

2006-2010



The Greater Haven Gateway

Housing strategy for the sub-region



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The Greater
Haven Gateway



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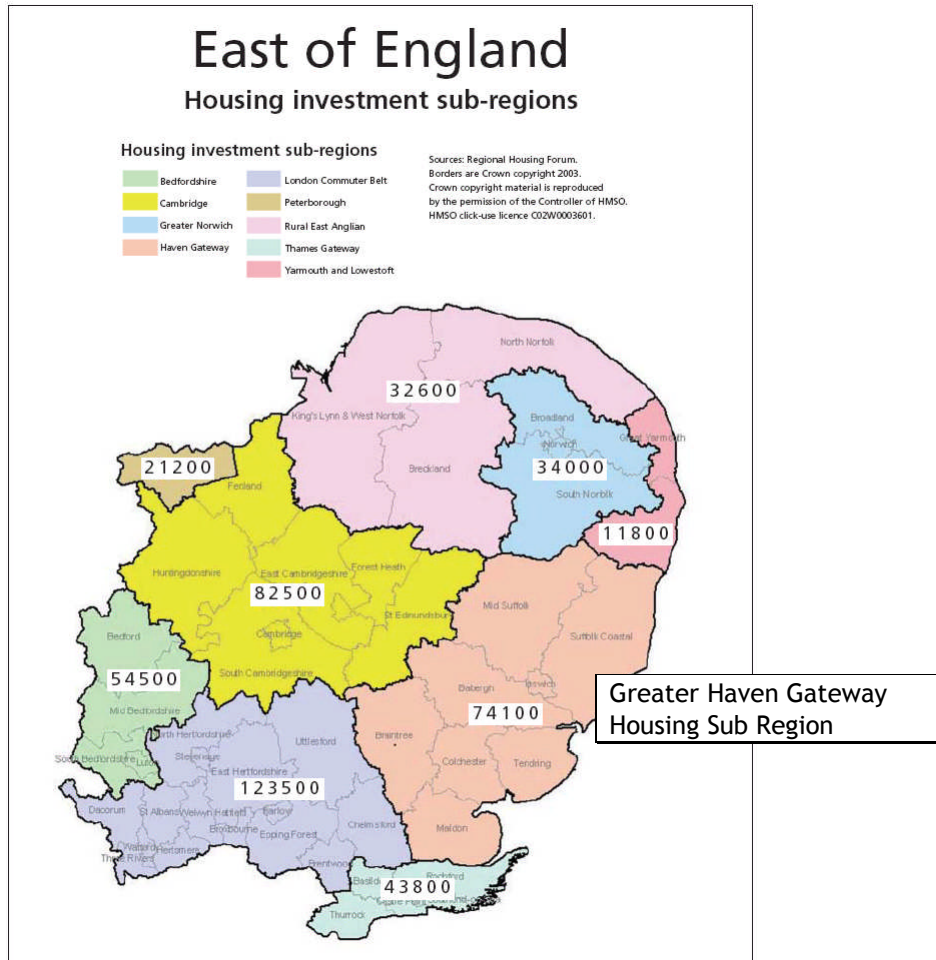
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Introduction

The Greater Haven Gateway sub region is one of nine housing sub regions in the East of England, and includes Babergh, Braintree, Colchester, Ipswich, Maldon, Mid Suffolk, Suffolk Coastal and Tendring borough and district councils. For ease they are referred to only by the borough or district name throughout this document.



Sub regions have been established in response to the Government’s Sustainable Communities Plan 2003 to reflect the housing markets of the East of England. The Greater Haven Gateway is made up of eight local authorities working in partnership with partner RSLs. The numbers in the map refer to the number of new housing provision to 2021.

We recognise that housing markets do not respect boundaries set for administrative, geographical, political, financial or other purposes, and are committed to working together to address cross-boundary issues. We will continue to involve partners and residents to develop a meaningful, useful and inclusive strategy.

Our vision is *“to ensure everyone can live in a decent home which meets their needs, at a price they can afford, and in locations that are sustainable”*.

Our aim is *“more sustainable housing provision, in high quality homes and environments, creating inclusive communities”*.

The challenge is *“to achieve balanced housing markets and to meet diverse needs by working collaboratively with partners across the sub region”*.

Our priorities

Our priorities are to

- maximise delivery of new affordable housing
- tackle homelessness
- support people who are more vulnerable in our society
- improve housing conditions for vulnerable people living in the private sector
- ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable
- improve access to affordable housing
- ensure equality for all in housing services.

Through the document, these priorities are highlighted using the symbol ☆.

The sub region is diverse geographically, economically and socially, with a population of over 900,000 (mid year population estimates 2003, Neighbourhood Statistics), living in over 403,000 dwellings (Housing Investment Programme 2005). This is an increase of 10,728 households since the 2001 Census. It is of national and regional importance, providing a strategic gateway for trade and tourism between the UK, Europe and elsewhere. With two large urban centres, Colchester and Ipswich, extensive rural and coastal areas, market towns and the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich it is a focus for growth. The Draft East of England Plan (regional spatial strategy December 2004) proposes 3,705 new homes each year across the sub region.

North East Essex and South East Suffolk are highlighted in the Eastern Region Affordable Housing Study (2003) as “pressured sub regions”, meaning those characterised by high housing demand, high incomes, and high house prices. The sub region is also affected by its proximity to London, the Ipswich/Cambridge hi-tech corridor and Stansted Airport. Two of the four national growth areas adjoin our sub region. While some parts of the sub region experience economic prosperity, other areas are in severe economic difficulty with low incomes, high dependence on agriculture and designated rural priority areas.

Lack of affordable housing in both urban and rural areas is a significant problem, fuelled by rising house prices following the general economic boom and migration from London. Levels of planned development of new housing varies. Demand for affordable housing is rising, and although homelessness strategies have largely achieved the government target of keeping families with children out of B&B, this may not be sustainable and services are stretched.

Black and Minority Ethnic communities are small and usually rely on mainstream housing services, often lacking the infrastructure needed to make their housing needs known.

There are high levels of disrepair and poor energy efficiency in the private sector and significant investment is needed to bring affordable homes up to the decent homes standard. The recent changes to funding mechanisms for disabled facilities grants and aids and adaptations are having a significant impact.

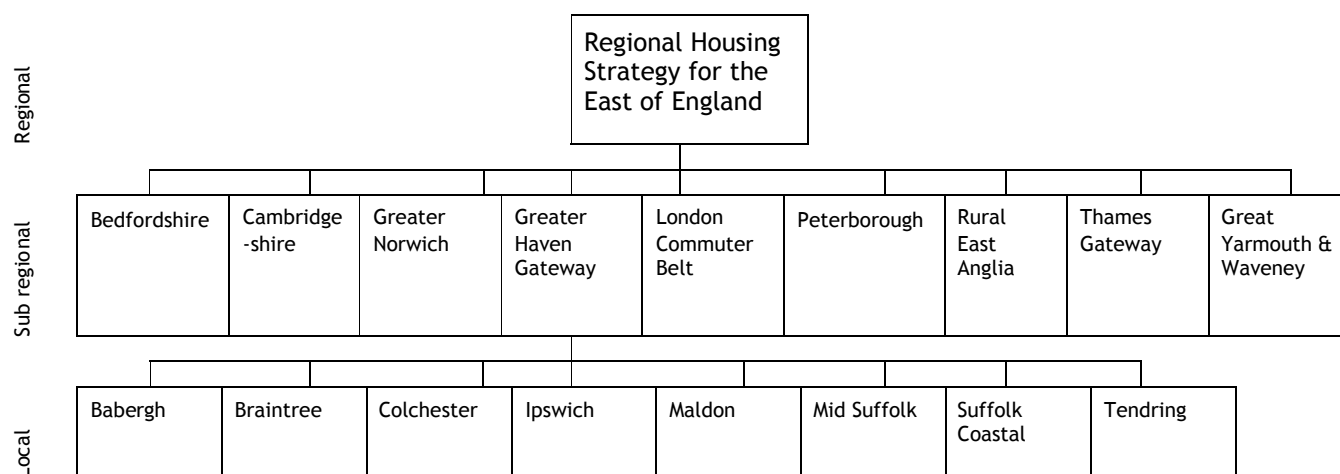
There are two administering authorities for supporting people addressing support needs - Essex and Suffolk County Councils - which share a number of common themes.

Where does this strategy fit in?

This is a strategy designed and written to help apply the priorities and actions of the East of England Regional Housing Strategy to the Greater Haven Gateway housing sub region.

It aims to help individual local authorities, who each produce local housing strategies, housing needs assessments, stock condition information and Local Plans and (soon) Local Development Frameworks, to set these in a broader geographical context.

The strategy has a lifespan of 2006 to 2010, dovetailing with the Regional Housing Strategy and covering the next two anticipated rounds of Housing Corporation funding in 2006-08 and 2008-10.



How was it produced?

The Greater Haven Gateway housing group steers the production of the strategy, and has worked through task groups to produce this document.

The Group has adopted a formal constitution, and is working with its sub groups (and forming new sub groups) to enable more detailed action plans and projects to be progressed in future, to make our strategy a reality and ensure we are taking advantage of the opportunities presented to us, through effective partnership working. A chart of the sub groups is included at Appendix 3.

Developing the strategy

The strategy has been written in the light of current initiatives and guidance, though naturally issues and agendas change over time so it is vital, if this is to be an effective document, that it can grow, develop and change in the future.

To date we have involved a variety of partners and stakeholders (see appendix 2) in creating and steering the strategy, through various events, dialogues and working groups. These include meetings and feedback from partners and stakeholders, housing providers and lead housing councillors. Where comments made have had a direct effect on the strategy, they are highlighted in the text with this symbol 🗨️.

In future we plan to involve more partner organisations and more residents to guide the principles of the strategy, help understanding of the issues and focus on the tasks ahead of us all. As with any strategy, its success is based on partners and customers understanding the principles and taking a view on how they can be involved and where our respective agendas overlap. This will be a continually building process and one we value very highly in making sure our strategy is effective and beneficial.

Taking action

The Greater Haven Gateway housing sub region will work in partnership with a range of agencies and organisations to achieve the targets set out in this document. This strategy is accompanied by an action plan and includes high-level actions which are highlighted with this symbol ▶▶. The strategy links to the East of England Regional Housing Strategy Investment Plan and individual authorities' housing and homelessness strategies. The action plan will be monitored continuously by sub regional partners and formally reviewed each year to review progress, obstacles, issues and new agendas.

Part 1 Sustainable housing provision

Principles of development

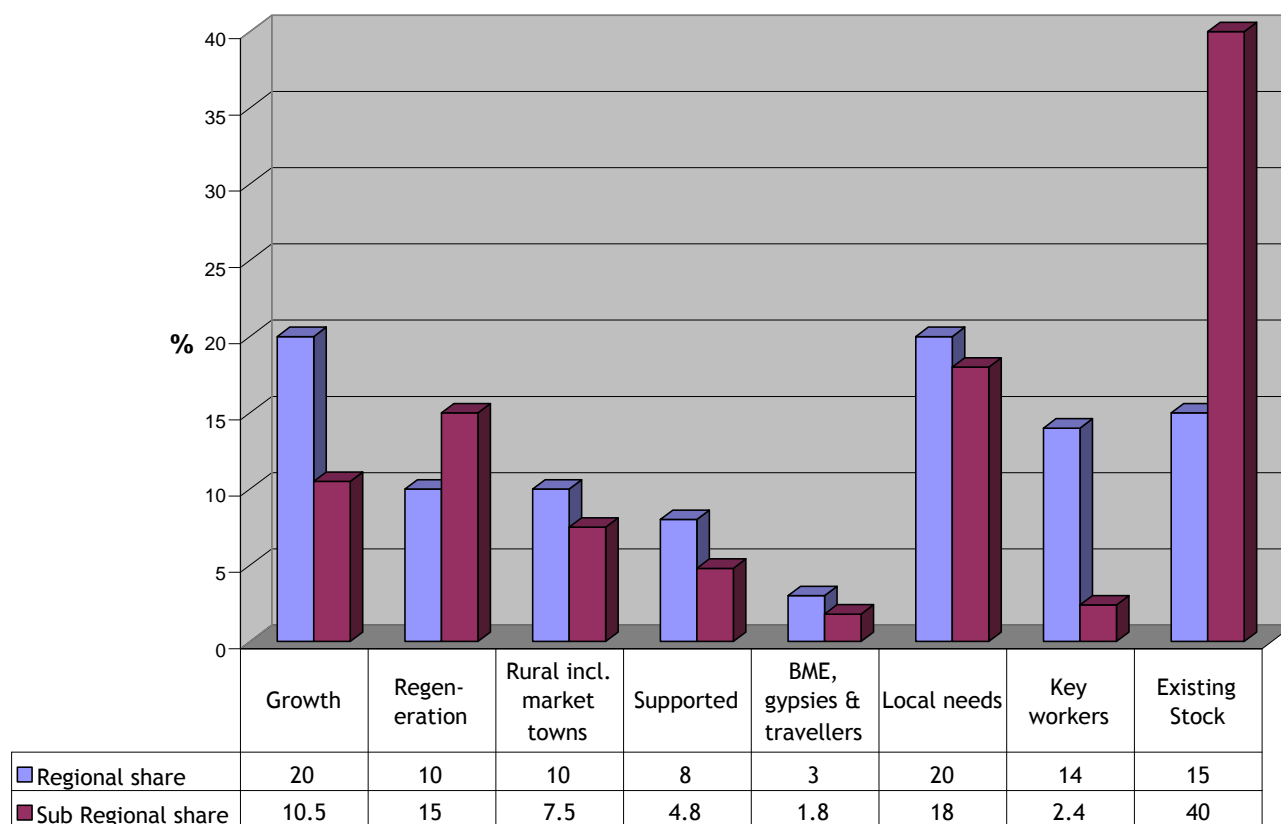
In line with the Regional Housing Strategy, we have prioritised investment for new affordable housing development across eight key themes. However there are cross cutting themes which apply to all new housing development. These are

- Sustainable development: an emphasis on design, density and quality of schemes to minimise environmental impact and achieve balanced communities.
- Energy efficiency: encouraging the development of new homes to the Housing Corporation's excellent standard for eco-homes which are affordable to run for low income households.
- Accessibility: encouraging the development of Lifetime Homes to enable people to remain in their home and meet their changing needs.
- Security and safety: applying secured by design standards across all new developments.
- Maximising opportunities: ensuring we secure the best provision of affordable housing consistently across the sub region through negotiations and procurement.
- Robust evidence base: for any interventions into the housing market.

These cross cutting themes are taken into account in each of the actions.

Investment priorities for the region and sub region

The Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) sets out eight investment themes that it will use to allocate funding for housing. The sub region has also set out its priorities against each investment theme:



How were the sub regional priorities decided upon?

Various factors were used to set our sub regional funding priorities. These included:

- Sources of funding for each agenda, for example the position for stock options appraisal and where each authority stood on identifying its resource gap (see *Decent homes and communities*).
- Importance of each agenda within each local authority and level of need identified against each agenda (see *Appendix 1 Key Facts*).
- What was in the supply chain for new affordable homes at the time of working out the priorities, and whether this reflected the sub region's needs and aspirations for new housing development planned up to 2010.

The difference between the regional and sub regional priorities are clearly shown in the graph above. Some highlights to note are:

- A lower share under the growth theme for the sub region than across the region, balancing a practical view of how many homes are classified in the 2006-8 pipeline under growth with a deliverable target for the future.
- A lower number of supported schemes in the sub region's supply chain under the supported theme, partly due to uncertainties of approach to capital linked to revenue funding (see *Supported housing*).
- Support for the BME communities theme, balanced again with a practical view that there are very few schemes in the pipeline at present which would qualify under this theme.
- A low percentage for key worker housing, as the view of this sub region is that public subsidy may not be required to deliver much of the intermediate tenure housing being developed. Rather, intermediate tenures should be secured through planning gain rather than direct grant wherever possible. However a small percentage of the funding available could be used in exceptional circumstances, judged on an individual scheme basis.
- A high percentage for existing stock, which includes public and private housing. The lack of specific funding to support activities in the private sector has led us to support a high level of public funding to tackle housing standards in privately rented and owned homes, which account for 85% of the sub region's homes. This is balanced with the assumption that, in council housing, decent homes would be delivered through the stock options appraisal process and should need no additional resources. Housing associations are assumed to be able to deliver decent homes through their business planning processes, however further work will be needed to check out this assumption.

Setting priorities is a challenging process which is bound to change over time, as further issues arise and alternative sources of funding or approaches to issues develop.

We are committed to continue to consult and listen to our partners and residents views on these priorities, and to work within the regional agenda to re-assess and refocus our work as the regional and sub regional approaches develop.

We are also keen to gather and compare information gathered to assess housing need, to enable us to understand and respond to housing markets in the sub region in future. This may be through specific research work, or through agreeing an approach to future market assessments to enable better comparison.

Appendix 3 Investment Planning gives an overview of investment planned in the sub region for 2006 to 2008, and beyond.

Growth

Areas of priority

- ☆ Maximise delivery of new affordable housing.
- ☆ Tackle homelessness.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.

What do we mean by growth?

Strategic Outcome: Where growth in housing numbers is planned to be significantly more than natural household growth in the area, measures are needed to ensure affordable housing is provided and used properly. This affordable housing must provide for housing need over a larger area than would be considered local need.

Typical Schemes: Schemes will be part of strategic release of land required by regional or sub regional plans. They will be of mixed tenure and housing types and provide for the range of needs in the incoming population. Residents will come from an area larger than the town or district in which they are located, shown either by homes being let across administrative boundaries, or by on-going monitoring the origin of households accommodated by the host authority.

Developing key worker and intermediate tenure homes as part of a growth scheme will depend on local employment circumstances and expected commuting patterns.

Evidence of need

The Greater Haven Gateway is a desirable place to live and each year people move here to live work and study. Housing Need Surveys from each district indicate we expect continuing in-migration over the next 5 years.

This means a key priority for the sub region is to respond to challenges of growth, affordability and accessibility. We are committed to work together to achieve increased housing provision and secure resources to enable targeted growth across the sub region.

Issues and trends

The East of England population grew by 5.5% between 1981 and 2001, generally through people moving in from London and the surrounding areas. This trend is set to continue and increase over the next 5 years and the Greater Haven Gateway expects to benefit from a significant part of this growth. We need to match resources to this growth, to tackle both new infrastructure and housing across all tenures.

A significant challenge for the sub region arises from the need to deliver new homes through planning gain while balancing housing gain with other planning gain priorities such as education and transport. The Greater Haven Gateway will meet these challenges by working in partnership to achieve more collectively than we can individually.

Involving partners in growth

How can we work across the sub region and with other sub regions to ensure growth targets are met and development is sustainable?

Some work is already underway to use a system of inter authority nominations, such the START register for key worker housing where a percentage of nominations will be shared between Colchester, Braintree and Tendring districts. Growth and key worker housing link very well as a targeted way of meeting the need for key workers in the sub region and ensuring they have housing which is sustainable and affordable. It can also facilitate the mobility within and between other sub regions.

The Greater Haven Gateway is also committed to developing a sub regional choice based lettings scheme by 2010 to ensure housing applicants across the sub region have the widest possible choice at their disposal. We intend this scheme to facilitate sub regional movement of housing applicants.

Examples of growth schemes in the current pipeline for the sub region include

- ☐ The Garrison, Colchester
- ☐ Maltings Lane, Witham
- ☐ Ipswich Waterfront.

Action points

- ▶▶ Improve links with Haven Gateway Partnership and local business and employment centres by two way representation at partnership meetings.
- ▶▶ Secure inward investment by contributing to growth point status bid by the Haven Gateway Partnership for Colchester, Ipswich and targeted regeneration sites in Essex and Suffolk, in 2006.
- ▶▶ Explore ways to increase the proportion of affordable housing in new development to a minimum of 30% through a standard s106 agreement across the sub region and use of other planning mechanisms.
- ▶▶ Develop a sub regional choice based lettings scheme including shared ownership and affordable rented housing, by 2010.
- ▶▶ Undertake sub regional housing market assessments and ensure they link across the sub region, by 2008 and use the results to set appropriate targets for provision by tenure.
- ▶▶ Explore ways to develop cross boundary working for the sub region for our growth schemes.

Regeneration

Areas of priority

- ☆ Maximise delivery of new affordable housing.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.
- ☆ Improve housing conditions for vulnerable people living in the private sector.

What do we mean by regeneration?

Strategic Outcome:

Regeneration requires the physical regeneration of land or buildings now redundant, or the social or economic regeneration of areas and communities unable to achieve this themselves. Investment in new affordable housing can be through rehabilitation or through new homes on brownfield sites. Its provision is normally one of a bundle of measures required to achieve the regeneration. Housing development may be the only measure in a run-down residential area that needs regeneration.

Typical Schemes: Schemes on brownfield sites will be recognised as regeneration where there is a clear and beneficial outcome. Where regeneration extends beyond one development site, there must be a strategy to show the relationship between sites. The detailed nature of the scheme will be designed in direct relationship within local circumstances of the surrounding area.

Evidence of need

The Greater Haven Gateway contains a number of wards which are in the top 20% most deprived in the country. The harmful effects of deprivation on residents are well known. We are committed to enabling neighbourhoods to regenerate themselves and improve residents' life chances and opportunities to reach their potential. The sub region is committed to tackling deprivation by working in deprived areas to achieve growth and regeneration in partnership with local communities.

A key part of regeneration in the sub region is being undertaken by the Haven Gateway Partnership. The purpose of the Partnership is to provide a framework for partner organisations to work together to promote economic opportunities and secure future prosperity of this major gateway to the East of England.

The Partnership has a vision

To deliver a high quality environment for its residents, workers and visitors, by capitalising on its location as a key gateway, realising its potential for significant substantial growth, addressing its needs for economic regeneration, creating an additional focus for growth in hi-tech, knowledge based employment, related to the Cambridge clusters, and protecting and enhancing its high quality, attractive natural assets.



The Haven Gateway Partnership and the Greater Haven Gateway cover different areas. This can present some challenges to effective working. The Greater Haven Gateway will, wherever possible, work together with other forums to maximise investment and resources in the sub region and support sustainable development.

Involving partners in regeneration

We are committed to improving the quality of life for residents in the sub region. All regeneration will be implemented in partnership with key local stakeholders and residents through the consultation and planning process.

The housing sub region is committed to working with the new local development framework to meet our identified needs and priorities. This will be particularly relevant when considering land use opportunities to meet housing need and achieving the best deals possible for our communities.

Sub regional partners have identified a number of actions which are included in our sub regional action plan.

Action points

- ▶▶ Undertake two learning events each year to share good practice on achieving regeneration, concentrating on planning and funding issues.
- ▶▶ Co-ordinate activity between housing and planning sub regions, possibly through quarterly partnership meetings.
- ▶▶ Work in partnership to achieve specific regeneration schemes in:
 - ▣ Ipswich Waterfront
 - ▣ Ipswich Village
 - ▣ East Colchester
 - ▣ Severalls, North Colchester
 - ▣ St. Boltophs, Colchester
 - ▣ Jaywick, Tendring.

Key worker and intermediate housing

Areas of priority

- ☆ Maximise delivery of new affordable housing.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.
- ☆ Improve access to affordable housing.

What do we mean by key worker housing schemes?

Strategic Outcome: Where community sustainability is endangered by difficulties recruiting or retaining staff in essential activities, these are key workers. If housing accessibility or affordability contributes, housing solutions are needed.

Typical Schemes: Key worker schemes require key worker groups in housing need to be identified, projects designed to meet this need and arrangements to ensure the scheme will be viable and needed in future. To help create balanced communities, intermediate and key worker housing may be integrated into schemes alongside other homes, providing a range of opportunities for local needs. Key worker units must link to the area's wider economic development strategies and support local employment initiatives.

What do we mean by intermediate tenures?

These are tenures which help meet housing need but are not affordable rented, and can include tenures such as shared ownership, shared equity and sub-market renting. These tenures are used to help balance housing markets.

Evidence of need

The accessibility and location of the Greater Haven sub region, together with the knock on effect of housing market hot-spots at Cambridge and London, have ensured that housing demand in the area is high and that house prices have continued to rise. Increasingly, local families are being priced out of the market. First time buyers are finding accessing the housing market increasingly difficult due to the mismatch of local incomes and house prices. Typically these are young couples, who would not normally qualify for affordable rented housing. This has led to a growing demand for affordable home ownership initiatives and other intermediate tenures. It is estimated from housing needs research that over 400 low cost home ownership units may be needed each year across the sub region.

This imbalance affects communities, particularly in rural areas, where local families are unable to get or keep local homes and are being forced out by people moving in who can afford the prices. The sub region is working with RSLs and other partners to encourage provision of a range of affordable tenures to help restore a balance.

Throughout the East of England the high cost of housing makes it difficult for public sector employers to recruit and retain staff. In 2004 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister launched its key worker living programme, promoting housing initiatives aimed at keeping the skills required in key public services available to local communities. Grants are available through zone agents to help key workers access the housing market. In the 2006 - 2008 development programme, the Housing Corporation is also inviting bids for key worker housing schemes, appropriately located to address the demand. The sub region is committed to work in partnership with the Housing Corporation and the ODPM to help identify these areas of demand, and with RSLs and providers to deliver these programmes.

Issues and trends

However the definition of key worker could be extended to other vital services for communities, for example post office workers or bus drivers, particularly where local services are declining due to recruitment issues. The sub region recognises that a more local definition of key workers is required, and that further research is needed to identify the scale and nature of the problem. At this stage we are comparing existing data rather than

commission new research, but will keep this approach under review and work together to fill gaps in knowledge.

The sub region will work together to ensure an appropriate mix of rented and intermediate tenure homes is secured, tailored to local needs and catering for different income levels, to help create balanced and sustainable communities.

Involving partners in key worker and intermediate housing

Comments from partners include

- Consider the need for key workers in rural areas.
- Why do other services not assist in subsidising this area of provision?
- We need to work on a definition of key worker housing that is right for the sub region.

We will continue to involve our partners, to help achieve our priorities for key worker and intermediate housing, and in monitoring our effectiveness.

Action points

- ▶ Quantify the need for different types of affordable housing, including key worker housing and intermediate tenures, across the sub region.
- ▶ Work with our zone agents to deliver the ODPM key worker living programme.
- ▶ Involve partners to achieve priorities and monitor effectiveness on key worker and intermediate housing.

Rural Housing

Areas of priority

- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.
- ☆ Improve access to affordable housing.
- ☆ Maximise delivery of new affordable housing.

What do we mean by rural housing?

Strategic Outcome: To identify the specific housing needs of rural areas, and to deliver appropriate affordable housing, in order to sustain rural communities.

Typical Schemes: Rural housing is usually developed to enable local people to either remain in or return to their home community. It can also provide an opportunity for those who work within rural communities, providing essential services such as care, to secure housing locally. Meeting the housing needs of these groups provides some of the building blocks to the continued sustainability of rural communities.

Issues and trends

Rural housing needs can be addressed by building in market towns (more than 3,000 population) or villages (less than 3,000 population).

Where village homes are planned, a robust long term sustainability test must be completed. Owing to the unique character and sensitivity of many village sites, the location and design of the development are critical. This helps integrate the homes physically and socially, but may have an effect on the cost.

Our sub region is very rural, except for the two urban centres of Colchester and Ipswich. The lack of affordable rural housing is a problem throughout the sub region, in part caused by increasing house prices and private rent levels. In many areas local people are unable to access local housing and this means households moving away from their local area. This affects the social fabric and the sustainability of our rural communities. Without new affordable homes to help reverse this trend, many villages will become unsustainable commuter or dormitory settlements.

Key challenges

It is essential for the sub region to have a clear understanding of its housing market. This includes robust housing needs information for our urban and rural areas. Rural housing needs can be more difficult to assess as information must be gathered and applied at a more local level to ensure homes are delivered in the areas of highest need. Any assessment of the sub regional housing market needs to include the rural angle.

Developing affordable housing within the rural environment is a key challenge for this sub region, especially overcoming planning dilemmas. For example, highways issues, NIMBYism, and finding appropriate sites while acknowledging the need for schemes to be sustainable. The affordability of schemes is also crucial so that the less affluent can continue to be able to live in a sustainable rural community.

Although rural housing is a very “local” issue, the sub region will highlight rural housing issues collectively and support a co-ordinated national approach to the issue. We are committed to meeting rural housing need through the Rural Housing Enablers, whether administered across Essex or Suffolk. The Rural Housing Enablers have been working to tackle the issue by improving links between parish and district Councils, undertaking village housing needs surveys, identifying sites and working with stakeholders to deliver new affordable village homes. We want to work with them to develop a more strategic approach to local needs assessments and rural issues in future.

Perhaps the greatest challenge for the provision of rural housing is funding. Rural schemes are often expensive and time consuming to develop, with open market sites often being too small to achieve any planning gain. The sub region believes rural exceptions policies and innovation are of great importance, but that further specific funding for rural schemes is essential to ensure that village needs are met. If funding is not available, false hope is brought to the community. This can result in lost trust and confidence amongst local people, and without their support potential schemes will fail.

We will also look to take advantage of any new powers arising from revised planning guidance. We anticipate continuing to identify and progress rural exceptions sites, and draft guidance indicates sites may be allocated specifically for affordable rural housing.

Involving partners in rural housing

Comments from the sub regional workshop included

- Villages and market towns, particularly villages, need small rural schemes of affordable housing
- Create sustainable settlements
- ‘Refresh’ dormitory villages
- Increase the percentage of funding going to rural schemes
- Encourage modest or small developments over large growth of villages
- Most of the sub region has rural areas - keep reminding government of rural concerns and issues

Action points

- ▶▶ Assess rural housing needs, using a robust format, which can be filtered down to parish level in areas of the sub region.
- ▶▶ Investigate developing a data bank of rural housing needs surveys across the sub region.
- ▶▶ Share best practice on developing rural exception sites, and devising innovative ways of providing rural housing schemes through learning events.
- ▶▶ Work with and support the Rural Housing Enabler service. This includes exploring sustainable ways of funding the service on a performance basis.
- ▶▶ Explore the opportunities provided for the delivery of rural affordable housing through the planning system via new PPG3 guidance.
- ▶▶ Explore opportunities to maximize the benefit of reduced discounts on second homes and reinvested them in affordable housing, working across district and county boundaries.

Local need and homelessness

Areas of priority

- ☆ Tackle homelessness.
- ☆ Improve access to affordable housing.
- ☆ Maximise delivery of new affordable housing.
- ☆ Support people who are more vulnerable in our society.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.
- ☆ Ensure equality for all in housing services.

What do we mean by local need and homelessness?

Strategic Outcome: In contrast to the growth theme, this relates directly to need arising within the locality of the scheme, serving the needs of the existing population.

Typical Schemes: In this theme, typical schemes will provide homes with a mixture of types and tenures, complementing existing provision. Any schemes built specifically to house the homeless will be developed in line with local homelessness strategies.

Evidence of need

In 2004/05 there were over 4,700 homelessness approaches made within the sub region and almost 1,500 acceptances compared with 11,190 homeless acceptances across the Eastern Region as a whole in 2003/04. This is a growing trend, raising increasing concern across the sub region. We also expect the number of households in the sub region to grow within the next 5 years. This will be from a combination of newly forming households and from changing family patterns for example following relationship breakdowns.

While affordability issues are clearly affecting levels of homelessness, there are a number of vulnerable groups consistently over-represented as presenting via the homelessness route. Support is vital to meeting the needs of these people to sustain tenancies and maintain independent lives. We will continue to work closely with both Essex and Suffolk County Councils to ensure that appropriate support is provided to all who need it.

Rough sleeping is an issue in some parts of the sub region, but the phenomena of 'hidden homelessness' or 'homeless at home' is a challenge for all local authorities. We will work together to meet local housing need and tackle hidden homelessness by improving access to the private rented sector and developing more affordable housing.

Both Suffolk and Essex authorities are focussed on prevention work with victims of domestic violence, through Essex-wide support and outreach work and through Suffolk-wide domestic violence good practice and training protocol. We will continue to share ideas, and build on these two approaches across the sub region to further improve the quality and effectiveness of these services.

There is an opportunity to share good practice and innovative working around homelessness and homelessness prevention - Colchester has been awarded beacon status for its innovative work in this area. We also plan to compare our homelessness reviews and strategies and learn from each other.

Action points

- ▶ Develop cross boundary nominations through a sub regional choice based lettings scheme and the existing START scheme.
- ▶ Implement district's homelessness strategies and identify any opportunities to work across boundaries and share good practice.

- ▶▶ Prevent and tackle homelessness, including amongst 16 and 17 year olds, through the use of mediation services, home visiting and other mechanisms through ODPM and other funding.
- ▶▶ Increase the availability of private rented housing available to homeless families and people at risk of homelessness through partnership working with private landlords and innovative use of rent-deposit and rent-in-advance type schemes.
- ▶▶ Work in partnership to achieve the government target of reducing use of and need for temporary accommodation by 50%, by 2010.

Supported housing

Areas of priority

- ☆ Support people who are more vulnerable in our society.
- ☆ Improve access to affordable housing.
- ☆ Tackle homelessness.

What do we mean by supported housing?

Strategic Outcome: A substantial and growing proportion of the population needs housing support. Revenue funding should be strategically targeted to help provide this under Supporting People arrangements. Where future provision needs capital investment in new schemes, this will be a strategic objective for use of the Single Regional Housing Programme (SRHP).

Typical Schemes: Supported housing needs to be developed on the basis of planned provision of appropriate support and its revenue underpinning. They will normally need to be planned as part of implementing emerging Supporting People strategies. Care needs to be taken also in terms of design and location, relating to physical appropriateness and the need for integration into surrounding communities.

What do we mean by “supporting people”?

Supporting people is “the government’s long term policy to enable local authorities to plan, commission and provide quality support services which help vulnerable people live independently in the community” *ODPM, June 2002*

Issues and trends

All new supported housing schemes have to address the priorities of the relevant Supporting People Strategy. In Essex, the key priorities are

- Increasing the availability of floating support (which ties in with the identified need for increased move-on accommodation).
- New services for people in specific target groups: homeless people, people with chaotic lifestyles, young people and frail elderly people.
- The key priorities for Suffolk are
- Enable older people to remain in their own home for as long as possible.
- Reduce the level of homelessness.
- Enable people to move out of long-term institutional care and given the choice of independent living options in the community.

All district and borough councils in Suffolk have achieved coveted “beacon status” for their innovative work on supporting people.

Tying revenue and capital funding together has led to uncertainty over scheme delivery, both present and future. If capital funding is available for the bricks and mortar, revenue funding will be needed to secure the support services for the new residents. Without one or the other, the scheme is threatened. The fact the sub region is covered by the two county administering authorities adds to the challenge. However, regardless of the difference in the decision-making process, schemes proposed by the sub-region will address the issues of sustainability, viability, flexibility and responsiveness.

Increasingly, before a scheme is proposed it is important to consider alternative uses for the building, the extent to which the support provided can help meet needs in the wider community and setting out clear referral and move-on policies. In particular, we will ensure the design and layout of new buildings intended for supported housing will be easily adaptable to serve as general needs properties in the future, in case of shifts in patterns of demand.

Common areas for future action and investment include

- Expanding and improving the availability of floating support for vulnerable people, particularly those at risk of repeat homelessness.
- Co-ordinating services for care-leavers and young people.

- Improving and re-modelling the provision of housing for older people, including sheltered, very sheltered and extra care housing both for rent and for lease.
- Temporary and move-on accommodation for all homeless households.
- All districts are working on improving partnerships with agencies and providers to ensure best use of resources, supported by effective referral processes for all supported housing.

Involving partners in supporting people

At a sub regional partnership event, stakeholders and partners gave the following feedback on supported housing and supporting people.

- We need suitable short terms and medium term move on accommodation for people leaving care.
- We must work more closely with health and social care agencies.
- How can we resolve the tension between working sub regionally on this issue and the fact that SP is organised on a county wide basis.
- The sub region needs a clear set of priorities for investment and clear evidence for the needs of different vulnerable groups. This should incorporate robust 5 year projections.
- We must work to overcome the marginalisation of groups such as: older people, people with mental health problems, young people, people with physical and learning disabilities and people who misuse substances.
- Consider a wide range of solutions covering different tenures and types to meet the identified need for supported housing.

Action points

- ▶ Share good practice on the development, planning and programming of supported housing and support services, work together to improve partnerships with agencies and providers to ensure best use of resources, supported by effective referral processes for all supported accommodation.
- ▶ Integrate schemes into the sub-region's pipeline and consider if services can be provided across boundaries.
- ▶ Quantify the need for different types of supported housing and housing support for a range of client groups, in partnership with Supporting People administering authorities, social care and health agencies. Examples include coordinating services for care-leavers and young people, and improving and re-modeling housing provision for older people.
- ▶ Explore and develop funding opportunities sub regionally.

Black and minority ethnic community needs

Areas of priority

- ☆ Ensure equality for all in housing services.
- ☆ Improve access to affordable housing.
- ☆ Improve housing conditions for vulnerable people living in the private sector.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.
- ☆ Support people who are more vulnerable in our society.

What do we mean by BME community needs?

Strategic Outcome: We will promote community cohesion and social inclusion across the sub region. All communities must be able to access housing, housing services and support and benefit fairly from each of the investment themes. This may not always be the case for BME communities. There may be linguistic, cultural or other factors which mean specialist schemes are needed.

Typical Schemes: To receive investment under the BME theme, schemes must have been planned and designed in collaboration with community members in mind. A strategic approach to BME housing is always needed.

The 2001 Census shows there are around 32,500 people from BME communities in our sub region. This population is widely dispersed and is not generally clustered in particular places, except that larger than average numbers of people from BME communities live in Ipswich and Tendring.

An Essex BME Housing Needs Survey, *Facing the Facts*, was conducted in 2003. A development worker has been appointed to help authorities implement its action plan. The study was recognised in the Regional Housing Strategy as providing reliable information on which investment decisions can be based. Similar work will need to be done across the Suffolk authorities in the sub region, so a consistent approach can be achieved in assessing and meeting the housing and support needs of BME households.

Despite the fact that people from BME backgrounds often feature disproportionately in the more vulnerable groups in our society, they are often underrepresented among those who access housing and support services. Tackling discrimination is one of the ways to address this issue, and we are committed to working in partnership with representative groups to listen to and act on the views of BME households.

To do this, we need to ensure that language does not operate as a barrier within our sub region by providing high quality translation services wherever required. The sub region is committed to ensuring the work we undertake and the image we present is inclusive, non-discriminatory and welcomes diversity.

As a sub region we recognise the value of developing a range of measures to encourage fair access to mainstream housing provision, housing services and support for all communities. These might include cluster lets, robust racial harassment policies, appropriate design and community involvement. Although these measures attract no additional funding, we will encourage a commitment to community cohesion and social inclusion from all our housing partners.

Action points

- ▶ Engage with BME communities to identify housing and support needs of BME communities and take action to ensure these are met through working with communities and partner agencies.
- ▶ Continue to improve information about BME communities' needs, including the issues in future assessments of housing markets and housing need.
- ▶ Sharing good practice on engagement of minority communities and tackling harassment and hate crime.

Gypsies and Travellers

Local authorities are required to include Gypsies and Travellers in local housing needs assessments, under the Housing Act 2004. The sub region is committed to ensuring provision of appropriate sites and working in partnership to tackle homelessness and social exclusion among Gypsy and Traveller communities, as well as addressing tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and settled communities. The arrangements for Gypsies and Travellers are currently county-based. To respond to this and other legislation we will be harmonising our work across the sub region. We also plan to learn from example of good practice in Fenland and Norfolk.

The Essex Planning Officers Group has commissioned a needs assessment of gypsies and travellers, due out in February 2006. This will give robust evidence for action to meet the housing needs across Essex and will be shared across the sub region.

To tackle unauthorised camping we recognise the shortfall in authorised pitches and will work together to assess need and form a strategy to deliver adequate authorised pitches and deal with unauthorised camping.

Although gypsies and travellers can use the support services available to all residents, in practice many are unlikely to do so. As a result, they may rely more on specialist services that do not always have a local base. There are specialist services available in our area, if not our sub region. We plan to work with them in future to help gypsies and travellers access these services and to make sure mainstream services are welcoming to and do not discriminate against these communities.

Action points

- ▶▶ Assess the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers within the sub region with planning colleagues by bringing together county wide datasets from Essex and Suffolk.
- ▶▶ Work with planners and other partners to implement recommendations of sub regional research into the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

What do we mean by asylum seekers?

Anyone at all is allowed to ask for sanctuary in another country if they are suffering persecution in their own. An asylum seeker is someone who has submitted an application for asylum to the UK authorities and is waiting for a decision on whether asylum will be granted. During this time, asylum seekers are usually accommodated by NASS in a cluster area.

What do we mean by refugees?

A refugee is someone who has had their asylum application thoroughly investigated, and who has proved that they have 'a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion' in their homeland. They are therefore entitled to our protection

What do we mean by a cluster area?

In the East of England, from 2006 the cluster areas will be:

- ☐ Ipswich
- ☐ Norwich
- ☐ Peterborough

Reserve Areas are:

- ☐ Bedford
- ☐ Colchester

Asylum seekers and refugees

Ipswich is the only existing cluster area for National Asylum Support Service (NASS) dispersal in the sub region and has received asylum seekers since 2000. Colchester has been recommended as a dispersal area from 2006 onwards.

Regionally NASS is currently supporting 490 single asylum seekers and 238 families with single people predominantly accommodated in Ipswich and Peterborough (taken from *Housing Needs of Refugees in the East of England* ECTEC 2005). Up to now NASS accommodation in Ipswich has been in the private rented and small hotel sectors, which are at the lower end of the market.

NASS has consulted on new arrangements for dispersal and the provision of 800 placements across the region to take effect from June 2006. The new model includes more cluster areas, including Colchester which will accept approximately 100 asylum seekers each year. Ipswich will continue as a cluster area accepting around 150 asylum seekers each year. This provides us with an opportunity to work together to make sure asylum seekers receive support to participate in local communities, and for authorities to learn from best practice.

An estimated 5,500 refugees live in the Eastern Region but there is little evidence on the number of refugee households settling in the sub region in the longer term. In Ipswich homelessness and housing advice services, hostels for single people and the rent deposit guarantee scheme have all seen increased numbers of refugee households. Refugee agencies identify the need for short term supported housing or floating support to help those who have had a positive decision from the Home Office to find housing locally and adjust to independent living. The Refugee Council offers up to 2 hours advice to each household and Suffolk Refugee Support Forum provides casework including basic housing advice and support. The Suffolk Refugee Support Forum is planning outreach services for refugees settling in smaller towns and villages in Suffolk, and this may become more important should sub regional partners take on a greater role.

Action points

- ▶▶ Help prevent homelessness among refugees in partnership with refugee agencies.
- ▶▶ Work with NASS to achieve a sustainable dispersal policy for asylum seekers.
- ▶▶ Promote community cohesion by developing balanced communities of people from a range of backgrounds with a range of needs.
- ▶▶ Support the development of supported housing, floating support, advice and outreach services for refugee households.
- ▶▶ Work with authorities and partners across the region to implement the recommendations of the East of England Housing Needs Study of refugees.

Part 2 Existing homes and communities

What is the fitness standard?

A “fit” home has to be reasonably suitable for occupation. It has to be in a reasonable state of repair and have decent heating, lighting, bathing, toilet and cooking facilities.

What is the health and safety rating system?

This is a system for checking faults in homes and assessing their effect on the health and safety of people living there, their visitors, their neighbours and even passers-by.

Each home gets a hazard score. The greater the hazard, the higher the score. The score is based on the likelihood of any particular hazard occurring, how serious it would be if the hazard occurred and the effect of the hazard on health.

What is the decent homes standard?

The government has set a standard for council and housing association homes called the “decent homes standard”. If a home is to be judged ‘decent’, it must

- ☐ be above the fitness standard for housing
- ☐ be in a reasonable state of repair
- ☐ have reasonably modern facilities
- ☐ be reasonably warm and well insulated.

Why focus on existing homes?

While new investment and the challenge to increase the supply of homes are key priorities for the region and the sub region, we need to balance this work with investment in existing homes and communities.

There are standards used to measure the quality of homes in all existing homes, though these vary depending if a home is rented or owned privately, or if it is an affordable home rented from a council or housing association.

Private homes

In the past, private housing has been judged according to the fitness standard. Now, the government has introduced a new measure called the health and safety rating system.

The government has also set a target to increase the number of decent homes in the private sector, particularly focussing on vulnerable households.

Affordable homes

Affordable homes are measured according to the “decent homes” standard.

The government has set the target that all affordable homes, whether council or housing association, should reach the decent homes standard by 31 December 2010.

Private housing conditions

Areas of priority

- ☆ Improve private sector housing conditions for vulnerable people living in the private housing sector.
- ☆ Support those people who are more vulnerable in our society.
- ☆ Contribute to ensuring housing in the sub region is of high quality and is sustainable.

What do we mean by private housing?

Private housing includes owned and rented homes, but excludes homes rented from councils, housing associations, registered social landlords (RSLs) or other public bodies.

Evidence of need

Across the sub region, 85% of homes are privately owned or rented. However this varies, from 77% in Ipswich to 91% in Tendring. There are high levels of disrepair and poor energy efficiency in private homes.

An average of 4.76% private sector homes are unfit, ranging from 2.4% in Suffolk Coastal to 8.25% in Mid Suffolk.

Over and above unfitness, an average of 9.72% private sector homes were in serious disrepair at the last stock condition survey. The estimated cost to remedy serious disrepair was £270.4m.

Local authority funds available for 2004/5 total £2,743,000 with all authorities making private sector housing an investment priority. Ipswich and Tendring have been successful in accessing government funding for the private sector in 2004/5. This funding is focussed specifically on achieving the decent homes standard in private homes.

Our sub regional focus is on vulnerable households in private sector housing, whether rented or bought. The government's target is to increase the proportion of vulnerable households living in decent homes. This target will be achieved if the proportion of vulnerable households in decent homes is increased from 57% in 2001 to 65% in 2006, 70% by 2010 and 75% by 2020.

Issues and trends

Each authority is implementing local policies based on the results of individual stock condition surveys. We need to share and compare information, both on levels of decency, fitness and risk in the private sector, and how best to correlate this data with residents' vulnerability, to make sure we direct any resources most effectively.

By comparing unfitness and serious disrepair information with Census data, it is clear at present that Ipswich and Tendring both have high levels of unfitness and disrepair, followed by Colchester.

However these statistics need further analysis to make sure we are comparing similar data, comparing vulnerability to housing conditions specifically in the private sector. In addition, this information will be affected by the introduction of the new health and safety rating system in the autumn of 2005 and new condition surveys that some authorities are commissioning.

Involving partners to improve private housing conditions

There is sound evidence of partnership working with agencies that help to improve the housing conditions of our more vulnerable residents, including a wide range of different kinds of home improvement agencies. Colchester has seconded a team of occupational therapists from Essex County Council to

ensure that assessments for aids and adaptations and DFG's can be facilitated quickly. This team also work with Anchor *Staying Put* to ensure older people can remain in their home independently and safely for longer.

Fuel poverty is being tackled across the sub region, hand in hand with improving energy efficiency and securing affordable warmth, again focussing initially on our most vulnerable residents. Key partners include the Warm Front team, Essex Energy Advice Centre and Suffolk Energy Action Link, which is a partnership arrangement between all the Suffolk borough and district councils.

Action points

- ▶▶ Achieve the government's decent homes target to improve housing conditions for vulnerable households living in private homes.
- ▶▶ Seek to secure investment and an increase in resources to address unfitness, serious disrepair and fuel poverty and use new tools and mechanisms to achieve this such as the hazard ratings.
- ▶▶ Compare stock condition survey data across the sub region and build information on the decent homes standard in private homes.
- ▶▶ Work to promote interventions to tackle fuel poverty.

Disabled Facilities Grants, aids and adaptations

Areas of priority

- ☆ Improve housing conditions for vulnerable people living in the private sector.
- ☆ Support people who are more vulnerable in our society.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.

What are DFGs?

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) are available to fund adaptations to homes to allow people with disabilities to remain living independently in their own home. With the exception of children's DFGs the grants are subject to a test of financial resources. To be eligible you must be an owner-occupier or a tenant who has a disability, or have a disabled person living with you.

What are aids & adaptations?

Aids and adaptations are similar to DFGs, providing facilities to people with disabilities living in council housing. The funding comes from the Council and are awarded according to the Council's local policy on aids and adaptations.

Issues and trends

Recent changes to funding for aids and adaptations to housing association homes, and reduced funding across the region in 2005/6 for DFGs have placed an additional, significant burden on local authorities in the sub region. These changes have had a direct impact upon people with disabilities whose homes need to be adapted to meet their needs, with waiting lists for work having to be established and considerable rigour being applied to determine what work should or must be undertaken.

Requests for substantial increases in credit approvals to meet the needs identified have been, and will continue to be, submitted to ODPM to try to redress the issues that have arisen. At the same time, authorities undertaking stock option appraisals have had to reflect the changes to funding as part of the appraisal. Where stock transfer is proposed the receiving housing association will need to fully fund aids and adaptations to the stock in future years from its own resources, reducing the value of the homes involved.

Involving partners in disabled facilities grants, aids and adaptations

Partners and key stakeholders have identified the need to link our actions to already identified county and regional priorities for investment in DFGs and aids and adaptations. Feedback from partners has also indicated that meeting the specific housing needs of older people in the sub region is an important priority for them.

The ODPM is currently reviewing the future direction of DFGs. The sub region will await the outcome of this review prior to determining any specific proposals for DFGs or aids and adaptations. We will work hard to ensure that the demand for DFGs is met and involve partners in achieving this goal as well as monitoring our effectiveness in meeting demand for DFGs.

Action points

- ▶ Secure additional resources to meet the needs of people with disabilities in the sub region and work together to ensure we get best value from all resources.
- ▶ Work in partnership with other organisations to ensure that the housing needs of disabled people and people with mobility impairments are assessed quickly and expertly, in order to achieve a better level of health and well being in the sub region.
- ▶ Ensure our choice based lettings systems enable us to make best use of DFGs when adapted properties are relet, including creating a register of properties for people with disabilities.

Empty homes

Areas of priority

- ☆ Improve housing conditions for vulnerable people living in the private sector.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.

Issues and trends

All authorities in the sub region have different issues around empty homes. We recognise the need to share good practice and to work together to analyse information on the most effective ways to deal with them. Some authorities have related problems with significant numbers of second homes, which exacerbates affordable housing need.

Authorities are at various stages of creating, adopting, implementing and reviewing strategies, but all are aiming particularly at long term empty homes, and bringing them back into use to help meet local housing need and revitalise this part of the housing market.

Some authority's private housing renewal strategies include grants or loans to help bring empty homes back into use. This assistance requires the owner to accept a nomination arrangement so local people in housing need can occupy the property for a set period.

Colchester and Suffolk Coastal have also entered into leasing arrangements with Annington Homes and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to use surplus former MOD housing as temporary housing for homeless households. However, authorities individually have generally struggled to make private leasing schemes a viable option. We hope that working in partnership within the sub region to share ideas and good practice will help present a solution to this issue.

All four Essex authorities have worked with Colne Housing Society to establish leasing schemes to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households. We will investigate options to use leasing schemes to provide settled accommodation to homeless households and households in housing need. If successful this may also reduce the use of temporary accommodation in line with government targets by 2010.

Action points

- ▶ Explore options for a sub regional leasing scheme to assist with homelessness and bring properties back into use, including using the new powers and toolkit set out in the Housing Act 2004 to initiate a compulsory leasing scheme.
- ▶ Share good practice on empty homes across the sub region through the newly created private sector housing sub group, particularly through the new legislative powers under the Housing Act 2004.
- ▶ Link our work to bring empty homes back into use to revitalising our town centres and to any regeneration initiatives.

Decent homes and communities

Areas of priority

- ☆ Support people who are more vulnerable in our society.
- ☆ Ensure housing in the sub region is high quality and sustainable.

By 31 December 2010, all affordable housing must meet the government's decent homes standard (see *Existing homes and communities*). Stock holding authorities are conducting options appraisals to assess whether they have the resources to meet and maintain homes not only at the minimum Decent Homes Standard but at an enhanced standard in line with tenants' aspirations and priorities, known as decent homes plus. RSLs are expected to attain the standard through their business planning processes.

Evidence of need

Significant levels of investment are needed to reach the decent homes standard. At April 2005 some 12,601 (34%) council homes fail the standard across the sub region. This varies from 21% in Babergh to 62% in Braintree. An estimated £225m is needed to meet the standard against estimated available funding of £174m. The way forward for individual authorities will be addressed through options appraisal.

Suffolk Coastal and Maldon have both previously transferred their housing stock to RSLs. Colchester operates in partnership with Colchester Borough Homes, an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO). Following options appraisals (which have been "signed-off" by GoEast) Ipswich, Babergh and Mid Suffolk are to retain their housing stock. Tendring is seeking sign-off for retention and Braintree is seeking sign-off for stock transfer.

In partnership with tenants and residents local enhanced standards known as decent homes plus are being developed to deliver better homes, neighbourhoods and services. Initiatives include resident-led environmental improvements, safety and security, tackling anti-social behaviour, community and estate regeneration. We will share good practice on these issues across the sub region.

Action Points

- ▶▶ Achieve the decent homes standard by 2010 or sooner for all affordable housing and work towards delivering "decent homes plus".
- ▶▶ Share good practice on partnering and procurement and explore joint procurement opportunities.
- ▶▶ Maintain the commitment to work in partnership with tenants and residents and increase their involvement in decision-making regarding their homes.

Communities

Authorities are committed to working in partnership with residents and other agencies to deliver improvements in local communities. We will help achieve this by

- improving resident involvement and participation in decision making
- acting on residents concerns and priorities
- fostering joined-up working across agencies.

There are many community-based initiatives across the sub region providing tremendous opportunity to share good practice and encourage innovative working. Babergh has been awarded beacon status for its innovative work on neighbourhood renewal, which all authorities in the sub region are keen to learn from. Other examples in the sub region involve “liveability” and “investing in communities” projects and numerous local interagency projects, all of which help physically improve neighbourhoods, tackle problems locally and build community capacity.

Appendix 1: Key facts

This appendix has been put together by combining information from:

- Housing needs studies carried out in each district. Housing needs studies have been undertaken at different times between 2000 and 2004 and we need to develop a housing market assessment across the sub region to give more reliable and comparable information in future.
- Housing Investment Programme (HIP) returns.
- The National Statistics website.
- The 2001 Census.
- The Land Registry.
- The National Housing Federation (NHF) report Housing Crisis in the East 2005.

Overall figures

- Total population 889,752 (from 2001 Census). Mid year population estimates (from Neighbourhood Statistics) give a total population for the sub region of 900,500 in 2003, showing an increase in population of 10,748.
- Total dwellings 403,086 (HIP figures April 2005).
- Total housing association (21,578) and council dwellings (33,687) = 55,226 (HIP figures April 2005).

Type and Tenure	Number of Dwellings	% of total stock in sub region
Council	33,687	8.4%
Housing Association	21,578	5.4%
Other Public sector	5,240	1.3%
Private owned & rented	342,581	85%
Total	403,086	100%

Housing market - earnings

- Earnings needed to enter the private housing market range from £20,000 to £28,500 including renting and purchase. Average earnings needed across the sub region = £24,809 (figures from housing needs studies).
- Average incomes in 2004 across the sub region vary from £17,497 in Ipswich to £26,589 in Braintree from NHF report Housing Crisis in the East, 2005.

Housing market - housing costs

- To buy a property on the open market with a 5% deposit and a mortgage equivalent to 3.5 times income would necessitate an income of between £38,570 a year and £57,837 a year. From NHF report *Housing Crisis in the East*, 2005.
- House price across the sub region averaged £188,913 and have increased by 85% since early 2000. Average house prices now range from £143,257 to £230,530 (Land Registry June 2005) across the sub region.
- Price of cheapest dwellings ranges from £52,000 to over £110,125 (from housing needs studies).

Mismatch between supply and demand for affordable housing

- Number of applications on housing registers at April 2005 (excluding applications to transfer from one home to another) is 16,111.

- Some 4,724 homelessness applications were made in the sub region in 2004/05 and 1,502 were accepted. This represents 32% of applications are accepted, however the 68% of applications not accepted may still have a housing need.
- 357 affordable rented homes were purchased through the right to buy (RTB) in 2004/05. Between 1999/2000 and 2004/05 some 4,053 affordable homes have been lost through the RTB across the sub region, or an average of 675 affordable homes per year no longer available to rent. This does not include sales to housing association tenants through the right to acquire.
- A total of 4,410 new affordable rented homes are estimated to be needed each year (from most recent housing needs studies).
- 642 new affordable homes were delivered across the sub region in 2004/05.
- Number of lettings to council and RSL properties (excluding transfers) was 5,423 in 2004/05.
- Total funding to RSLs to deliver new affordable homes was just under £33million in 2004-2006, from Housing Corporation and local authority resources.

Planning targets and policies

- The Regional Planning target in the Draft East of England Plan is to develop 74,100 homes across the sub region between 2001 and 2021 or 3,705 dwellings each year.

	Annual average	Total
Braintree	385	7,700
Babergh	260	5,200
Colchester	855	17,100
Maldon	120	2,400
Tendring	425	8,500
Ipswich	770	15,400
Mid Suffolk	385	7,700
Suffolk Coastal	505	10,100
Total	3,705	74,100

- District council targets range from 15% to 40% of all new homes to be affordable homes on qualifying sites.

Mismatch between stock condition and available funds

- Approximately 4.8% private sector homes were unfit and 9.7% were in serious disrepair at time of last stock condition survey.
- In the private sector the estimated cost of remedying unfitness was just over £187 million and tackling serious disrepair was just over £270 million, at time of last stock condition survey.
- Council funds spent on repairs to private sector housing in 2004/05 totalled £2.7 million.
- The number of council dwellings not meeting the decent homes standard totalled 12,600, representing 37% of council homes across the sub region at the start of April 2005.
- The estimated resources needed to ensure all council dwellings (excluding the two stock transferred authorities) meet the DHS by 2010 is £225 million. The estimated funding available is £174 million.

Special needs

- Some 52,700 households contained someone with special needs at date of last housing needs studies.
- 30% of these households were living in a home adapted for their needs at the last housing needs study.
- Local authority funding available to adapt council and private homes totalled £5.2 million in 2004/05.

Appendix 2: Contributors to the sub regional strategy

Local authorities in the sub region

- Babergh
- Braintree
- Colchester
- Ipswich
- Maldon
- Mid Suffolk
- Suffolk Coastal
- Tendring

Social landlords

- Anglia Housing Group
- CDS Co-operative
- Colchester Quaker HA
- Colne Housing Society/Iceni Homes
- Flagship Housing Group
- Guinness Trust
- Hastoe Housing Association
- Iceni Homes
- John Grooms HA
- Moat Housing Group
- Orbit Housing Group
- Orwell HA
- Springboard HA

- Suffolk Housing Society
- Swan Housing Group
- Warden HA

Private sector partners

- Lovell Partnerships
- Persimmon Homes

Specific interest groups

- Countryside Agency
- House Builders Federation
- Menter
- Suffolk ACRE

Other partners

- Cambridgeshire Housing Sub Region
- East of England Regional Assembly
- Essex County Council
- Essex Social Care Services
- Essex Supporting People
- Go East
- Haven Gateway Partnership
- Housing Corporation
- Suffolk County Council
- Suffolk Social Care Services
- Suffolk Supporting People