

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16TH NOVEMBER 2006

EXECUTIVE – 27TH NOVEMBER 2006

Report by the Director of Housing on the results of consultation on the draft revised strategic housing objectives.

SUMMARY

This report sets out the results of consultation with a number of voluntary groups, statutory organisations and partner agencies and groups with an interest in housing issues on the draft revised strategic housing objectives. In total, some 138 organisations and strategic partnership groups were consulted with 58 responses received.. Consultees were asked for their views on the proposed objectives and their ranking of the objectives in terms of importance. The results of the consultation indicate overwhelming agreement from those who responded with the revised objectives and include amendments and additions to the actions by which the objectives could be delivered. The report seeks approval of the revised strategic housing objectives, the proposed action to be taken on issues raised by the consultation and the preparation and production of an updated Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Housing and Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to support the recommendations in paragraph 3.
2. If the Overview and Scrutiny Committees approve any views, comments or additional recommendations on this report these will be submitted to the Executive for consideration.
3. The Executive are recommended to:
 - (a) approve the strategic housing objectives, amended as a result of consultation, as set out in paragraph 10 (Table 2 - column 3) of this report;
 - (b) approve the action proposed in response to the issues raised as a result of the consultation exercise as set out in Appendix 3 to the report; and
 - (c) authorise the preparation of a revised Housing Strategy and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan to be completed by Summer 2007.

INTRODUCTION

4. The Council's current Housing Strategy document was prepared and published in 2002/03 (Papers Nos. 02-769 and 03-248) and then updated in January 2004 (Paper No. 04-78) at the start of the Stock Options Appraisal Process. Both the Housing Strategy and the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan achieved a "Fit for Purpose" rating in 2003 (Paper No. 03-552) from the Government Office for London. As a result of achieving "Fit for Purpose" no update of the documents was required for at least three years although it was expected that the Strategy and Business Plan action plans would be updated annually.
5. In 2002, the Government White Paper "Strong Local Leadership-Quality Public Services" set out proposals to reduce and rationalise the requirements for authorities to prepare plans to central government specifications. This was followed in 2003 with a document titled "Reducing Local Authority Plan Requirements" which stated that excellent authorities would be required only to produce a Best Value Performance Plan (now known in Wandsworth as the Corporate Performance Plan) and a Community Strategy and to contribute to those plans which are the responsibility of partnerships (e.g. Crime and Disorder Reduction etc). In addition to the above, "non-excellent" authorities would be required to produce the following major service plans: a Housing Strategy (every three to five years once Fit for Purpose is achieved and with the discretion to include the HRA Business Plan, Homelessness Strategy and other housing related plans within this strategy), a Local Development Document, a Children and Young People's Plan, a Local Transport Plan and Civil Contingencies Plans plus a number of other topic specific or partnership plans.
6. The Local Government Act 2003 provided a statutory basis for the production of local housing strategies and for the streamlining of housing related plans by subsuming the HRA Business Plan, the Homelessness Strategy and the Home Energy Conservation Strategy into the Housing Strategy document. The clear intent was to re-confirm the Housing Strategy as an overarching document. Under the Local Authorities' Plans and Strategies (Disapplication) Order 2005 "excellent" local authorities are no longer required to produce home energy conservation reports or homelessness strategies.

CURRENT POSITION

7. Updating of the Council's current Housing Strategy was delayed to allow for the Stock Options Appraisal process to take place. Given that the outcome of that process was to retain the ownership and management of the Council's housing stock added to the changes which have taken place in the intervening years to the delivery of the housing service, it was deemed appropriate to update the existing Strategy with a view to producing a revised Housing Strategy by Summer 2007. It is generally accepted that an "excellent" local authority will wish to update its housing strategy at regular intervals.
8. In order to ensure that the proposed revised Strategy reflects the views of Wandsworth residents and other stakeholders the current strategic housing objectives (a copy of which is set out in [Appendix 1 to this report](#)) were reviewed. The revised draft housing objectives were then circulated for consultation. In total, over 138 Resident Associations, Resident Management Organisations, Resident Social Landlords (RSLs) voluntary organisations, strategic partnership groups, statutory and partner agencies were asked for their views on the draft revised housing objectives, including whether they agreed/disagreed with the draft objectives, how they wished to rank the objectives in terms of importance and whether they wished to bring to the Council

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other objectives which they deemed to be important. A copy of the revised draft housing objectives and questionnaire is set out in [Appendix 2 to this report](#).

9. To date some 58 responses have been received from a variety of stakeholders. It would be appropriate to thank those organisations that took the time to respond to the consultation questionnaire. The nature of the responses is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Analysis of Consultation Responses

Action	Number
Number of stakeholder organisations, partnerships etc contacted:	138
Number of responses received:	58
Of which replied: by means of a separate response:	2
by means of the questionnaire:	56
Number expressing neither agreement nor disagreement with the objectives:	8
Number expressing agreement/disagreement:	50
Of which: agreeing with the objectives:	39
expressing either disagreement or amendments to the objectives:	11*

* Only two of which suggested amendments to the wording of the objectives, the remainder suggesting amendments to the actions delivering the objectives.

10. Where stakeholders expressed a view on the draft, revised objectives, the overwhelming majority were in agreement with the draft. Of those disagreeing two responses suggested a change of wording in respect of objectives 4 and 5 which are detailed in bold in Table 2 below

Table 2 – Amendments to Strategic Housing Objectives

Draft Revised Strategic Housing Objectives which were subject to consultation:		Amended Strategic Housing Objectives as a result of consultation
01	Maintain and improve the Borough's housing stock.	Maintain and improve the Borough's housing stock.
02	Maintain and improve the supply of affordable housing to own and rent.	Maintain and improve the supply of affordable housing to own and rent.
03	Promote a range of housing options for a range of housing needs.	Promote a range of housing options for a range of housing needs.
04	Promote community safety and the protection of the environment.	Maintain and improve community safety and the protection of the environment.
05	Encourage resident and stakeholder involvement and participation in service delivery.	Encourage resident and stakeholder involvement and participation in the delivery of a quality housing service.

11. Where disagreement with the objectives was expressed, this was generally in the form of amendments or additions to the way in which the objectives should be delivered rather than amendments to the overall objectives. Details of the issues raised by consultees and responses to those issues are set out in [Appendix 3 to this report](#). Proposed amendments to the actions will

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be addressed as part of the detail of the Housing Strategy. In general the issues raised covered the following areas: -

- (a) consultation with residents and stronger working relationships with partner agencies (both in terms of those providing support to specific client groups and in terms of development);
 - (b) improving the availability of affordable housing, including property to rent and purchase (best use of existing stock, addressing under occupation and overcrowding issues);
 - (c) addressing the housing needs of specific client groups such as those with physical disabilities and people experiencing mental health issues;
 - (d) anti-social behaviour; and
 - (e) sustainability and regeneration issues
12. Views differed on the ranking of the objectives with some responses of less use than initially anticipated due in some part to unclear ranking decisions by respondents. Some 39 responses provided a clear indication of ranking of the objectives from most important to least important. In terms of “first highest ranking choice” the objectives were ranked as follows in order of most important to least important: -
- (a) Maintain and improve the Borough’s housing stock;
 - (b) Maintain and improve the supply of affordable housing to own and rent;
 - (c) Promote a range of housing options for a range of housing need;
 - (d) Promote community safety and the protection of the environment; and
 - (e) Encourage resident and stakeholder involvement and participation in service delivery
13. When second ranking choices are taken into account, promoting community safety and the protection of the environment becomes the second most important priority after maintaining and improving the Borough’s housing stock. Full details of the ranking decisions can be found in Appendix 4 to this report.

CONCLUSION

14. The consultation exercise has provided evidence of strong agreement from a range of agencies with the Council’s revised housing objectives and provides a firm foundation on which to prepare and produce a revised and updated Housing Strategy. Work will continue in relation to the issues raised in respect of delivering the housing objectives as set out in Appendix 3 to this report. There will be a further opportunity to discuss issues arising from the revised housing objectives with interested parties at the Housing Conference scheduled to take place in the Civic Suite on 7th December 2006. It is anticipated that the revised Housing Strategy and an associated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan should be completed by Summer 2007.

The Town Hall,
Wandsworth,
SW18 2PU.

ROY EVANS
Director of Housing

8th November 2006

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers to this report.

All reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regulatory and other committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/committ) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the committee secretary (on 020 8871 6039) can supply if required.

Current Strategic Housing Objectives (before revision)

The Council's Current Strategic Housing Objectives are:	
01	To maintain and improve the physical condition of the Borough's housing stock with particular regard to the Decent Homes Standard.
02	To maintain the supply of affordable housing and ensure the effective allocation of social housing on a fair and equal basis.
03	To promote a range of housing opportunities for people with special needs and to address the needs of homeless households.
04	To ensure that government targets for new housing provision are met in a manner consistent with planning policies and the needs of residents.
05	To promote community safety and the protection of the environment, with particular reference to the use of sustainable energy resources.
06	To support the economic regeneration of the most deprived areas of the Borough.
07	To support the continuing aspirations of residents to become homeowners.
08	To promote best use of the Borough's housing stock, maximising the potential of current non-residential stock for housing purposes and minimising the number of empty properties with particular regard to currently underused property in line with the Council's "Hidden Homes Initiative" and Empty Property Strategy.
09	To facilitate the development of a vibrant private rented housing market.
10	To pursue best practice and value for money in the provision of housing and housing services, ensuring residents have a real opportunity to influence the delivery of services and to participate in the Council's decision-making process at the level they choose.

Name of Organisation: _____

CONSULTATION ON THE COUNCIL’S STRATEGIC HOUSING OBJECTIVES

The Council’s proposed draft revised housing objectives are as follows:

The Council's Proposed Revised Strategic Housing Objectives are to:	This means:	Ranking
<p>01 Maintain and improve the Borough's housing stock.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out repairs, major works and improvements to existing Council stock to ensure that homes are habitable and meet current housing standards (Decent Homes Standard (DHS)). • Improving both the Council housing stock and environment beyond current standards. The Council is currently working to the Decent Homes Plus Standard which involves work over and above the DHS such as security works, landscaping etc. • Ensuring that the Council’s housing stock contributes to regeneration by being well maintained and providing a visually attractive appearance in the area. • Working with partner housing agencies and the private sector to improve their housing stock. • Adopting a targeted approach to private sector improvement. 	
<p>02 Maintain and improve the supply of affordable housing to own and rent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising opportunities to create new affordable homes for both sale and rent, ensuring government targets for new housing provision are met in a manner consistent with planning policies and the needs of residents. • Seeking opportunities within the housing stock to provide additional accommodation (Hidden Homes Initiative), ensuring Council properties that require repair are made available for letting as soon as possible, encouraging tenants who are under-occupying property to move to more suitably sized accommodation to free up family size accommodation for others. • Seeking agreements from other housing providers to make housing accommodation available to the Council for allocation. This is achieved either directly by means of nominations agreements with Registered Social Landlords or through national schemes such as the “Out of London” Scheme. • Working with private sector owners of empty property to bring those properties back into use by means of grants. • Seeking agreements with private sector landlords to make use of their property for Council housing applicants. 	

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03	Promote a range of housing options for a range of housing needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with agencies to ensure that Wandsworth residents have access to home ownership schemes and providing information on the options available for residents who wish to become home owners either through the right to buy scheme or the various national schemes such as Homebuy, Key worker Living, Cash Incentive Schemes etc. • Adapting the Council’s housing stock (where possible) to meet the needs of those with physical disabilities. • Working with other housing providers to ensure that particular housing needs (physical disabilities, mental health or learning disabilities, substance misuse etc) are addressed either through the provision of specialist accommodation or through appropriate support services. • Ensuring that homeless households are accommodated in appropriate temporary and permanent accommodation. • Allocating accommodation for rent in line with the Allocation Policy with an agreed set of allocation priorities and on the basis of housing need. 	
04	Promote community safety and the protection of the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where appropriate putting in place appropriate security measures (CCTV, door entry systems, improving landscaping to eliminate “problem areas” etc), safety measures (installation of smoke alarms, window catches etc) and policies (anti social behaviour policy) to create a safer environment. • Working with other agencies to achieve a safer Wandsworth. • Improving the fabric of the stock and installing efficient, energy saving components (over-cladding to reduce heat loss, efficient boilers and components, double glazing, insulation and any other carbon reducing measures) 	
05	Encourage resident and stakeholder involvement and participation in service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking residents’ views on the delivery of the housing service either through specific consultation or through the Area Panels and the Borough Residents’ Forum. • Seeking the views of other stakeholders (service users, voluntary sector partner agencies) on housing issues. 	

1. The above are the Council’s proposed draft housing objectives for the next three to five years.
2. For each objective please indicate which are most important to your organisation by placing 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 against the relevant objective in the column headed “Ranking”.
3. Please indicate below whether you agree or disagree with each objective. If you DISAGREE with any objective and feel it should be changed or deleted please indicate which objective and provide details below.

Objective Number	Agree or disagree?	If you disagree, how should the objective be changed
01		
02		
03		
04		
05		

4. Are there any other objectives which your organisation feels should become part of the Council's housing objectives? If "yes" please indicate the objective and indicate how important it is to you by placing 1, 2 or 3 against the relevant objective in the column headed "Ranking" bearing in mind any ranking given to objectives with which you agree.

Additional objective	Ranking

Thank you for completing the above questionnaire which should be returned in the enclosed pre-paid envelope (no stamp required) to:

**Housing Strategy and Development Section
Housing Department
17-27 Garratt Lane
Wandsworth SW18 4AE**

Please return the completed questionnaire by no later than Wednesday 25th October 2006.

Issues Raised in Relation to the Delivery of the Revised Objectives

Revised Strategic Housing Objectives:		Issues Raised	Response
01	Maintain and improve the Borough's housing stock.	Installation of double-glazing to help reduce heating costs.	A programme of double-glazing installation is in place together with other work (such over-cladding, insulation, installation of energy efficient components) to reduce heat loss and maximise energy efficiency. The Housing pages on the Council's website are being redesigned to provide residents with information on major works taking place. This is in addition to regular reports to both the Borough Residents' Forum and Housing Committee. Information will also be included in "Homelife" the Council's newsletter for Council residents.
		Keep unnecessary costs to a minimum.	All contracts are subject to a tender process with the aim of achieving the best possible service at the lowest possible cost. Resident representatives are fully involved in this process. Work will continue to identify "efficiency savings" and ensure that these are brought to the attention of residents.
		Use recycled content construction materials and recycle demolition waste where possible.	Where possible the Council will address sustainability issues but must clearly bear in mind the costs of such initiatives to Council residents. Officers will liaise with partner housing agencies in relation to sustainability issues.
		Housing stock both Council and Private Sector to be raised to Decent Homes Standard (DHS).	DHS currently being worked to with Council tenanted properties subject to the Decent Homes Plus standard which includes environmental and security works.
		Look for opportunities to provide outdoor and indoor safe and accessible space for play and exercise for children and adults. *	The Children, Young People and Families Housing Policy Statement, Strategy and Action Plan recognises the need to maintain housing estate play and ball games areas to a good, safe standard.
		Provide healthy living space especially for the very young and the very old in terms of heating, lighting and ventilation and opportunities to have easy and affordable access to healthy food.*	The Decent Homes Standard incorporates an assessment of the "fitness" of buildings for human habitation (now replaced by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)). Currently less than 1 per cent of the Council tenanted stock is non-decent.

02	Maintain and improve the supply of affordable housing to own and rent.	Under-occupation of existing property.	Initiatives are already in place to encourage those under occupying Council property to free up family sized accommodation. Other initiatives to encourage under occupying residents to move to more appropriately sized accommodation are being explored.
		Increase the provision of homes for rent reducing waiting times.	The provision of homes for rent is being addressed in part through the Hidden Homes initiative and by working with partner RSLs through the development of sites in line with local planning policies on affordable housing. Policy 2 in the Council's Local Development Framework Draft Core Strategy (out for consultation from 3rd November 2006 – 15th December 2006) states "A proportion of one third affordable housing will generally be sought in private developments of 15 dwellings or more. Schemes which meet a specific priority need identified in the Council's Housing Strategy will be encouraged, in which case a lower target (at least 25% may be appropriate".
		Encourage private investor providers of affordable homes to work in the Borough to deliver provision of such homes on a shared ownership basis without grant.	The Council is currently working in partnership with one such developer and will seek opportunities to increase such work.
		Accommodate homeless households locally.	Wandsworth has one of the highest rates of in borough provision for homeless households in London and will seek to accommodate homeless households in Borough where possible.

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		<p>The Council's perception of an affordable home is beyond the reach of those working in essential services.</p> <p>Increase dramatically the percentage of affordable homes being built by developers and make them truly affordable. *</p> <p>Ensure homes go to key workers.</p> <p>Encourage the development of mixed income, mixed ownership type areas.</p>	<p>The Council uses the definition of affordable homes defined in the Government's draft Planning Policy Statement 3. This includes social rented housing, key worker housing and intermediate housing (housing for rent or sale above social rented prices but below market price). The average income of purchasers for one bed shared ownership properties is approximately £30,000 in a range from £18-46,000 and £35,000 for purchasers of two bed properties in a range from £22-54,000.</p> <p>The Council has in place a number of shared ownership schemes some of which are specifically aimed at key workers.</p> <p>In order to make home ownership more affordable especially in high cost areas a number of organisations have lowered the percentage at which people can enter homeownership, in some cases this has been reduced from 25% to either 10% or 12.5% depending on the developer. The Council is currently out for consultation on its Local Development Framework Draft Core Strategy which generally proposes increasing the proportion of affordable homes on development sites from 25% to 33%(see above).</p> <p>The Council's homeownership policies have encouraged mixed tenure communities on Council estates.</p>
		<p>Maximise the supply of low cost private rented housing, particularly in houses in multiple occupation, by ensuring that HMO licensing and regulation is applied with a light touch. Balance the need to cover the local authority's costs of the licensing process against the impact of higher than average fee levels on the availability of low cost private rented housing.</p>	<p>The Council shares concerns about the impact of licensing on the supply of accommodation in HMOs and consequently has only implemented the mandatory licensing scheme as set out by the Government. No additional discretionary licensing powers will be adopted. The levels of fees reflects the costs of administering the scheme for licences which are of a 5 year duration.</p>

03	Promote a range of housing options for a range of housing needs.	Provision of supported accommodation for people with mental health problems.	Current processes for the provision of supported accommodation and floating support will be reviewed.
		Provision of adapted accommodation for those with physical disabilities in both Council and Private Sector stock. Make sure that those with particular needs such as disabilities are able to access services equally including recycling services.	The Housing Department is currently preparing a Housing Policy Statement, Strategy and Action Plan for People with Physical Disabilities, which will support the multi agency strategy currently in place. Current processes for the provision of adapted accommodation to both Council and Private Sector stock will be reviewed.
		Work with other agencies to ensure particular housing needs are addressed through the provision of an adequate supply of suitable housing accommodation, including specialist accommodation with appropriate support. Services. Ensure the most effective use of supported housing for vulnerable people through fixed services in building and floating support packages.*	Housing Resources and Commitments forecast prepared annually and reported to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Regular meetings take place with other agencies regarding specialist provision.
		Develop a common allocations policy and choice based lettings.	Both matters are under consideration
		Address sub-letting issues in Council stock.*	Where unauthorised subletting takes place in Council tenanted stock the Council will seek to regain possession. Where nuisance is being caused by such occupants in Council property regardless of tenure action will be taken in relation to any instances of anti-social behaviour or other breaches of tenancy and lease conditions.
		Use and expansion of rent deposit schemes.	A Council rent deposit scheme is in place for homeless and high priority applicants. Threshold Housing Advice deal with non-priority single homeless households and have available a cash limited rent deposit scheme.

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		Encourage the take-up of private rented housing for those for whom it would be more appropriate and realistic than waiting at length for a social sector tenancy.	The private rented market provides relatively easy access to accommodation and forms an important part of the Borough's housing stock. However, it is important that accommodation meets acceptable standards otherwise potential tenants will continue to seek accommodation in the public and social sectors.
04	Promote community safety and the protection of the environment.	Carry out environmental audits of housing estates/environments in relation to environmental hazards e.g. uneven paths, loose paving stones etc especially in relation to older people.	Estate Officers currently identify such issues as part of their daily duties and report back on any necessary work.
		Support mental health promotion and socially inclusive environments through workforce initiatives and planning.	Officers will liaise with the Council's Policy Unit and South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust on this issue.
		Work with other housing providers to ensure that lettings policies promote community safety and protection e.g. domestic violence issues.	Housing Policy Statement, Strategy and Action Plan on Domestic Violence in place, as are internal procedures. "Stay Put, Stay Safe" sanctuary scheme in place for those escaping domestic violence.
		Address Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues such as noise, flytipping by the installation of CCTV cameras and a zero tolerance approach to ASB.	The Council has in place a programme of CCTV installation and an Anti- Social Behaviour Policy statement to tackle such issues. Information in relation to specific locations has been passed to the relevant Area Housing Team for follow up action.
		Address sustainability issues including employment, training and community regeneration and alternative energy sources. * Use more eco-friendly and energy saving features in buildings.	Work will take place to prepare a housing position statement in relation to sustainability issues. Housing Officers will liaise with Economic Development Officers regarding opportunities for regeneration and benefits for local residents.
		Ensure housing staff are aware of responsibilities in relation to "safeguarding children".*	Housing Policy Statement, Strategy and Action Plan for Children, Young People and Families in place, which incorporates safeguarding issues. Training being developed for staff and contractors on safeguarding responsibilities.

	<p>Where rebuilding is taking place, include the provision of recycling systems within buildings e.g. recycling chutes next to refuse chutes, allow room for recycling banks within communal bin rooms etc</p> <p>Make improvements to communal recycling areas in order to make them user-friendly i.e. safe and attractive. This can be done by ensuring that they are well lit, open and in full view of the housing stock.</p>	<p>Comments in relation to rebuilding will be forwarded to appropriate partner agencies.</p> <p>Communal recycling banks have been put in place across a number of housing estates. The siting of such banks was the subject of extensive consultation with residents to ensure that they were easily accessible and to encourage use. The orange sack recycling scheme is in the process of being extended to residents in Council multi-story, high rise blocks to further increase the proportion of waste recycled in Wandsworth.</p>
	<p>Planning issues to be addressed in relation to the protection of the environment (encourage mixed use development (work/home) to reduce travel), housing development targets to be supported by assessment of need statement, affordable housing targets for sale and rent to be addressed, protection of wildlife, provision and preservation of open spaces, flexibility of accommodation to suit different household needs including space and density standards, development of transport infrastructure, encourage alternative modes of travel, reduce car use, use of hard surfaces in and around housing areas.</p>	<p>Issues have been raised with Planning by relevant organisation as part of response to consultation on emerging issues and options relating to the Local Development Framework. The Council will continue to ensure the co-ordination of its relevant strategies e.g. the Housing Strategy Statement, Local Development Framework and Community Strategy and those of partner agencies. Housing service specific items such as hard surfaces, open spaces will addressed as part of the housing sustainability position statement.</p>

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05	Encourage resident and stakeholder involvement and participation in service delivery.	<p>Increase number of forums to enable discussions to take place with stakeholders. Provide information and opportunities to participate for individual residents. Regular consultation with residents about housing matters.*</p>	<p>Council residents currently have a number of forums through which issues can be raised e.g. Residents’ Association, Housing Area Panels, Borough Residents’ Forum. Housing consultation database has been established to enable more targeted consultation to take place with stakeholders. Housing Link contract has been revised to allow for a variety of consultation methods to be employed – contract will shortly be out to tender. There are a number of partner agency forums in place covering issues such as physical disability, supporting people, children and young people (safeguarding) issues some of which have user representation. A “DAT (Drugs Action Team) Housing Working Group: Substance Misuse and Housing” has recently been established to enable better operational working to take place in supporting people with substance misuse. Officers will explore where the setting up of similar groups may be of benefit. In addition officers will consider how best to provide information in relation to resident participation to a wider audience.</p>
		<p>Address issues raised by residents.</p>	<p>Issues can be raised by residents through any of the forums indicated above or through the usual channels of communication with the Housing Department with responses by the Department either on a group or individual basis. Officers will explore the opportunities for profiling issues raised by residents through “Homelife” to increase awareness both of the issue and the Department’s response. Special Homelife issues have previously addressed issues of anti-social behaviour.</p>
		<p>Provide information to Residents’ Associations.</p>	<p>Officers will contact Resident’s Associations regarding the range of information which they would find useful. A Residents’ Association Handbook (a guide to running Residents’ Associations) is in preparation.</p>
		<p>Strengthen partnership working with agencies working with clients.</p>	<p>A “DAT (Drugs Action Team) Housing Working Group: Substance Misuse and Housing” has recently been established to enable better operational working to take place in supporting people with substance misuse. Officers will explore where the setting up of similar groups may be of benefit.</p>
		<p>Consider the inclusion of advocates, carers and other support to include the most vulnerable.</p>	<p>Work to establish the Housing Consultation database involved contacting over 200 organisations in the Borough to find out if they would like to be consulted on housing issues; over 80 organisations have responded positively. Officers will work with the Council’s publicity section and the Housing Department’s Publicity and Communications Officer to raise the profile of this initiative.</p>

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	Provide regular feedback to residents on delivering and monitoring the housing objectives.*	Feedback is currently given to residents through the Housing Area Panels and the Borough Residents' Forum. Officers will investigate how better use can be made of Homelife to inform the resident body as a whole on work undertaken to deliver and monitor the housing objectives.
	Provide regular training for staff and resident representatives.*	As part of the recent consultation and participation strategy review a programme of resident and staff training is in the process of being established.
	Use tenant feedback from reviews of supported housing to influence priority developments for future supported housing.	This suggestion will be passed to the appropriate agency to action and to inform future decisions on supported housing.
	Ensure Housing staff are proactive in maintaining relationships with resident associations.*	This will be addressed as part of staff training.

*Suggested as additional objective but already/can be contained within revised objective.

Ranking of Revised Housing Objectives in Order of Importance

Revised Strategic Housing Objectives:		Ranking					Total
		1 (Most Important)	2	3	4	5 (Least Important)	
01	Maintain and improve the Borough's housing stock.	16	7	6	6	4	39
02	Maintain and improve the supply of affordable housing to own and rent.	13	6	8	8	4	39
03	Promote a range of housing options for a range of housing needs.	7	7	10	8	7	39
04	Promote community safety and the protection of the environment.	10	11	5	8	5	39
05	Encourage resident and stakeholder involvement and participation in service delivery.	6	8	8	4	13	39