

HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Key Links

1. Affordable Housing
2. Tackling Homelessness
3. Supporting People
4. Quality and Choice
5. Decent Homes
6. Regeneration
7. Environmental Sustainability
8. Health Improvement
9. Growth
10. Crime and Anti Social behaviour
11. Young People
12. Key Workers

The Action Plan is a summary of the council's priorities for housing. Many of these are inter-connected, and cut across the priorities (national, regional and local) set out in the strategy.

The strategy highlights 12 key links, which reflect the council's own priorities, the national and regional agenda and those emerging from consultation with the community.

The numbers in the 'Links' column of the Action Plan correspond with these 12 themes.

Risk

Each of the tasks contained in the Action Plan is assessed as a High, Medium or Low risk.

The 'Status' given is the product of a number of factors, including:

- The probability of the task not being completed;
- The impact which not completing the task will make;
- The level of resources devoted to each task;
- The level of impact on other tasks.

A task assessed as 'High' risk usually requires a considerable input of resources and has a significant impact. Examples of 'High' risk tasks could include the development of affordable housing or the enabling of *Decent Homes*.

'Medium' risk denotes a task, which requires fewer resources and has less impact. Some aspects of the homelessness agenda and Special Needs are of 'Medium' risk.

A 'Low' risk denotes a less critical (though still important) task, which is usually expected to reach completion within existing resources.

PRIORITY 1: PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOMES

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To maximise the delivery of an average of 100 affordable homes per year over the next five years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver 480 affordable homes from funded development opportunities 	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12	<p>Capital Funding: ADP bids 2004/06: £3.2m GADG: 2004/07: £5m Challenge Fund 2004/06: £15m (estimate) SBC capital 2004/05: £200k ADP (N Herts): £3m (split 50/50) RSL direct investment at Brittain Way</p> <p>Potential capital funding opportunities (Options Appraisal)</p> <p>Additional funding will need to be secured from 2006 to deliver more affordable homes.</p>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	High	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One hundred affordable homes to be provided through Section 106 agreements 	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12	100 units through Section 106	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	High	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an average of 10 homes per annum outside the town in partnership with other authorities 	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12	ADP (N Herts): £3m (split 50/50)	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve planning permission for Stevenage West 	1, 2, 9, 12	Within existing resources	Head of Planning	High	Nov 2005

PRIORITY 1: PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOMES						
TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To maximise the delivery of an average of 100 affordable homes per year over the next five years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin town centre redevelopment 	1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 12	Within existing resources	Head of Planning	High	Summer 2007
To extend the range of homes available to those in housing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the extent of need for other affordable tenures 	1, 4, 9, 11, 12	Within existing resources	Head of Housing + Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	March 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the demand for key worker housing 	1, 9, 12	Within existing resources	Head of Planning + Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	March 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure development programme includes appropriate levels of other affordable tenures 	1, 9, 12	Within existing resources	Head of Planning	High	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 10 homes specifically for disabled persons 	1, 3, 8	To be arranged	Head of Housing	High	2004-08

PRIORITY 1: PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOMES

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To increase the rate of delivery of affordable homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use modern methods of construction in all appropriate cases 	1, 7, 9	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager + Head of Planning	Medium	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a total of six council sites forward by 2008 	1, 9	Within existing resources	Estates Manager	High	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed up rate of development by publishing site design guides at the pre-planning stage 	1, 2, 9	Within existing resources	Head of Planning	Low	2004-08

PRIORITY 2: TACKLING HOMELESSNESS

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To reduce levels of homelessness by better prevention and improved access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase users of Housing Advice service by 10% 	2, 11	Section 93: Homelessness implementation monies from ODPM	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Sept 2006
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access for minority groups including DDA compliance and improved interpretation services 	3, 4	To be arranged	Head of Housing	Medium	June 2006
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve Community Legal Service Quality Mark in the case-work category 	2	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Sept 2007
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand schools programme to 100% of schools in the town 	2	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	March 2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue 20 rent deposits per year to re-house households in the private sector 	2, 4	Within existing resources Section 93: Homelessness implementation monies from ODPM	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	2004-08

PRIORITY 2: TACKLING HOMELESSNESS						
TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To reduce levels of homelessness by better prevention and improved access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a family mediation scheme 	2, 11	Section 93: Homelessness implementation monies from ODPM	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	Jan 2005
To provide an effective and efficient Homelessness Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure 85% of cases are determined within 33 days 	2	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Dec 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer satisfaction levels at 90% 	2, 4	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Feb 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend Choice Based Lettings to homeless applicants 	2, 4	Within existing resources The introduction of Choice Based Lettings will require additional IT for which funding has yet to be identified.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	Nov 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate use of hostels except in an emergency 	1, 2, 3	General Fund capital receipts of £165k 2004/05 Further resources to be arranged	Head of Housing	Medium	Sept 2007

PRIORITY 3: SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE AND SPECIAL NEEDS

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To ensure there is sufficient supported housing to meet the needs of all main service-user groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six additional units for young homeless 	1, 2, 3, 11	General Fund capital receipts: £250k 2004/05 Further resources to be arranged	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	High	Dec 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five units for substance misusers 	1, 2, 3, 10	To be arranged	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	High	Aug 2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twenty units for people with mental health problems 	1, 2, 3	ADP 2004/06 funding of £1.8m for mental health units	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	High	July 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forty units a year adapted through grants 	4, 5, 6	Housing Revenue Account capital averaging £160k per year	Environmental Health Manager (Residential)	Medium	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Haven 2': eight further units for rough sleepers with floating support 	1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manger	Medium	Feb 2006
To ensure all supported housing is <i>Supporting People</i> compliant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all supported housing services are compliant with the Quality Assessment framework 	3, 4	Within existing resources	Head Of Housing + Head of Community Development	High	Dec 2006

PRIORITY 3: SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE AND SPECIAL NEEDS

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To ensure all supported housing is <i>Supporting People</i> compliant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish user involvement strategy 	3, 4	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager + Head of Community Development	Low	Sept 2006
To extend joint protocols with key stakeholders to all vulnerable groups needing support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working protocols covering mental health 	2, 3, 10, 11	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Feb 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working protocols covering learning disability 	2, 3, 10, 11	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Feb 2005
	Working protocols covering older people and people with physical disabilities	2, 3, 10, 11	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	May 2007
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working protocols covering young people 	2, 3, 10, 11	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	March 2005

PRIORITY 3: SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE AND SPECIAL NEEDS

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To extend joint protocols with key stakeholders to all vulnerable groups needing support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working protocols covering ex-offenders 	2, 3, 10, 11	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	May 2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish Housing Strategy for Older People 	3, 4	Within existing resources	Head of Housing	Medium	May 2007

PRIORITY 4: DELIVERING QUALITY AND CHOICE

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To maximise choice for all applicants in housing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Choice Based Lettings for all applicants 	1, 2, 4	New IT for Choice Based Lettings will need to be funded	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	Dec 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a unified housing register for all applicants 	2, 4	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Aug 2006
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a housing gateway for all applicants 	2, 4	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	May 2006
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a register for applicants to intermediate tenure housing 	1, 4	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	Feb 2007
To ensure high standards of housing management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a three star housing service for council tenants 	4, 5	Within existing resources	Head of Housing Technical Services + Tenancy Services Manager	Medium	March 2007
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all RSLs operating in the town sign up to the RSL Charter 	4, 5	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	March 2005

PRIORITY 4: DELIVERING QUALITY AND CHOICE						
TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To ensure high standards of housing management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackle inadequate private-sector housing through appropriate intervention 	4, 5, 6, 8, 10	Within existing resources	Environmental Health Manager (Residential)	Medium	2004-08

PRIORITY 5: ENABLING DECENT HOMES						
TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To ensure that all local social housing meets the <i>Decent Homes</i> standard by 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete, verify and evaluate stock condition survey 	5	Housing Revenue Account capital of £200k	Head of Housing Technical Services	High	? 2004
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude the Options Appraisal and determine preferred future stock option 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Housing Revenue Account capital of £100k	Director of Community Services	High	June 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set annual target of homes to be brought up to Decency Standard 	4, 5, 8	Within existing resources	Head of Housing Technical Services	High	? 2004
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelop Stonyhall 	1, 4, 5, 6, 10	RSL direct investment	Head of Housing	High	2005-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring all homes up to <i>Decent Homes</i> standard by 2010 	4, 5, 8	Housing revenue account capital: £14m (estimate)	Head of Housing Technical Services	High	Dec 2010
To tackle poor housing in the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve 40 homes per year with the assistance of grants and loans 	4, 5, 6, 8	General Fund capital: £125k per year	Head of Environmental Health	Medium	2004-08

PRIORITY 5: ENABLING DECENT HOMES						
TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To tackle poor housing in the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect all known HMOs using a risk-based priority system 	4, 5, 8	Within existing resources	Environmental Health Manager (Residential)	Medium	April 2006
To improve energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the SAP rating of private sector properties to 61 	4, 5, 8	Within existing resources	Environmental Health Manager (Residential)	Low	April 2008
Tackle issue of empty homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the number of long-term empty homes in the private sector to zero. 	6, 7	General fund capital: £250k for Compulsory Purchase Orders, if required.	Environmental Health Manager (Residential)	Low	April 2008

PRIORITY 6: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
To ensure that the housing needs and aspirations of the black and minority ethnic community are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all housing information leaflets are available in the main community languages 	1, 2, 4	To be advised	Environmental Health Manager (Residential) + Director of Community Services + Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	Aug 2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An analysis of the needs and aspirations of BME communities 	4	To be advised	Director of Community Services + Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Medium	March 2006
To enable housing services to contribute to a 'safer Stevenage'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make use of ASBOs where appropriate to tackle anti-social behaviour 	6, 10	Within existing resources	Head of Community Development + Tenancy Services Manager	Medium	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise Introductory Tenancies 	4, 10	Within existing resources	Tenancy Services Manager	Medium	Jan 2005

PRIORITY 6: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES						
TASK	TARGET	LINKS	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	RISK	WHEN
Ensure housing makes an effective contribution to the Community Safety Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure affordable housing development complies with local planning guidance <i>Secure by Design</i> 	1, 4, 10	Within existing resources	Head of Planning + Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	Sept 2005
To enable neighbourhood regeneration and health improvement to take place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure affordable housing provision as part of town centre and neighbourhood regeneration 	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9	GADG: £3.25m for Austen Paths and Manulife	Head of Planning + Head of Community Development + Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackle skills gap by enabling key worker housing 	1, 12	Within existing resources	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager	Low	2004-08
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to health improvement in the town by ensuring <i>Decent Homes</i> (Priority Five) 	3, 8	Housing Revenue Account capital: £14m for Decent Homes	Head of Housing Technical Services	Low	2004-08

HOUSING STRATEGY 2003/2006 ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Since the 2002 Housing Strategy was published, the council has re-evaluated its key housing priorities, and revised the Action Plan accordingly. Some actions from the previous plan have been set aside, some have been revised, and some remain. This Action Plan Update indicates, where appropriate, how key actions from the previous strategy are reflected in the new document.

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
WORKING TO MEET HOUSING NEED: Priority 1 Providing Affordable Homes		
Meet the needs of key workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has signed up to the county key worker strategy • The 2003 Housing Needs Survey has highlighted the need for key worker housing • Challenge Fund/Housing Partnership/Growth Area funding has been obtained to develop 170 key worker dwellings in the town 	Priority one Priority six
Continue to negotiate for the provision of affordable housing through Section 106 agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eighteen homes at Round Diamond delivered through S.106 • Fifty-five homes at Brittain Way 	Priority one
Redevelop Ross Court	On target for completion January, 2005	Priority one
Ensure that 20% of newly built properties at the West of the A1(M) [Stevenage West] site are social rented homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Enquiry underway; Section 106 being negotiated. In principle, agreement with developers that 27.5% of homes will be affordable 	Priority one
Deliver 288 affordable units through Section 106 agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eighteen homes on site • The 288 Section 106 homes have been reduced to 100 	Priority one

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Identify further sites suitable for developing social housing in conjunction with planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six sites identified, town centre, Manulife, Austen Paths, Stonyhall (re-provision), Fairview Road, and Ridgmond Park delivering up to 600 affordable homes 	Priority one
Maximise the availability of affordable housing for those in need through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • innovation • conversion • Purchase and Repair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten homes delivered through Purchase and Repair in 2002/03 	Priority one
Encourage and enable alternatives to local authority housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSLs • <i>Homebuy</i> 	Ongoing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADP funding approved for 2004/05 for 70 homes. • Twenty shared ownership homes at Brittan Way • Three key worker homes at Round Diamond • Two Homebuy per annum • Twenty-six homes through Key Worker Living Project 	Priority one Priority one
Establish a Housing Strategy and Enabling unit to deliver pro-active solutions to the problem of affordable housing	Completed	
Merge housing transfers, exchanges and other tenant mobility schemes within a new Rehousing and Advice Service	Completed	
Review allocations policy and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Based Lettings Pilot introduced 2003; roll out across all lettings scheduled for 2004/05 	Priority four
Continue to meet with RSLs to promote dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two RSL liaison and two RSL management forums scheduled each year 	Priority four

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
<p align="center">Priority 2</p> <p>Providing Housing for People With Special Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
<p>Increase the range of specialist accommodation for young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Crashpad</i> scheme established in conjunction with other Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council 	<p>Priority three</p>
<p>Implement the government's <i>Supporting People</i> programme in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial countywide <i>Supporting People</i> strategy published. Countywide commissioning and steering bodies set up with SBC representatives on both bodies 	<p>Priority three</p>
<p>Review the type and purpose of sheltered accommodation via the <i>Being Independent</i> Best Value Review, including options for service delivery and partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Value Review scheduled for completion in 2005 	<p>Priority three</p>
<p align="center">Priority 3</p> <p align="center">Tackling Homelessness</p>		
<p>Achieve Quality Mark accreditation for the council's Housing Advice Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Mark accreditation in 'general help' category awarded 2001 	<p>Priority two</p>
<p>Develop a comprehensive Homelessness Strategy</p>	<p>Completed 2003</p>	<p>Priority two</p>
<p>Work towards introducing greater choice for families accessing permanent homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice Based Letting scheme to be introduced in 2004/05 	<p>Priority two</p>
<p>Complete modernisation of temporary accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtually all medium/longer term temporary housing now self-contained 	<p>Priority two</p>
<p>Implement the Homelessness Act, 2002</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Priority two</p>
<p>Develop one-to-one key working for vulnerable households in temporary accommodation</p>	<p>Still to be fully implemented</p>	<p>Priority two</p>

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
WORKING TO MAINTAIN HOMES Priority 1 Private Sector Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
Ensure empty properties are bought back into use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 50 properties brought back into use: empty properties now reduced to around 80 	Priority five
Review council policy on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMO registration scheme not pursued: insufficient properties affected 	Priority five
Continue to target Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to those most in need	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Renewal Policy 	Priority five
Carry out house condition surveys for dwellings in the private sector and facilitate a review of the Private Sector Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next house condition survey scheduled for 2006/07; Review scheduled 2006 	Priority five
Enhance consultation with private sector tenants	No progress to date	Priority five
Priority 2 Local Authority Housing		
Establish a Housing Property Services (HPS) section to link planned, programmed and capital repairs	Completed	Priority five
Design repairs strategy to achieve 70:30 repairs split between programmed and responsive repairs	Achieved	
Link Major Repairs Allowance and health and safety work with the <i>Decent Homes</i> Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £12m invested in homes in last 3 years including gas and electrical work • <i>Decent Homes</i> programme in void properties initiated 	
Merge responsive repairs service with Housing Property Services (HPS) in one location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has appointed a Head of Housing Technical Services in 2004 	

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Create Service Centre for repair reporting, logging and issuing	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs call centre opened 	
Change hours for reporting and carrying out repairs to meet customer expectations	No progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals to integrate Repairs Call Centre into Customer Service Centre in 2005 	
Establish new void (empty property) management system	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated voids officer appointed 	
WORKING TO ENSURE QUALITY HOUSING MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
Introduce performance management to make improvements in rent arrears recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 0.26% increase in collection (+ £200k) in 2003/04 	Priority four
Complete Best Value Reviews of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Better Homes for Stevenage</i> • <i>The Moment of Truth</i> 	Completed	
Introduce use of mediation services and/or professional witnesses	Ongoing (as part of the development of the Anti-Social Behaviour protocol.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently a benchmarking exercise is being concluded 	Priority six
Continue to foster links with RSLs and private sector landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forums with RSLs and private sector landlords in place 	Priority four
Investigate production of protocols for RSLs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter drawn up and signed by partner RSLs 	Priority four

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Reduce cash culture and dependency on local offices; increase choice of payment and contact methods; increase existing outreach services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash offices closed • Post Office, telephone & online payments introduced 	Priority four
Consider options for new methods of service access and delivery based on combinations of cost, quality, effectiveness and customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy Services centralised, emphasis on landlord services • Customer Service Centre opened • More access to services through internet 	Priority four
Develop protocols for, and linkages between neighbourhood services, e.g. caretaking and neighbourhood wardens; Housing Officers/Community Development Officers and other agencies and landlords	<p>Incomplete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols with caretakers and refuge collection concluded 	Priority four Priority six
Introduce business management; maximise income from rents, service charging and leaseholder billing; make budget spenders into budget holders and devolve budget management to them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets devolved to service managers, rent collection improved, leaseholder revenues increased 	Priority four
Introduce effective leasehold management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated leaseholder manager introduced, leaseholder group set up, resident parking scheme set up in response to customer wishes 	Priority four
Introduce asset/facilities management of non-residential buildings, e.g. Neighbourhood Offices and garages, office and storage spaces, small areas of land, unused compounds	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garage management transferred to Estates, garage compounds to be considered for housing re-development 	Priority four

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Establish and publicise transparent policies, procedures and processes; plain English letters and leaflets; a regular flow of information; revised tenancy conditions, tenants handbook, etc	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflets revised, regular tenants' newsletter and applicant newsletter introduced, new tenancy contract introduced, Introductory Tenancies introduced, new Tenancy Handbook scheduled 2005 	Priority two Priority four
Establish new service standards which are set and agreed by members, staff and customers and monitored by all, not just council officers	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Leaseholder Forum meetings, 'Have a Say Day', FOSTA meetings Customer Service Panel to be set up in 2004/05 	Priority two Priority four
Set up customer service improvement panels, with customers and staff to act as service champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above 	Priority four
Establish a Performance Monitoring Unit	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance and Quality Assurance Officer appointed 	Non-specific
Establish a Customer Services Section for internal and external customers	Completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service Centre opened, 2003 	All
Establish a consolidated housing management service focused on core landlord functions	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Tenancy Services section established 2003 	Priority four
WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY Priority 1 Housing and Social Exclusion		
Ensure maximisation of benefits take-up and participate in benefits take-up campaign	Ongoing	Priority four

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Implement results of review of tenant participation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure full tenant involvement; • provide resources for tenant participation; • provide support for tenants groups; • provide quality information; • monitor effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven Tenants' groups now set up • Three Tenancy Support Officers appointed, Stonyhall Tenants Group participated in proposed regeneration scheme with RSL 	Priority four
Enhance tenant participation in decisions by engaging a wider cross-section of tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular drop in sessions held • Town wide questionnaire delivered to all tenants 	Priority four
Consider ways of keeping tenants better informed and more involved in service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants newsletter published three times per year • Four leaflets circulated as part of Options Appraisal 	Priority four
Provide greater resources for tenant participation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training staff to increase awareness of the tenant's role; • developing a training programme for tenants; • setting up a scale of allowances and incentives for tenants to promote participation; • reviewing funding to FOSTA; • consider the setting up of a tenants' resource centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of trained officers trebled • Tenants training programme set up for 2004 • Tenant representative expenses scheme established • FOSTA provided with new bespoke office 	Priority four
Ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing and implementing the action plan; • continuing to encourage and assist other organisations in improving services in this area 	No progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist consultant to be appointed in 2004 to recommend Action Plan priorities 	Priority four Priority three Priority two
Work towards achieving Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) standards for local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level one of Equalities Standard achieved, Housing section participating in corporate initiative to achieve Level two in 2005 and Level three in 2006 	Priority six

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Work toward achieving better government for older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft of <i>Being Independent: Older Persons Strategy</i> out to consultation in 2004. 	Priority three
Develop the Community Safety Partnership and evaluate and monitor its effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership introduced in 2000: current Action Plan runs to 2006 	The Housing Strategy is informed and influenced by the council's wider strategic priorities such as those on community safety, health and regeneration. Its Action Plan to deliver these goals has been substantially revised at Priority six. Actions/Targets in the last strategy no longer form an integral component of the 2004 Housing Strategy.
Continue to improve security by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementing the SRB programme; • improving door entry systems; • improving walkways and balconies; • providing more anti-climb fencing; • improving lighting; • considering a bye-law to ban alcohol consumption in public places; • provide improved landscaping to discourage anti-social behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further details of how the council is implementing the Community Safety Action Plan, 2003 –2006 can be found at www.stevenage.gov.uk 	
Extend the provision of CCTV by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing provision at neighbourhood and town centres; • providing mobile units; • introducing CCTV in car parks; • carrying out technical improvements 		
Develop youth initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a youth forum; • more community projects involving young people • expanded supported housing for young people • a more developed Young Citizens Programme • Community Arts projects • Contributions to training and education of young people 		

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Tackle violence and harassment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuing to support Women's Aid; • supporting intimidated witnesses and fast tracking alternative accommodation; • providing community alarms; • employing professional witnesses 		
Participate in a major publicity campaign which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage residents to join a neighbourhood watch scheme; • give crime prevention advice; • give information about current initiatives to combat crime; • help people to security mark their property 		
Continue to develop the council's Neighbourhood Regeneration Strategy by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementing SRB5; • establishing community resource centres at Bedwell and The Oval; • implementing environmental and safety improvements at neighbourhood centres; • continuing to refurbish difficult to let properties above shops 		
Continue to work on the Boxfield Farm Partnership		
Priority 2 The Environment and Energy Efficiency		
Update and refine the council's policy on the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA), Energy and Water policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Efficiency policy due to be published in 2005 	Priority five
Publicise available grants for energy efficiency	Ongoing programme	Priority five

PRIORITY FOR ACTION 2003/06	STATUS	ACTION PLAN 2004/08
Insulate the walls of council dwellings without cavities and make other energy efficiency improvements	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme to replace gas boilers with energy-efficient boilers as part of <i>Decent Homes</i> programme 	Priority five
Maximise private-sector take up of the Home Repair Assistance Scheme	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also introduced a Handyman Scheme for elderly owner occupiers and tenants 	Priority five

SCHEDULE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Site	Units	SBC Site	EP Site	Section 106	Other	Funding
2002/03						
Acquisition and Works	10				x	ADP
Coreys Mill	5			x		RSL Investment
2003/2004						
Homebuy	2				x	ADP
2004/05						
Round Diamond	18			x		Transitional LASHG
Ross Court	13	x				ADP
Homebuy	2				x	ADP
Key Worker	26				x	ADP
Knebworth Lane	2			x		RSL investment
2005/06						
Brittain Way	60	x				ADP RSL Investment
Oxleys Road	20		x			ADP
Six Hills Cottages	3		x			Challenge Funding
Larkinson	15			x		TBA
Hertford Road	9			x		RSL investment
2006/07						
ManuLife	69		x			GADG
Ridgemoor Park	35	x				GADG
Austen Paths	24	x				GADG
Fairview Road	199		x			Challenge Funding
Pond Close	5			x		TBA
Walkern Road	14	x				TBA
2007/08						
Stevenage West	50 (est)			x		TBA
Nokeside	10	x				TBA