

## HASTINGS & ST LEONARDS HOUSING STRATEGY 2016–2019

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## **Foreword**

I am pleased to introduce the Hastings and St Leonards Housing Strategy 2016-19. It's so important that we plan for the future to ensure residents in the Borough have access to good quality accommodation at a price they can afford.

We are working hard to improve existing housing and to enable the delivery of new housing in Hastings and St Leonards. We are putting significant efforts into regenerating the most deprived areas of the town to improve the quality of life for local residents and the community as a whole; Hastings Borough Council is committed to there being a decent home for everyone.

Hastings has been acutely affected by the economic difficulties of the recession. Changes to government housing policy and legislation has had a significant impact on local residents and introduced new challenges for future housing policy locally.

Too many of our local residents are living in poverty. Poor housing conditions and increasing housing costs exacerbate this issue. We will continue to work in partnership to ensure people in Hastings and St Leonards can access and maintain accommodation that is suitable for their needs.

With increasing pressures on local services and declining resources it is even more important to develop strategies and joint initiatives with partners that will address the housing issues affecting people living and working in Hastings.

We will strive to secure the necessary resources to achieve our objectives and give active support to initiatives that will benefit the community and address housing issues for those in most need. This strategy will give us the platform on which to achieve our future housing ambitions.

**Councillor Kim Forward, Housing and Community Services Portfolio Holder**

## Executive Summary

Whilst the Council's revised Housing Strategy for the period 2016-19 has broadly similar aims to previous strategies it has been developed in the context of a quite different set of circumstances. Since the last strategy was implemented in 2009 we have experienced one of the most severe economic recessions of modern times and as a consequence of the resulting financial deficit, successive governments have sought to sharply reduce public spending in order help restore balance to the economy; this remains, from the current government's perspective, a work in progress and key to achieving its objectives are a continuing programme of welfare benefit reforms and reductions in spending on public services.

Whilst there has been a fragile recovery in terms of economic growth more recently and a marked recovery within the housing market, the economic and political landscape remains quite different now to that which informed the last strategy.

Despite the long recession there are reasons for optimism within Hastings. Whilst the town remains one of the most deprived in the region, regeneration continues apace. Recent openings of the Pier and the new skate-park complex are testament to the vitality of the town. As a consequence, Hastings is becoming a more favoured destination for inward investment and new home seekers. The Housing Strategy and Local Plan seek to continue to support this through ensuring that there is provision and access to new housing whilst also making best use of existing built assets, for example through the regeneration of existing stock and minimisation of empty homes.

Whilst this regeneration is positive and to be welcomed it brings with it greater challenges for those least able to compete in the market for housing. Those most economically disadvantaged in terms of poor health, education and skills find it increasingly difficult to secure housing that is adequate for their needs, at a price they can reasonably afford.

The Council's strategy is one that aims to support the local economy and promote continuing growth whilst making sure that as many local people as possible share in the prosperity created. Against a backdrop of continuing reductions to the resources of the local authority, police and other public sector partners – as well as the challenges faced by voluntary sector bodies – this will be difficult. Nevertheless the Council remains committed to closing the gap between both the most advantaged and disadvantaged households in the town and between the performance of the town compared with other areas of the South East.

The mix and tenure of housing in the town, whilst not unique amongst coastal areas, is very different from many other areas of the South East; this brings with it its own set of problems which are reflected in the strategy. Social housing and owner occupation remain comparatively low relative to the rest of the South East whilst rates of private renting are far higher. The Council aims for a more balanced housing market that provides for a range of individual needs and income levels.

The profile of the housing stock is also quite different from many other areas. There is a significantly higher proportion of older, higher density and terraced housing than is common in many other areas. This brings with it higher investment and maintenance costs, issues of disrepair and particular challenges with regards to energy efficiency and fuel poverty for occupiers. Associated with this is the concentration of many poorer and deprived households in the poorest quality stock. The council remains committed to driving up standards through programs of support and enforcement where necessary.

The strategy also recognises that outside the town centres and seafront the housing profile is quite different but can be equally challenging. Social housing tends to be concentrated in particular areas which also register some of the highest deprivation levels within the South East. The strategy therefore is to ensure that regeneration is not concentrated in the centres but reaches out to all areas of the borough. The council is committed to working with the main housing providers in order to help regenerate those areas with a high density of social housing.

The strategy stresses that bricks and mortar are only a part of the solution to an individual's housing needs and social wellbeing. The provision of effective support for the most disadvantaged groups in society, including those who may find themselves homeless or rough sleeping, is absolutely critical. The strategy aims to ensure that a partnership approach is adopted to helping vulnerable households retain their homes and their independence and, where possible, support them back into mainstream society.

The strategy seeks to build on the success achieved through the delivery of the previous strategy. Significant progress was made in achieving the objectives in the previous Housing Strategy through strong partnership working, joint commissioning and new housing and regeneration initiatives (a summary of the successful achievements during the life of the previous strategy can be found in appendix 1).

The purpose of the Housing Strategy 2016-19 is to inform local residents and partners about the housing needs in the Borough and set out plans to address key issues. Three key strategic housing priorities have been identified with partners for the period 2016-2019. These priorities have been agreed with the aim of achieving the maximum benefit to local residents and communities.

### **Priority 1 - Meet Housing Needs and Aspirations**

This will be achieved through:

- Helping to ensure that 3,400 net new dwellings are delivered in the Borough between 2011 – 2028 in line with the Local Plan
- Ensuring that a minimum of 200 new homes are delivered annually
- Prioritising new housing on previously developed land to assist with regeneration where possible

- Ensuring an appropriate mix of housing is provided in terms of tenure, price, type, size and location, having regard to the accommodation needs of the town
- Making decent housing accessible to more people by increasing the provision of affordable housing
- Providing more opportunities for people to live in Hastings town centre through identifying opportunities for mixed use schemes and making best use of space above shops
- Widening the range of housing available in Central St Leonards, particularly through the provision of good quality affordable housing
- Considering the potential for the Council to invest directly in new housing
- Ensuring the delivery of affordable housing through planning obligations is maximised
- Identifying suitable sites (both local authority owned and in the private sector) for new development
- Maximising opportunities for securing capital investment to deliver new affordable homes
- Creating an online self-build register to ensure future planning policy can meet the demand for this type of development
- Regularly reviewing and assessing the housing needs of the residents in the Borough
- Working with East Sussex County Council to ensure housing related support is available for vulnerable people
- Continuing to work with Brighton Housing Trust to deliver the Big Lottery funded Fulfilling Lives programme
- Continuing to minimise and tackle rough sleeping in the Borough
- Regularly reviewing the progress of the Social Lettings Agency (Letstart Lettings)

## **Priority 2 – Improving Access and Opportunities**

This will be achieved through:

- Ensuring that there is adequate supply of accommodation to meet the needs of older people and those with a disability
- Working with Hastings & Rother Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that housing and health needs of household in Hastings are considered and addressed
- Working with East Sussex Better Together partners to improve the links between Health and Housing in the planning of future services
- Maintaining support for vulnerable people through Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), loans and housing solutions to ensure homes are adapted and improved
- Supporting measures that will help households manage the impact of welfare benefit reforms
- Continuing to work with partners to develop innovative ways of improving access to accommodation for young people
- Meeting our commitment to help resettle vulnerable Syrians refugees under the government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS)
- Mitigating the impact of rogue landlord behaviour
- Continuing to work with our partners to encourage social housing tenants to play an active role in governance structures, neighbourhood management and decision making

### **Priority 3 – Support for Economic Regeneration**

This will be achieved through:

- Maintaining our focus on the regeneration of the St Leonards Housing Renewal Area
- Seeking further improvement of private rented housing through licencing and enforcement where required
- Encouraging and supporting responsible landlords
- Working to secure funding for targeted housing interventions within the Borough
- Monitoring the condition of the private housing stock
- Continuing to bring empty and derelict homes and land back into use, through CPO where necessary
- Working with Education providers to ensure the housing needs of any future student population are assessed and catered for
- Ensuring appropriate housing solutions are available for keyworkers where these are identified
- Considering the establishment of a Local Housing Company to aid with development and regeneration of the town
- Reducing fuel poverty and improving energy efficiency for local residents

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## **The Council's vision**

This strategy outlines a vision of how Hastings Borough Council will work with partners and the community to make Hastings a place that residents are proud to live and work. The ambition is to provide decent, high quality, affordable and secure homes to meet the aspirations of the people of Hastings and St Leonards.

This vision complements the Council's priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2016/17-2018/19, which include promoting a greener town, intervention where it's needed, economic and physical regeneration, and the creation of decent homes. The Corporate Plan can be viewed in full at:

[http://www.hastings.gov.uk/content/decisions\\_democracy/pdfs/Corporate\\_Plan\\_2016-19](http://www.hastings.gov.uk/content/decisions_democracy/pdfs/Corporate_Plan_2016-19)

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## **Key facts about Hastings and St Leonards**

Hastings is an entirely urban coastal town in East Sussex with a population of just over 90,000. In contrast to relatively more affluent and largely rural areas that typify much of East Sussex, opportunities for significant expansion and housing growth are limited.

Whilst the town remains a busy seaside tourist destination, it did, along with some other major Victorian seaside destinations, witness a significant decline in the traditional holiday market during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In terms of the built environment, the legacy is often all too clear to see, a rich architectural heritage, but one which requires significant capital investment in order to realise a healthy return for investors.

The social costs are also apparent. Too often in the past the large Victorians buildings that dominate and add character to parts of the town were subject to poorly conceived and implemented conversions that created higher concentrations of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The higher levels of crime, poor health, educational failure and population churn in some areas of the town have created a barrier to inward investment and the attraction of economically active residents and visitors. This has been compounded by a lack of employment opportunities locally, particularly at levels that would allow residents to exercise real choice over their housing.

Nevertheless, there are good reasons to be optimistic. Whilst high levels of deprivation remain a defining characteristic of the town at present, the significant public and private investment that has been made in recent years is producing notable results. Town centre regeneration within Central Hastings, the Old Town and Central St Leonards has resulted in a noticeable change.

Concerted housing interventions such as those undertaken within the St Leonards Housing Renewal Area are slowly turning the town around. It will be important moving forward that other areas of the town are similarly benefited, including the estates at Ore and Hollington where social housing predominates.

Other notable developments include the rebuilding of the pier, the state of the art skate-park complex and the the Jerwood Gallery, which has brought an art gallery of national importance to the town. The work of Hastings & Bexhill Task Force and regeneration companies has also produced new office and commercial facilities, attracting new employers to the town.

## **The people of Hastings**

Hastings has a population of around 90,000 which to date has been younger than the rest of East Sussex. Currently, the age group profile is mirroring the national picture. Based on the housing growth proposed between 2011 and 2028, the population is forecast to grow by 3.2%.

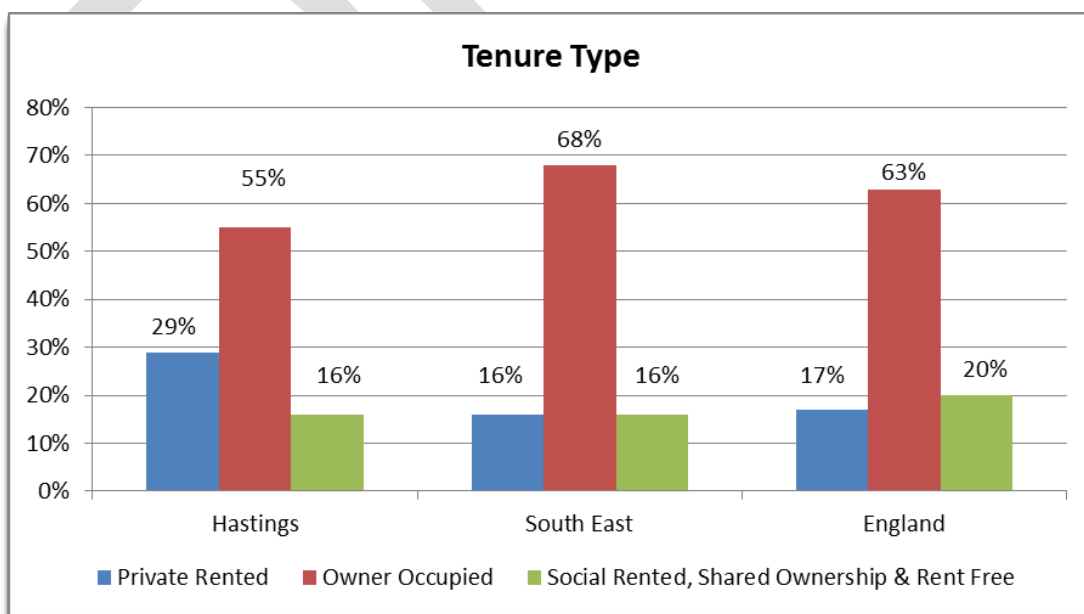
At the same time a growth in the number of households is expected to increase from 41,100 in 2011 to 44,500 in 2028 (an increase of 8.2%). This is a reflection of changes in lifestyle, with more people living longer and more people living alone. The working age population is forecast to remain static between 2011 and 2028.



Hastings has a relatively diverse population in comparison to the rest of East Sussex with settled migrant communities and a comparatively high number of EU migrants and Roma households living in private rented accommodation, often in the most deprived areas. Hastings has been designated an asylum seeker dispersal area since 2000, and since 2006 has accommodated up to 110 individuals at one time. Those granted asylum sometimes choose to settle in Hastings which has contributed to the wide range of differing cultures and communities across the Borough.

### The Housing Stock in Hastings

- The average house price is over 50% less than the regional average (East Sussex in Figures: Quarter 1 2015)
- The social sector housing numbers are slightly lower than the national average and supply is not sufficient to meet demand
- The Census 2011 confirmed the private rented sector was 50% larger than the national average and accounted for nearly 30% of the housing stock (It is known however that the private sector nationally has grown in recent years, however the rate of growth locally has not been measured)
- Owner occupation is lower than the rest of East Sussex; 55% compared with a national average of 63% (Census 2011)
- There are approximately 2,800 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), 85% of which are concentrated in 4 wards
- HMOs comprise 8% of the housing stock compared with an average of 2% across England
- There are significantly higher than average numbers of older buildings, often with poor internal layouts due to inadequate conversions in the 1960s and 70s
- There are issues with affordability, quality of accommodation and poor management standards in some parts of the private rented sector, particularly in areas of deprivation
- Proportionately, there are double the number of empty homes in comparison to the national average and the rest of Sussex



Census 2011

## Deprivation

Deprivation is measured taking into account the proportion of households in a defined small geographical unit with a combination of circumstances indicating low living standards or a high need for services, or both. Factors such as health, housing, employment, benefit dependency, education and crime are considered when determining levels of deprivation. Not all households that are considered 'deprived' live in areas of deprivation and it is important to ensure housing and support services are available to all residents in need.

Despite progress to address issues of deprivation, in September 2015 Hastings was the 20<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority in the country (from a total of 326) with 11,281 households (28%) living in poverty. Central St Leonards, Hollington and the Ore valley have significant levels of deprivation. The worst housing conditions and some of the highest levels of deprivation are concentrated within private sector housing in the town centres of Hastings and St Leonards.

Key deprivation information for Hastings:

- Hastings is the 20th most deprived Local Authority in the Country
- There are very high levels of economic inactivity
- Life expectancy is below the regional and national average
- Benefit dependency levels remain high and wage levels are lower than the regional average
- There are a high proportion of adults on working age benefits
- There are higher than average numbers in receipt of incapacity benefit
- A third of all households in Hastings claim housing or council tax benefits
- Educational attainment is persistently low
- Hastings is one of only three areas in the south east designated as a dispersal area for asylum seekers
- Hastings was the 11th most affected area in the Country by welfare reforms
- There are very high levels of deprivation and benefit dependency which are linked to patterns of inward migration of poorer households

The Council and partners will continue to concentrate on addressing the causes of deprivation which result in low skills, poor educational attainment, ill health, poverty, lack of job opportunities, poor quality housing and high crime rates, and will continue to ensure Hastings is an attractive place for future investment and for skilled workers to live and work.

## The Policy Framework

### The national housing policy agenda

The housing policy direction of the incumbent administration has extended and built upon the strategy direction outlined in the last Parliament. The publication of “Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England” in November 2011 summarised a number of housing policies being implemented at that time and added new proposals aimed at unlocking the housing market and getting the building industry moving again. A number of these have been included in subsequent legislation and guidance.

The key aims of government housing policy include:

- Improving the number of available homes
- Improving the rented sector
- Providing housing support for older and vulnerable people
- Helping people to buy a home

Recent housing, planning and welfare legislation is consistent with a view that households should be encouraged to reduce their reliance on welfare and be supported to achieve a greater level of employment and economic independence.

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 will have a significant impact on the nature of future development in the UK. The Act has a key objective of increasing home ownership, and consequently is likely to result in a shift away from traditional forms of affordable housing for rent. Key measures being introduced through the Act include:

- The Right to Buy (RTB) will be extended to housing association tenants on a voluntary (non-statutory) basis
- Higher value local authority properties will be sold to fund the extension of RTB
- Planning authorities will be expected to promote and increase the supply of Starter Homes
- The introduction of a ‘Pay to Stay’ scheme where tenants with incomes of £31,000 and over are charged market rent (discretionary for housing associations)
- The phasing out of lifetime tenancies for local authority tenants
- A commitment to tackling ‘rogue’ landlords
- A number of planning reforms aimed at increasing the supply and delivery of additional new housing

Under the Act, Planning authorities are required to promote and increase the supply of Starter Homes, which will be available for first-time buyers under the age of 40 and discounted by 20% of the market value. For the first time Starter Homes are included within a wider government definition of affordable housing. The government’s policy of prioritising access to home ownership will mean that it is likely that far fewer affordable rented homes will be built by Registered Providers. Development funding from the Homes and Communities Agency for the provision of general needs rented housing is also unlikely to be available during the current parliament.

In addition to the Act, recent changes have been introduced by central government to reduce social housing rents by 1% compared to the preceding year, every year, for the next four years. This reduction in Housing Association rents is likely to require them to convert a

substantial element of their vacant stock to higher affordable rents in order to balance their business plans and continue to develop new homes.

The extension of the RTB to Housing Association properties will also support the aspirations of those households who wish to own their own home. While this strategy and the other policies outlined in the Act will doubtless help to meet the housing aspirations of some sections of the community, it is likely that the longer-term provision of social housing for rent in Hastings will be reduced.

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 has seen the introduction of a range of new reforms designed to encourage households into employment through a number of restrictions on the incomes of benefit dependent households. While the elderly and disabled have been largely protected from these restrictions, the incomes of working age benefit dependent and low income households are likely to be impacted significantly. The changes outlined are wide-ranging and detailed; however, it is clear that there will be a reduction in household incomes as a result of the reduction of the benefit cap to £20,000 a year from £26,000 (outside London) and a freeze on all benefits and the LHA rates until 2020. In addition these changes may result in an increase in the inward migration of benefit dependent households from more expensive areas of the South East.

### **Regional and Sub-Regional Policy**

The government has introduced Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to help determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within the local area.

Hastings forms part of the South East LEP which includes businesses, local authorities, Universities and other industry players across Essex, Kent and East Sussex. The federated South East LEP agrees priorities for investment in roads, buildings and facilities in the area as part of an integrated approach to growth and infrastructure delivery. This includes the delivery of new and improved homes, particularly in coastal areas with dysfunctional housing markets as outlined in the South East Local Enterprise Plan.

## **Priority 1 - Meeting Housing Needs and Aspirations**

Meeting the housing needs and aspirations of local people is a key strategic priority for the Council and partners. This will be achieved through:

- The delivery of affordable and market homes
- Preventing homelessness

### **Housing Supply and Demand**

Ensuring residents have access to a decent home and a suitable living environment is fundamental to people's wellbeing and is a key priority for the Council and its partners. It is crucial to increase the availability, affordability and quality of housing for all sections of the community to meet housing needs.

A Housing Needs Assessment carried out in 2013 confirmed that there is an insufficient housing supply to meet demand. Taking into account future population growth as well as likely fluctuations in the economy and changes to the housing market, the assessment concludes that over 400 new dwellings across all tenures should be provided annually to meet demands and aspirations.

The supply of new housing delivered also has an important role in the Borough's continued regeneration. The key features of the Hastings housing market which distinguishes it from other parts of the South East include:

- Comparatively low house prices; but declining affordability for local people
- Natural population growth with additional migration from households choosing to move to Hastings from other areas
- A comparatively large private rented sector and high levels of deprivation.

It is essential these issues are monitored and addressed as part of the ongoing economic development and regeneration taking place locally. Building new homes and having a variety of type and mix of housing to meet a range of households' needs is key to continued economic, social and physical regeneration in the Borough.

Through the Local Plan 2014 the Council has committed to:

- Delivering 3,400 net new dwellings between 2011 – 2028
- Prioritising new housing on previously developed land to assist regeneration where possible
- Ensuring an appropriate mix of housing is provided in terms of tenure, price, type, size and location, having regard to the accommodation needs of the town
- Making decent housing accessible to more people by increasing the provision of affordable housing, having regard to issues such as fuel poverty, improving/regulating the quality of existing accommodation in the town and bringing vacant dwellings back into use
- Providing more opportunities for people to live in Hastings town centre through identifying opportunities for mixed use schemes and making best use of space above

shops, and widening the range of housing available in Central St Leonards, particularly through the provision of good quality affordable housing.

### **Development of new housing**

As well as identifying key overarching objectives for the sustainable growth of Hastings, the Council's Local Plan evidences a requirement for at least 3,400 net new homes over the period 2011 to 2028 to meet the needs and aspirations of a changing population. The Plan identifies a broad range of sites for housing which will assist in delivering a range of housing types, and contains specific planning policies which set out the Council's requirements in terms of quality, design and tenure of housing. In addition, it highlights the requirement to meet the needs of specific groups such as older people, those with mobility issues and specialist needs such as those presented by the Gypsy and Traveller community.

However, there are many constraints to development in the Borough, and these are acknowledged in the Plan. They include topography, the effect on the natural and historic environment, contamination, land instability and the present insufficiency of infrastructure. The housing site allocations take account of these constraints, any assets that could or should be retained and other potential land uses. It will be important to continue to work with the neighbouring local authority of Rother to consider shared ideas for meeting housing need.

The Council is keen to work with Registered Providers and private developers to deliver new affordable housing for rent and shared ownership either as part of open market housing schemes, or developing whole sites as affordable housing. In addition, the Council is committed to bringing forward stalled sites using any funding available and making best use of local authority owned land that could be brought forward for additional housing.

The Council will also be considering whether it should establish a Local Housing Company with the intention of directly intervening in the local market to increase the supply of new and refurbished homes for rent or sale.

### **Delivering affordable housing**

Although house prices in Hastings are below the average for the South East, low wages and benefit dependency make accessing suitable, affordable accommodation a challenge for many residents.

Many households in Hastings lack sufficient finances to buy or rent accommodation suitable for their household needs. Housing available to buy on the open market in the lowest quartile (cheapest 25%) is priced at 6-7 times that of the lowest 25% average income. However, many of the new proposals within the Housing and Planning Act offer a range of additional measures, including financial incentives, aimed at improving access to home ownership for first time buyers.

Those households not able to purchase their own home rely on renting from the private rented sector or Registered Providers. There is insufficient social housing to meet demand and data on housing benefit recipients indicates the private rented sector is playing a significant role in meeting these housing needs. However, accommodation available in the private rented sector is, increasingly, far exceeding Local Housing Allowance rates for Hastings which, in turn, is making it harder for people on lower incomes to access or sustain

housing. It is therefore crucial that the Council and partners continue to work jointly to deliver new affordable housing to rent and buy. This will include:

- Identifying suitable development partners in the social sector
- Considering the potential for the council to invest directly in new affordable housing
- Ensuring the delivery of affordable housing through planning obligations is maximised
- Identifying suitable sites (both local authority owned and in the private sector) for development
- Maximising opportunities for securing capital investment to deliver new affordable homes
- Creating an online self-build register to ensure future planning policy can meet the demand for this type of development

The impact of the proposals outlined in the Housing and Planning Act look likely to impact on the future development of affordable housing for rent further. The Act includes a number of measures designed to stimulate an increase in the development of affordable housing for sale rather than rent. The government's commitment to delivering 200,000 'starter homes' by 2020, encouraging increased levels of self-build development and the extension of the Right to Buy Scheme is welcomed but will not meet the housing needs of lower income households. The impact of this policy could be a further decline in the availability of affordable accommodation for rent and an increase in housing insecurity for some.

## **Social Housing Stock**

There are approximately 5,250 units of social housing stock in Hastings which are all owned and managed by Registered Providers following the transfer of ownership of 'Council Houses' in 1996. The social housing stock accounts for 15% of all the housing in the Borough which is slightly under the national average of 17%. However demand for social housing far outweighs the supply and the average 450 new vacancies per year does not meet the housing needs of all residents in the Borough.

To ensure the scarce supply of social housing is allocated to local people in most need, the Council's Allocations Scheme (which sets out who can apply for social housing) was amended in 2012. The amendments clarified that eligible applicants must have a housing need and a local connection to Hastings (with a few exceptions). The Scheme will be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose for the Council and Registered Providers.

The 1% annual reduction in the rent levels Registered Providers are able to charge their tenants will reduce the ability of some Registered Providers to invest in the development of affordable housing in future. In addition, the ability to develop general needs social housing for rent is likely to be reduced further by the removal of all grant funding to develop social housing for rent between 2016 and 2018 from the Homes and Communities Agency.

Within the voluntary Right to Buy Scheme Registered Providers will be required to sell existing housing stock to eligible tenants at a reduced rate. It is proposed that all property sold will need to be replaced by new development. It is the government's intention to publish at a later date details of the type of accommodation they want to replace accommodation sold under the Right to Buy Scheme.

## **Ensuring homes are suitable**

The Council has adopted planning policies to ensure new housing is developed to a high design standard. Lifetime Home standards are encouraged on all new developments and minimum space standards are required at a local and national level. On sites of over 50 new dwellings, 2% of the units must be wheelchair accessible accommodation.

The Council provides Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to help households meet some or all the cost of aids and adaptations to make a home a less disabling environment for a disabled person. The grant is available to low income families across all tenures.

Alongside DFGs, the Council manages a shared Housing Solutions Service, jointly funded by Hastings Borough Council, Wealden District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council and East Sussex County Council's Adult Social Care Service. The objective of the Housing Solution Service is to assist disabled people to make informed choices about their housing needs when adapting their existing home via a DFG may not be the best solution.

## **Preventing Homelessness**

Homelessness not only affects individual households, but also impacts upon the wider community. Homelessness is commonly linked to crime and fear of crime, health and developmental problems, substance misuse issues, poor educational attainment and unemployment. Homelessness is also intrinsically linked to poverty.

It is therefore not a surprise that Hastings, with significant levels of deprivation, has the highest rate of homelessness in East Sussex. Reasons for homelessness remain consistent year on year and are mainly due to relationship breakdowns with friends or family (including domestic violence). Given the high levels of private rented accommodation in Hastings it is also unsurprising that the other main reason for homelessness is a result of an assured shorthold tenancy being terminated.

The approach to tackling homelessness is not just about providing housing solutions. The Council and partners are committed to trying to prevent homelessness before a crisis, to prevent a household losing their home or stop them being placed into emergency accommodation.

Homelessness applications (and acceptances) have increased year on year since 2012: the increasing pressures on the local housing market, alongside the reform of the welfare system and changes to housing policy and legislation as a result of the Localism Act are making it harder to achieve successful homeless prevention outcomes and avoid a crisis. Rough sleeping has reached the highest level since recording started in 2002 when only 1 or 2 people were known to be rough sleeping. In 2015 outreach services verified up to 16 people as rough sleeping on a given night. Over 35 people are confirmed to be rough sleeping intermittently and the Council and partners are working jointly to develop new ways of working to tackle the escalating problem.

To date, the private rented sector has been an excellent housing solution for preventing homelessness and the Council has been fortunate to have access to funding from central government and from East Sussex County Council to assist with financial obstacles when accessing private accommodation. However, the housing market is changing as more and more households migrate to the area to take up affordable housing options and there is



uncertainty about the future of financial assistance to enable people to access private accommodation.

### **Social Lettings Agency**

The Council established a Social Lettings Agency pilot in 2015/16, which has been extended in 2016/17. The service model involves working with local landlords to lease their accommodation and assist with housing management. This will ensure a supply of good quality housing and a high standard of housing management for local people at risk of homelessness. It will also assist local people to overcome the barriers (including financial barriers) that prevent them accessing accommodation locally.

If successful the Council will consider extending the scheme to offer a management only service to those owners who do not wish to lease property directly to the Council.

The Hastings and St Leonards Homelessness Strategy 2016-18 sets out further detail on how the Council and partners will tackle homelessness in Hastings.

### **Actions**

- Regularly review and assess the housing needs of the residents in the Borough
- Work with East Sussex County Council to ensure housing related support is available for vulnerable people
- Continue to work with Brighton Housing Trust to deliver the Big Lottery funded Fulfilling Lives programme
- Continue to minimise and tackle rough sleeping in the Borough
- Regularly review the Social Lettings Agency
- Increase the supply of new housing in the Borough with a minimum of 200 new homes delivered annually
- Consider the disposal of council owned land and property for new housing development

## **Priority 2 - Improving Access and Opportunities**

A key strategic priority is to ensure local people can access suitable accommodation that is appropriate for their needs. It is important to recognise that housing needs are often coupled with other support needs such as health problems. This priority will be achieved through:

- Delivering targeted interventions to improve health outcomes
- Addressing the housing and support needs of vulnerable people

### **Health and housing**

It is nationally recognised that suitable housing is critical to maintaining health and wellbeing. Good housing helps people stay healthy and achieve a decent quality of life. Stable housing will aid people to recover from periods of ill health and can also enable them to effectively address their health and social care needs. Safe housing will help prevent trips, falls and injuries that can result in hospital admissions and lead to longer term health problems.

### **Health Inequalities in Hastings**

Hastings has significantly worse health outcomes for residents when compared to the rest of England. There are a range of underlying reasons for poor health in Hastings, including the high level of deprivation, the percentage of children living in poverty, the high number of overcrowded households, households without central heating, poor housing conditions and the rate of long term unemployment.

Men in the most deprived areas of Hastings are expected to live 11.1 years less than those in the least deprived parts of the town which is the biggest gap in the South East. Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average. Lifestyle factors also contribute to residents' poor health including high smoking rates, high levels of alcohol and substance misuse, risk of obesity related illnesses and poor sexual health.

Incidences of poor mental health are high in Hastings. For example, the prevalence of depression, psychoses and dementia are significantly higher than elsewhere in England. Hastings also has a significantly high rate of hospital admission for self-harm and for trips and falls that can be directly attributed to poor housing conditions.

East Sussex County Council and the NHS are working jointly with partners and the community to transform current ways of working and deliver integrated social care and health services. The programme of change is known locally as 'East Sussex Better Together'. The housing solutions for vulnerable people will be integral to this work and partners will continue to work jointly to identify current and emerging needs and to deliver new specialist housing with care and support where appropriate.

Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) launched a £5m annual investment plan to tackle health inequalities between 2014 and 2019. The Council has been commissioned to deliver a number of projects, including a group of services designed to

address health inequalities among the rough sleeper and street community to improve the health outcomes for this vulnerable group.

### **Vulnerable households**

'Supporting People' is a government programme which provides vulnerable adults with housing related support to help them find, or stay in their own home. The support is aimed at helping people to achieve independence within their community.

The funding is administered by East Sussex County Council and provides accommodation based support services and floating support services that reach people where they are currently living as well as providing accommodation based services with support. The proposed level of budget reductions which the County Council are tasked with achieving in future years make it increasingly important that the Council and partners work jointly with the County Council to highlight the benefits of these services in meeting local housing need and ensure they are retained.

### **Care and support in supported living developments**

The County Council will work with the Council and partners to plan for and develop a wider range of accommodation based services for people with a disability. Developers are not obliged to inform planning authorities as to whether they intend to develop accommodation services for people who have care and support needs; however a partnership approach to ensure a strategic and managed approach to developing the market is strongly encouraged.

### **Meeting the needs of older people**

It is known that people are now living longer, partly as a result of changes in lifestyle and lifestyle choices as well as improved health care interventions. It is anticipated that there will be a greater proportion of older people in the Borough by 2028, with particular growth in the post retirement age group of over 60s (30% in 2028, compared to 24% in 2011).

East Sussex County Council and partners have identified a need to develop further social care and housing options for older people. Marlborough House is the only Extra Care housing scheme in Hastings for older people with a housing, care and support need which does not meet demand for this type of housing locally.

Due to an accidental fire in July 2013, Marlborough House is currently not in operation. Partners are working jointly to bring this accommodation back into use by 2017.

With the removal of Supporting People funding to provide an element of support for residents of sheltered housing, the Council will continue to work with Registered Provider partners to bridge this funding gap.

### **Ethnic minority groups**

The Council will seek to ensure that the housing needs of ethnic groups are met; including providing for the housing needs of Gypsy and Travellers should they emerge in the longer term.

The Council will work with partners in health, social care, education and housing, alongside community-based and other organisations, to deliver on its commitment to resettle up to 100 individual vulnerable Syrians by 2020 under the government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS).

Hastings Borough Council also recognises its responsibility as an asylum dispersal area to those granted asylum to remain in the UK. The Council will continue to work proactively with the Home Office to ensure that a comprehensive package of support, advice and assistance is available to enable those granted asylum to successfully integrate into the wider community.

## **Young People**

The recent changes to Housing Benefit and welfare entitlement as a consequence of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, alongside the Housing and Planning Act 2016, have further restricted the ability of vulnerable people under 35 to access affordable accommodation.

It remains a priority of this strategy to develop new approaches to increasing the supply of accommodation based support services for vulnerable people in this group to prevent homelessness. Levels of accommodation based support provision in Hastings are significantly below what is available to young people in other areas of East Sussex and the Council will continue to work with partners to develop innovative ways of increasing the supply of this type of accommodation.

## **Financial inclusion**

The Council, East Sussex County Council, the Department of Work and Pensions, the Clinical Commissioning Group and housing associations have invested significant amounts of funding to encourage financial inclusion, which will help to prevent homelessness and improve well-being. As public finances reduce going forward, all partners must work jointly to ensure efforts to address financial inclusion can continue, particularly with the roll out of Universal Credit and the £20,000 benefit cap.

## **Actions**

- Ensure that there is adequate supply of accommodation to meet the needs of those with a disability and older people
- Work with the Hastings and Rother CCG to ensure that housing and health needs are considered and addressed
- Work with ESBT partners to improve the links between Health and Housing services in the planning of future services
- Maintain Support for vulnerable people through Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), loans and housing solutions to ensure homes are adapted and improved.
- Resettle up to 100 individual vulnerable Syrians by 2020 under the government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS)
- Support measures that will help households manage the impact of welfare benefit reforms
- Continue to work with partners to develop innovative ways of improving access to accommodation for young people

- Mitigate the impact of rogue landlord behaviour
- Continue to work with our partners to encourage social housing tenants to play an active role in governance structures, neighbourhood management and decision making

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### **Priority 3 - Supporting Economic Regeneration**

Addressing the housing needs of local residents is not simply about building new housing. The existing housing stock is a valuable asset for accommodating residents although the quality of housing has a direct impact on health and wellbeing. The Council and partners are committed to:

- Improving the quality of existing housing stock
- Planning for future housing needs

#### **The private rented sector**

The supply of social housing is not sufficient to meet housing demand locally. There is therefore a reliance on the private rented sector which makes up 30% of all the housing stock in the Borough; this is twice the national average.

However, a higher than average proportion of this privately rented accommodation, often in multiple occupation, is below minimum acceptable standards. Approximately 2,800 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are distributed throughout the town. Evidence shows that 64% of all HMOs fail to meet the government's Decent Homes Standard. Many suffer from low standards of fire safety, management and maintenance, and in some cases, tenants are treated very poorly and the buildings are a focus for crime and anti-social behaviour.

There is, therefore, a pressing need to add to existing housing led initiatives to help support the regeneration agenda in Hastings. There is a need to rebalance local housing markets dominated by rented accommodation concentrated in the areas most deprived areas with the poorest quality housing stock. Strategic initiatives that combine licensing, enforcement and acquisition will be important in the Council's aims of driving up housing standards and in turn improving the health and wellbeing of residents and neighbourhoods.

#### **Social Housing Stock**

It is important to ensure current social housing stock is safe and of a good standard. Not only does this improve a tenant's quality of life but also helps maintain a stable community where people are proud to live and settle.

Registered Providers in Hastings are committed to improving current housing stock by renewing doors, windows, kitchens, boilers, bathrooms and making external improvements to homes to improve the look of the area

#### **Area Based Development and Regeneration**

Area based regeneration seeks to tackle all aspects of regeneration (including housing) as part of wider strategic plans. A number of areas of land and different locations throughout the town have been identified as suitable for area based regeneration.

Some areas of the town have larger concentrations of one tenure. Central St Leonards for example has a higher concentration of poorer quality private rented sector accommodation which tends to encourage a higher turnover of tenancies and lead to a more transient

population in the area. Similarly, the Ore Valley has high concentrations of social rented housing which has contributed to similar issues associated with deprivation.

Addressing the imbalance in the housing stock in these areas will provide a mix of housing to improve housing choice and help to deliver long-term policy objectives relating to economic regeneration. The Council's aspirations are still to regenerate the former power station site, working with the local community and existing developers to explore viable options for future development.

### **The Housing Renewal Area**

Central St Leonards is the most deprived area in the Borough and was designated as a Renewal Area in 2003. The aim was to improve unsatisfactory housing conditions, employment prospects, social facilities and health to make Central St Leonards an area where people want to live, work and visit. The Renewal Area covers the whole of Central St Leonards ward and also some parts of Gensing ward to the North East and North West of Warrior Square station which have a high concentration of poor quality private rented housing.

A report on the work carried out in the Renewal Area in 2013 concluded that even though nearly 1,000 homes had been improved through enforcement, there were still an estimated 800 that failed basic housing standards and the area still has the highest number of empty homes in the town. As a result, the Renewal Area status has been extended until 2018.

Although much has been achieved since 2003 there is still more to do. Overall, Central St Leonards still compares poorly with other parts of the borough and the rest of the South East in respect of key indicators of deprivation; partners remain committed to continuing the social, economic and physical regeneration of the area.

### **The Coastal Space Project**

The level of capital funding now available for regeneration and renewal projects is much reduced as a result of the government's deficit reduction plans. However, the Council and [AmicusHorizon](#) have pursued an innovative approach to combining the purchase and improvement of empty and privately owned property for rent with social and economic regeneration. The initiative was launched in 2013 and is known as the Coastal Space Project.

The project is currently in its second phase, which runs from 2016-18. The previous phase attracted support from the Homes and Communities Agency and there is an expectation that phase three will be supported financially by the Council and the South East Local Economic Partnership (SELEP) as well as AmicusHorizon.

### **Licensing Schemes**

The Council introduced a Selective Licensing Scheme in October 2015. The scheme covers seven wards in Hastings where there are above average levels of private renting and evidence of significant and persistent anti-social behaviour linked to privately rented homes. The aim of the scheme is to improve conditions, management standards and tenancy practices in the private rented sector to ensure that properties have a positive impact on the area.

The Council has also been operating an Additional HMO Licensing Scheme in 4 wards with the highest concentration of HMOs in the Borough. Since the scheme was introduced in 2011 nearly 800 HMOs have been licensed leading to improvements in housing conditions and management standards in HMOs. The existing scheme is due to end in September 2016 and the Council is proposing to consult on the extension of the scheme for a further period to ensure the protection it affords to HMO tenants is continued.

## **Inward Migration**

The relatively affordable accommodation across all tenures in Hastings (compared to other areas in the South East) makes it an attractive option for households outside the area to relocate to find more affordable housing solutions.

Households are actively choosing to relocate to Hastings: successful efforts to regenerate Central St Leonards have encouraged a range of households to relocate to this up and coming area. This has made the housing market increasingly competitive.

However, other Authorities also continue to use private sector units in Hastings to meet their statutory housing duties. Between July 2013 and October 2015 the council were informed of 46 placements. Although this is relatively modest, anecdotal evidence suggests other households may also be actively encouraged to move to areas like Hastings in order to find affordable housing.

In the past Hastings has found it difficult to attract higher skilled workers to live, generate and take up employment in the area. Ensuring that there is a balanced mix and tenure of accommodation would help to address this issue. This might include working with key public sector employers such as the schools, universities and health sectors as well as private employers to ensure that there is access to suitable and desirable accommodation for keyworkers.

The Council recognises the need to ensure that key service providers are able to attract the right staff to the town in order to assist and sustain regeneration. The Council will work with public service providers to assess demand and find ways in which key staff can access appropriate housing

The future of further education in Hastings is currently under debate, and at this point it remains unclear what the aspirations are for the University of Brighton as they relate to Hastings. The Council is committed to working with education providers to ensure that the housing needs of any future student population are assessed and catered for locally.

Whilst the natural migration of households to Hastings can be positive for the economy and aid regeneration, there is a risk that gentrification could further increase demand for what is, in terms of the South East, very affordable, family-sized accommodation. This sustained level of demand is likely to continue to drive-up market prices meaning local people are less able to access affordable, good quality housing in the private sector. In addition, the migration of economically inactive homeless households from more affluent surrounding areas to Hastings could work against the wider strategic regeneration plans and put further pressure on local services.



## **Community Led Regeneration**

One of the government's key priorities is to reduce public spending and promote economic growth to tackle unemployment, poverty and poor health. A favoured approach is to support 'localism' and community led regeneration driven by the principle that local businesses, the community and civic society organisations should be at the forefront of regenerating local areas.

The Council and partners are working jointly to secure Community Led Local Development funding which offers a significant opportunity to enable wider inclusion in the economy and society through active partnership between local people and the organisations that serve them.

There are a number of significant opportunities in Hastings to:

- Ensure residents and business access new opportunities and take effective leadership in changing and sustaining their communities
- Support economically inactive over 55s back into economic activity
- Support the integration and success of those migrating into Hastings and particularly to support the development of black and minority ethnic (BME) businesses
- Use culture and creativity as a tool for economic growth, particularly encouraging the use of digital technology for entrepreneurial activity
- Build on the existing genuine 'bottom up' governance structures e.g. the successful Fisheries Local Action Group [FLAG] model which already has a functioning Local Action Group

## **The South East LEP**

As part of the South East LEP's Growth Deal with the government, the Council has successfully secured £500,000 funding to support the Coastal Communities project which complements the work of the Coastal Space project. The funding will support efforts to make the best use of housing in the coastal areas and realise the economic growth potential of these communities. This housing led regeneration will act as a catalyst to attract private sector investment for the improvement of whole streets and neighbourhoods.

## **Reducing Fuel Poverty**

The number of households in fuel poverty in Hastings is amongst the highest in the south east. This is mainly due to the nature of the housing stock but also as a result of poor housing management in some areas and many households being on low incomes. The council is committed to reducing fuel poverty and is working with partners to introduce a range of measures that will improve housing standards through enforcement, practical improvements to homes, promoting awareness of how to reduce fuel costs and continued applications for external funding for new initiatives to tackle fuel poverty.

### *'Eco friendly' housing*

New build housing generally has much higher build standards to address the issues of climate change and reduce carbon emissions. However, Hastings has a large stock of

accommodation built prior to 1919 where issues relating to fuel poverty and high levels of carbon emissions are significant.

### *Sustainable Houses in an Inclusive Neighbourhood (SHINE)*

The council and European partners are working jointly to secure European Regional Development funding to address fuel poverty and to lower carbon emissions. The Sustainable Houses in an Inclusive Neighbourhood (SHINE) project will complement the work of Coastal Space and put an 'eco uplift' on properties refurbished in the Renewal Area. This will ensure the eco measures included as part of the refurbishment are a much higher standard overall.

### *Climate Active Neighbourhoods (CAN)*

The Council and AmicusHorizon will work jointly to eco-renovate social rented housing that is in poor condition in deprived neighbourhoods. It will address the joint aims of reducing carbon emissions and alleviating fuel poverty in these residential homes. The activity will be supported by wider regeneration activity in the neighbourhood. With European funding, a programme of social investment is planned, which is likely to have long-term beneficial impacts on the sustainability of the neighbourhood.

### **Empty Homes**

The Council is committed to bringing empty homes back into use to make best use of housing stock and help meet housing need. In 2016 there were known to be nearly 900 empty homes in Hastings, of which around 250 have been empty for more than 2 years. This accounts for nearly 2% of all private housing stock which is considerably more than the rest of Sussex where the average is 0.7%. The Council works hard to tackle empty homes and 785 were brought back into use between April 2010 and March 2016. The units empty for 2 years or more are often more challenging to bring back and the proactive use of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) since 2010 has resulted in 55 units being brought back into use. The Council took possession of 5 units during 2013-2016 through CPO action. The Council is committed to securing a further 20 CPOs during the period 2016-18 in order to ensure that the availability of private sector housing stock is maximised.

### **Local Housing Company**

In order to increase the supply of housing, including affordable housing, the Council is interested in exploring how it might intervene directly in bringing forward sites for early development, particularly where housing might provide the key to wider regeneration ambitions. The Council would seek to do this on a commercial basis with any return being reinvested in further provision or existing services.

The Council will be undertaking initial viability and options assessment for the establishment of a Local Housing Company (LHC) in 2016 with a view to investing directly in the provision of new or refurbished housing should this prove viable. The aim would be to establish a LHC that could cater for a range of income levels and housing needs.

Evidence shows that Hastings has a significantly higher proportion of smaller dwellings including flats/maisonettes when compared to the profile of the stock across the South East as a whole. Addressing imbalances in the housing stock is important both in terms of

improving housing choice and in terms of the contribution it can make to assist economic regeneration. New housing can help change the image of an area and the perceived quality of life to help foster in-migration of skilled and key workers. Local Plan policy seeks to secure a balanced mix of good quality housing both within sites and across the Borough. New housing, and in particular larger homes, can help attract skilled and keyworkers by providing a choice of homes attractive to economically active households. The Council will work with employers and housing developers to ensure the offer of housing is attractive to skilled and keyworkers and does not act as a barrier to them taking up residence and employment in Hastings.

## **Actions**

- Maintain focus on the regeneration of St Leonards Housing Renewal Area
- Seek improvements in private rented housing through a mixture of licencing and enforcement where necessary
- Encourage and support responsible landlords
- Monitor the condition of the private housing stock
- Work with partners to secure funding for targeted housing interventions within the Borough
- Continue to bring empty homes and derelict land back into use, through CPOs where necessary
- Work with education providers to ensure the housing needs of any future population are assessed and catered for
- Ensure appropriate housing solutions are available for keyworkers where identified
- Consider the establishment of a Local Housing Company
- Reduce fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency for local residents

## Hastings & St Leonards Housing Strategy 2016-2019 Action Plan

### Priority 1 – Meeting Housing Needs and Aspirations

OBJECTIVES
1.1 Preventing Homelessness
1.2 Delivery of Affordable and Market Homes

Policy Objective	Actions	Milestones	Target	Outcome	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
Maintain a good understanding of the changing demographics, housing needs and aspirations of existing and new households	Regularly review and assess the housing needs of residents in the Borough	Carry out an annual review of shared ownership demand with the Homebuy agent  Share quarterly statistics on the movement of the local housing market with partners	Undertake a new Housing Market assessment by 2018  Complete Stock Condition Survey – Autumn 2016  Monitor the activity of private house sales quarterly through Hometrack software	Well informed, planned housing delivery is sufficient and suitable to meet changing demographic trends.		HBC
Meet the housing related support needs of vulnerable groups	Work with ESCC Supporting People Team to ensure housing related support is available	Work with Supporting People to review the joint working protocol between floating support and	Commission generic short term and long term floating housing support	Good quality housing related support is available for all clients groups	At least 1,000 vulnerable people assisted with housing related support annually	HBC

<b>Policy Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	for vulnerable people	accommodation-based services to ensure effective move	services until 2018 through the Supporting People & SHORE Partnerships			
Meet the housing needs of vulnerable households in the Borough	Through the Supporting People Partnership continue to fund supported housing schemes for single homeless people and families with support needs	Work with ESCC to manage the impact of implementing Supporting People budget reductions	To provide accommodation for households that are homeless, victims of DV, those with a mental health disability, young people at risk and young mothers are sustained until April 2018	Providers meet targets set in the service specification and deliver outcomes required  Saving can be achieved & impact identified & managed effectively	Maintain the current level of 80 units of supported accommodation funded to 2018	HBC
Meet the housing and support needs of those with the most complex needs	Work with Brighton Housing Trust (BHT) and partners to ensure Big Lottery funded Fulfilling Lives programme is delivered	Assist partners to review data sharing practices between services – March 2017	Complex homeless cases are assisted over 2 years between April 2016-18	Improved systems for partnership working  Meet needs around housing, mental health, substance misuse and offending behaviour	30 households assisted to 2018	HBC
Improve approaches to homelessness prevention to take account of	Monitor service demand and identify opportunities for improved	Monitor the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan through Quarterly reports to the	Minimise homelessness presentations	Successfully maintain improvements in homelessness prevention achieved over last plan period		HBC

<b>Policy Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
the emerging economic environment, welfare reforms, changes to legislation and housing related government policy changes	processes and procedures to raise service standards	Housing and Support Services (HASS) group  Review Homelessness Strategy – March 2018		Sustain high level of preventions through 2016-2019  Quality housing advice and support services delivered  Effective joint working with partners		
Improve access to accommodation for young people	Work with the YMCA to identify suitable units of accommodation for development in line with the Empty Homes Scheme  ..... Work with partners to identify the potential for increased provision of accommodation based support units	Quarterly meetings with YMCA and partners  ..... Inform future funding decisions regarding the value of supported accommodation for young people to ESCC – March 2017	40 units leased between April 2015 and March 2018  ..... Sustain current levels of accommodation based support for young people	Increased number of housing solutions for young people  ..... Opportunities for increasing the provision of supported accommodation for young people are maximised	40 units leased between April 2015 and March 2018	HBC
Reduce incidences of rough sleeping in the Borough	Consider how the short and longer term housing and support needs of rough sleepers can	Undertake an annual rough sleepers count/estimate with partners	Maintain year on year reduction in rough sleeping over the period 2016-19	Rough sleeping is minimised  Appropriate support is available from partners		HBC

<b>Policy Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	be addressed	Review outcomes of Health and Wellbeing Hub – April 2017		to successfully resettle those with complex needs that end up on the streets		
Prevent winter deaths of rough sleepers in adverse weather conditions	Ensure that emergency accommodation arrangements are in place during periods of extreme weather	<p>Annually liaise with the voluntary sector (including the faith groups, the Seaview Project and St Mungos Broadway) in support of their annual winter period service provision</p> <p>Carry out an annual review of the Council's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) to ensure it is consistent and fit for purpose</p>	<p>Deliver the Council's winter period policy of temporarily accommodating rough sleepers in periods of continuing extreme weather</p> <p>Snowflake night shelter facility operational</p>	No person is forced to sleep rough during periods of extreme weather	Zero rough sleepers forced to rough sleep when the temperature/feels like temperature is forecast to be 0 degrees or below for 3 consecutive nights or when the weather conditions could pose a serious risk to life	HBC
Maximise access to social housing through the Council's Allocation Scheme	Regularly review the Council's Allocation Scheme, transfers policies, and local lettings plans	<p>Quarterly strategic liaison meetings with main Registered Providers</p> <p>Review the Allocations Scheme with RP partners by March 2017</p>	Monitor allocations through the Homemove scheme to ensure transparency and fairness	A balance is maintained in terms of access to social housing for Homeseekers and Transfer cases.	<p>75 % allocation to Homeseekers</p> <p>25% allocations to Transfer cases</p>	HBC

<b>Policy Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
	<p>Continue to monitor and review rent policies, tenancy policies and asset management strategies with Registered Providers</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Work with development partners to ensure that the impact of changes to affordable housing provision resulting from the Housing and Planning Act are effectively managed</p>	<p>Carry out an annual assessment of social housing stock numbers (including new builds and disposals), affordable rent and social rent levels and conversion from social rent to affordable rent</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Produce an interim report on the impact of the Housing and Planning Act – April 2017</p>	<p>No affordable rent to exceed Local Housing Allowance level for the area</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Ensure all opportunities for affordable housing development are explored with partners</p>	<p>Rents are kept at an affordable level</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Access to affordable housing is maximised</p>		
Assist social housing tenants to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness	HBC and Registered Providers continue to jointly visit and support tenants at risk of homelessness	Undertake an annual review of joint working protocols with Amicus Horizon and Orbit South to ensure they are fit for purpose	Jointly address the housing and support needs of current social housing tenants at risk of homelessness due to arrears or	<p>Reduced numbers of evictions</p> <p>Fewer possession proceedings</p>	Homelessness prevented for 10 households who were visited annually	HBC



Policy Objective	Actions	Milestones	Target	Outcome	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
			anti-social behaviour			
Improve access to good quality, well managed accommodation for local people in housing need	Continue to expand the stock of accommodation in the Council's Social Lettings Agency (SLA)  ..... Deliver rent in advance and deposit loans to homeless households	Review the project outcomes of the SLA – April 2017  Consider the extension of a management only service for landlords who do not wish to lease – April 2017  ..... Quarterly review loan repayments with the Hastings and Rother Credit Union	Assist people in housing need to access good quality and well managed accommodation  ..... Maximise access to affordable housing solutions	Reduced dependency on rent deposit schemes locally  Improved management standards in the private rented sector  ..... Prevention of homelessness	Provide a minimum of 100 homes through the SLA by 2018	HBC
Improve the quality of privately managed accommodation in Hastings	Monitor and support Letting and Managing Agents to deliver quality services for those accessing accommodation in Hastings	Develop joint enforcement protocols with Trading Standards by August 2016	Enforce the Redress Scheme requirements  Enforce the new provisions relating to the publication and display of fees and charges	Quality assured Letting and Managing agents  All letting and managing agents are part of an approved redress scheme  Better informed tenants of their rights and responsibilities		HBC
Increase the	Proactively support	Annually update a	Provide for the	Sufficient supply of	200 new units	HBC

Policy Objective	Actions	Milestones	Target	Outcome	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
supply of new housing in the Borough to meet local housing need	the delivery of new housing and Local Plan targets through a proactive approach to planning	supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing in accordance with the Hastings Local Plan  Develop a Self-Build Register	development of at least 3,400 net new homes from 2011 to 2028  Undertake public planning forums on all major residential application sites for more than 30 homes	housing to meet existing and emerging housing demand	delivered annually	
Support the regeneration of the local economy	Support and facilitate the redevelopment of the remaining former millennium communities land at the Ore valley  ..... Bring forward public sector land (and land acquired through public investment) for new housing development	Preferred developers for Ore Valley sites identified by April 2017  ..... Review any remaining land holdings of the council	Clear redevelopment proposals covering the Ore Valley sites in place by 2018  ..... Deliver up to 16 homes through the land auction pilot by March 2018  Further development opportunities identified	Mixed use development  ..... Successful development of the Kings Road and Church Street sites  Better use of Council owned assets	..... A minimum of 30 units delivered  11 new homes delivered on the Kings Road site by 2018  5 units delivered on Church Street site by 2018	HBC

Policy Objective	Actions	Milestones	Target	Outcome	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
<p>Increase the supply of new affordable housing in the Borough to meet the needs of local residents</p>	<p>Support Registered Providers to find sites, secure planning permission and deliver homes</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Make best use of planning polices to ensure that all new developments make some provision for affordable housing</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Undertake an options and viability assessment into the establishment of a Local Housing Company (LHC) to help bring forward development on</p>	<p>.....</p> <p>Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning guidance in place by December 2016</p> <p>Annual monitoring of the Planning Strategy Polices DS1 – New Housing Development &amp; H3 – Provision of Affordable Housing</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Complete initial legal and financial appraisal of options by summer 2016</p>	<p>Enable AmicusHorizon and Orbit to successfully realise their 2015-18 NAHP programmes</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Optimise levels of affordable housing in accordance with planning policy</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Establish a Local Housing Company Dec 2016</p>	<p>Help maintain a supply of social rented, affordable and low cost home ownership homes for those unable to secure housing suitable for their needs at a price they can reasonably afford.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Improve overall housing delivery and meet identified housing needs</p>	<p>150 units delivered by 2018</p>	<p>HBC</p>

Policy Objective	Actions	Milestones	Target	Outcome	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
	suitable sites/properties					

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## Priority 2 – Improving Access and Opportunities

OBJECTIVES
2.1 Addressing housing and support needs of vulnerable people
2.2 Delivering targeted interventions to improve health outcomes

Policy	Action	Milestones	Targets	Outcomes	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
Seek to ensure that there is adequate supply of accommodation to meet the needs of those with a physical disability	Implement Local Plan requirements for disabled & wheelchair provision, lifts etc.	Approval of Development Management Plan Policy DM3 and DM4 by September 2016	Development Management Plan adopted	The installation of a powered lift system to all floors, for any new building (except a single dwelling house) of three storeys or more.	Schemes for 50 dwellings or more should include at least 2% fully adapted dwellings for wheelchair users	HBC
	Establish an accessibility standard with Registered Providers for new build and refurbished social housing	Establish an accessibility standard by 2017	Adopt the agreed standard by 2018	Accessibility standard applied to all new adapted social housing		
	Maintain support for vulnerable people through DFGs, loans and housing solutions	Review level of DFG provision with partners Joint fund Housing Solutions Officers with ESCC to 2018	Identify and deliver commitment and spend against the DFG budget Registered	People with a physical disability are suitably housed		

Policy	Action	Milestones	Targets	Outcomes	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
			Providers to continue to provide financial support for adapting their own stock			
Seek to ensure that there is adequate supply of specialist accommodation to meet the needs of elderly households	<p>Contribute and support the Adult Social Care commissioning plans through the East Sussex Better Together (ESBT) Housing sub-group</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Contribute to Registered Providers' Sheltered Housing reviews &amp; Plans</p>	<p>Review of future specialist accommodation provision undertaken by ESBT Housing sub-group</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Participate in quarterly partnership meetings in order to reinstate extra care provision at Marlborough House</p>	<p>Improve joint approaches to specialist accommodation provision with Local Authority, Health and Social Care partners</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Bring 40 units at Marlborough House back into use by 2017</p>	<p>Extra care accommodation for older people made available in Hastings.</p> <p>Reduction in unnecessary admissions to residential care premises</p>	40 extra care units delivered	ESCC
Improve the strategic links between Health and Housing	Explore strategic opportunities for shared initiatives with Health partners to improve outcomes for rough sleepers and reduce A&E presentations	Continue to support ESBT Housing sub-group and develop joint commissioning initiatives to inform the investment planning of the ESBT Integrated Strategic Partnership	Identify with Health and Social Care colleagues measures for longer term resettlement services and improved housing	<p>Less reliance on acute health care services</p> <p>Well informed health professionals on housing and support options for homeless people presenting to their services</p>		ESBT

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
			allocation processes for those with complex needs across Sussex			
Ensure that there is adequate supply of specialist accommodation to meet the needs of vulnerable groups	Review and assess the current and emerging housing needs of vulnerable people in the Borough	Establish a forum with ESCC commissioners and Registered Providers by April 2017 to ensure emerging housing needs can be met	Commission further supported housing schemes depending on established need and opportunity	Positive joint working with ESCC commissioners and Registered Providers  Suitable accommodation for those with a housing, care and support need		HBC
Support measures to address poverty for local residents	Contribute towards the delivery of the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan	Revised HBC Anti-poverty strategy adopted December 16  Annual statement	Work with Partners to deliver a revised strategy and action plan to help address local needs	Better informed and enabled residents		HBC
Support vulnerable people to access advice and assistance to improve quality of life	Commission services to assist communities and local residents to access advice, employment and to maximise income	HBC Community Partnership Funding to commission services up to 2017	Deliver services to enable: Job creation Advice services Safer communities initiatives Active involvement of residents	Improved financial inclusion  Independent advice available		HBC

Policy	Action	Milestones	Targets	Outcomes	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
			Digital inclusion (e.g. to address issues of universal credit)			
Support measures that help households manage the impacts of welfare benefit reforms	<p>Review and Implement the Council's Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Policy</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Support the delivery and promotion of the CCG funded Welfare Benefits Project</p>	<p>DHP review completed annually</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Quarterly Welfare Benefit Project core group meetings</p> <p>Quarterly multiagency Housing Benefit Reform meetings</p>	<p>Enable vulnerable households to secure suitable housing</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Maximise income for local residents</p>	<p>More effective targeting of DHP</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Poverty and its effects are considered in relation to Council decision making processes</p>		HBC
Manage and monitor the impact of inward migration	Develop links with partners to coordinate knowledge of the level of inward migration and ensure appropriate support and advice is available for these groups	<p>Continue to carry out annual FOI requests where other LAs do not provide prior information relating to the placement of homeless households in the Hastings area</p> <p>Use equalities and customer satisfaction</p>	Monitor the protocols agreed with East Sussex and London housing authorities for emergency accommodation placements of homeless households	The level and nature of inward migration of vulnerable households is understood		HBC



<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
		monitoring to review service delivery				
Manage and monitor the impact on local housing supply from being a Home Office dispersal area for asylum seekers	Monitor the dispersal of asylum seekers to the Borough	6 monthly meetings with Clearsprings/Home office	Maximum of 110 places identified as housing for asylum seekers	Maintain current levels		HBC
Resettle up to 100 individuals under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS) by 2020	Establish Implementation plan, including recruitment of necessary staff in partnership with other East Sussex Districts & Boroughs  ..... Source suitable accommodation sustainably across East Sussex	Establish Project Board through ESBT Housing & Health sub group July 2016  SVPRS Coordinators recruited by August 2016  Specialist support services in place by Q4 2017  ..... Resettlement commences Q4 2016	Up to 100 individuals resettled in Hastings under the SVPRS by 2020	The successful resettlement of vulnerable Syrian's in Hastings		HBC

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Mitigate the impact of rogue landlord behaviour	Review the performance of the DCLG funded rogue landlord project by April 2017	Multi agency working group to meet quarterly to streamline processes and share information  Quarterly performance monitoring of the Specialist Legal Service being delivered by BHT  Delivery landlord training event – August 2016	Increase levels of enforcement  Reduce instances of retaliatory evictions  Inform and support landlords	Improve property management standards and conditions in the private rented sector  Mainstream rogue landlord project activity into Council services  Landlords and tenants educated about their rights and responsibilities		HBC
Encourage local residents in Central St Leonards to positively contribute to their community	Work with Amicus Horizon to encourage tenants to play an active role in governance structures, neighbourhood management and decision making	Undertake survey of residents' satisfaction in 2017/18	Improved engagement with tenants' support networks	Reduced fear of crime amongst residents Increased levels of participation	200 residents engaged per year	AH

### Priority 3 – Supporting Economic Regeneration

OBJECTIVES
3.1 Improving the quality of existing housing stock
3.2 Planning for housing needs

Policy	Action	Milestones	Targets	Outcomes	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
Consider the establishment of a Local Housing Company (LHC) to aid in the development and regeneration of the town	Undertake an options and viability assessment into the establishment of an LHC	Initial legal and financial appraisal completed – Summer 2016	Establish a LHC – December 2016	Increased provision of quality housing solutions for the community		
Maintain focus on the regeneration of St Leonards Housing Renewal Area and continue proactive enforcement action	Deliver phase 2 of the Coastal Space project 2015-18	Development of Carisbrooke Road and Winchester House by March 2018	Deliver Operational Programme for 2015/18 with the HCA, AmicusHorizon and the Council	Increased social housing provision  Improved housing stock in St Leonards Housing Renewal Area	30 units delivered 2015-2018  25 HHSRS inspections per month  90 improvements in private owned properties per annum	HBC
Targeted approach to housing	Identify hotspots of poor housing in seafront and town centres and other areas for phase 3 of	Obtain approval of business case from SELEP	Secure LEP funding	Housing related regeneration of targeted areas	30 units of privately let or vacant	HBC

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Numerical Measure (if appropriate)</b>	<b>Lead</b>
interventions as part of the Coastal Space Project	the Coastal Space project by March 2017				dwelling over the period 2015-18 funded, acquired and improved	
Address poor quality housing management and conditions within private rented accommodation through licensing	Ensure good quality housing management and property standards through the delivery of the mandatory, additional (four town centre wards) and selective HMO Licensing Schemes	Implement decision whether to renew Additional HMO Licensing Scheme by March 2017  Review implementation of selective licensing by December 2016	License all HMO properties that meet the criteria for mandatory or additional licencing schemes	Licensing of all Higher Risk HMOs in the four wards completed by September 2016  80% of all the privately let properties are licensed by July 2020	1,000 HMOs licensed by September 2016  8,000 privately rented properties licensed through Selective Licensing by July 2020	HBC
Enforce housing standards and management in the private rented sector	Continue to take appropriate enforcement action to improve housing conditions across the borough	Statutory standards target reviewed on an annual basis	175 homes brought up to the statutory standard per annum	Improved property standards and management in the private rented sector	875 homes brought up to the statutory standard by 2020	HBC
Bring empty homes back into	Utilise Compulsory Purchase Order powers to acquire empty	Action plan with sites and	Explore back to back CPO	The Council's Empty Homes	70 long term empty homes	HBC

Policy	Action	Milestones	Targets	Outcomes	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
use, improve derelict buildings and bring forward land for housing development	homes  ..... Encourage owners to invest in bringing property back into use through the continued provision of loans  ..... Continue to support the YMCA short term leasing scheme for empty homes	schedule of properties identified by March 2017  Quarterly reports to Empty Homes Steering Group  ..... Publicity campaign delivered on the availability of loans during annual empty homes week  ..... 20 units leased between April 2015 and March 2017	agreements with RPs  ..... Continuous reinvestment of loan funds for further loans  ..... Support the continuation of the YMCA leasing scheme to 2018 and beyond	Strategy delivered  ..... Improved knowledge of the availability of loans  Increased take up of loans  ..... Increased supply of housing available to vulnerable groups	brought back into use per annum  20 CPO resolutions obtained from Cabinet  ..... 40 units leased between April 2015 and March 2018	
Reduce fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency for local residents	Identify properties exhibiting 'Cat 1 hazards' for excess cold and take appropriate enforcement action  ..... Instigate with Trading Standards a programme of Energy	Private Sector Stock Condition Survey carried out in 2016/17  ..... Increase the Standard	Continue to support the energy switching initiatives  ..... Targeted EPC enforcement in	Reduction in properties exhibiting Cat 1 Hazards – Excess cold  ..... Reduced carbon emissions from		HBC

Policy	Action	Milestones	Targets	Outcomes	Numerical Measure (if appropriate)	Lead
	<p>Performance Certificate (EPC) enforcement</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Deliver the Climate Active Neighbourhoods (CAN) project in partnership with AmicusHorizon and Energise Sussex Coast</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Support the delivery of SHINE (Sustainable Houses in an Inclusive Neighbourhood)</p>	<p>Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of housing</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Targets agreed with East Sussex Energy Partnership and 'Your Energy Sussex' by December 2016</p> <p>Review outcomes of CAN project annually</p> <p>.....</p> <p>SHINE services commissioned – September 2016</p>	<p>partnership with Trading Standards established</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>local housing stock</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Households are better informed and able to reduce fuel consumption</p>		

## Appendix 1

Key partnership achievements include:

- The commissioning of housing related floating support services for vulnerable people through the Supporting People Programme
- The highest proportion of homelessness preventions in England in 2012/13 (1,896 preventions)
- The success of the private sector access scheme, Letstart, where 374 households were assisted into private sector accommodation to prevent homelessness between 2009-14
- The delivery of 28 new homes for people with a learning disability and 18 homes for people with a mental health disability
- The delivery of 284 new affordable homes between 2009-2014
- Spending £4.169M Disabled Facilities Grant between 2009-14 to make adaptations to the homes of vulnerable people and improve their quality of life
- Assisting 157 vulnerable households with suitable housing solutions to consider more appropriate alternatives to adapting their current home.
- 1,701 properties were improved through the use of enforcement between 2009-14
- An additional licencing scheme was introduced in 2011 to complement the mandatory licencing scheme and 580 HMO licenses issued between 2009-14 to improve standards in the private rented sector
- 300 long term empty homes brought back into use between 2009-14
- The Coastal Space project was launched to aid regeneration of the Central St Leonards Renewal Area: 78 properties were improved through enforcement and 7 units brought back in to use as social rented units
- 38 new homes were delivered at the Ore Valley Millennium Communities site as phase 1 of 4 phases as part of the planned regeneration for the area
- 287 rough sleepers or those at risk of rough sleeping were assisted into suitable accommodation or reconnected to another area
- A rough sleepers outreach service to minimise risk of harm on the street and find housing solutions for those sleeping on the streets
- The Council funded an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor to assist victims of abuse and to prevent homelessness
- The housing needs of gypsy and travellers was met by obtaining planning consent for a housing site with two pitches
- Youth homelessness was kept to a minimum through successful partnership working with East Sussex County Council's Children's Services and through effective interventions to prevent homelessness
- 1,305 households were lifted out of fuel poverty through the work of the East Sussex Energy Partnership during 2009/10 and 2010/11
- Improvements to energy efficiency and the installation of renewable technologies led to 810 tonnes of Carbon being saved during 2009/10 and 2010/11
- 48 households were incentivised to downsize into smaller social housing to free up the larger accommodation for families.
- Various events for private landlords, developers and stakeholders took place to update on policy changes and to help inform future housing related policy and practice
- The Council's Homemove Allocation Scheme was reviewed and amended in 2012 giving priority to local people in the greatest housing need

- 7,163 participants were engaged onto community projects through AmicusHorizon
- A good practice guide for professionals was produced to assist them to address housing issues for migrant communities
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Strategic Housing Market Assessment and a Housing Needs Assessment was produced to inform policy around future housing delivery
- The Hastings Planning Strategy was produced
- The Climate Change Strategy was produced in 2011
- The Article 4 Direction policy was adopted which aims to prevent an over concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation in certain areas

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