Foreword

This is a booklet about the housing position in the Mole Valley area and about the Council’s plans for housing in the future. It is the Council’s ‘housing strategy’.

A housing strategy is more than a document - it is a process. The process begins with understanding the nature and needs of the district and its people. The strategy describes what Mole Valley is like as a place and what it is like to live here. It considers in particular:

• the issues that matter most to local people
• their future needs and the concerns that have formed the Community Strategy through the Shared Agenda group
• the impact of those things on the supply of, and demand for, housing and associated services.

The strategy sets out the housing needs of the district and the resources that will be made available both now and in the foreseeable future. It considers also the ways in which any unsatisfied needs might be met whether directly by housing providers or through financial assistance to make housing affordable or better suited to individual needs.

To be relevant and successful, the strategy needs to be well informed. Information is drawn from a number of local and national sources, with some of the most important and relevant research emerging from the Council’s partnership work with other agencies. Further details of the consultation and input that has helped shape the strategy are set out in the next section.

The most important test for the strategy is the extent to which the plans and ambitions are translated into practical results and actions. The final section of the strategy considers the action plan set out in last year’s strategy, the progress made in meeting those objectives and the targets for the future.

Leader of the Council
Developing the strategy

While the strategy is structured, co-ordinated and produced by the Council’s housing department it is a document with clear links to other corporate strategies, the strategies of partner organisations and stakeholder groups. The following groups and organisations have all contributed to and influenced the strategy:

- **Local strategic partnership.** The consultation carried out through the Shared Agenda Group identified that the lack of affordable housing is the single most important issue to be addressed. This has been followed up through community workshops on affordable housing and neighbourhoods at risk as part of the consultation process and helped inform the action plan set out in the strategy. The strategy has clear links to the Community Plan and related strategies such as the Community Safety and county-wide Supporting People strategy.

- **Councillors, mainly through the Affordable Housing Task Group.** A Task Group of elected Members was established to consider the issue of affordable housing, working with representatives from a building company and another social housing provider. Members were able to consider strategic issues, with the benefit of that independent expertise and the results of research reports commissioned with Cambridge University and the Surrey Local Government Association. The Task Group recommendations were reviewed in March 2002 accepted and include twice-yearly reports to the Community Committee to monitor progress across the whole range of housing activity. The action points arising from the Task Group’s work have been incorporated in the Strategy.

- **East Surrey Housing Strategy Group.** The Group has been established for ten years. The five East Surrey housing authorities work on a cross-boundary basis with the health authority and social services to meet shared priorities and launch initiatives such as the joint Register of special needs.

- **Housing Provider Forum.** An annual forum takes place involving all social housing providers with housing stock in the district. Local strategic housing issues are discussed, including current and future priorities and Supporting People. The Council has adopted a preferred partner approach to decide the Registered Social Landlords it will work with from September 2002 and will be working closely with the selected partners to meet local housing priorities.

- **Private Landlords Forum.** The first East Surrey Landlord forum took place in June 2002 and involved discussions and presentations on the strategic role of the local authority in the private rented sector, including specifically energy grant aid, housing benefit issues and ways to improve housing conditions.

- **Supporting People stakeholder meetings.** The first local user Forum took place at a sheltered housing scheme in Leatherhead in June 2002. Service users were consulted directly about the...
issues that matter to them and have influenced this strategy and the County-wide Supporting People strategy.

- **County-wide officer groups** such as Surrey Chief Executives and the Surrey Chief Housing Officers Association. The Groups have considered the issue of affordable housing provision across the county and have arranged for research to be commissioned and reports produced, notably ‘Making Affordable Housing happen in Surrey’.

- **Tenants and tenant groups.** The strategy has been reviewed with the Mole Valley Tenants Action Group who have also been actively involved in the Best Value review of housing management completed in January 2002. Copies of the strategy are circulated to tenant representatives and the key points in the Strategy feature in the tenant newspaper ‘Mole Valley Life’.

- **Special interest groups,** such as local voluntary sector groups, organisations supporting homeless people, housing developers especially in respect of the revised draft policies relating to affordable housing development provision and community agencies.

2002 and an electronic comments box is provided to enable comments to be received. A recently launched website - Surrey On-Line - gives the public direct access to all the published information about Mole Valley's housing information and policies, including the Housing Strategy.

There are examples throughout the Strategy of the ways in which stakeholders views have influenced it's development and the Council's priorities as set out in the Action Plan.

**Consulting via the Internet**

The strategy is still circulated in hard copy but is also available on the Council’s website. This is becoming an increasingly important means of consultation with the Housing Strategy web pages alone getting 588 hits in the past 12 months. A link to the dedicated e-mail address housing@mole-valley.gov.uk enables the public to comment. The Strategy was adopted at the meeting of the Council's Community Committee in September.
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The national and regional context

National and regional housing objectives

Mole Valley shares the objectives set out in the Regional Housing Statement and the national and regional investment strategies. The principal south-east regional priorities are household growth, the need to provide and safeguard affordable rural housing, regeneration in areas of relative deprivation and employment initiatives.

The Council supports the policies designed to promote these objectives and to address the other issues identified in those strategies, but some are more important to this district than others.

Of particular relevance to Mole Valley are:

- **household growth**, especially the increase in the number of newly forming smaller and concealed households identified in local housing needs surveys.
- **rural areas** and the action needed to sustain rural communities and their economies.
- **employment initiatives** to address the recruitment and retention problems experienced by public and private sector employers, especially key and essential workers.
- **low cost home ownership** needed because of the high cost locally of market housing.
- **housing and support for vulnerable people with particular needs**, especially those client groups for whom there is no specific provision in the district presently.
- **regeneration** to address the wide differences between the relative deprivation and affluence of communities living very close to each other.

However, unemployment is low at 0.6% of the working population so there is no need for investment in employment generation or for the widespread redevelopment of poor quality residential areas.

Further information on these issues and the specific actions needed to address them are set out in detail elsewhere in the strategy.

The Community Strategy

The first Community Strategy has been prepared by a partnership of local organisations from the public, voluntary and business sectors committed to working together to improve the quality of life in Mole Valley. This partnership, established in May 2000 is known as the Shared Agenda Group and forms the Local Strategic Partnership for Mole Valley.

The starting point was to gather information and undertake research into the problems, needs and trends in the district. Local people were asked for their views on key issues and what they thought should be done to address them. A report titled ‘Towards a Shared Agenda’ was published in March 2001 setting out the results and priorities identified.

Representatives of local groups were invited to a community workshop and a residents survey was carried out in order to test the conclusions drawn and further develop an understanding of the main quality of life priorities for the district.

The outcome was that 13 key issues were identified. Many of the actions proposed relate to the existing plans of the partner organisations but the value of the Community Strategy is bringing agencies together to look jointly at the issues which cut across their individual responsibilities. The 13 issues have formed a vision for Mole Valley that reflects the vision for the south-east region. It is:

‘The environment, prosperity and distinctive character of Mole Valley are sustained, these benefits are shared more widely and problems which reduce the quality of life are tackled’
Of the 13 issues, the following are directly relevant to housing and have shaped this strategy.

- **Affordable housing.** There is a wide concern that future generations and new forming households will be denied access to housing and will be unable to afford to live in the district. This was the greatest single issue that emerged from the consultation. 47% of respondents considered that the availability of affordable housing was either poor or very poor.

- **Community safety.** Although the district has the second lowest crime level in Surrey and is also one of the safest counties in the country based on recorded crime levels, the consultation indicated that more should be done to reduce the fear of crime and promote safer communities.

- **Neighbourhoods with problems.** While the district is generally affluent, some neighbourhoods are relatively deprived. More action was requested to deal with social exclusion and to improve the quality of life for those residents.

- **Safeguarding the countryside and rural economy.** There is a need to balance the concerns expressed about preserving the character of the villages and protecting them from over development while ensuring that affordable housing is available for younger people that would otherwise have to move away.

The other issues are described in detail in the Community Strategy and are highlighted elsewhere in this strategy where they impact on housing, for example maintaining the infrastructure and increasing energy efficiency.

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Mole Valley’s strategic housing aims

Mole Valley’s work through the local Strategic Partnership, the housing strategy and investment programme are intended jointly to achieve the shared objectives set out in this statement and related strategies. The housing aims are to:

- seek to ensure that local people, including future generations, and people needed by the Mole Valley community, can access housing that is affordable and of the highest reasonable standard.

- work with other partner housing providers to make best use of the existing supply of affordable housing and maximise the opportunities for developing new homes.

- contribute to the objectives in the Community Strategy where there are housing implications. This is especially relevant to social inclusion and community development, community safety, sustainability and achieving health improvement objectives.

- encourage and where necessary assist owners of dwellings in the private sector to improve and maintain their homes.

- provide tenants of Council properties with a high quality management service, standard of amenity and standard of repair.
Mole Valley context

About Mole Valley

Main Issues

- Mole Valley is in a desirable and prosperous location
- There is a high demand for homes but a limited supply in all sectors
- Three-quarters of Mole Valley is in the Green Belt. A third is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- There is very limited scope for new development
- High demand and low supply leads to high property prices

Detail

Mole Valley is at the heart of Surrey, midway between London and the Sussex coast. It is in the South East of England, the most prosperous region of the country and one of the most prosperous regions of the world. It feels the pressure as well as the benefits of being located in such an economically active and commercially desirable region. It has formidable international links, as it lies between Gatwick and Heathrow airports and within easy reach of the Channel ports and tunnel.

Mole Valley is predominantly rural, covering 258 square kms (100 square miles) and is one of the least densely populated districts in Surrey. Nearly 80% of the District’s population live in the built up areas.

The District’s two best known towns are Dorking and Leatherhead. At the time of the 1991 census, Dorking had a population of 10,600. It is a small historic market town surrounded by attractive countryside.

Leatherhead had a population of 9,700 and is the main commercial centre of the District. The other built up areas are Fetcham (population 8,300), Bookham (10,400) and Ashtead (13,400).

These are principally residential areas that have grown up around original village cores, which today provide a range of local facilities.

The countryside of Mole Valley is extensive and accounts for 90% of the District’s area. It contains a variety of attractive villages, hamlets and scattered isolated dwellings. Much of the area is in the Green Belt and/or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The attractive location encourages people from other areas to seek to live in Mole Valley. The private property market responds to the needs of people who can afford to choose to live in the district. As there is limited housing supply and little potential for new development, this leaves fewer opportunities for meeting the needs of local people, or people on lower incomes whose local residence would benefit the community. The high demand and limited supply cause private property prices to be high.

The constraints that flow from preserving the attractiveness of the area and from Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt restrictions, limit both the nature and scale of development in the District. It is therefore not possible to depend exclusively on new development to meet local needs for affordable housing.
The local housing market

Main Issues

- 86% of Mole Valley’s housing is in the private sector.
- Market rents and purchase prices are unaffordable to local people in housing need.
- The demand for affordable housing exceeds the current and forecast supply.
- Local people leave the district to find affordable housing elsewhere.

Detail

The housing stock in the Mole Valley area is about 76% owner occupied, 10% in private ownership other than owner occupation (such as private renting), 12% Council owned and 2% owned by housing associations (1991 census, Surrey County Council Area Profile, Mole Valley dwelling records 2001).

Of the 700 housing association dwellings owned by registered and unregistered social landlords, 46% are for older people 8% for people with a physically disability and a further 16% are provided for specific groups by specialist societies or charities. Fewer than one third are available for general needs, including single person and family housing.

The Council has retained its housing stock and had 3,682 units in management at 1st April 2002. The stock is of mostly traditional build and provides for the entire range of needs, including 550 units in sheltered extra care sheltered schemes for the elderly and frail elderly. The stock has reduced progressively through Right to Buy sales which average 50 completions each year. Further details regarding the Council’s properties and the landlord role are set out in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan that accompanies this strategy.

Market rents tend to be significantly above the level that can be afforded by the local people in housing need who would normally look to the social housing sector for help. Often, only professional households and people who receive housing benefits, are able to afford rented housing in the private sector.

Affordability

In the quarter to March 2002, the average price of a semi-detached house in Mole Valley was £208,072, the average price of a terraced house was £160,362 and the average price of a flat was £151,329 (HM Land Registry). Lower quartile prices are significantly above the national, south-east and Surrey averages.

23.4% of existing households earn between £30,000 and £50,000 per annum. However, 32.4% earn less than £20,000. The needs survey indicates that 80% of concealed households earn less than the minimum necessary to secure a mortgage for the lowest cost small flats in the district. (Halifax plc and D. Couttie Associates 2002).

There is a clear gap between the cost of private property in Mole Valley and the ability of local people to buy it. Much of this housing is purchased by people from outside Mole Valley who are attracted to the Green Belt environment. There is evidence from the housing needs survey that local people who cannot afford to buy or rent in the private sector in Mole Valley leave the area to places where housing costs are less. The Council wants to ensure that the younger members of its community should not be forced into this situation because of the lack of properties to purchase at a price they can afford, or because of the lack of affordable rented housing for those who cannot achieve home ownership.
Mole Valley people

Main Issues

- The total population of the district will fall slightly over the 15 years to 2011.
- The number of households is rising, largely due to an increasing number of single people.
- Nearly a quarter of the population are pensioners.
- The number of older pensioners (85+) will nearly double between 1991 and 2006.

Detail

The population of Mole Valley is about 79,000. At the time of the census in 1991 there were about 31,900 households, giving an average household size of 2.44 people. At that time about 21% of the District’s population were pensioners, the highest proportion for any district in Surrey. In four electoral wards more than 25% of the population were pensioners. In contrast, 17% of the population of the district were under the age of 16, which is a lower proportion than in any other Surrey district. (1991 Census).

Population forecasts produced by Surrey County Council indicate that by the year 2011 the total population of Mole Valley is likely to have fallen by about 3% from its 1991 level and that the number of households in the District will rise by 5.5%, mainly as a result of a predicted increase in the number of single person households. The forecasts indicate that the profile of the District’s population is also likely to change during this 15 year period and in broad terms become older.

The pre-school population is forecast to fall from 5.6% of the total to 4.9% in 2006 and the population of working age to reduce from 58% to 56%. The population of pensionable age is forecast to increase from 21% in 1991 to 25% in 2006. Most significantly, that figure includes almost a doubling in the number of very elderly (aged 85 years or more) from 2.3% to 4.4% of the total population.

The proportion of local people that are black or minority ethnic is 0.5% of the total population. There is no significant single ethnic group in the district and the ethnic minority population is dispersed throughout the district although under-represented in the rural areas.

Mole Valley Population - age profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>0-4</td>
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<td>4500</td>
<td>4300</td>
<td>4100</td>
<td>3800</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-19</td>
<td></td>
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<td>20-59</td>
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<td>41900</td>
<td>41300</td>
<td>40200</td>
<td>38400</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12100</td>
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<td>79600</td>
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<td>78200</td>
<td>77500</td>
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Note: figures are individually rounded so may not sum. (Surrey County Council)
The Mole Valley community

Main Issues

- There is a wide disparity between the most deprived and the least deprived areas in the district.
- Relatively deprived individuals and communities are unable to access some resources, including private sector housing, which are only available to the more affluent.
- The Council is working with other agencies to support and develop communities, especially in North Leatherhead.

Detail

Mole Valley has the sixteenth highest average household income in the country and the sixth highest in Surrey (Surrey County Council Area Profile). Over 76% of all houses in the district are owner-occupied and average house prices are the third highest in the county.

Despite this general picture of wealth, several parts of the district experience relative deprivation in terms of a range of criteria. Individuals and communities can feel relatively deprived because of the disparity in measured levels of deprivation between geographically close areas, even when incomes and material wealth are above national averages.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation for 2000, developed at Oxford University, is based on data from the Department of Social Security and the University and College Administration Service (UCAS). The index ranks one Mole Valley ward in 8,411th position out of 8,414 wards in England and Wales (that is, it is the fourth least deprived). The highest ranking (most deprived) ward in Mole Valley is in 4,278th position out of 8,414 (DETR & Oxford University, July 2000). The same ward is ranked the 5th most deprived in Surrey according to the Jarman Index and the 12th most ‘income deprived’ (DETR, August 2000). This illustrates the wide gap between two geographically close wards in the district.

Unemployment in the district is the lowest in the south-east region, comprising 343 adults accounting for 0.6% of the working population. (Source: Benefits Agency April 2002).

Neighbourhoods in need of support

Through the Community Strategy consultations and published data the three wards that are the most deprived in the district are North Leatherhead, Boxhill and North Holmwood. All have well established socio-economic and environmental problems. Until the North Leatherhead Focus Group was established there were no active partnership initiatives in any of the three communities. The Group has established a post of Partnership Worker with joint funding and accommodation provided by the agencies involved. The worker will prepare with community representatives a Neighbourhood Action Plan and undertake a thorough community appraisal.

The two other communities have a common link in that park homes account for a significant number of dwellings locally. The park sites tend to attract people on lower incomes wishing to buy a home but unable to afford a permanent dwelling, many of whom are elderly. The Council has reviewed its policies and provides grant assistance for minor works and disabled facilities grant, together with annual safety and site condition inspections.

An initial community appraisal was carried out at Boxhill by the Surrey Voluntary Services Council in 2001.

There are no major hospital or higher educational facilities located in the district.

Rural communities

The need to sustain rural communities forms part of the Community Strategy. The Council assists through a rural transport initiative, grant
aid to village communities and steps to improve communication such as an establishing an Internet café in a village business south of Dorking.

The Council’s allocations policy allows people to choose to be housed in a particular area. The rural housing policy gives preference for housing in rural areas to applicants who want to be housed in their own rural communities.

Working with other agencies
Whilst Mole Valley Council is responsible for a wide range of local services, it recognises that much of what it does links very closely with the services provided by other agencies. The voluntary sector, parish councils and faith groups (for example) are particularly active and have an important role to play in supporting people in need. The assessment of the need for all those services and their provision is often only effective and efficient when all agencies work closely together. This will often include working across geographical boundaries. In addition to working with the Shared Agenda Group, the Council works with other statutory, business and voluntary agencies on a range of initiatives and joint strategies, some of which are referred to elsewhere in this statement.

Action points

- Contribute to the action points for neighbourhoods with problems in the Community Strategy.
- Work with the Cleeve Road residents association on community development.
Housing needs

Main Issues

- There are high numbers of concealed households living with host families.
- Three quarters of concealed households cannot afford the market price of entry-level housing.
- Low cost renting is the only realistic option for about a quarter of concealed households.
- Acceptances of homeless households each year have settled to under 100 per annum.
- Many people with mobility problems occupy unsuitable accommodation in all sectors.

Detail

The Council has commissioned considerable work to evidence the extent of housing need in the district. Specific measures include:

- A district wide housing needs survey. The first major survey was carried out by David Couttie Associates in 1999 based on a 5% weighted sample of the local population. The resulting evidence of need was used to support the proposed changes to the Local Plan relating to affordable housing. A further survey based on a 10% sample was commissioned in April 2002.
- Rural housing need surveys have been carried out in seven parishes in the last two years. Carried out by the Rural Housing Trust working closely with the Parish Council the evidence has been used to justify development as an exception to policy in two villages in the last three years.
- The East Surrey Housing Strategy Group has carried out research into the needs of specific special needs groups on a cross boundary basis. Further details are set out in the next section.
- The Housing Register is reviewed annually on a rolling basis.
- The Surrey district and borough councils carried out local research with key worker employers to support the successful bids made county-wide by Thames Valley HA and locally by Mount Green HA under the Government’s Starter Home Initiative.
- Research has been carried out through Shelter on a county-wide basis to identify the needs of young care leavers and homeless people and map existing provision.

Key findings

The district wide survey completed in (2002) identified nearly 1,680 concealed households forming in the next five years of which 8% consist of two people or more. 5% of local households contain a concealed household. Most are adult children of the main householder seeking independent accommodation. 24% of concealed households are looking for social rented or shared ownership housing.

80% of households who need housing had incomes below £30,000, the level necessary to afford the lowest cost flat. An income of £45,000 is needed to afford the lowest cost terraced house. 34% of concealed households had annual incomes below £12,500, at which levels low cost renting is the only realistic option. Only 63% can afford a rent of more than £70 per week.

Based on these findings, and allowing for the homelessness trends, known unmet need, new need likely to arise through new household formation and the net balance in migration to and from the district, the study identified a gross need for 4,473 subsidised dwellings up to 2011. Anticipated turnover in the existing stock of social housing across all providers is expected to provide 2100 letting opportunities during the same period. The total unmet housing need for dwellings is therefore calculated at 497 per annum over the period to 2011.

In addition, the study identified a need for 75
unsubsidised low cost market dwellings per annum to meet the demand for owner occupation by households earning above £30,000 per annum.

**Homelessness**

The numbers of people accepted as homeless and helped by the Council increased year on year from 18 in 1988/89 to 156 in 1995/96. Since then the numbers have reduced and is now typically under 100 per year. The housing register and allocations policies enable permanent help to be provided in cases of genuine homelessness, either immediately or after a stay averaging six months in temporary accommodation. Bed and breakfast accommodation is used exceptionally and only to house adults that are homeless as an emergency where there is no alternative available.

Mole Valley provides its own temporary housing using two reception centres to house homeless people. Vulnerable single people are provided for through the direct access night hostel in Leatherhead that the Council leases to a local charity while special needs provision is through registered social landlords.

The Council is undertaking a complete review of the existing policies and procedures relating to homeless people and housing allocations this summer. It is proposed that local organisations such as faith groups, the Leatherhead Night Hostel and Pitstop, a local charity that provides support to homeless single people, will all be consulted and involved in the process.

**Single people, including rough sleepers**

Many vulnerable single homeless people are found accommodation through the multi-agency East Surrey Referral Service meetings, thereby preventing homelessness. The Council also leases property in Dorking to a registered social landlord for the accommodation of single people at risk of offending or with a learning disability.

The Council works with Epsom & Ewell BC, Reigate & Banstead BC and Surrey County Council to employ a Community Housing Worker who helps single homeless people to access the private rented market, with access to funds to provide rent deposits for the unemployed or those on low incomes.

Through an organisation in the voluntary sector, the Council is promoting the publication of county-wide advice for single people who are, or risk becoming, homeless. This will be accompanied by a joint protocol with the County Council and all districts within the county for the provision of one-stop advice and assistance for single homeless people. A joint accommodation strategy is being developed by the Surrey district and borough councils in partnership with Surrey County Council.

**Action points**

- Review existing policies, taking into account the Homes Bill and guidance on local housing allocation schemes.
- Set up a local homelessness multi-agency forum and work with preferred partner RSLs and other agencies to meet local needs.
Main Issues

- There is good evidence of local needs through the supply and needs mapping undertaken with the Supporting People team.
- The needs of physically disabled people in particular have been identified through the district wide housing need survey across all tenures.
- The East Surrey Housing Strategy Group and the central referral body (ESRS) have undertaken specific research, including the scope for cross-boundary working and commissioning.
- Advice and support is needed for young people, including those who have previously been cared for in institutions or with families.
- Other agencies are better able than the Council to meet the special needs of people with a learning difficulty or a mental health need.
- Outreach support is an effective way to provide help for people with special needs.
- Domestic violence victim provision is adequate but there is a need for a supported housing scheme for teenage parents serving the East Surrey area.

Supporting People proposals and has worked closely with the Supporting People team to map existing provision and research future needs. The research identified that there will be increased needs for housing for frail elderly people and that there is a county-wide shortage of housing for people with multiple needs including drug and alcohol addiction.

Mole Valley was instrumental in the establishment of the East Surrey Housing Strategy Group (ESHSG). It comprises representatives of the Health Authority and a local Health Trust, Social Services and the District Councils in East Surrey and has conducted a survey of the housing and associated needs of people with a mental health problem, a learning disability or physical or sensory disabilities. The evidence has resulted in partnership funding for the Community Housing Worker post and support for specific projects such as the move on accommodation provided at Dorincourt in Leatherhead.

The ESHSG established the East Surrey Referral Service (ESRS), which differs from similar services in that it seeks solutions for people with a wide range of needs, including multiple needs, and works across district and borough boundaries. Mole Valley is working with other authorities in the east of the county to establish a joint register of people who need support. The register, currently being piloted by Epsom & Ewell BC prior to being rolled out in East Surrey, will provide a common source of data on the housing and support needs of clients.

For more specific information about individual people, the Council’s records of people known to need help with housing and their support needs are kept up to date through rolling annual reviews. The Council’s assessment of housing need is based on current evidence and is therefore extremely robust. The Council contracts an independent occupational therapist qualified to assess physical and mental health needs. Appropriate housing and support provision, based on the assessment, is identified through the ESRS.
Extra help for those who need it

The following sections describe the needs identified for specific groups of people needing extra help besides accommodation and how those needs will be met by housing providers and care organisations.

People with a physical disability

The Housing Needs survey found that 2,510 people in Mole Valley have difficulty with walking. The same study found that 550 households contain members who are wheelchair users but only 9% of them live in a dwelling that has been adapted to meet their needs.

There is some local provision for people with mobility problems, both through the Council's 26 purpose-built dwellings for people with a physical disability and through housing associations, who between them have a total of 77 dwellings for physically disabled people in various parts of the district.

The Council has recognised the housing and support needs of people with a physical disability who are accommodated by local voluntary sector providers of specialist rehabilitation and training. The Council has promoted two schemes of move-on accommodation for these clients. The Council's current policy provides for the release of further units of move-on accommodation for people who are ready to settle in the community when those providing the training and rehabilitation judge that the time is appropriate.

The need for housing for disabled people tends to be met by the conversion of existing stock rather than by new build. The benefits are of this approach are:

- it enables some disabled people to remain in their existing properties rather than being rehoused
- it enables the Council to respond more quickly where a change is necessary, because conversion is quicker than new build
- it ensures the inclusion of physically disabled people in traditional communities, rather than in distinct properties or communities
- it is less expensive than new build, which in turn affects the number of clients who can be helped within finite resources.

Where the applicant is in Council housing, a joint protocol is in place with the Occupational Therapy team at Surrey County Council to see whether the applicant may wish to move to smaller adapted or sheltered housing as appropriate to make best use of the stock.

In the current year the Council and the Housing Corporation are joint funding conversion work at the Grange Centre in Bookham to provide twelve self contained units while Mount Green HA has converted former office accommodation and extended a property to provide two additional wheelchair units in Leatherhead.

People who have learning difficulties or a mental health need

The Council recognises that other specialist agencies are better able to meet the needs of these clients than the Council itself. Accordingly, the Council has enabled the provision of shared and self-contained housing for people with special needs through a housing association, rather than providing specialist accommodation itself.

The Council also works with Social Services and the health authority, and with them jointly funds an outreach service through Cherchefelle HA that takes support to the homes of people who need specialist help. This arrangement meets the needs of up to 20 tenants on average at any one time. The amount of care purchased for each tenant is based on a thorough assessment of their care needs and can be varied to provide extra help at times of crisis.
Multiple needs & drug and alcohol addiction

The Supporting People research has identified a county wide shortage of supported accommodation, especially wet and dry hostel units to aid recovery. Locally the Council works closely with the Leatherhead Night Hostel and a local charity, Pitstop, to provide move on units and support. The Surrey Community Development Trust also provide two units of accommodation in Leatherhead for recovering alcoholics.

The Council will discuss further with preferred partner specialist RSLs how these needs can be met in future and how existing units could be remodelled to meet the need.

Domestic Violence

The Community Safety Audit published in December 2001 identified that while the number of incidents of domestic violence remains low and is the lowest in Surrey, under-reporting is commonplace. This is acknowledged and the Council provides for short term needs where the prime concern is to find a place of safety as well as longer term solutions including permanent rehousing which can be arranged out of district through a county-wide protocol. In a typical year accommodation is arranged on about 40 occasions, but in many instances the domestic situation is resolved without the need for alternative temporary or long term rehousing.

The Council offers a range of solutions based on a victim centred approach. Help is provided in the following ways:

• **Domestic violence hostel provision.** A hostel with self contained facilities and managed by an RSL was jointly funded through a partnership involving Mole Valley, Guildford and Waverley local authorities in consultation with the local domestic violence forums. It opened in June 2001.

• **A new domestic violence forum** for east Surrey has replaced the former Mole Valley forum.

• **An outreach worker post** has been funded by the local multi agency Community Safety partnership

• **Community Alarm support.** This is through a special arrangement between the police and the Council’s Community Alarm service where the victim wishes to remain in the family home but fears violence from the partner. It enables victims to summon support with the guarantee of a rapid police response.

• **The Surrey Domestic Violence Mobility Scheme** enables victims to move to safer areas outside their own district and operates on a debit and credit system.

• **Legal action,** for example the use of injunctions and arranging transfers of tenancy or emergency rehousing are undertaken by Council housing officers for tenants of the Council.

Teenage pregnancy

A multi agency approach has been taken to dealing with teenage pregnancy in East Surrey. A ten-year strategy is in place that provides the strategic framework for tackling teenage pregnancy, is reviewed annually and places a strong emphasis on partnership working.

The most recent statistics for Mole Valley indicate a conception rate of 23.3 per thousand 15-17 year old girls. The rate is marginally higher than the East Surrey average of 22.5 per thousand which is the lowest in England. Only 3.1% of births in East Surrey are to teenage mothers. (ONS and ESHA ‘Teenage Pregnancy profile’ Feb 2000/ ESHA Health Improvement Plan 2001-04).

A mapping exercise has been carried out by the health authority based on the most deprived Council wards with the highest conception
rates. None of the wards are in this district but the need has been identified for supported accommodation for teenage parents who are unable to depend on parental support.

Many of the younger people who seek help from the Council are either expecting a first baby or have recently delivered a child. In a typical year, nine young mothers who become homeless and are provided with accommodation are not able to depend on their parents or other close family for support or for developing parenting skills.

Partnership working with other agencies is essential to put in place the range of measures necessary to tackle the issue more effectively than individual agencies can achieve on their own. The needs are met at present through the use of Council owned reception centres for homeless young mothers with visiting outreach support where needed. In the absence of local specialist provision the East Surrey Housing Strategy Group is working on a cross-boundary basis to provide a joint funded project in partnership with an RSL.

**Action points**

Through the Supporting People research work on a cross-boundary basis to meet the needs of people assessed with multiple needs

Work with other East Surrey agencies to bring forward a teenage parent housing scheme by December 2003
Meeting general housing needs

Main Issues

- The housing needs survey identified that some people require and can only afford subsidised rented accommodation.
- Many people aspire to home ownership but are unable to afford outright purchase.
- The allocations scheme that determines access to social housing is being reviewed this summer and will be designed to best meet local needs and maximise use of the affordable housing stock and low cost ownership schemes.
- The Council will make best use of the social housing stock by reducing underoccupation and working closely with preferred RSL partners.
- An innovative shared ownership scheme to help people that would not qualify for help through a social housing provider but cannot afford market housing was launched by the Council in May 2002.

Detail

The housing need survey findings indicate a clear future demand for an increased number of smaller dwellings, mainly for rent or equity share, to meet local needs. The limited supply of existing affordable housing and the scarcity of land for new development mean that housing providers have to make best use of the existing stock and use existing brownfield land for development. The Council reviews existing land holdings and assets and makes land available to RSLs for new development as well as funding and converting existing units. In the current year the Council is converting a shop premises to provide two units of affordable housing in Ashtead. Additionally three sites, one with a current planning consent, are being transferred to RSLs to develop 14 units for key workers, a rural scheme and general needs housing.

Opportunities to build affordable housing will continue to be explored and decisions will be made in each instance about the most appropriate developer and owner, taking into account such criteria as land ownership, the type of scheme under consideration, RSL development capacity and total scheme cost. In most cases, the development will be by a registered social landlord.

The Housing Register

Through the district wide Housing Register, the Council accepts housing applications from all qualifying people. The local allocation scheme operates on the basis of housing need and uses a points based system to decide the relative priorities of applications. The scheme stakes into account health, overcrowding, employment, social factors and local connections. The scheme is being reviewed in consultation with partner RSLs and will take into account the latest Government guidance, the views of applicants through consultation and the important part that sensitive allocations schemes can play in building sustainable and cohesive communities.

The Register holds information on all local housing needs. The following sections describe the range of housing solutions for general housing needs are described opposite.
Housing for rent
The Council is the largest single provider of affordable rented housing in the district. The use of nomination agreements and protocols with RSL partners is maximised to make best use of the stock. The introduction of a joint Register has been discussed with RSLs and has not so far been widely supported due to the complexity that such an arrangement would have for the many smaller housing associations that have stock in the district. However, this will be revisited as part of the wider policy review when the RSL preferred partner arrangement is implemented in August 2002.

Purchase for rent and shared ownership
The Council provides funding for registered social landlords to buy existing private sector properties through purchase and repair schemes. The budget also funds the Council’s Do It Yourself Shared Ownership (DIYSO) programme and the Homebuy scheme. Over the past three years the Council has provided an average of £500k per annum to fund the programme supplemented by Housing Corporation funding assisting approximately twelve housing applicants each year.

Self-Help Shared Ownership (SHSO)
In May 2002 the Council launched an innovative scheme called Self Help Shared Ownership. The scheme consists of a model form of agreement and supplementary information to enable individuals and organisations to help buyers unable to afford outright ownership to purchase properties in the private sector that would otherwise be unaffordable. The helping partner invests in the property in return for an equity charge so that the occupier will only need to be able to afford the balance. By the end of June 2002, nearly thirty packs had been sent out and four enquirers are actively considering using or investing in the scheme.

Self-build
Past co-operation between the Council and self-build groups resulted in the development of self-built houses in the rural parts of the district. The Council will work with self-build groups that comprise local people in housing need who have an appropriate mix of skills. It is not likely that the Council will be in a position to make land available, because the Council does not hold a developable land bank. However, other forms of advice and assistance, including shared ownership of land purchased for or by a self-build group, will be considered. A Dorking based group has discussed with a locally based partner RSL being involved in a site that will become available next year to the south of Dorking.

Mortgage Rescue
The Council introduced one of the country’s first Mortgage Rescue Schemes, in partnership with a housing association to enable households facing homelessness as a result of innocent mortgage default to continue to occupy their properties as equity sharing owners. The occupier has the opportunity to return to full owner occupation when financial circumstances allow.

The Council will continue to operate and grant fund the mortgage rescue scheme which has helped four households avoid being made homeless in the past three years.

Rent deposits and guarantees
The Council has worked with local church based charities with access to deposit funds to help homeless households to access private rented housing. The Community Housing Worker has access to funds for rent deposits to help the single homeless.

The Council will consider whether a scheme should be operated directly as part of the review of the homelessness and allocation policies.

Cash Incentives to help owner-occupation
The Council will continue to operate and...
promote the cash incentive scheme to make it possible for tenants who can nearly afford private purchase, to become owner occupiers and to release Council dwellings for the benefit of other families. The budget is demand led and is reviewed not less than twice yearly. The demand for the scheme has slowed in recent years as a consequence of the upturn in the property market making homes less affordable and the relative attractiveness of the Right to Buy for those tenants that wish to remain in the district.

Summary
The schemes summarised in this section are general needs schemes. Measures to meet housing need through planning policies and schemes to help particular client groups are detailed elsewhere in the strategy.

The table below illustrates the number of general needs units that the schemes set out above will deliver in the current financial year based on the resources available. Details of the number of dwellings let by the Council and RSLs are contained in the statistical reports that accompany this strategy.

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<tr>
<td>DIYSO</td>
<td>Hyde HA</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Action points

- Review the allocations scheme by September 2002, taking account of stakeholder and applicant views
- Promote the Self Help Shared Ownership for people on low incomes who do not otherwise qualify for help
- Continue to provide funding using local authority social housing grant for shared ownership and purchase and repair schemes
Meeting housing need through planning

Main Issues

- Planning policies seek to meet local housing needs whilst protecting the environment.
- The Local Plan identifies reserve sites for development when necessary to meet Structure Plan requirements.
- The findings of the Housing Need survey support the case for a reduction in the thresholds in respect of dwelling numbers and site size where developers would be required to provide affordable housing.
- The Local Plan’s affordable housing policy is being formally reviewed and a Public Inquiry to consider objections to the proposed revisions will be held in November 2002.

Detail

Mole Valley is an attractive district where development is constrained by Green Belt Policies. Land for residential development is limited.

The housing strategy of the Surrey Structure Plan, complemented by the current Local Plan, seeks to ensure that:

- within the context of planning restraint, encouragement is given to housing that meets the needs of those groups experiencing the greatest difficulty in obtaining adequate housing;
- there is efficient use of the existing housing stock and minimum loss of residential accommodation.

Through its planning policies the Council also encourages the provision of smaller dwellings to meet local housing needs wherever the character of the site and locality allow.

The total number of new dwellings necessary to meet the Surrey Structure Plan requirement for the period 2001 - 2006 averages 120 per annum. The Council’s most recent forecasts indicate that the Structure Plan requirement will be met through the development of sites which already have planning permission, sites identified in the Local Plan and windfall sites. If, through regular monitoring of housing land supply, it becomes evident that there is likely to be a shortfall relative to the Structure Plan requirement, reserve housing sites identified in the Local Plan will be released in proportion to the deficit.

The Council’s Local Plan affordable housing policy indicates the Council will negotiate with landowners and developers for the inclusion of a proportion of affordable housing on suitable sites in the built up areas of the district which have a capacity of 25 dwellings or more or are 1 hectare or more in area. However, nearly all the housing development necessary to met the Structure Plan requirements will take place on sites that already have planning permission or are less than 1 hectare. To increase the potential to deliver affordable housing through the planning system the Council has decided to reduce the size of site on which an element of affordable housing would be required. This is being pursued through a formal review of the Local Plan policy.

It is now proposed to apply a threshold of 15 dwellings or 0.5 hectare. The proposed revisions have given rise to objections which will be considered at a Public Inquiry in November 2002.

Housing and planning officers meet regularly to discuss and review current schemes and the potential for social, low cost market and other affordable housing as part of development proposals being made to the planning authority. Members receive regular progress reports and bulletins on all schemes including enabling activity.

The Surrey Structure Plan is being reviewed and will establish the amount of new housing to be provided in the county in the period 2001-2016. A draft Spatial Strategy for the county has been prepared by the County Council and indicates...
that provision should be made for 80 additional dwellings a year in Mole Valley up to 2016. The district Council will be expected to carry out detailed local studies to demonstrate how this baseline figure will be met and the level of any additional housing that could be provided as a contribution to the total county requirement.

Action points

- A formal review of the affordable housing policies in the Local Plan seeks to reduce the threshold above which affordable housing can be sought as part of private developments so that the policy can be applied to sites of 15 dwellings or 0.5 hectares in the built up areas and 5 dwellings or 0.2 hectares in the villages.

- The Council will endeavour to secure the on site provision of affordable housing in preference to a financial contribution.

- The Council has and will continue to support amendments to national guidance on thresholds to make it easier to secure affordable housing on smaller sites.
Rural housing and rural needs

Main Issues

- 90% of Mole Valley is in a rural area.
- Rural property prices are high and many rural properties are bought by people who are not local.
- Parish based surveys evidence unmet need for housing for people in rural communities.
- The Council’s development and allocations policies support the provision of housing to meet the needs of people who live or need to live in the rural communities.
- A new dedicated post of Rural Housing Enabling Officer is being part funded by the Council.

Council’s Local Plan allows for the provision, exceptionally, of limited low cost housing on sites within or adjoining villages on land that would not normally be released for housing development, provided there is an identified unmet housing need.

The Council works closely with the Rural Housing Trust and endorses that organisation’s methodology for carrying out local needs surveys. In the past 3 years 7 village housing needs surveys have been carried out in conjunction with Parish Councils. Following earlier surveys that have provided the necessary evidence of local housing need, rural housing developments have been completed in two of the areas, Capel and Ockley, and a third is nearing completion in Newdigate. To enable further surveys to be carried out the Council has supported the creation of a post of Rural Housing Enabling Officer. Employed by the Surrey Voluntary Service Council, the postholder will work with the Parish Councils, the Rural Housing Trust and the Countryside Agency to promote a better balance between the need and the supply of housing to serve rural communities.

Detail

The countryside of Mole Valley accounts for 90% of the district’s area. It contains a variety of attractive villages, hamlets and scattered isolated dwellings. Three quarters of the area of Mole Valley is in the Green Belt and a third is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Rural employment is predominantly in agriculture, with many lower paid employees living in tied accommodation.

Mole Valley is one of the least densely populated districts in Surrey. Only 20% of the population, just under 16,000 people, live in the rural parts. There are 24 settlements in Mole Valley each with a population under 3,000 that are regarded by the Government Office and the Housing Corporation as rural settlements. Much of the housing in the rural areas of Mole Valley is purchased by people from outside the district who are attracted to the Green Belt environment.

Safeguarding the countryside is one of the Council’s corporate priorities. However, the
The Council supports registered social landlords, including funding through Local Authority Social Housing Grant, to purchase market properties in the rural areas to meet local need where such properties can be purchased within the value limits.

To ensure that people are able to continue to live in their home village or area that they are connected to, the Council’s housing allocations policy enables priority for tenancies of properties in the rural areas to be given applicants who have a connection with those communities.

In addition to the Newdigate scheme the Council has released land at Strood Green to enable two bungalows to be developed and is working with the Parish Council at Headley to identify a suitable site for up to five units. Additionally there are three privately owned sites that have been granted planning permission in the southern parishes that will provide an element of affordable housing and could generate up to 15 additional units. At the present time the sites concerned are either subject to an Inquiry or the negotiation of a planning section 106 agreement.

The Council is seeking to adopt a ‘standard’ form of section106 agreement to streamline the often lengthy process of negotiating with developers and land owners. This is in line with the recommendations of the county wide report ‘Making Affordable Housing Happen in Surrey’.

### Action points

- Work with Parish Councils and preferred specialist rural housing providers on new development.
- Use the findings of the parish based survey and the work of the Rural Housing Enabler to support the need for schemes and identify potential sites including exception sites.
- Adopt a standard model of section 106 planning agreement to secure affordable housing in perpetuity.
Work and key workers

Main Issues

- Mole Valley has very low unemployment and a high demand for employees.
- Many people leave the area to find similar employment in areas where housing costs are lower.
- Many local firms are small and depend on retaining existing staff.
- Affordable housing is essential for public services, local companies and the rural economy.

Detail

Unemployment levels in Mole Valley are among the lowest in the country. In May 2002 the unemployment rate was 0.6%, the equal lowest in Surrey (Surrey County Council, ‘Labour Market Trends’).

The District’s resident workforce is highly mobile. Almost half of Mole Valley’s employed residents work outside the District and over 60% travel more than 5 kms to work (1991 Census and Henley Centre).

The local economy is made up predominantly of small companies. Nearly 90% of all firms in Mole Valley employ fewer than 25 people. Small firms are particularly vulnerable to the loss of essential staff.

Because of the low rate of unemployment, the high cost of accommodation in the area and the availability of work outside the district, it is important to retain key workers. Key workers are not just essential public sector workers. Workers in a very wide range of private and public organisations are key to those organisations, to the community and to local business. Retaining existing employees and attracting new workers are greater local issues than employment creation.

The Council has been involved in a number of studies to establish the housing requirements of people who are needed by the local community or its economy, but who may not be able to live locally without some form of assistance.

Mole Valley, together with the County Council and the other districts and boroughs in Surrey, commissioned Cambridge University to study the issue and to indicate solutions. The Council supports the findings of the report of The Property Research Unit of Cambridge University entitled ‘Housing Key Workers in Surrey’ and the recommendations of the subsequent report of the Surrey Local Government Association, entitled ‘Housing to underpin Economic Success’.

The Shared Agenda Group has identified the lack of affordable housing, including but not exclusively housing for key workers, as a priority issue.

The people that are in need of key worker accommodation can be considered in three general categories.

- Workers providing essential unskilled or semi-skilled services, eg auxiliary hospital staff, care home workers and retail employees. Most are recruited locally but are often amongst the people who tend to leave the area, often when forming a new household, in search of affordable housing.
- People on lower salaries who would normally expect to move location for reasons of employment, typically private or public sector employees training in a profession. Home ownership may not be affordable and could act as a barrier to their future mobility.
- People who are already in well-established middle or higher management posts in another area and wish to move to broaden experience or to further their careers. Such professionals are frequently attracted to positions in Surrey. They can sometimes afford properties at the lower end of the price scale but would not be able to afford a property of the quality they now occupy. Their
reluctance to accept positions in Surrey tends therefore to be connected with quality of life, especially quality and size of property, rather than inability to afford lowest cost properties.

There is no single solution to meeting these needs. However, the Council has undertaken or worked in partnership with other organisations on the following actions to address the issue.

- **Allocation policy.** In 2001 the Council removed the local residential requirements in the Housing Register for key workers to enable access by people living outside Mole Valley to the Starter Home Initiative and other key worker schemes. A ‘Key Worker’ housing register was introduced to enable needs to be recorded and assessed. To date thirty applicants have been nominated to the RSL operating the scheme in Surrey and four applicants have completed equity share purchases.

- **New key worker provision.** The Council supported the bid by Mount Green HA to develop up to twelve new key worker units on land that the Council has made available. In addition the same RSL has let some properties pending redevelopment to local teachers.

- **Future development.** Developers are discussing with the Council schemes proposed in the town centres of Dorking and Leatherhead, both of which would include equity share homes for public and private sector key workers.

- **Sites owned by public sector organisations.** Surrey County Council are negotiating with the Council the provision of up to 50% affordable housing on a site near Dorking to include key worker housing. The Police are reviewing the use of a potential development site also in Dorking.

- **Self Help Shared Ownership (SHSO).** The Council’s scheme, detailed elsewhere in the Strategy, can enable an employer to help an employee financially. It could assist in particular the people identified above that are deterred at the present time from relocating to take up work opportunities.

The Council is working closely with local employers, especially local head teachers, through the Shared Agenda group and also through twice yearly ‘business breakfast’ meetings to identify the scale of local needs and how the local housing market and housing organisations can best meet those needs.

**Action points**

- Further promote and publicise the SHSO scheme
- Support RSLs making future bids under the Starter Home Initiative
- Consider as part of the wider review of the local housing allocations scheme whether employment should be given additional weight to help key workers that need to live in a particular locality for employment reasons

Local hospital staff are among the key workers to benefit from the Starter Home Initiative.
Housing and support for older people

Main Issues

- The pensioner population is not growing significantly, but it is getting older.
- The supply of housing for younger pensioners is adequate.
- Additional extra care accommodation is needed for the growing number of ‘very elderly’.
- Many younger pensioners - the ‘active elderly’ - prefer outreach support in their own home in preference to traditional sheltered housing.

Detail

The Housing Needs survey indicates that while the number of older people is expected to rise slightly over the next decade, the number of more recently retired people will not increase significantly. Recently retired people tend to prefer to remain in independent accommodation rather than move to sheltered housing. Conversely, the number of people over 85 will increase substantially before 2006. The Housing Needs survey identified an increasing need for higher care accommodation for older, frailer elderly people.

The Council is the major provider of housing locally for older people and has earned an enviable reputation for the high quality of its housing. In April 2002 there were 1,100 applicants on the senior citizens list of the Housing Register. While there are very few that are in need of accommodation urgently, many will choose to delay moving until their health is failing or a spouse dies. In response to these changes, the Council’s has adjusted the balance of its housing for older people in favour of schemes suitable for frailer, older people. The Council now has five ‘special sheltered’ schemes for frailer older people. Four were purpose built and the fifth resulted from the conversion of traditional sheltered housing.

The costs of providing support to older people have been identified on an individual scheme basis in advance of the Supporting People funding. However, only 45% of sheltered housing residents are in receipt of benefits with those having a private income having to pay the support charges direct. It is not yet known whether this will have a significant impact on the future demand for sheltered housing.

To meet local needs, the Council will continue to provide, directly and through other agencies, for the housing needs of the older and frailer pensioners, but will not increase its stock of traditional sheltered housing. The support provided for tenants of sheltered housing schemes is reviewed regularly to consider whether resident or peripatetic support is appropriate. Changes are made as necessary, following consultation with residents.

Older people living longer in traditional Council housing may need outreach support to help them to remain in the community. The Council provides this support through two mobile wardens, who visit regularly or respond to requests for one-off visits according to need and can access any specialist support required.

Recognising that many older people wish to retain their independence, the Council has supported the Primary Care Group in the appointment of a ‘Home Services Officer’ to provide home assistance in the private sector and a Handyman, also jointly with the Primary Care Group, to help older people tackle simple chores and enable them to remain at home longer.

The Council runs a Community Alarm service with its own monitoring centre, which enables older people to seek help in an emergency or simply advice and reassurance. Two day centres in Dorking and Leatherhead provide support with life skills, such as advice on the prevention of accidents, as well as Tai Chi and fitness classes to promote healthy living.
The Council supports the objectives of the National Service Framework for Older People.

In the past twelve months the Council has enhanced services for older people in the following ways:

- **Step down project.** The Council has leased to Surrey County Council, in conjunction with the local Primary Care Group, two flats in sheltered housing schemes to ease bed blocking at local hospitals. The scheme provides telemedicine monitoring and enables health professionals to assess whether the person is able to return home and live independently.

- **Conversion work.** The Council has supported Mount Green HA in converting studio flats in Bookham to one-bedroom units to better meet local demand.

- **Warmer homes and energy savings.** The Council has negotiated the bulk purchase of energy through a consortium to keep fuel costs and tenant service charges down.

- **Allocations policy.** The Council has removed the local residence requirement for older people to enable applicants to be able to move closer to family and friends for support and to increase the potential number of applicants for those schemes that are in relatively low demand.

- **National sheltered housing week.** A display was mounted in the Council’s offices and press releases issued locally promoting sheltered housing, prompting many enquiries for further information.

- **Home adaptations.** Housing officers are working jointly with the County Council’s occupational therapists to promote sheltered housing and other housing options for those people for whom it is not practical to carry out extensive adaptations, especially where they are underoccupying a local authority family home and could qualify for the transfer incentive scheme payment of £2,000.

The priorities for future action are to monitor on an individual scheme basis the demand for each of the housing schemes provided by the Council and those run by RSLs that the Council has nomination rights to. In the past three years the Council has leased a wing of 6 flats in a low demand sheltered housing scheme to a locally based RSL for letting to people with physical disabilities. The mix of residents and tenure has been successful and will be used elsewhere where the scope exists. It will also enable a more strategic approach and informed decision making on the need for future investment and changes to existing facilities.

**Action Point**

- Continue to monitor the demand for sheltered housing schemes across the district to enable redevelopment and improvement plans to be produced and prioritised.
Housing in the private sector

Main Issues

- Private sector properties are generally in good condition.
- The greatest need for grant aid in the private sector is for disabled facility adaptations.
- Home energy grants are actively promoted on a contract basis through the SESEAC.
- A private sector landlords forum took place in June 2002 in partnership with two neighbouring authorities and the Southern Private Landlords Association.
- The Council is relaunching its Empty Homes strategy in September 2002.

Detail

Housing conditions

The Housing Needs survey incorporated a house condition survey. Data was obtained from a representative sample of just under 2,000 private sector households (6%), providing 95% certainty of +/-2% accuracy of data about private sector house condition. The findings are supplemented by information collected from the records of the Council’s Environmental Health Officers.

The survey concluded that:

- The condition of properties in the private sector is good - virtually all households have access to all basic amenities.
- 94% of homes have full or partial central heating.
- There are no aggregations of poor condition owner-occupied or tenanted properties that would justify renewal or targeted improvement activity.
- Some properties do not satisfy the full fitness standards but appropriate action has been taken in all known cases. There are no known examples of properties that warrant enforcement action and where such action is outstanding.

The Council recognises the value of well managed and maintained private rented housing. The Council takes enforcement action where necessary to ensure that private tenants are able to benefit from good quality housing.

Assistance for home owners and landlords

The grants policy is reviewed annually and falls within the Council’s Housing Investment Programme. The Council works in partnership with other agencies to provide the following housing services:

Disabled facilities grant for home adaptations

The greatest call for grant aid stems from the needs of disabled people, usually of retirement age. The district has a high proportion of older people with mobility problems evidenced by the Housing Needs survey. Many own their home outright but are dependent on a pension or benefits and require help from the Council. Older people are expected to generate significant demand for grant aid in future years. Grant availability is published and promoted through environmental health officers and the other statutory agencies that the Council works in partnership with.

Private rented sector

The Council has affiliated to the Southern Private Landlords Association and has contacts with local lettings agencies. The Council has linked with Reigate & Banstead BC and Tandridge DC to establish an East Surrey private sector landlords’ forum covering a wider geographic area. The first forum meeting took place in June 2002.

The Council’s housing officers provide housing advice to private sector tenants. Many hold
assured shorthold tenancies or short-term informal lets and apply to join the Housing Register as a precautionary measure. Where the property is in poor repair the Council’s Environmental Health officers are able to recommend the award of points in the allocation scheme and take enforcement action where appropriate. Joint working provides the opportunity to identify ways to avoid the need for residents to be rehoused, for example where grant aid could improve conditions or meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Park homes
There are three substantial and several minor park home sites located in the district. The Council undertakes annual site inspections to ensure proper standards and safety, with the cooperation of the site owners. Many people purchase a park home as a form of low cost home ownership and later find that they are unable to maintain their home in good repair. Residents are eligible to claim grant aid for designated work to site homes to maintain the structure of their home.

Home security
The district is the safest in Surrey, as evidenced by the crime and disorder audit carried out as part of the development of the Community Safety strategy in December 2001. The Council’s Community Safety Officer works with the local Police to identify and target help to vulnerable and high crime risk areas. Work completed in the last two years has included upgrading external lighting and fitting high security locks, hinge bolts and ‘spy holes’ to residential properties.

Empty Homes
A permanently staffed hotline receives details of empty properties. The Council works with a locally-based registered social landlord to bring empty dwellings back into use and is promoting with the Town Centre Managers the benefits of living over the shop. The Empty Homes strategy is scheduled for revision in September 2002.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
The district has only a few Houses in Multiple Occupation. They are currently inspected on a reactive basis. Steps are being taken to identify and inspect them proactively. The Council is also considering a voluntary landlord accreditation scheme.

A budget of £100k Home repair assistance is available for minor repairs and improvements, mobile home adaptations, energy efficiency and home security work.

Home Improvement Agency (HIA)
There is no agency coverage for the Mole Valley district at present. A review has been undertaken of the existing agencies in conjunction with the ‘Supporting People’ team. The findings are that there are too many agencies operating presently and that there needs to be wider cross-boundary coverage to make best use of existing resources. The Council is working with the Supporting People team to have an agency arrangement in place by April 2003 ready for the changes in the funding of HIAs.

Action points

• Review the existing grant policy taking into account any additional flexibility that proposed changes to the national grant framework may introduce
• Review the Empty Homes strategy in September 2002
• Have Home Improvement Agency coverage in the district by April 2003
The wider agenda and community priorities

The Community Strategy consultation and Shared Agenda group work identified the priority issues for the local community. The goals, including that of improving the availability of affordable housing, are based on the concept of bringing together social, economic and environmental objectives to promote future sustainability. The model is based on the sustainable development framework for the south-east that promotes ‘a prosperous region delivering a high quality of life and environment for everyone now and in the future’.

The housing strategy contributes to the overall objective in the following ways.

1. Goals that protect the environment and use natural resources wisely

Sustainability and balanced communities
The Council founded an Environmental Forum to which a wide range of local organisations belong and supported the formation of a Local Agenda 21 steering group. An LA21 Strategy was published in 2000. Since that time the Council has consulted through the Shared Agenda group and adopted the wider principles of sustainable development.

Environmental protection
The progress made towards improving the energy efficiency of housing in Mole Valley is described in detail in the Council’s annual Home Energy Conservation Act report. The key issues that relate to this strategy are set out below.

The Council is a member organisation of the Surrey & East Sussex Energy Advice Centre (SESEAC). The Centre provides the Council with current information about the energy efficiency of the housing stock and also works with the Council to promote energy saving initiatives through occasional roadshows, mailshots and general promotional activity.

The energy efficiency of private dwellings has been reported in the Home Energy Conservation Act Report and in ‘Affordable Warmth’. The information has been further updated following a survey carried out in the early summer of 2001 during the promotion of the Home Energy Efficiency (HEES) scheme. The 1012 responses to that survey indicate that the modal, mean and median average SAP ratings of properties in Mole Valley are all between 45 and 55. Schemes to improve energy efficiency in the private sector are targeted on ‘fuel poor’ areas based on the information provided by SSEAC.

A 100% stock condition and energy efficiency survey of Council dwellings has been carried out. The SAP energy rating was 40 (percent efficiency) following a survey in 1995 but by 2001 the average rating had risen to 54 as a result of the Council’s capital works to the stock.

The Council promotes sustainable development principles in all new social housing developments. Schemes developed through preferred partner RSLs will be assessed based on the Housing Corporation’s scheme development standards and the extent to which they comply with Egan principles. For existing homes needing improvement, local authority social housing grant is made available to enable...
improvements in the energy efficiency of RSL owned dwellings

The Council intends to redevelop an existing social housing scheme in Fetcham. The scheme will see 20 flats replacing the existing 16 studio flats in an energy efficient flagship scheme. A sustainability consultant is being appointed to work with the Council and local people on the scheme that is scheduled to commence in 2003/4.

Supplier vetting and purchasing policy
In autumn 2002 the Council will be introducing a new purchasing and supply database. The Sinclair purchasing system will enable the Council to select and shortlist material and service suppliers from a shortlist of suppliers that will have already have been vetted to ensure that they comply with the Council’s sustainable purchasing policies. In respect of housing the main policy issues are the use of timbers only from renewable sources, high levels of insulation to prevent heat loss and the use of low energy lighting and heating appliances, including condensing boilers in heating installation and renewal schemes.

Traffic congestion
In addition to having a district wide strategy to provide additional off street parking on housing estates, the Council promotes the use of non-polluting means of transport through its own employment policies and support for local cycling groups.

2. Goals for achieving social progress, recognising the needs of everyone.

Safer Communities
The revised Community Safety Strategy for Mole Valley from 2002-5 was published in May 2002. The findings and future priorities for action flowed from the community safety audit undertaken in 2001.

The police and Members and officers of the district and the county councils work closely together on community safety issues. There is a district-wide Mole Valley Community Safety Strategy Group and local groups for Dorking, Leatherhead and the rural areas. The partnership work has resulted in the following outcomes.

- Mole Valley in partnership with Surrey Police secured the first Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) granted in Surrey in 2000, banning the offender from the district for a two-year period.
- The use of acceptable behaviour contracts (ABC’s) to curb anti social behaviour by young people.
- A graffiti hit squad initiative giving a rapid response where graffiti appears in public places.
- The ‘Safer Staff’ initiative, launched and operated through the Council’s Community Alarm centre and offering support to lone and vulnerable workers.
- A roving CCTV facility to enable surveillance to be carried out in high crime hotspots.
- A fast track Internet based procedure enabling a rapid response for the reporting of dangerous and derelict abandoned vehicles.
- Weekly meetings take place between the Council’s housing officers and local police officers to discuss local problems.

Safeguarding the countryside
The Council’s planning policies provide protection for internationally important countryside within the District, such as Special Areas for Conservation and nationally important countryside. In addition to planning, the Council’s functions extend to the protection of trees and hedgerows. Officers in the housing
and planning departments liaise closely on planned and proposed developments, considering especially the environmental impact of proposals. Reduced car parking thresholds have been accepted in recent developments in agreement with the County Council to encourage sustainable means of transport such as walking and cycling.

**Young people**

The lack of affordable housing and the impact on communities of young people having to leave the district has been highlighted earlier in the strategy. Housing staff run workshops in the two main secondary schools in the district to highlight that finding suitable housing is a significant issue locally.

**Access to services.**

- **Black and ethnic minority residents.** The Council launched and adopted in May 2002 a Race Equality strategy. The main purpose of the strategy is to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote community relations.

  From April 2002 the Council has introduced a system for monitoring the ethnic origin of all applications for housing to ensure that discrimination is not occurring. In its landlord role the Council has consulted all tenants through the STATUS survey to test service satisfaction levels. The survey revealed that the levels of satisfaction amongst BME tenants is marginally higher than tenants generally but further analysis will be carried out this year to test levels of unmet need in respect of housing services.

- **Electronic government.** The Council is using the funding available to extend electronic means of delivering services through the E-government strategy. The Council is implementing software that will enable all monetary transactions to be carried out on line and web-based broadcasting of Council meetings. An internet café has been set up in a village to the south of Dorking to increase service accessibility in rural areas.

## 3. Goals for maintaining a successful economy

**Leatherhead & Dorking Town Centres**

Although Dorking is regarded as an attractive market town, which performs relatively well as a shopping centre, various studies have shown that the town centre is not commercially robust. Leatherhead town centre is in a similar position. The Council has initiated a strategy to aid its recovery and to reduce pressure on an already fragile retail economy.

The town centres play an important part in the daily lives of the residents and workers in the area and also of the surrounding rural communities. It is therefore essential not only to sustain but also to improve the vitality and viability of the town centres. Town Centre managers operate in Dorking and Leatherhead, supported by mixed funding and working closely with the local chambers of commerce. In September 2002 the Council will review its Empty Homes Strategy and discussions have already taken place with a local RSL and the town centre forums on ways to target financial assistance to bring empty flats above shops in commercial areas back into use, possibly linked to shop front improvement work.

The town centres are where the major retail outlets are based and where the shortage of affordable housing is most acute. The social rented sector has an important part to play in maintaining the viability of the towns.
Delivering housing priorities

Main Issues

• The Council is debt-free and there are reasonable levels of useable capital balances.
• Development is constrained by land supply rather than availability of capital.
• Opportunities for shared ownership are limited by the number of properties available within the value limits.
• Council dwellings are well maintained and will meet the Government’s decency standard by the target date.
• Maintenance, improvement and construction programmes can all be afforded without the need for schemes to compete for the same funds.
• The Council is debt free and does not seek borrowing approval for its own developments or work to its stock.

Detail

The Council’s first housing priority is to increase the supply of affordable housing. This will be achieved through the following actions, in descending order of preference:

• delivering low cost housing development in the private sector through the planning system
• enabling new development by other social housing providers
• enabling people to afford housing with the support of relatives, friends and employers, through Self-Help Shared Ownership
• bringing properties from the market price sector to the affordable sector, for example through purchase by social landlords and through shared ownership schemes.
• remodelling existing Council schemes to better meet local needs.

Investment in housing

The Council has adopted the general principle of a single capital pot for all capital investment, including housing. Capital projects are assessed against the priorities identified in the Community Strategy and the extent to which capital investment is required for specific projects. Previously, it had been the Council’s policy to reserve housing receipts for future housing investment.

The main source of funding for affordable housing is from usable capital receipts, mainly from Council house Right to Buy sales. The Council is free of housing and general debt. Receipts are estimated at £2.5 million per annum throughout the term of the strategy. There was a balance of useable capital receipts of £7.2 million at April 2002. Over the term of the strategy as a whole, the proposed investment programme is at about the level of net receipts. The Housing Investment Programme is reviewed by members not less than twice a year and scheme progress is reported more frequently. More precise figures are provided in the statistical appendices to the Housing Strategy and the Business Plan.

Although the Council’s first priority is the expansion of the affordable housing sector, in practice it is not necessary for the Council to carry out detailed option appraisals or to deny investment opportunities because capital balances are at present adequate to fund the current Housing Investment Programme. However the Council’s ability to deliver the planned programme would be jeopardised if the Government’s current proposals to
redistribute the future capital receipts of debt free authorities were to be implemented. Any funding uncertainty could impact on rural housing schemes in particular which frequently take years to deliver. The Housing Investment Programme for 2002/3 totals £4.8million

The Council has produced a revised Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan. Capital schemes are assessed against a range of criteria that include the future revenue implications, the scope for joint or match funding being available and most importantly the extent to which the scheme will contribute toward the objectives in the Community Plan.

Investment priorities
This section sets out the main areas in which investment is necessary to deliver the Council’s housing goals.

• Delivering affordable housing through the planning process, in line with the proposed amendments to the Local Plan affordable housing policy.

• Making unaffordable properties affordable through equity share schemes that enable local people to access accommodation that would be unaffordable at full market price. This includes the DIYSO and Homebuy programmes as well as the Council’s new Self-Help Shared Ownership scheme.

• Promoting mixed tenure through purchase and repair acquisition schemes operated through RSLs.

• Remodelling properties owned by the Council and RSLs to better meet needs. In recent years the Council has demolished a low demand sheltered housing scheme and replaced it with general needs housing, as well as converting shop premises for residential use.

• Major capital repair and improvement work to the Council’s own stock is needed to maintain dwellings in good condition and to meet the Government’s decent homes target. Future planned programmes are subject to tenant consultation and based on the resources known to be available.

• Private sector investment centres on adapting homes to meet the needs of disabled people supplemented by minor works grants.

Enabling affordable housing
Registered social landlords are increasingly important providers of affordable housing in the district. When opportunities arise for property or land purchase or for development, this would usually be carried out by an RSL rather than by the Council.

The Council agreed in March 2002 to adopt a preferred partner approach to selecting the RSLs that it wishes to work with on future development. The partner arrangements will be in place by September 2002 in advance of the next Housing Corporation grant bidding round and will introduce an element of competition when future sites become available for development.

The Council encourages RSLs to improve the condition and energy efficiency of their stock. Local authority Social Housing Grant funding can be available for approved schemes including:

• improvements to provide self-contained facilities where these are currently shared (such as bathrooms in sheltered housing schemes) as long as there is a need for the improved dwellings;

• adaptations to make a property suitable for people who have a physical disability

• improvement and energy efficiency measures that reduce fuel costs for tenants.

The Council supports applications by RSLs to the Housing Corporation for Social Housing Grant where proposals meet the Council’s strategic housing objectives. Local Authority Social Housing Grant is available where schemes are not otherwise grant-aided but the development
proposals meet a local housing priority. Priorities for local housing investment are identified in this statement and the Housing Corporation’s Regional Investment Statement.

**Physical resources**

The Council does not have a land bank but does acquire sites as they become available where they can be secured for the future development of affordable housing. The principal housing resource is the stock of over 3,600 dwellings and the other buildings and land associated with them. The use of the dwellings and housing land is reviewed regularly, particularly where garage areas and car parking are no longer required and are suitable for redevelopment for affordable housing. In the past three years, 11 new family homes have been developed by the Council in this way while current planned disposals to RSLs will see the development of 14 new homes for general needs and key workers.
In the last twelve months the Council has undergone significant change. The Council has reviewed the way that services are delivered and the performance of the Council is measured. The following are the main issues that relate in particular to service delivery:

- **Best Value.** The Council has carried out a fundamental review of its whole approach to Best Value. A Best Value member group has been established and an officer Head of Best Value appointed. The Council has worked closely with the Audit Commission Best Value Inspectorate and moved from service specific reviews to cross cutting reviews that focus on service delivery to customers. The two major reviews scheduled for 2002/3 will be on the following:

- **Customer Care;** considering the way that services are delivered and received by customers based on past and current consultation.

- **Extra help for those who need it:** A review of all the services that the Council provides now either directly or in partnership with other organisations. The review will consider how services are provided now to those in the greatest need, gaps in service provision, the standard and cost of the services and the scope for externalising or delivering services in different ways. The vision for the review is that the Council should have no Council electoral wards in the top 20 most deprived wards in Surrey.

- **Performance management.** In March 2002 the Council introduced a corporate framework for managing performance. The framework is based on ‘key deliverables’ that in turn are based on the priorities for action in the Community Strategy. The framework provides the basis for ensuring that the Council is able to monitor performance at a corporate level and drive service improvement.

- **Consultation with the local community.** The Community Strategy priorities are driven by the results of community consultation through the Shared Agenda group and the local Citizens Panel. In addition, special interest groups such as the Mole Valley access group that considers access to public buildings and the STATUS survey of all Council tenants provide information to help inform best value reviews and service improvements generally.

- **Local governance and decision making.** The Council consulted residents on the options for local decision making. The community’s preference was to retain a Committee system. The Committee structure, terms of reference and remit have changed to bring together common services as well as introducing a Scrutiny Committee with the power to call in decisions. The Council will be implementing the web casting of Council meeting as part of the move towards extending local democracy linked to the electronic government agenda.

- **Asset management, investment and risk.** The Council has agreed in principle to adopt the single capital pot approach to deciding investment priorities. Capital schemes are assessed against the corporate priorities that relate to the Community Strategy based on the principles of the Asset Management plan. In addition, the Council has introduced a comprehensive Risk Register that identifies known current and future risk to enable risk to be minimised based on a thorough assessment of the likely impact.

- **Corporate restructure.** Following a major corporate restructure in September 2001, service departments and resource departments are grouped under lead directors. This has led to closer working between officers on the wider corporate agenda that includes Best Value, neighbourhood renewal, community safety, race equality initiatives and the allocation of resources based on the Performance Management Framework.
Action Plan

Last year’s Housing Strategy set out the Council’s housing priorities and included action points to be implemented over the next twelve months. This section sets out the progress made to date and the current position. The new action points set out in this strategy will be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported in next year’s revised Action Plan. This year’s Action Plan has been influenced by the following events that have occurred in the past 12 months:

• The priorities for the Council based on the Community Strategy and partnership work through the Shared Agenda group

• The change in corporate structure in September 2001, reflected in the way that services are provided and the changes in Committee structures and decision making

• The fundamental review of the Council’s approach to Best Value that has seen a new review programme based on service provision from a customer perspective rather than service specific reviews

• The introduction of a performance management framework with key deliverables identified against each service area and assigned to a lead department and named officer

• The priorities for action agreed with tenant representatives through the housing management Best Value review completed in February 2002

• The impact of changes in partner organisations such as the move towards Primary Care Trusts, a major review of the structure of Surrey County Council social services and local hospital closures

Where services are delivered with partner organisations, they are named within the action plan. The resources required to achieve the plan are specified where appropriate.
## HOUSING In Mole Valley - 2002

### Strategy Action Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increasing the supply of affordable housing in the district</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy Action Points</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tackle strategic housing issues in a way that is consistent with the Council’s corporate and housing aims</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor and maintain progress towards achieving the objectives agreed by the Council following the report of the Affordable Housing Task Group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rather than depend on new development, make it possible for people to afford existing properties, through shared ownership and housing association acquisition of market properties.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue to review the use of Council-owned land and exploit opportunities for development, by increasing density and/or by change of use of land used for parking or other purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bring market housing into the affordable sector through shared ownership schemes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with others on “Empty Homes” scheme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve the promotion of “Living Over the Shop.”</td>
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<td>Strategy Action Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote equity sharing and other low cost ownership schemes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivering affordable housing through planning policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review the affordable housing policies in the Local Plan &amp; seek to reduce the threshold above which affordable housing can be sought as part of private developments: 15 dwellings or 0.5 hectares in the built up areas and 5 dwellings or 0.2 hectares in the villages.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Council will join with others to lobby government to amend national guidance on thresholds to make it easier to secure affordable housing on smaller sites.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing and Planning Officers to consider scope for affordable housing on sites coming forward for development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seek and exploit opportunities for private developments to include affordable housing to meet local needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enabling and meeting the need for key worker housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with employers and the Shared Agenda Group to establish the need for key worker housing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research opportunities to provide housing for key workers on Council-owned land.</td>
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<td>Strategy Action Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage public sector employers to use their own land and resources to provide key worker housing, possibly through a social housing landlord.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tackle the affordability of housing to reduce the tendency of essential workers to migrate to less expensive areas outside the district. This will help sustain the rural economy, retail centres and the leisure industry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amend the allocations policy to take into account the need to attract and retain key employees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop an assessment protocol for applicants competing for limited key worker housing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publish an information pack for employers and employees that describes opportunities to provide and to access housing.</td>
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**Promoting balanced and safer communities**

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<tr>
<th>Strategy Action Points</th>
<th>Progress to Date</th>
<th>Future Action and Resources Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through the Shared Agenda Group bring together agencies from all sectors to tackle social exclusion and relative deprivation and to promote community development.</td>
<td>Community Strategy out to consultation Shared Agenda group focusing on Nth Leatherhead Joint funded post established</td>
<td>Neighbourhood appraisal to be conducted following appointment of local partnership worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make available Social Housing Grant funding for approved schemes that meet the Council’s stock condition and energy efficiency objectives.</td>
<td>Housing Investment Programme in place for current year RSL preferred partners appointed to maximise forward funding opportunities from September 2002 Capital Strategy based on single capital pot approach with funding matching the Council’s corporate objectives agreed in June 2002</td>
<td>Bids to be assessed against Housing Corporation scheme standards and the extent to which they meet the Council’s housing objectives</td>
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### Strategy Action Points

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rural housing</th>
<th>Progress to Date</th>
<th>Future Action and Resources Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respond to rural housing needs by allowing development exceptionally in the rural areas where there is a proven local need that could not otherwise be met, subject to planning criteria.</td>
<td>Rural Housing Trust has carried out three local needs surveys in 2001/02 RHE post established Exceptions site policy applied to 3 developments in last 4 years.</td>
<td>Work with specialist partners on developing new sites and with planning officers on identifying exception sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenancy allocation policies will continue to recognise the needs of rural communities.</td>
<td>Current scheme recognises local connection and allows points to be awarded</td>
<td>Allocation policy review by September 2002 will include recognising the need for key workers in village communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with others to identify and promote rural housing opportunities.</td>
<td>Parish Council help lead on local surveys Sites identified by Rural Housing Trust and Parish Councils</td>
<td>Make provision in HIP budget for potential schemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The allocations policy takes into account the connection of applicants with rural communities. Take into account also the need of the rural community for essential workers.</td>
<td>Rural Housing Enabling Officer post joint funded with Guildford BC &amp; SVSC Three rural schemes approved in 2002 through Section 106 agreements with allocations to the local community through a parish ‘cascade’ principle that recognises local connection</td>
<td>All partners have funding agreed for three years for the rural enabling post Model section 106 agreement to be adopted by December 2002 based on Rural Housing Trust model that ensures dwellings remain affordable in perpetuity</td>
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### Assessing the need for housing and support

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<th>Future Action and Resources Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take into account the shift in population, household numbers and age profile in the pattern of future social and affordable housing provision.</td>
<td>District wide Housing Need survey completed August 2002</td>
<td>To be repeated on a three yearly basis supplemented by parish based surveys in rural communities and special needs surveys with health trusts and social services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide for an increase in the housing needs of very elderly people and single people.</td>
<td>Allocations scheme amended March 2002 to reduce residence period for older people Sheltered housing promotion week through display and local press publicity Mount Green HA bid for funding to remodel Graham House in Bookham supported</td>
<td>Support RSL funding bids to remodel existing schemes to meet local needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy Action Points</td>
<td>Progress to Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide an outreach service, jointly funded with Social Services, through a specialist association, for people with special needs.</td>
<td>Contracted to a special needs RSL providing services to 20 tenants with particular needs.</td>
<td>Scheme funded from transitional housing benefit scheme pending Supporting People.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with health, Social Services and the voluntary sector to meet agreed health promotion targets through the Health Improvement Programme.</td>
<td>‘Step down’ flats leased to local health authority to ease bed blocking with Telemedicine support Fitness and Tai Chi programmes run for older people through day centres Decent Homes work by the local authority centres on warm healthy homes.</td>
<td>Need for further step down units to be reviewed in one year based on demand for the pilot scheme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to establish demands and needs through special surveys.</td>
<td>Through district wide needs survey Work with county wide SP team on needs and supply mapping East Surrey Referral Service maps present and future special needs.</td>
<td>Consider scope for cross boundary working on schemes to meet specific needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a joint strategy and protocols with other agencies across Surrey for the provision of advice and direct assistance for single people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, especially people leaving the “cared for” system.</td>
<td>Joint protocol launched by SCC in conjunction with RPS Rainer Needs mapping exercise for 16/17 year olds carried out in 2001.</td>
<td>Review provision required in addition to 4 RSL units available currently based on evidence of need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a supported housing register in partnership with other Districts and Boroughs, the Health service and Social Services. Share data to provide a consistent basis for mutual and linked strategies and for meeting the specific needs of individuals.</td>
<td>Joint register of special needs being piloted in Epsom &amp; Ewell prior to roll-out in East Surrey.</td>
<td>Review of allocations scheme to be completed by September 2002. Stakeholder organisations to be consulted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting health and mobility needs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Use evidence of latest housing need survey to consider support for bids by RSLs in September as part of the Housing Corporation bid round.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy Action Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide solutions to homelessness through prevention and allocations policy management</td>
<td>Provision through Council reception centres, direct access Night Hostel and joint funded domestic violence refuge Work with local charity ‘Pitstop’ to help the homeless, including counselling, furniture and room share scheme Use Council stock where self contained accommodation is needed for vulnerable people</td>
<td>Review existing policies by September 2002 Set up a local homelessness forum with voluntary and statutory organisations by December 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build or enable social rented housing where it best meets housing need. New build will usually be through registered social landlords.</td>
<td>Capital Strategy in place; decision making framework in place for deciding whether Council or RSL develops</td>
<td>Housing capital scheme funding to be considered in January 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support domestic violence victims through mobility and exchange schemes</td>
<td>Community Safety partnership in place Weekly meetings with local Police to discuss crime and disorder and the Safer Surrey initiative Community Safety strategy relaunched May 2002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operate a refuge for victims of domestic violence, jointly with the two other authorities.</td>
<td>Opened in June 2001</td>
<td>Provide permanent rehousing for women and their families in accordance with agreed protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with the health and social services to provide step-down accommodation to aid early hospital discharge.</td>
<td>Two units leased to the Primary Care Trust in March 2002 Protocol in place April 2002</td>
<td>Income received by the Council from leasing arrangement Savings to PCT to be assessed based on pilot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to work with the East Surrey Health Authority and Social Services to develop and implement the teenage pregnancy and parenting strategies.</td>
<td>Ten year strategy in place</td>
<td>Possible scheme site identified Through ESHSG, develop a scheme by December 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a register of dwellings suitable for occupation by people who are physically disabled.</td>
<td>Housing needs survey identifies the need to support the case for local resources Computer based register of adapted local authority dwellings established December 2001</td>
<td>Enables better matching of applicants to property; savings from reduced need for further adaptations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New developments and improvement schemes to satisfy “Secured by Design” and high sustainability standards.</td>
<td>Standard met by all newbuild Council and RSL developments since 2000</td>
<td>Reduced cost to occupiers from energy savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy Action Points</td>
<td>Progress to Date</td>
<td>Future Action and Resources Required</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Promoting choice and alternative tenures</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to publicise, promote and award cash incentives to enable tenants to achieve home ownership.</td>
<td>Scheme continues to run &amp; budget of £40k in place 2002/3</td>
<td>Operate scheme and publicise through the tenants newspaper Mole Valley Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and advise local self-build groups</td>
<td>Working with Dorking based group; scope for land being made available on local site</td>
<td>Subject to planning permission on site near Dorking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and launch Self-Shared Ownership (SHSO) and model form of agreement.</td>
<td>Launched with press release May 2002</td>
<td>Monitor take up and report to members in twice yearly Housing Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund rent deposit guarantees from revenue where they will avoid or resolve homelessness.</td>
<td>Scheme operated through joint funded Community Housing Worker project</td>
<td>Consider as service enhancement as part of homelessness review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch a private sector landlord forum.</td>
<td>First private Landlord Forum arranged in partnership with Tandridge DC, Reigate and Banstead BC and the Southern Private Landlords Association June 2002</td>
<td>Repeat at least annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide choices in lettings, within options available.</td>
<td>Existing policy allows applicants flexibility</td>
<td>Review policy in Autumn 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximising existing resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelop Randalls Crescent car park site by 2004.</td>
<td>Site to be sold to RSL with detailed planning permission Sept 2002</td>
<td>Four new homes to be built. LASHG of £200k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the use of properties and change as necessary to meet needs.</td>
<td>Demand for properties monitored through stock turnover and applicant demand analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelop Moon Court flats and convert Stonny Croft shop by 2004.</td>
<td>Stonnycroft shop conversion to be complete by Sept 2002 Moon Court to progress when energy consultant appointed September 2002 at a pace to be agreed with tenants</td>
<td>Budget in place; scheme progress monitored &amp; on target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy Action Points</td>
<td>Progress to Date</td>
<td>Future Action and Resources Required</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor and reduce underoccupation in the Council’s stock</td>
<td>Promotion of transfer incentives through tenants newspaper Mole Valley Life</td>
<td>Review incentive scheme in September 2002 as part of wider allocations policy review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the amounts payable under the transfer incentive scheme.</td>
<td>Strong demand for the scheme; 11 transfers arranged for underoccupying tenants in 2001/02</td>
<td>Included in review of current allocations scheme by September 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with partner RSLs in the purchase and development of land and acquisition of existing properties</td>
<td>LASHG funding for 5 units in HIP budget 2002/3</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BV</td>
<td>Best Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Performance Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFG</td>
<td>Disabled Facilities Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIYSO</td>
<td>Do It Yourself Shared Ownership</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESHA</td>
<td>East Surrey Health Authority</td>
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<td>ESHSG</td>
<td>East Surrey Housing Strategy Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESRS</td>
<td>East Surrey Referral Service</td>
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<td>HIA</td>
<td>Health Improvement Agency</td>
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<td>HIP</td>
<td>Housing Investment Programme</td>
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<td>HRA</td>
<td>Housing Revenue Account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEG</td>
<td>Implementing Electronic Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>MVTAG</td>
<td>Mole Valley Tenants Action Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCT</td>
<td>Primary Care Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSL</td>
<td>Registered Social Landlord</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHI</td>
<td>Starter Home Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHSO</td>
<td>Self Help Shared Ownership</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIP</td>
<td>Service Improvement Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Supporting People</td>
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<tr>
<td>SESEEAC</td>
<td>Surrey &amp; E Sussex Energy Advice Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>SVSC</td>
<td>Surrey Voluntary Services Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWIG</td>
<td>Surrey Wide Involvement Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPAS</td>
<td>Tenant Participation Advisory Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPO</td>
<td>Tenant Participation Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>The Housing Corporation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Housing Strategy consultation and circulation list

The strategy is based on consultation with the following organisations and groups, as well as taking into account individual representations. Copies of the Strategy have been sent out for further consultation while the strategy is also available on the Internet. Comments can be made by e-mail or using the electronic voting button system.

- Shared Agenda group members, that includes major local employers and private / public sector organisations
- Registered Social Landlords, especially preferred partner organisations
- Residents association and tenant representatives through the Mole Valley Tenants Action Group
- Members of the Council (including those members that were part of the Affordable Housing Task Group)
- Surrey County Council - social services and the central planning team
- Southern Private Landlords Association
- Surrey district and borough Councils
- East Surrey Health Authority
- County wide ‘Supporting People’ team
Supporting documents

The following documents have links to the strategy and are available from the Council on request:

- Community Strategy
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan
- Housing Needs survey findings 1999 (Results for 2002 will be available in August 2002)
- Corporate Performance Management framework
- Housing Department Service Plan
- Draft Local Plan policy on Affordable Housing
- Mole Valley’s Race Equality strategy
- The Council’s Grants policy
- Housing Management Best Value report and Service Improvement Plan
- Self Help Shared Ownership (SHSO) leaflet and model agreement
- Step Down project profile
- Affordable Housing scheme spreadsheet
- Housing Report to members June 2002
- Mole Valley’s Tenant Compact
- Making Affordable Housing happen in Surrey - joint commissioned report
- Community Safety Strategy April 2002
- Corporate Risk Register
- The Council’s Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan
Further information

For further information about the Council’s Housing Strategy contact:

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Telephone 01306 879206
Fax 01306 876821

Copies of the strategy can be viewed on the Council’s website at
www.molevalley.gov.uk

You can comment on the strategy by e-mailing to
Housing@mole-valley.gov.uk
or using the electronic voting system,
Mole Valley’s Housing Strategy 2002