new 10-year strategy for the City – City Vision – through consultation Corporate Plan objectives are agreed to target City Vision themes.
2. The Capital Strategy in partnership with the Asset Management Plan show how capital spending will help achieve corporate themes.
3. The Development Advisory Group of colleagues meet to focus strategic thinking and direction between Members and Officers and inform the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
4. A surplus land review has identified £5.8 million of assets available with a SMART £500,000 minimum target per year to achieve.
5. An Asset Investment Fund has been established as a first principle to be resourced from the receipts.
6. The Audit Commission recommendations for the Property Service and, through cross cutting work, those of Economic Development, are being monitored through the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and are being implemented.
7. A business-managed approach is enabling the release of resources to implement proactive asset management, including £220,000 to upgrade operational buildings to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.
8. Partnership working continues with the transfer of Kingmoor Park to 90% private sector control, 11 new shops let in the Lanes, and the establishment of new partners for the Market Hall and Raffles.
9. The asset management database has been purchased and data is being implemented.
10. A corporate research paper into the property market of Carlisle is completed. This major piece of work will inform policy making to determine if and why the Council owns what property it does and whether it still needs to.

The 2003/06 Asset Management Plan sets further targets which flow from this work.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

(To be submitted)

NATIONAL PRIORITIES – COMMUNITY STRATEGY

(To be submitted)

NEIGHBOURHOOD INVESTMENT

1. Introduction

At its Board meeting in March 2003 CHA agreed a policy to influence the sustainability of the neighbourhoods in which the organisation has its housing stock.

The document detailed Carlisle HA's policy for Community Investment and Regeneration and the approach to non-housing regeneration activity within our neighbourhoods and the criteria that guides the overarching priorities and principles for the use of Carlisle's Community Investment Fund and Environmental Project Fund.

Carlisle Housing Association has committed resources to invest in regeneration activity to improve the quality of life for communities.

An integrated approach to improving the quality of life for communities is paramount in Carlisle Housing Association's strategic plan. Co-ordination of activities, with a wide range of partners, both internal and external is central to achieving our aims and objectives.

The Neighbourhood Investment Approach seeks to:

- Establish a planned and co-ordinated medium to long-term strategy for each neighbourhood (3 - 5 years)
- Inform CHA on the nature in which we deliver services and their impact
- Adopt a partnership approach with local people to deliver integrated services to improve the quality of life
- Demonstrate that CHA is committed to addressing the needs of our customers

It is intended to compliment this process by proposing the establishment of some guiding principles for a range of themes evolving from the planning process associated with the Neighbourhood Action Plans.

2. Community Investment Fund Criteria

In promoting the concept of investing in non-housing related activity, parameters need to be set to validate the level of investment that Carlisle HA are prepared to contribute to the regeneration of those communities where we have stock.

At the very heart of this approach is the acknowledgement that the commitment of Community Investment resources needs to demonstrate an impact on:

- The social, economic and environmental well-being of the neighbourhood including:
 - Preventing Social Exclusion
 - Addressing areas of health inequality
 - Improving the quality of the environment
 - Improving access to services
 - Assist in the physical, economic and educational advancement of individuals/groups
- An improvement in the quality of life for our tenants, and:
- Of increasing the demand for properties in the neighbourhood.

3. Financial Resources

The **Community Investment Fund** has a budget of £400,000 per year to support regeneration activities aimed at improving the lives of our communities. Within this budget £30,000 has been allocated to a Community Grant Scheme (Delegated to Officers) and the remainder, £370,000, to fund larger scale projects identified within the Neighbourhood Action Plans and Annual Implementation Plan.

An **Environmental Fund** is also available on an annual basis (circa £170,000 for 2004/05) to support the development of environmental issues in our neighbourhoods. Funding is set on an annual basis to represent a level of investment based on the number of properties managed by the association.

In addition £100,000 has been set aside in the business plan for the first five years to consider potential remodelling and demolition where appropriate.

4. Neighbourhood Action Plans

In furtherance of the sustainability approach staff are currently compiling individual Action Plans for each of our neighbourhoods. The culmination of this activity will inform the setting of an Annual Delivery Plan for 2004/2005 and subsequent years.

The above process has identified a number of issues emerging that are replicated across a number of our individual neighbourhoods and include:

- a) Environmental Improvements & Maintenance
- b) Stock Investment & Remodelling
- c) Housing Management
- d) Enterprise, Training and Learning (including Benefits Advice)
- e) Community Safety
- f) Demographic and Locality Issues
- g) Consultation Mechanisms

5. Guiding Principles

A number of key areas of activity have been identified where it is suggested that a co-ordinated approach is set out within given parameters to determine a way forward. These Guiding Principles will ensure consistency of approach in considering each of the key areas of activity for inclusion in the sustainability action plans for each neighbourhood.

Consultation Mechanisms

In establishing the individual Neighbourhood Action Plans consultation has been integrated into the development process, containing where possible a partnership with local people.

This approach will:

- Assist in the development of locality based services
- Support issues set out in Neighbourhood Action Plan
- Enable TAG/Federation to act as a voice for local people
- Provide the basis for Monitoring and Reviewing Action Plans

Theme

Environmental Initiatives & Maintenance

Potential to develop a Partnership approach where possible to address:

Environmental Cleanliness and Maintenance
 Street/Security Lighting
 Parking Bays
 Gardening/Environmental Projects

Stock Investment & Remodelling

Issues for consideration:

Type of Investment Required:

- Central heating
- Kitchens
- Bathrooms etc

Priorities areas for investment

Void/Relet standards

Estate Remodelling

<u>Housing Management</u>

Consideration of:

Area Based Approach

Landlord Functions:

- Allocations/Lettings
- Property Shop
- Anti Social Behaviour

Demand Issues

Employment, Training & Learning

Support and provide a range of activities including:

Employment Opportunities
 Learning/Educational Courses
 Intermediate Labour Market
 Community Enterprise
 Benefits Advice Services

Community Safety

Supporting initiatives that address criminal and unacceptable behaviour and fear of crime, including:

Tenancy Enforcement
CCTV and Shirpa Scheme
Neighbourhood Watch
Safe Homes Project (Risk Assessment)
Security Lighting and Fencing Schemes
Retail Security

Demographic and Locality Issues

Including a Partnership Approach for:

Youth Provision (Motor Project)
Services for Vulnerable/ Elderly Residents:

- Sheltered Housing
- Housing Visitor Scheme
- Careline Services
- Floating Support Scheme

Health and Social Care
Support Services (assisting in Independent Living Options)
Social and Community activities

EMPTY HOMES

Carlisle City Council has 2054 empty homes (as shown on the Council Tax Register) which represents c.4.5% of the total housing stock, over all tenures.

It is proposed to enter into a partnership arrangement with Eden District Council to produce a joint Empty Property Strategy, with a view to moving from a facilitation role to one of development and implementation.

However, the Local Authorities cannot tackle this significant problem on their own, and require the assistance of other partners, not only to identify specific properties, but to work together to bring these properties back into use.

Not only does an empty property have a detrimental effect on the area in which it is situated, but it also loses revenue for the owner; loses Council Tax for the Local Authority, but also removes a unit of accommodation from the housing stock. One just has to look at the Housing waiting list to see what effect, dealing with empty properties would have, on the number of people seeking accommodation.

The City Council will take a corporate approach to dealing with empty properties, with Economic Development/Housing/Property Service/Finance etc all being involved in the process.

EMPTY PROPERTY STRATEGY

- Housing applicants – to access a better choice of accommodation.
- Provide accommodation for more vulnerable people such as the homeless and younger people.
- Private sector home owners – providing an income stream, better security if the property is continually occupied and a possible increase in property value.
- The immediate neighbourhood – reduces blight, ASB, nuisance etc.
- Housing Associations/RSLs – utilise their expertise in the management and regulation of tenancies (HAMA or some equivalent).

ACTION

- Identify properties with the potential to be brought back into use.
- Identify and include BU's that have an input into the proposed strategy and categorise their role in the operation.
- Involve RSLs/HA/private sector landlords.
- What are our limitations.
- Consult with Council Tax to quantify the extent of the problem (data protection issues?).
- Carry out a survey (use LHC material) to identify the reasons for the non-occupancy of empty properties.
- Awareness raising of the public and what their involvement could be.
- Provision of advice and information to clients to enable them to make an informed decision on how and why to bring their property back into use.
- Funding from Capital Resources of City Council to encourage owners to realise the potential of their property.
- L.O.T.S.
- Working with Private Sector Landlords.
- Planning policy liaison.
- Publicity/Promotion.

- Use the Strategy to bid for funding to ODPM/HC/LA.

SUPPORTED APPROACH

- Involve all BU's who have an input.
Economic Development / Property Services / Finance/Planning / Environmental Services / Housing etc.
- Collate information held by these BU's into a single database.
- Continue to liaise with Private Sector Landlords through the Landlords Forum and the Landlords Association.
- Single person co-ordinator for EH. Strategy.
- Partnership with input from ALL.
- Corporate Approach.
- Constraints
 - Funding limitations (Capital)
 - Data Protection
 - Staffing/resources (Revenue)
 - Planning Policy – car parking/listed/conservation areas.

POSITIVES

- Partnership working.
- Bringing unused properties back onto the market to meet a definite need.
- Regeneration of 'problem' areas throughout the District.
- Integrated/Corporate approach to an existing resource.
- Improved communication.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

It is the aim of the Empty Property Strategy to: -

- Reduce the number of empty properties in the area.
- Reduce the level of homelessness.
- Improve the quality of the surrounding environment for residents, by improving, currently empty homes.
- Reduce the number of complaints regarding empty properties.
- Prevent the deterioration of an area where empty properties are situated, which affect the value and marketability of neighbouring properties.

PROPOSAL

Prior to achieving any of the above, the Local Authority requires to put in place an Empty Homes Strategy. In conjunction with Eden District Council and approach has been made to the Empty Homes Agency, with a view to having them carry out this Strategy formulation on a consultancy basis. Because we would be able to achieve economies of scale.

REGULATORY REFORM ORDER

(To be submitted)

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

The delivery of low-level housing related support services for vulnerable people in the District of Carlisle will continue to be carried out in partnership with Cumbria Supporting People. This involves the delivery of services such as supported accommodation, floating support (support delivered to people in their own homes) and community alarm services to enable people to remain independent in their own homes or in supported tenancies for longer. Services are also provided to enable people to develop their independence or return to the community following a crisis such as homelessness, mental health problems, domestic violence, a period of imprisonment, or substance misuse. Longer-term support services are provided to assist people with learning disabilities, people with more severe mental health problems, older people and people with physical disabilities to maintain their independence in the community.

Supporting People is new statutory legislation introduced by the Government, which 'went live' in April 2003. The legislation provides a new funding mechanism, performance monitoring and quality improvement framework for accommodation and support services for a wide range of vulnerable adults. It replaces a variety of funding streams such as Housing Benefit, Supported Housing Management Grant and the Probation Accommodation Grant, which were used to pay for some of these services in the past.

Supporting People is a partnership between the six District Councils and four Primary Care Trusts of Cumbria, along with Cumbria County Council and Cumbria Probation Service. The partnership is responsible for the delivery of the Supporting People Programme in Cumbria. This involves decisions on the funding of support services for vulnerable people on a countywide basis. Carlisle City Council is committed to the partnership arrangement and maintains a strong representation on partnership bodies such as the Supporting People Core Strategy Development Group and Commissioning Body.

Local discussion of Supporting People funded services and development requirements are enable via the North Cumbria Housing Forum and Supporting People Locality Strategic Development Group.

Current developments include the provision of six units of supported accommodation for people with Learning Disabilities.

Supporting People will be carrying out reviews of all services as part of a three year rolling programme. The City Council's own Homeless Hostel and associated move-on accommodation will be subject to Supporting People review in 2003-04. The review involves an assessment of the services strategic relevance, demand, quality and cost effectiveness. Other services provided in the area will also be subject to review over the next three years.

The City Council's full involvement in the Supporting People Programme will support the delivery of Corporate and Development Objectives such as:

- Statutory responsibilities relating to Homelessness
- The Health and Well Being agenda

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Everyone has the right to live in a vibrant sustainable community, but communities will only be sustainable if people want to live in them. Whilst investment in housing is paramount, communities are not just about housing, a holistic approach is essential in the development of sustainable communities. Through creating more employment, increasing prosperity, improving the environment, reducing inequalities, providing better access to education, improves the quality of life for the people living in those communities.

We are committed to the objective's agreed by the North West Housing Forum. We will draw together three key strategies in this area, Regional Housing Strategy (which incorporates the aims and objectives of the Sustainable Communities: building for the Future document), Regional Planning Guidance, and Regional Economic Strategy.

The Strategies outlined above are taken forward and expanded through other partnerships i.e. Regeneration, health, Crime Reduction Group.

VALUING PEOPLE

(To be submitted)

HOMELESSNESS

- The Homelessness Act 2002 has emphasised the Government's commitment in dealing with the problems that people face when homeless and socially excluded. As well as widening the scope of responsibility to help homeless people, the Act also placed a requirement on local authorities to develop a Homelessness Strategy and a strategic response to dealing with and preventing the problems that homelessness causes.
- Carlisle City Council has become part of the County group of six authorities that have produced a "Cumbria Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008" following a thorough review of all homelessness services in the County. The aims of the Strategy are to: -
 - Set a new strategically planned direction for homelessness services in the County
 - Outline County homelessness objectives and each districts key priorities
 - Identify resources and future resources to tackle homelessness
 - Achieve local, regional and national homelessness strategic targets
 - Outline strategy-monitoring procedures
- Homelessness cannot be tackled in isolation. The Cumbria Local Authorities aim to adopt a partnership approach to implement the Strategy and work together through the County Forum.
- Carlisle City Council has made the following homelessness decisions within the last 3 years: -

Homelessness Decisions

Year	Decisions Made	Priority Need
01/04/01 – 31/03/02	97	39
01/04/02 – 31/03/03	200	74
01/04/03 – 31/10/03*	240	110

***2003/04 FIGURES TO BE UPDATED**

- Carlisle City Council has an "Action Plan" within the Strategy document, covering the following seven main areas: -
 - Preventing Homelessness
 - Housing Advice
 - Temporary Accommodation
 - Rehousing and Resettlement
 - Multi-Agency Working
 - Performance Management
 - Strategic Issues
- The targets within this "Action Plan" form a core part of the Housing Strategy plan.

PLANNING REFORM

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill is currently going through Parliament with the scheduled date for its enactment in June/July 2004. The Bill covers a number of changes to the planning system including the Development Plan system which currently provides the Local Plan guidance on the location of housing development.

Under the new system Regional Spatial Strategies will set the regional context for housing development throughout the North West, giving more weight to the current Regional Planning Guidance. The Local Development Framework will replace the Local Plan with a number of documents which are listed in a Local Development Scheme. This Scheme is currently being developed and will be in place by the end of 2004.

In addition other changes are occurring. Shorter, clearer Planning Policy Statements are replacing Planning Policy Guidance. Some of these are supported by other documents depending on the technical nature of the guidance.

The system for Planning Obligations (usually referred to as S106 agreements) is also being reviewed and consultation finished in December.

All these changes should result in a more positive, easier to use and easier to update planning system delivering quicker decisions on planning applications and giving more certainty.

HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

- The North Cumbria Health Improvement and Modernisation Plan 2002-2005 (HIMP), is the umbrella partnership document for the drive to improve health and to reduce inequalities in health across the area. Within the Carlisle City Council area, 2 PCT's operate (Carlisle & District and Eden Valley).
- The HIMP has identified the following health issues for improvement;
 - Premature deaths among men from Cancers and accidents, especially road accidents.
 - Premature deaths among women due to circulatory diseases (Coronary Heart Disease and Stroke), bronchial conditions and mental disorders.Through the Local Health Group (LHG), the authority is working with the PCT and other statutory and voluntary organisations to encourage and enable people to live healthier lives in a healthier environment. The LHG itself operates within the LSP framework.
- Through the LHG, the authority has managed the following programmes funded by Health Action Zone (HAZ) monies, these are;
 - Exercise on Prescription (EOP) since 2001 for GP's to refer patients for a programme of exercise within the City and rolled out to local communities.
 - Cardiac Rehabilitation sessions since 1991 for patients referred for a Phase IV programme of exercise following heart problems.
 - Fuel Poverty Officer since 2002 employed to develop an Affordable Warmth Policy.
 - Youth Housing Officer from 2004 who will be employed to work regarding youth homelessness and health provision
- Other programmes contributed to include;
 - Smoke cessation
 - Research on domestic violence
 - Local health survey
- Health partnerships are crucial for contributing to the social inequality, poor housing and homelessness.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

(To be submitted)

NORTH WEST HOUSING FORUM

The North West Housing Forum (NWHF) was set up in 2000 when the Government's department, the DTLR, was looking to develop key priorities and inform investment decisions based on regional assessments on need and priority setting.

The NWHF is therefore one of about 7 across the Country involving each district authority in the designated area through representatives from each sub-regional area (in our case, the Cumbria Sub-Regional Forum explained elsewhere). The Forum has member and officer representation and takes place every quarter. It has one paid officer to develop links and service the Forum.

The key issues identified by the Forum for 2003/4 are: -

1. Housing and Community Cohesion – this priority concentrates on issues relating to segregation within communities involving ethnic minority communities. This is highlighted in places like Oldham and larger metropolitan cities, it does not apply to Cumbria in general.
2. Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal – this priority concentrates on Housing and wider issues such as improving education, health and public services, employment and economy, neighbourhood management, tackling anti-social behaviour, improving environmental quality and design and good public transport.
Two key long-term goals have been established as follows: -
 - In all the poorest neighbourhoods, to have common goals of lower worklessness and crime and better health, skills, housing and physical environment
 - To narrow the gap on these measures between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the CountryThis should achieve the Government's target the within 10 to 20 years, no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live.
3. Sustainability, Quality and Design – this priority concentrates on economic growth, environmental protection/enhancement and social inclusion. The aim is to draw 3 key strategies in this area, i.e. Regional Housing Strategy, Regional Planning Guidance and Regional Economic Strategy, to contribute in the delivery of the Regional Sustainable Development Framework "Action for Sustainability".

The key priorities for the North West are being drawn from the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS) Study and are as follows: -

1. Urban renaissance and dealing with changing demand, where Housing Market failure and low demand issues are to be addressed by £500million of Market Renewal Pathfinder Funding, in designated areas. In Cumbria, funding is being secured in the West of the County.
2. Providing affordable homes to maintain balanced communities, where the conditions experienced are opposite to those in priority areas where areas are in high demand and house prices exclude section of the community in their ability to purchase or rent in the private sector market. In Cumbria, this priority concentrates on rural parts, particularly the Lake District National Park area and rural areas.
This priority includes Carlisle district area and we will develop priorities to enable delivery of affordable homes.
3. Delivering decent homes on thriving neighbourhoods. In Carlisle, this area of work is being assessed in terms of the Regulatory Reform Order, Empty Homes Strategy and monitoring RSLs on the delivery targets on decent homes.

4. Meeting the Regions needs for specialist and supported housing. In Carlisle, we are concentrating on priorities developed as part of our involvement in the Supporting People Programme at the various levels.

The needs analysis group's work will be central in establishing new priorities within the Carlisle District area. These will need to tie in with our priorities for new developments involving Housing Corporation funding.

HOUSING CORPORATION ADP

Since the results of the Sheffield Hallam Housing Demand Study (2001) were published, the City Council has been 'taking stock' of the issues raised from the study.

The key findings highlighted that some areas of Carlisle, particularly areas in Carlisle South, were showing low demand and were at risk of decline.

Since then, the City Council has taken a major step in transferring its housing stock to the newly established Carlisle Housing Association (an independent subsidiary of the Riverside Group).

During this period of major change there have been major changes in the Housing Market, particularly through house price increases.

The reduced level of investment from the Housing Corporation ADP programme in Carlisle now needs to be turned around and accelerated, partly due to increased level of Right to Buys experienced by CHA thus reducing the overall numbers in the Social Housing Sector but also because the private rented sector is now concentrating on the student population in Carlisle, which is expected to increase over the period covered by this document (2004-9), reducing options for families and non-students.

It has been unfortunate for Carlisle that the Housing Corporation has amended its method of allocating resources as for the first time, focusing spending over a 2 year period with a priority towards partnership bids – i.e. partnership arrangements including major RSLs and large schemes.

For 2004-05 it is likely that we will only secure one scheme here in Carlisle (with only one unit of an existing purchase), the other bids made relating to move on accommodation are unlikely to gain approval due to the need for revenue funding involving Supporting People programme funding (the latter currently has no funding for developing new schemes and schemes already in the pipeline are still awaiting approval from the ODPM).

In Carlisle we have schemes outstanding from previous years due to exceptional circumstances and others which do not involve Housing Corporation funding. In addition, there are a number of sites with private developers where we have negotiated a number of units for discounted sale, these are highlighted in the article on Low Cost Housing.

For the purposes of this article, the following actions are ongoing currently: -

- Impact Housing Association – developing a new build scheme for people with mild learning disabilities on a site off Greystone Road (behind Warwick Road). This scheme involves Housing Corporation ADP.
- Two Castles Housing Association – identifying a site for the development of bungalows and houses to replace the scheme originally planned at the Carleton Grange site (Cumwhinton Road). This scheme involves Housing Corporation ADP.
- Impact Housing Association in negotiation with New Era Housing Association in the transfer of the previously County Council contracted capital grant scheme involving 6 shared houses (dispersed units) for people with learning disabilities. This scheme does not involve Housing Corporation ADP, there is a Supporting People contract associated with these properties and some social care services are provided to the residents.

In the rural area, our key priorities in terms of procurement of Social Housing Units through a needs survey, are as follows: -

- Longtown Market Towns Initiative area
 - Moor Road, Longtown
 - Netherby Road site
- Burgh By Sands
- Laversdale
- Farlam

Priorities for future years will be achieved through the research work being carried out and will be worked up in partnership with other stakeholders.

There will be an update provided annually.

NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

(To be submitted)

SUB-REGIONAL PRIORITIES – SUB-REGIONAL HOUSING FORUM

(To be submitted)

NORTH CUMBRIA HOUSING FORUM (NCHF)

The NCHF has been in existence since around 1994 and involves the sharing of views and lobbying for joint action particularly where Housing and Care can jointly deliver national and local priorities in innovative ways.

It meets every 6 weeks and is represented by Local Authority Housing Staff from Eden, Carlisle, Copeland and Allerdale, Supporting People Team, PCTs, Registered Social Landlords, Social Services and a number of voluntary sector organisations.

Carlisle City Council officers chair the group, which has enabled representative organisations to secure funding of over £1million over the years.

Strong links have been established with key officers in the Social and Health economy and has resulted in various innovative schemes. An example of one such scheme where Carlisle City Council took a lead role, involved the establishment of the North Cumbria Community Alarms Consortium, this relatively formal collaboration has resulted in funding for Health and significantly eased the "bed-blocking" problem at the Cumberland Infirmary.

This scheme highlighted how joint working can achieve major results relatively inexpensively.

In 2004, the North Cumbria Housing Forum is likely to take a stronger role in the sector with issues relating to Local Government Boundary changes emerge.

It is also now the formal conduit for user and provider involvement (although not exclusively) for the Supporting People Programme in North Cumbria.

Other key areas the City Council hopes to influence through the forum are: -

- Stronger links and joint priorities between the NCHF and the Carlisle Health Group.
- Lobby for additional funding to support the Supporting People programme.
- Look at opportunities for joint working between floating support providers.
- Formal evaluation of the Community Alarms scheme.
- Joint working between the four Local Authorities and the Learning Disabilities Team.

The NCHF reviews its priorities on an annual basis and will continue to take on new priorities as they emerge.

COMMUNITY ALARMS CONSORTIUM

Intermediate Care Initiative

'The Project aims to develop and provide a range of community based services that prevent avoidable acute admissions and facilitate the transition from hospital to home and support continued independent living at home, utilising modern community alarm technology.'

Laurie Brewis, Carlisle Housing Association.

The Need:

The community alarm services currently provided in North Cumbria have, in recent years, become a respected and trusted enhancement to core support for elderly, disabled and/or isolated people. Recently the providers of these services in Carlisle, Eden, Copeland and Allerdale have agreed to work in partnership to further improve the type and range of services available to people across North Cumbria, including urban and rural areas. The partnership has focused on establishing a new and innovative approach to the provision of intermediate care. This approach forms both an integral part of planned hospital discharge arrangements and an alternative to hospital admission for elderly and disabled people.

The emphasis of the initiative is primarily concerned with that of prevention and short-term support to sustain independence and promote healthy ageing in a safe environment. The NSF standards, which this initiative addresses through the provision of preventative and supportive services, are:

Standard Two:- Person-Centred Care

Standard Five:- Stroke (Partial)

Standard Six:- Falls

Standard Eight:- Healthy Ageing

The initiative also addresses some of the issues contributing towards delayed transfers of care, which is vital in light of the introduction of the Community Care (Delayed Discharge etc) Bill which comes into force in October 2003.

The Solution:

In order to implement the initiative, close and regular liaison between health staff, occupational therapists and social workers has been vital in order to undertake initial and exit assessments to determine "person centred" packages of support. Referrals were accepted from all health staff within the district, including hospital and community based nurses, OTs, local GP practices, Social Services and Emergency Service staff.

Referrals are normally assessed with 3 working days, and the alarm units are installed within 5 working days of referral from hospital/social work staff, and before the agreed discharge date. A period of intensive support in the home is provided following discharge or prevention of admission, which varies according to the circumstances of the client but averages 6 weeks. Service providers assist in the domestic support assessment and co-ordination of appropriate services, and in the identification of a programme to promote

active life and self-care specifically designed around the rehabilitation and recovery needs of the vulnerable person. Regular safety checks on the client and their living environment are made, along with emergency response visits if a problem occurs.

Providers are alerted to emergencies by means of the Lifeline 4000 home unit. If the alarm button on the unit or the remote personal trigger is pressed, a call is sent to the response centre, where the appropriate help can be arranged. Likewise, the centre will receive a call if the Lifeline unit detects an alarm from other sensors, such as a flood detector, smoke detector or fall detector. The means to call for assistance quickly, 24 hours a day and from anywhere around the home gives users a great sense of security.

A Case Study

Mr and Mrs X were in hospital. Mrs X was recovering from major surgery and was still very frail; Mr X who is diabetic and had recently had his right leg amputated was being discharged into residential care. Both clients were distressed at being separated and wondered if they would return home together.

It was decided by the relevant parties after much discussion that Mr X was to be allowed home with a Careline Intermediate Care package which included a fall detector, routine daily calls from Careline and also help from the Community Support Team and District Nurse who would administer insulin three times daily. All parties met regularly to discuss progress.

Initially, as a result of the amputation Mr X fell quite often, and a call was automatically raised to Careline whose staff assisted where necessary. However, before too long Mr X had the confidence to get himself up without any physical response, with reassurance and prompting from the control centre staff. As his confidence grew the number of visits from the Community Support Team were reduced, as were the falls.

Mrs X was discharged two weeks later with the Intermediate Care Package still in place. Following the support given by the project both clients regained their confidence and the ability to cope at home; neither returned to hospital. They chose to continue with the Careline service and with this support they felt that the need for respite care would not be necessary. Mr and Mrs X felt that their support package was more than adequate and provided some feedback for the service providers in order to evaluate the scheme.

- *The service gave the reassurance that there was someone available to help 24 hours per day.*
- *The daily calls meant any problems were identified and the appropriate services made aware and dealt with immediately.*
- *The family of Mr and Mrs X were reassured that there was help at hand if it was needed.*

Conclusion:

Through provision of this integrated, proactive service the following outcomes have been realised:

- A planned hospital discharge support package of temporary services.
- Alternative options to hospital admission.

- Reduced NHS 'bed blocking' problems arising from unsupported discharges.
- Improved follow up support in post trauma situations.
- Reduced service pressure on the NHS at peak periods.
- Reduction in acute care following a 'fall'.

Most (60%) packages were put in place to support a transfer of care, with 20% of packages instigated to monitor clients at risk of falling, and **20% actually prevented admission to hospital.**

Since the scheme was introduced in February 2002, 500 individuals have received Care Packages in 13 months.

An important aim of the project is to release hospital beds and the major resources benefit of the project is derived from the savings produced by this one aspect of the project.

The comparison of £5,100 for six weeks in hospital (the average duration of the intermediate care package) and £125.90 care package cost speaks for itself.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS – CARLISLE HEALTH GROUP

(To be submitted)

CARLISLE AND EDEN SHARING OF HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

A working arrangement between Carlisle City Council and Eden District Council was made during July 2003 involving an agreement whereby, Eden District Council was able to utilise two rooms within Carlisle City Council's London Road Family/Female's Hostel. Eden District Council does not have a family hostel facility, which often necessitates the need for them to use Bed and Breakfast accommodation. This type of accommodation is inappropriate except for short-term emergency use and also expensive.

Carlisle's family hostel is a resource which usually runs at 80% occupancy and the arrangement with Eden has helped to keep the hostel running at over 90% occupancy, allowing Eden the flexibility of an additional resource and Carlisle to benefit from some additional funding. This arrangement came into being on 1st August 2003.

The framework of the agreement established that the rooms, which would vary in size according to the need, would be used solely as temporary accommodation, pending enquiries or assessment by Eden Housing Association (on behalf of Eden District Council), for homeless persons on Priority Need. Eden Housing association is responsible for providing move on accommodation.

Referrals can only be made during office hours and on the agreed referral form, which includes a completed risk assessment, details of support etc.

Since August 2003, 4 referrals to the hostel have been accepted on behalf of Eden District Council.

The first quarterly review meeting took place on 5th November 2003. It was agreed by both parties that, so far, the arrangement appeared to be working well.

The next meeting has been arranged for 3rd February 2004.

This arrangement will be reviewed after 12 month i.e. July/August 2004.

GENERIC DOMICILLIARY CARE PROJECT

(To be submitted)

ADVAICE AGENCIES WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Carlisle City Council has a statutory duty to provide housing advice and the aim is to develop an effective service with clear route to local advisory agencies which cover a wider area of need.

The current housing advice service offers:

- Help with housing options and solutions to problems, which may involve outside agencies
- Challenging illegal evictions and offering mediation between landlords and tenants.

During the review, it was found that there were gaps in the homeless advice service and that there was a need to develop this provision if it was to have an impact on preventing homelessness.

Over the next five years, a more robust advice service will be developed. It will involve working in partnership with local specialist support agencies, working with voluntary groups, health groups, social service, housing benefits, landlords forum, probation and prison services, in order to achieve this. Some initiatives have already been highlighted:

- Regular knowledge based staff training
- Discussions with advice agencies to improve links internally and externally and encourage joint working practices and assessments
- The planned development of a one-stop needs facility at the Civic Centre, to offer clients wider support service. This would help to provide a holistic response for those with more complex problems
- Education – visiting schools to offer information sessions on housing and associated issues
- Identifying housing needs and working with providers to ensure adequate suitable accommodation is available to all client groups
- Development of a recording system to monitor outcomes of actions

Meetings with representatives from each group commenced during August 2003 and are still underway.

Meetings with Probation and Cumbria Las planned for early 2004 to discuss ways to provide a more comprehensive advice service for ex offenders.

DEVELOPMENTS POST LSVT

Since the successful transfer of its housing stock to Carlisle Housing Association (CHA) the Council has developed and maintained close working links with the new Association. Regular scheduled meetings take place between officers to discuss performance and mutual resolution of problems. In addition CHA officers play an important role in the Housing Strategy Working Group to ensure that proposals for area improvement match in to wider regeneration issues being pursued by the Council and its partners.

A suite of performance indicators have been developed covering issues of property repair and improvement, allocation and letting times and rates of tenant satisfaction. The indicators chosen are also monitored through returns to the Housing Corporation which oversees the work of Registered Social Landlords such as CHA.

The performance of CHA against these indicators is monitored through the Council's Overview and Scrutiny process.

PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS

The housing development rate in the district has been fairly constant in Carlisle with just under 400 new dwelling units being built per year within the district. Changes to guidance with the issue of PPG3 Housing put greater emphasis on urban development. This has had a knock on effect for the location of new development and rural housing.

In the rural area there is just under an eight year supply of housing against projected rates of development currently envisaged in the Structure Plan. In order to contain the levels of new housing and focus development in the more sustainable locations planning policy for private sector development is becoming more restrictive.

In the urban area the intended release of housing land at Morton has been held up by an Inquiry whilst other planned developments are nearing completion. This has led to reduced supply in the urban area of just over four years.

There are however a number of recent trends emerging where housebuilders are looking for alternative land and are beginning to focus on land previously used for employment. This is in itself putting greater competition on land uses particularly around the edges of the city centre and industrial areas.

The type of dwelling unit being applied for has also changed in recent years with a trend towards flat/apartment developments.

How can we provide additional units of accommodation, within the confines of existing resources?

Utilisation of part of the Private Sector Renewal programme funding, to provide self contained accommodation (in the private rented sector), as move-on accommodation for single people/families.

Working with an RSL/HA as a partner, acquire an existing set of properties (either domestic or commercial) and convert into self contained accommodation. Any funding allocated to this project has the possibility of matched funding by the RSL, and, at completion, could be managed by the existing Hostel staff, of the City Council.

Additionally, link the proposal into other funding streams such as Supporting People, Social Services and Health (PCT's), to provide a complete support package for vulnerable people.

This could be an ongoing, rolling programme that would see increased numbers of private rented sector accommodation, and also, accommodation that would meet the requirements of the Fitness Standard, HHSRS and the Decent Homes Standard.

Carlisle City Council would insist on Nomination Rights for a substantial number of the accommodation unit, and could provide the necessary management. This type of scheme would satisfy a number of key aims and objectives that the City Council wish to achieve: -

- 1) Partnership working.
- 2) Conversion/Renovation of empty properties/low demand properties.
- 3) Improve the profile of the City Council in terms of its Strategic Housing Authority Role.
- 4) Tap into Private Sector funding streams.

- 5) Link in to housing needs as shown by various surveys, and the increase in actual numbers of homeless people presenting to the Council.
- 6) Taking a corporate approach to Housing – involving Planning, Economic development, Property Services, etc.
- 7) Making the limited resources at the disposal of the City council go further, in partnership with the Private sector.
- 8) Provide additional, decent and suitable accommodation for vulnerable people.

LOW COST HOUSING

Housing Strategy staff work in partnership with colleagues from Planning to negotiate with developers, on the provision of Low Cost housing (or discounted housing) on new developments. The properties are subject to a Section 106 Agreement, (Town and Country Planning Act 1990). Low cost housing is negotiated on those sites/areas that have been identified as requiring affordable housing. The discount negotiated varies on each scheme, we aim for no less than 20% and the discount perpetuates every time the property is sold.

Property in Carlisle rose by 24.65% from Sept 2002 to Sept 2003 (Land Register February 2004). Carlisle is a low-income area, a single person earning an average wage is unlikely to be able to purchase an average two bedroom terrace in Carlisle at the present time.

How low cost housing is allocated varies slightly from scheme to scheme. Generally a person/s must:-

- Be local residents
- Work in the area
- Have a local connection
- Require the discount to be able to afford the property

We aim to offer everyone 'a choice of good quality housing in successful, secure and sustainable communities' (North West Regional Development Housing Strategy 2003) and continue to negotiate with developers to secure houses across all tenure on new developments.

HOUSING MARKET CHANGES

It is widely known that recent changes in house prices has caused significant movements in the Housing Market nationally, regionally and locally.

Some of the key factors that are highlighted in this section include: -

- Research findings which show how generally, private sector properties are now only available to households with at least £24,000 income (Centre for Regional Economic Development – Research 2003)
- A dramatic increase in tenants from transferred properties (through Large Scale Voluntary Stock Transfer) exercising their Right to Buy – thus reducing the overall Social Housing Sector Stock (figures from Carlisle Housing Association for 2003)
- Many first time buyers (mainly young singles and couples) who have bought a house because they feared the house prices would continue to rise beyond their ever being able to afford a property and gain independence (although mainly anecdotal Building Society personnel have confirmed this view)
- A significant increase in planning applications for property extensions (Carlisle City Council's Report P53/03 – DC Stats April-June 2003)
- Point above will lead to an increased average size of the districts property stock, thus reducing the percentage of smaller units, this in turn will have a direct effect on future affordability for the market housing
- Property extensions may, depending on the type of work carried out, reduce the rate of non-decent homes in the district (conversely however, this could hide the condition of the rest of the extended property)
- The Right to Buy and the Right to Acquire sales have resulted in many rural parishes with very little or no Social Housing remaining (Castle Carrock, Irthington, 1 or 2 in Wetheral, Hallbankgate 1 property, Low Row 1 property, Hayton none, Cumrew none, Faugh none)
- The point above exacerbates the already difficult affordability issue experienced by young people living in rural Carlisle, resulting in the social structure of some rural areas becoming unsustainable
- Outsiders buying up smaller accommodation, including terraces, particularly in outlying villages, thus reducing the options for local buyers, in turn inflating property prices as a consequence (source – Anecdotal information – further work needed)
- Business community, particularly the larger employers in the district identifying a gap in suitable executive accommodation, resulting in recruitment issues which in turn can affect the local economy (Employers Forum – further work needed)
- Potential for part of the recent increase in house prices being attributed to the injection of cash in property investment as a result of the Foot and Mouth disease outbreak (Source – Anecdotal information – further work needed)
- Sites with outline planning permission used to develop accommodation that would attract outside purchasers, particularly from the South of England
- Before the increase in the buy to let market materialised, there had been a significant increase in demand in the private rented sector which has 'artificially' inflated rents in the private sector.

Effects of Potential Changes

Based on the issues highlighted above, Carlisle's Housing Strategy considers that there is potential for 2 key types of consequences depending on house price changes and/or other environmental or economic factors changing.

Firstly, recent house price increases could continue to rise, if this were the case and although unemployment is at a relatively low level of 1.9%*¹, neither is there strong job

security, nor the average wages within the national range*², therefore in the scenario first time buyers would be increasingly priced out of the market.

Under these types of conditions it is likely that the need for affordable houses in certain areas will be increased. Therefore the Local Plan targets will need to adjust accordingly to accommodate changing needs.

In addition, we will need to establish appropriate schemes involving, for example, access to better borrowing terms for certain groups in need, this could involve investigating the re-introduction of the old Local Government loan scheme as that may be more possible with greater freedoms achieved by the Council through the CPA process.

If however, house prices fell or interest rates rose significantly (as they are doing currently) then we can expect that some owner-occupiers (particularly recent first time buyers) will struggle with either negative equity or not being able to keep up with higher mortgage repayments.

In view of the fact that many recent purchasers have borrowed at 3 times plus, (in some cases up to 5 times a 2 wage household income) a double household income, there are further vulnerabilities that these purchasers may be exposed to.

Under these types of conditions, we will need to establish schemes in partnership with lenders to avoid a significant increase in Homelessness applications.

*1 Job Seekers Allowance
 December 2003
 1.151 people = 1.9%

*2 2003 New Earnings Survey
 Weekly F/Time Gross £373.80
 North West £437.60
 GB £475.80

RESEARCH – RURAL, PROPOSED DATABASE

Understanding the Housing Market in Carlisle is central to developing priorities for all types of housing activity including improvements to existing stock, development of new build social housing, consumers choice, affordability and aspirations.

Carlisle City Council has regularly carried out research every 3 to 5 years usually commissioning specialist research teams. The last such research was carried out by the Sheffield Hallam University who reported the findings in 2000.

A great deal has happened since then in terms of housing including house price increases, Large Scale Voluntary Transfer of the City Council Housing Stock, revision of Planning targets by the ODPM, Building Regulation changes, the way the Government funds housing investment and support, amongst other things.

As the need for up to date information arises, the City Council intends carrying out research on a continual basis thus giving a wider picture and avoiding the 'snapshot survey' type results rapidly going out of date. The first neighbourhood/area of focus is Morton where over 3,000 comprehensive questionnaires have been sent out and returns currently being input.

To this end, we are taking the following actions: -

- Establishing a database to include logging of information on an area/neighbourhood basis on housing and some wider issues, including:
 - * Type and age of stock (both Social Housing and Private Sector)
 - * Condition
 - * Investment
 - past 5 years
 - planned for 5 years
 - * House prices for various types
 - * Planning applications
 - * Level of extensions to properties
 - * Resident views on desirability of living in the area (neighbourhood)
 - * Housing need
 - * Support needs
 - * Key resident concerns, particularly those relating to public services – to improve the Council's service delivery
 - * Trend and changes over 3-5 years when research would be repeated for that area.
- A rolling programme of Housing Needs Surveys in Urban areas and Rural Carlisle (the latter is explained in the next bullet point). The proposed order of priority urban areas is as follows: -
 - * Morton – commenced November 2003
 - * Stanwix
 - * Upperby
 - * Harraby
 - * Yewdale
 - * Currock
 - * Petteril Bank
 - * Botcherby
 - * Denton Holme
 - * Longsowerby
 - * Willow Holme

- Establish a method and carry out a full audit type review of Social Housing and affordability issues in rural Carlisle: -
 - * Developing a comprehensive database of all social housing units throughout the rural area, including type, age, rent levels etc
 - * Register schemes with a Section 106 agreement
 - * Parishes where 100% of Social Housing has been 'lost' through Right to Buy sales
 - * Integrate recent House Condition Survey information relating to rural properties
 - * Develop a database which gives a picture of the makeup of individual and clusters of parishes in terms of housing
 - * Engage with all RSLs and Social Housing providers in assessing the need for a joint allocations policy
 - * Engage with all RSLs and Social Housing providers in assessing a need for a joint waiting list for the rented, low-cost, shared-ownership housing.
- New angle of research through a 'residents pack' being sent out, including a questionnaire, to all householders receiving a Council Tax bill. Useful information will be gathered from asking households who have 'succeeded' in moving. This will provide information on trends across the district, whether aspirations result in the ideal move or moderation of say house size, price, location etc.
- Wider issues will be entered into the database, which will provide a picture of the key issues affecting residents and the need for resources in certain areas such as lighting, dealing with dog fouling etc.
- The activities relating to regeneration particularly in Carlisle South with the proposed NWDA funding and rural Carlisle will be entered into the database.
- Housing support issues will be drawn out of the questionnaires and other methods will be researched to develop a picture of the changing support needs in Carlisle.
- Information will be gathered from our health colleagues in assessing the housing and health connection.
- The work mentioned above will take into account work done by colleagues both within the City Council and agencies working in Carlisle.

CPA INCORPORATE AUDIT COMMENTS

(To be submitted)

OVERVIEW INCLUDING STRATEGY GROUP

The development of a Housing Strategy involves a wide range of stakeholders, quite often agencies and individuals need prompting to make the connections between their priorities and how joint working and development of priorities can assist different strategies and investment decisions to achieve a better service for all residents in the Carlisle District area.

In order to engage the input of agencies, individuals and groups, there are a variety of means of achieving this, listed below are the key forms of consultation methods used in forming and developing the strategy: -

- Housing Strategy Group – this group meets every six weeks and has a circulation list of over 40 individuals and agencies. Although the regular attendance at the meetings is generally around 15 people, the minutes and papers are circulated widely. In the past, the group has held focus groups concentrating on the different aspects of the Strategy, these have included dedicating 2 hours after a regular meeting to key issues such as: -

- * Local Plan
- * How do Private Sector issues contribute to the Housing Market
- * Demand – Current research and a possible way forward
- * Regeneration
- * Monitoring

In the development of the 2004-09 strategy, the group are planning dedicated sessions at each of the next 3 Housing Strategy meetings to hold workshops/focus discussions on the 3 key issues to be addressed as part of our action plan for 2004-05. As follows: -

- Implementation of Homelessness Strategy Action Plan
 - Impact of the Strategic Role – CPA Action Plan
 - Balancing Housing Markets
- Consultation takes place through various groups, such as the Regeneration Group, Local Strategic Partnership, Supporting People Local and Core Strategic Development Groups and Commissioning Body, Homelessness Forum, North Cumbria Housing Forum, Cumbria Sub-Regional Housing Forum to name but a few.
- Wider stakeholders are invited to a consultation day on the draft strategy including ODPM, North West Housing Forum, local and national builders, RSLs, Banks/Building Societies, Estate Agents, Core Agencies, Audit Commission etc, with a circulation list of around 140 named individuals being invited.

During 2004, we intend to extend consultation by: -

- Awareness raising sessions amongst City Council staff and members
- Presentations to at least 3 tenants and residents associations
- A quarterly update to the Carlisle and Rural Tenants and Residents Association (CRTF)
- Discussion groups at appropriate groups by invitation (such as Health and Social Service Partnership Boards, Age Concern etc)
- Develop a user forum through North Cumbria Housing Forum activity
- Public consultation session during Summer 2004.

HOUSING TEAM MEMBERS

(To be submitted)

REGERNARATION GROUP

(To be submitted)

CRTF

(To be submitted)

LSP

(To be submitted)

CMT

(To be submitted)

ARRANGEMENT OF HALF DAY SEMINAR

(To be submitted)

ADVERT IN PAPER

(To be submitted)

HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

This Agency provides a vulnerable service to the most vulnerable in our area. They provide assistance, guidance and advice to the elderly, the disabled, the financially disadvantaged and to families with young children.

They also provide a partnership setting in which to deal with matters such as distraction burglaries; crime and disorder and hospital discharge.

It is proposed to link the Agencies in Carlisle and Eden, through a Local Strategic Partnership scheme to cut costs and improve the service to our customers.

In future it is proposed to take a much more pro-active approach to dealing with those people who most need assistance, but the ability to pull in external funding is imperative.

For Government, improving the quality of life of older and disabled is high on the list of priorities, and although every encouragement is given to assist people to continue to live in their own homes, all alternatives need to be carefully considered.

To this end, people must be given the choice of as many options as possible, and the HIA is in an extremely strong position to provide this function.

Anchor HA will have control over 4 HIA's in Cumbria, Carlisle, Eden, Borrow and SLDC and will have the back up nationally recognised player in the Care/Housing/Health market.

KEY ISSUES – STATS AND FIGURES ON HOUSING MARKET CHANGES

(To be submitted)

IMPACT HOUSING ASSOCIATION

1. General Needs

800 properties in and around Carlisle. Large number of two bed properties but some 3 bed. Some properties have been built to mobility standard.

2. Supported Housing

Directly Managed

Bridge Lane – 16 beds, supported housing for homeless men.

Lindisfarne Street – 10 beds, supported housing for homeless men.

Aglionby Street – 5 bed shared house for vulnerable men.

Cliff Street – 3 bed “wet house”.

Move on – 4 supported self-contained houses.

Women’s Refuge – 7 bed refuge for women fleeing domestic abuse.

The refuge also has a playgroup for children and an Outreach Worker to provide support to women in their own homes.

Close Street – 7 bed supported housing for young people.

Indirectly Managed

Croftlands Trust:

Mental Health –

19 self-contained units.

5 Registered Care Homes (total 31 bed spaces).

Substance Misuse/Dual Diagnosis –

6 units (managed jointly with CASS).

CASS (see also substance misuse with Croftlands):

19 units for ex offenders or people at risk of offending.

Glenmore Trust:

4 Registered Care Homes for people with Learning Difficulties (17 bed spaces)

1 shared house (4 bed spaces).

3. Non-Housing Activity

1. Floating Support Team can provide support to non-Impact tenants.
2. Tenant Support Workers, based at specific schemes to provide support to older tenants.
3. Centre 47 provides a Furniture Store, trains young people. Café, meeting rooms and community resource.
4. Basic Skills Trainer.

NB we are also developing our Resident Participation activity. We now have a Resident Participation Officer who has been leading on developing effective participation in our supported housing schemes.

EDEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Eden Housing Association is a registered social landlord (RSL) formed by the large scale voluntary transfer of all of Eden District Council's housing stock in September 1997. The Association currently owns and manages 1439 properties throughout the Eden District, rural Carlisle and Borough of Allerdale. About half of the housing stock is located in Penrith (including two sheltered housing schemes), the remainder in the principal settlements of Appleby, Alston, Kirkby Stephen and Shap (each of which has a sheltered housing scheme), and a series of villages and hamlets. The Association also manages 120 properties throughout Cumbria for Mitre Housing Association.

The Association has 17 family homes in rural Carlisle in the following locations:

Burnrigg
Cotehill
Cummersdale
Cumwhitton
Dalston
Great Corby
Little Corby
Warwick Bridge

consisting of two and three bedroom semi-detached and terraced properties.

ANCHOR RETIREMENT HOUSING

Safe, warm and comfortable accommodation for rent

Our retirement housing is designed to provide comfort, security and independence. Self-contained flats, studio flats and bungalows are available to rent in a variety of locations across Cumbria. Properties usually offer facilities such as a laundry, hairdressing salon, guest room and communal lounge.

A scheme manager takes on all the worry of security, repairs and running the building and can also organise care services if tenants need extra help. All accommodation has our alarm call system, Anchorcall, so tenants can get help in an emergency at any time.

To register an application Telephone 08457 758595

TWO CASTLES HOUSING ASSOCIATION

We have a variety of general needs development, supported housing, and home ownership schemes in Carlisle and the surrounding villages. Table 1 gives a stock profile of our stock:

Table 1

Carlisle Housing Stock - Two Castles' and Pele

Rented General Needs	167
Sheltered Housing covered by SP	78
Rented covered by SP	150
Supported Housing – Croftlands Trust	16
Shared Ownership	282
LSE & SO for the Elderly	112
LSE Sheltered	88
Total	893

We manage our stock from our Castle Street office which is centrally based for our Residents. Our Housing Management team is pro-active and the Association was very pleased to receive a good rating for Two Castles work on anti-social behaviour from The Housing Corporation Inspection Report 2003.

The Association also works with many agents in Carlisle, for example we recently set up a floating support scheme for the elderly in conjunction with Age Concern and Cumbria Care.

Our stock is well maintained and we have over the last 3 years spent £629,000 on major repairs. Examples of our repair programmes include new kitchen and boilers at Upperby Court and Bishops Close.

We are also a pro-active development organisation and are keen to develop where need is clearly demonstrated, and some examples of schemes completed in Carlisle over the last 3 years include the following:

Knowefield Phase 7:

22 units (18 Shared Ownership, 4 Leasehold Schemes for Elderly)

Total Scheme Cost £1,499,690; Housing Corporation Grant £328,823.

Houghton:

6 units for rent (Category 1)

Total Scheme Cost £442,492; Housing Corporation Grant £249,763.

Burgh-by-Sands:

6 units for rent (Category 1)

Total Scheme Cost £402,601; Housing Corporation Grant £195,000.

PROCUREMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Currently affordable housing is provided through planning processes by two means. A proportion of housing being provided on a larger site or a rural exception site. On larger sites the proportion of housing depends upon the site's location, scale of development and the identified need. A needs survey will be required to substantiate the need and ensure that information is recent and therefore relevant to negotiations on the planning application.

Affordable housing can mean social housing for rent, shared-ownership or for sale at a discounted price. A Section 106 Agreement will be required to ensure that the affordability remains in perpetuity and not just discounted for first time buyers. For rented or shared-ownership properties the Council's preferred method of delivery is with Registered Social Landlords. Whilst this is not the only choice in planning terms it is nevertheless the preferred strategy.

Recent consultation on Planning Obligations has suggested charges as a way of developers being able to contribute towards much needed local infrastructure and services where they may not be able to be provided on-site. This means that contributions could be gathered towards delivery of affordable housing until sufficient funds are gathered to provide a viable scheme. Alternatively the Council may consider using the funds to convert existing properties or help reduce the stock of vacant properties. The changes to the system will be the trigger to implement any changes to the procurement of affordable housing.

CHANGES WITHIN THE REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORD (RSL) SECTOR

Since the transfer of the City Council's housing stock, the number of properties in the Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Sector has more than doubled from around 5,000 properties to around 12,000.

However, with the preserved Right to Buy for qualifying tenants, the number of units 'lost' is increasing at a rate higher than anticipated, this is mainly as a result of the recent house price increases. Tenants have found a greater benefit to purchase than previously, as now there is the definite prospect of previously Council estate areas being improved with the commitments made by Carlisle Housing Association, including £52million investment in the properties over 5 years and an annual £400,000 for regeneration type community fund initiatives.

The anticipated improvements are therefore thought to increase property prices over the years. This in turn has assisted residents to decide to make a commitment to stay in the area by purchasing the property.

This in turn is bringing more diversity in tenure in the previously 'council estate' areas which may make some areas more sustainable. It is therefore likely that over time, the popularity of some current priority areas will increase.

New developments in Carlisle are reduced as the Housing Corporation has begun to implement a new method of allocating resources by establishing a 2 year bidding round for 20004/05 and 2005/06 and prioritising a major part of the annual programme to 'partnership bids', where large schemes are funded involving a number of RSLs with a capacity to develop these type of schemes.

The latter are targeted more at key worker schemes in the South of England and parts of Manchester and Liverpool in the North West.

Another aspect affecting developments, is the uncertainties in revenue funding for supported housing schemes requiring Supporting People Programme Funding.

As a result, for 2004 it is likely that Carlisle district will benefit from only one property from existing purchases budget.

RSLs are also reporting difficulties in financially stacking schemes due to low grant rates and total cost indicators.

Discussions with the Housing Corporation are ongoing in an effort to enable in year bids, especially for the outstanding schemes and our rural priorities.

In order to achieve our targets to the proposed Local Plan and the anticipated need which will emerge through the research proposed in this strategy, we are keen to develop a new programme of RSL development in urban and rural Carlisle utilising Housing Corporation Annual Development Programme funding.

REGULATORY REFORM ORDER

Central Government introduced the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 on 18th July 2002, giving Local Authorities (LA's) a far greater degree of discretion on how to tackle Housing Renewal in their area. This Reform Order placed a duty on LA's to produce, approve and publish a Housing Renewal Policy by 18th July 2003, as the existing legislation, allowing grant provision, would be repealed on that date, barring LA's from giving grants for Housing Renewal.

Having recently commissioned and completed a Local House Condition Survey in Carlisle City Council area, the findings have confirmed a number of assumptions made in the past that: -

- I. Carlisle has a low wage/low unemployment economy.
- II. 23% of the heads of household have incomes of less than £7,500.
- III. 2.66% of Carlisle private sector housing stock is 'Unfit' and requires investment of £6.8m to remedy the immediate problem.
- IV. A further £13.2m is needed to deal with those private sector properties that fall into the category requiring urgent repair.

In light of a reducing Capital budget for grant provision, it has been necessary to fundamentally review the Housing Renewal/Grant policy of the Council, to take into account a number of factors such as: -

- I. The applicants ability to meet the cost of housing renovation/repair.
- II. The responsibility of the owner occupier to repair or upgrade their own property.
- III. The ability of the LA to assist, financially, applicants for grant.
- IV. The sustainability for the housing stock where grant application are received.

This Council intends to take a holistic approach to Housing Renewal, taking into account not just 'bricks and mortar', but looking at the wider aspect of Neighbourhood Renewal, Regeneration and Supporting Communities. We will work with partners both within and outwith the Council, in order to maximise investment in those areas that most need assistance, and target those people, who through no fault of their own, most need financial assistance.

Areas of work will include: -

- Provision of grant assistance in the form of Renovation, Minor Works and Disabled Facilities Grants.
- Targeting the fuel poor and others through Energy Efficiency work.
- Linking into other funding streams associated with social, environmental or economic issues, such as Crime and Disorder; North West Development Agency; Single Regeneration Budget etc.

It is proposed to have three main types of grants: -

- I. Renovation Grants – which deal with 'Unfit' dwellings; Houses in Multiple Occupation and work to Common parts of residential premises.
- II. Minor Works Grant (formerly known as Home Repair Assistance Grants) – dealing with houses in disrepair but the condition is not as serious as to be defined as 'Unfit'.

- III. Disabled Facilities Grant – to enable a disabled person to remain and be cared for in their own home.

Changes to present procedures: –

Renovation Grants

- I. A new definition which will include all dwellings, Housing in Multiple Occupation and Common Parts Grants of residential premises.
- II. The dwelling must be located in a sustainable area i.e. if in low demand is evident, then grant may not be available.
- III (a). It is presently under discussion whether to retain and modify the current method of means testing all grant applicants or to replace this with a general percentage grant. If the latter option is adopted, grant assistance will be restricted to 75% of the approved cost of the works, subject to a maximum of £20,000. In exceptional circumstances (and this will be decided by Executive committee) the percentage grant may be increased to 100% (each application will be considered on its merits). Any non grant funding (i.e. the additional 25%) will require to be funded by the applicant through pursuing a loan/equity release or other method.
- III (b). Should the present means testing be retained this will be modified e.g. to take into account general housing costs and to close present loop holes in order to prevent abuse of this system.
- IV. A Renovation Grant will be available to landlords, but subject to a maximum of 25% of the approved cost of the works, to bring the property up to the Fitness Standard (no increase in percentage will be made available to Landlords).
- V. All renovation grant applicants, except for Landlords, will have to have both owned and occupied the premises for the 3 years prior to the date of their application. Waiver will be considered where the applicant is a “first time buyer” or the premises have been unoccupied for more than 18 months.
- VI. Where a grant has been completed, and paid to the applicant, it will be a condition of payment that, if the occupancy requirements are breached, the property is sold, or otherwise disposed of within 5 years, the grant shall be repaid on demand.
- VII. In certain circumstances, at the discretion of the Council, they may agree to recover none, all or part of the grant, dependant on the individual circumstances pertaining to the disposal of the property.

Minor Works Grants (formerly Home Repair Assistance (HRA))

It is proposed to revert to this title, as HRA is slightly ambiguous. Applicants must be in receipt of a qualifying means tested benefit (e.g. Income Support; Council Tax Benefit; Housing Benefit etc.) but, as Working Families Tax Credit is meant to bring up to an acceptable level, the income of families receiving benefit, this will no longer be adjudged to be a qualifying benefit. This grant will continue to be provided at 100% of the approved cost of the works, but subject to a maximum grant of £4,000 or a maximum of £4,000 available over a 3 year period. No exception will be made. Applicants will continue to require to be aged over 60 to qualify for this grant assistance, and a minimum period of

12 months will require to elapse before a further application for assistance will be considered.

In the case of a Registered Disable Person, one application only will be considered for small scale or urgent adaptations, but any subsequent applications must be a Disabled Facilities Grant application (this will assist in cases of hospital discharges, where a disabled person cannot return to their home without first having minor/urgent adaptations work completed).

Where an application is received from a person with only a life occupancy of a property, the dwelling being owned by a member of the same family, the applicant will require to be the person who is the legal owner, and be in receipt of a qualifying benefit. Otherwise, the owner will be responsible for the repair work from their own resources.

Minor Works grant eligibility will be received on a regular basis to ensure that the most vulnerable people have access to this type of grant, bearing in mind the budget allocation. Should demand exceed supply, the waiting list system, which has already been approved by Council, will be brought into force.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's)

These are the only Mandatory Grants that are available, and will remain as they are currently administered. The maximum grant is restricted to £25,000, and is for the provision of aids and adaptations for a disabled person, to enable them to remain and be cared for in the comfort of their own home.

DFG's are means tested, but this test is restricted to the applicant and their spouse, or if the disabled person is a child or young person, to their parents. The Council has no discretion in the application of this test as it is set down by Central Government.

Relocation Grants

The Relocation Grant can be made available to a person residing within a Clearance area, to purchase a similar property in an adjoining area. As Clearance areas are not being considered as an option in the Carlisle area, it is not proposed to introduce this type of grant.

Continual monitoring of the housing situation in Carlisle will be carried out to ensure that, should areas fall into decline, and clearance need to be used as a method of control, Relocation Grants will be considered. A further report will be produced for Council, should this arise.

Grants – General

In consideration of a reducing Capital Allocation for Housing Renewal/Grants, it is considered necessary to develop a points based system to apply to any enquiries where the demand for grant assistance necessitates the implementation of a waiting list.

All other sections of the current legislation (Housing Grants Constructions and Regeneration Act 1996) will continue to apply, but will be reviewed, reworded and where necessary, put into plain English.

The current appeals procedure within the Council will continue to be utilised, for anyone aggrieved by any decision on a grant application.

Anyone will be able to make a grant application, which will be dealt with in line with the new policy.

Due to the short time scale between consultation and implementation of the new policy, loans and equity release products will not be able to be accessed through the Council. However, information and advice will be available to applicants on what is available on the High Street, to assist with any shortfall in funding.

Local Housing Agencies will be invited to discuss the provision of advice and assistance on accessing home loans and equity release products.

Other Items to Consider

- I. The present means testing for grant assistance will be modified and retained for all applicants.
- II. The use of equity release to re-invest in the repair/renovation of the property be given further consideration.
- III. Where the means test result indicates that the property owner has sufficient finance to undertake the works without grant assistance, the LA may consider the use of enforcement to improve the housing stock.
- IV. The LA will consider 'Area based renewal techniques', but will continue to make grants generally available based upon need.
- V. Priority will be given to the elderly; disabled people; vulnerable people; poor people.

General Comments

The proposed policy will be published after consultation has been completed and approved by Council.

The document will be reviewed annually, but should any matter require alteration, this can be sanctioned at any time, subject to Council approval.

Should the Council consider Area Action, all information at the disposal of the Council will be used to prioritise which area to target (Local House Condition Survey : Indices of Multiple Deprivation : Unemployment : Environmental Issues etc).

SUPPORTING PEOPLE PRIORITIES

(To be submitted)

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

(To be submitted)

PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

To ensure that the standard of accommodation continues to improve, two schemes, which have been running successfully for a number of years, will continue to be expanded to meet ever increasing public aspirations.

The Registration Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation sets specific standards for this type of property, ensuring the safety of the occupants. It is imperative that standards are maintained and if possible, improved, in this sector, as the occupiers of this type of property are 6 times more likely to die in fire related incidents, than those people living in owner occupied properties.

The New Housing Bill, which is currently proceeding through Parliament, will give Local Authorities greater powers to License not only the properties, but the actual landlords themselves. They will require to be fit and proper persons, to hold this license, and should they breach the condition of license, then they are liable to lose this.

The linking of Homelessness/Hostels and Private Rented Sector property (HMO's/Accredited properties/private rents/landlords) needs to be addressed in terms of how each can complement the other, and how staffing resources can be distributed to address these important issues.

AREA RENEWAL

In light of the findings revealed in the Local House Condition Survey in 2001/02, consideration is being given as to how best to achieve the improvement of those houses which fail the Fitness Standard, and also, how to deal with those houses that are in disrepair, preventing them declining into unfitness.

An area based approach is being considered, based firstly in the former HAA/GIA areas, which were renovated in the 1970's, to be a 30-year-standard. Not only will this initiative show the success or otherwise of previous strategies, but will inform those adopted in the future.

A rolling programme of area based regeneration, based on the worst properties occupied by the most vulnerable people being addressed first, will enable the Local Authority to target its limited funding, achieve economies of scale, and deal with the poorest properties first.

FUNDING FOR UNFIT PROPERTIES, AND THOSE IN DISREPAIR

Current funding from the City Council stands at £768,000. This includes Renovation, Disabled, Landlords and Minor Works Grants.

However, in future, it is possible that an Equity release scheme will require to be implemented to make the existing funding go further. This would require any grant applicant to use any equity in their property to subsidise any renovation or repair works to that property. It is only right and proper that owner/occupiers/landlords should take ultimate responsibility for the upkeep of their properties. Albeit there will be those people who cannot afford to carry out works to their properties without undue hardship. These are the people who will continue to be assisted within the funding regime that is currently available.

Allied to this, the introduction (proposed) of the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) seem to be at odds with each other. One specific instance is under the DHS, elements requesting replacement because they are old and in need of replacement, may not fail the HHSRS (bearing in mind that there are no designated legal powers to deal with disrepair)!

In a low wage economy, with insufficient equity in older properties, and a constantly dwindling capital allowance to provide ongoing grant assistance, how will it be possible to address the DHS as set by Central Government. They have provided no estimate of the cost of achieving this standard, and no details as to how it will be funded.

DECENT HOMES STANDARD – RSL SECTOR

(To be submitted)

RESEARCH

Carlisle City Council intends to use different sources of information to develop a picture of the Health and Housing issues including wider issues such as economic regeneration, in the district area.

Specific research will be carried out using the following methods: -

- Area/neighbourhood based research through a questionnaire survey, with the aim of covering the whole district by early 2006. The priority order is proposed as follows: -
 - * Morton – November to March 2004
 - * Stanwix – March to June 2004
 - * Upperby – June to September 2004
 - * Harraby – September to December 2004
 - * Yewdale – December to March 2005
 - * Currock – March to June 2005
 - * Petheril Bank – June to September 2005
 - * Botcherby – September to December 2005
 - * Denton Holme – December to March 2006
- Research through a questionnaire with a 'new residents pack'. This long term project aims to find out about the experiences of households who have successfully moved property. It will give information on aspirations and level of satisfaction in the move, levels of borrowing, house prices, pitfalls, recommend actions for areas of change, focus on perception of new area and area they moved from etc.
- Collection of data from Local Futures Network for which the City Council has a license.
- Development of a database of information gathered from the various sources including planning applications, some information on extensions to properties, new build and section 106 sites etc.
- Specific work will be carried out in partnership with colleagues in Health and Social Care agencies in order to develop priorities for action, in particular this may include the changing needs of older people and young people, how schemes carried out by agencies are benefiting the target groups.
- Service user involvement will be promoted as follows: -
 - * Tenants and resident group involvement in RSL decisions
 - * Hostel and homeshare dwellers satisfaction survey
 - * Recipients of Supporting People services in the district, this will be carried out in conjunction with the Supporting People team and North Cumbria Housing Forum
 - * Satisfaction surveys of Home Improvement Agency service users
 - * Satisfaction surveys of recipients of Disabled Facilities Grants and Home Improvement Grants
 - * Survey of homeless people both in priority need and non-priority need
 - * Recipients of our Beacon Status Energy Efficiency Advice Centre.
- Use of information from various studies such as the CURS and the County commissioned spatial study for Cumbria.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING - STAKEHOLDERS

Carlisle City Council works in partnership with a wide variety of partner agencies in developing and delivering a housing strategy.

Current partnerships include: -

- Transfer of housing stock – Carlisle Housing Association
- New and existing developments – Impact Housing Association, Two Castles Housing Association, Home Housing Group, Anchor Trust, Lowells Partnership, Carlisle Housing Association, Montgomery Homes, Barratts Development, Persimmon Homes, Mitre Housing
- Joint working across districts – Carlisle and Eden Local Strategic Partnership
 - * Cumbria Sub-regional Housing Group
 - * North Cumbria Housing Forum
 - * Community Alarms Consortium
 - * Supporting People
 - Commissioning Group
 - Core Strategy Development Group
 - Local Strategic Development Group
- Supported Housing – Impact Housing Association, Two Castles Housing Association, Anchor Trust, Cumbria Action for Social Support (CASS), Glenmore Trust, Croftlands Trust, Youth Offending Team, CART, Cumbria Care
- Partnerships – Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, Drug Action Team, Carlisle Health Group, Cumbria Social Services, Carlisle and Eden PCTs, Carlisle Landlords Association, Local Strategic Partnership between Carlisle and Eden District Councils.

JOINT PRIORITIES – REGENERATION

(To be submitted)

HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

(To be submitted)

ACTION PLANS

IMPLEMENTATION OF HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Following the consultation exercise on the Homelessness Review document during April 2003, Carlisle City Council produced its Draft Homelessness Strategy, taking into account contributions made by other statutory agencies, service providers and service users. A further consultation exercise on the Draft Homelessness Strategy was carried out before its submission to the ODPM on July 2003 and included an Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy over the next 5 years, in context with the County-wide Homelessness Strategy. Shortfalls in the service had been identified and prioritised and a realistic date order Action Plan devised to commence the implementation of the Strategy.

The Main Objectives of the Plan are to:

Prevent Homelessness by improving preventative services together with better advice provision

Ensure that there is sufficient temporary and move on accommodation for those who may become homeless together with an effective re-settlement program

Ensure there is satisfactory support for homeless people to prevent repeat applications

Actions Taken To Date:

- A homelessness recording system has been developed in line with ODPM management requirements.
- Staff training arranged on tenancies, including harassment and illegal eviction and homeless case law updates, this will continue on a regular basis.
- A review of the Hostels service commenced, part of which identified the need for a hostel repair and refurbishment programme.
London Road Hostel is currently being re-decorated and has had a CCTV system installed in line with Health and Safety recommendations.
Three homeshares have been re-decorated.
The hostel staffing review, involving a revision of grades and job descriptions, commenced in September 2003.
- Additional 'move on' properties have been leased from local Housing Associations, to assist with the re-settlement programme.
Three, one bedded flats from Carlisle Housing Association.
One, two bedded house from Impact Housing Association.
- Meetings with representatives from Support, Mediation and Advice Agencies commenced in August 2003, to discuss ways of working together to develop better advice, support and preventative services for homeless persons.

- Funding for a Youth Housing Officer has been approved by Carlisle City Council working in partnership with local health groups. It is planned that the postholder will work closely with Homeless Services, Social Service, Health Groups and Connexions to develop protocols and services for young people. The joint funded post will be established initially for an 18 month period and the officer will be based at the Civic Centre. It is anticipated that an appointment will be made before the end of March 2004.
- Front Line Staff from each of the six Local Authorities in Cumbria, meet on a regular basis to develop initiatives highlighted in the Countywide Homelessness Strategy. The first meeting was held in November 2003.
- A meeting with stakeholders took place in December 2003 to discuss the possibility of the transfer of monies from the Carlisle Bond Scheme to the Deposit Guarantee Scheme. The DiGS will assist those on state benefits or low income to secure accommodation in the Private Sector. This scheme will commence in Carlisle from March 2004.

The Action Plan over the next four years (2004 – 2008) will cover:

- Strategic issues to include methodologies for Rough Sleepers Count in Cumbria, access issues for members of BME communities
- Preventative measures to include the development of links with landlords and mortgage lenders to promote early referral to independent advice services
- Multi-agency working to include further development of advice and support services
- Development of an Information Services Web Site linked to associate voluntary organisations. Production of a Cumbria wide booklet 'Without A Roof'. Investigate holding Rural advice surgeries
- Performance Management to develop monitoring procedures

Restrictions to Implementation of Action Plan

- Funding and Man Power: Although here is additional funding available for the year 2004/05, this has already been committed to various programs including DiGS, landlord advice and assistance, rural surgery, pro-active work within schools. Plans to fund RESOLVE mediation services are also under consideration.

Identified Shortfalls and Concerns

- Insufficient supervised accommodation for clients with serious mental health problems, discharged from the local hospital. There is no appropriate long term accommodation available other than the Council Hostels and in many cases, clients move in between the Carleton Clinic and John Street Hostel because of the lack of this resource.
- Also, those with drug or alcohol abuse problems who do not take up a rehabilitation program and are not in priority need but still require accommodation and support.
- The restrictions that Housing Associations' lettings policies impose on homeless nominations which excludes some nominees from being considered for accommodation also the restriction some Associations impose on choice of areas.

There will be an ongoing review and evaluation of how the Strategy is being implemented and areas are developed as required.

CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL
HOMELESS STRATEGY S M A R T ACTION PLAN
2003 – 2008

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTION	DATE	OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS
PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS	1. Investigate with Connexions, the possibility of a joint funded specialist worker to develop services for young people including 16/17 year old protocol	Joint application to be made by CCC and Connexions to the Health Management Group Meeting on 11 th September 03	<u>Sept 2003</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of temporary Youth Housing Officer joint funded by Local Health Group and CCC. Post commences on 8th March 2004 initially for 18 months
	2. Agree a protocol with private and other social landlords to notify homeless officer of possible evictions	Meetings arranged with RSLs towards the end of Sep 2003	<u>Sept 2003 onwards</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSLs – eviction notification will only be forwarded if consent is given by tenant. Standard eviction notifications include homeless contact. Leaflet to be designed by homeless services to be included in notice

3. Develop ways of

preventing eviction
due to rent arrears

**PREVENTING
HOMELESSNESS
(continued)**

To be discussed at the
meetings in Sept 03

Sept 2003 onwards

- Early Identification of problems and prompt response involving Housing Providers, Support Workers, HBs and Tenant.
- Preventing homelessness is an area for development during 2004/2005

**4. Develop the
implementation of
a fast track HB
verification and
process**

Meet with HB Advisors
to discuss ways of
implementing a fast
track verification and
process

October 2003

- Meeting with Advisors revealed that claims were processed 'within days' if receiving benefits.
- Continued monitoring of situation.

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTION	DATE	OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS
<u>HOUSING ADVICE</u>				
	1. Review the information/advice service for homeless persons	Revise/update advice and support agency lists and identify local access points for information and develop the advice services in line with best practice guidelines	<u>August 2003 onwards</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New stock of information leaflets displayed in foyer of civic centre • Lists updated • Advice service to be developed 2004/2005
	2. Develop links with CASS and Probation to offer advice services for ex offenders	To meet with representative to discuss options	<u>October 2003 ongoing</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Quille, Probation Services met with County Strategy Group to discuss the provision of a service for offenders and ex offenders – Jan 04 To submit a proposal – April 04
	3. Develop an Information Service Web Site for Homeless Persons	Discuss with Media Services the development of an accommodation advice service linked to associated support services	February 2004 onwards	In the process of being developed to include a link to Shelternet
	4. Property Display	Discuss with RSLs	April 2004	

Board in
Reception

- This service is already available to landlords but there is potential for improvement. Staff training during Summer 2004 to develop this provision

HOUSING ADVICE
(continued)

March 2004 onwards

Contact private sector landlords promoting service

5. Develop the provision of help and advice to landlords

April 2004 onwards

Contact HMO landlords and letting agents. Arrange for supplies of regular letting lists

6. Further develop the Private Sector Landlord list

April 2005

Potential to offer an advisory service to rural community

7. Investigate holding a rural housing advice surgery

September 2005

Contact secondary schools re: education sessions on housing issues

8. Instigate more pro-active work within schools

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTION	DATE	OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS
MULTI AGENCY WORKING	1. Actively participate in the development of the County-wide protocols with Social Services, Primary Care Trusts, Probation, Youth Offending Teams, Armed Forces, Prison and Connexions	Meetings arranged with support agencies to discuss how and when protocols can be put in place including the development of a single shared assessment for particular groups i.e. 16/17 year olds / young people and those with mental health/drug/alcohol problems	From July 2003 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless referral arrangement made with Probation and Prison Services. Discussions started with NACRO Prison Plus for a common referral system. • March 04 – Youth Housing Officer to work with young homeless persons and develop protocols with support agencies • Housing and Health Group formed to deal with homeless applications from those with mental health and associated problems

OBJECTIVE REVIEWING AND EVALUATING	TASK	ACTION	DATE	OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS
	1. Develop a Homeless recording system in line with ODPM requirements	Planning sessions with Media Advisor to establish a workable system	<u>March 2004 onwards</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless data base designed to record applications and produce statistical reports
	2. Develop a Hostel/Supporting People recording system to analyse data linked to Supporting People review	Sessions with IT Advisor to plan data base	<u>August 2003 onwards</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First phase of data base designed end of June 03. Up and running from August 2003
	3. Review homeless procedures in preparation for County-wide review	Attend County-wide Homelessness Forum and Housing / Homelessness Strategy Group Meetings	<u>October 2003 ongoing</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2003 Front Line Officers Strategy Subgroup established to implement identified areas of the County Action Plan
	4. Sustain links with others as part of the ongoing review to improve services		<u>Ongoing</u>	
	5. Carry out an assessment of current/future levels of homelessness	Planning sessions with IT Advisor to establish a workable system	<u>Ongoing</u>	

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTION	DATE	OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS
STRATEGIC ISSUES	1. Produce a Homeless Strategy for Carlisle	Work towards Strategy Targets	<u>July 2003</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlisle's Strategy completed and forwarded to ODPM
	2. Work together with other LAs within Cumbria to establish a County-wide Strategy	Attend Cumbria Strategy Group Meeting and Homelessness Forum	<u>July 2003</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumbria Strategy completed and forwarded to ODPM
	3. Development of homelessness service standards and local performance indicators			
	4. Review access issues for members of BME communities			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with Shelter to arrange a snapshot count on behalf of the County Strategy Group. Street Count may follow in Sep 04 (following ODPM guidelines)
	5. Develop a Rough Sleepers Policy		<u>March 2004 ongoing</u>	

OBJECTIVE	TASK	ACTION	DATE	OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS
TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION	1. Review the hostels service/funding of repairs and move on accommodation requirements	Leasing arrangements negotiated with CHA and Impact Housing. Talks with Health & Safety Officer and necessary action taken to ensure accommodation is up to standard including sufficient temporary disabled accommodation	<u>From April 2003</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three additional one bedded flats leased from CHA in April 2003 to offer additional move on accommodation to clients. One additional 2 bedded house leased from Impact Housing
	2. Review the roles of Hostel staff at John Street and London Road Hostels	To make service more efficient and equalise capacity to enable delivery of the resettlement service for homeless people	<u>From Sept 2003</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take place from (subject to final approval) 1st April 2004. All staff on new contracts, job descriptions and hours. Deputy Manager post created.
REHOUSING AND RESETTLEMENT	1. Acquire a Storage Unit for clients furniture	Temporary arrangement made with Property Services to use a Unit at South John Street which ended in Sept 2003. Alternative storage facilities to be	<u>April 2003 onwards</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help homeless applicants store house contents until they move into permanent accommodation. 2 local storage firms are presently

explored

being used to store furniture.

REHOUSING AND
RESETTLEMENT
(continued)

2. Review the present Deposit Bond Scheme and investigate joining the DiGS Scheme.

Discuss with stakeholders, the possibility of transferring monies to County-wide scheme

December 2003

- Help homeless secure accommodation in the private sector. The DiGS Scheme will start operating in Carlisle from March 2004.

EMERGENCY OUT OF
HOURS CONTACT

1. Review the Out of Hours Service provided for Emergency contact

Meeting arranged with Social Services Out of Hours Manager to discuss workable arrangements

September 2003

Discussions with Careline Services to formalise the emergency contact arrangement with Homeless Services

Ongoing

- Agreement arranged with Careline Services to be reviewed in March 2004. Since been extended until March 2005

ACTION PLAN – 2

(To be submitted)

ACTION PLAN – 3

(To be submitted)

GLOSSARY

PCT	-	Primary Care Trust
Himp	-	Health Improvement Programme
LHG	-	Local Health Group
LSP	-	Local Strategic Partnership
HAZ	-	Health Action Zone
EOP	-	Exercise on Prescription
GP	-	General Practitioner