

Vision: A District of sustainable communities offering more people the opportunity to live in good quality housing of their choice, with the support they need.

Local Area Agreement outcome areas described in
Stratford District Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy

Children and Young People ♦ Stronger Communities ♦ Healthier Communities and Older People
 Safer Communities ♦ Economy and Employment ♦ Climate Change and Environment

Housing Strategy 2009 – 2014: Action Plan as at 1 July 2011

Includes amended milestones and targets agreed by HAP on 1 July 2011. Progress as at 10 May 2011.

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Aim 1

To increase the supply and choice of good quality affordable housing for local people.

Enabling more and better affordable housing

Aim 2

To improve existing housing and help people to live as independently as possible.

Better homes

Housing for older people

Aim 3

To prevent homelessness and reduce the harm caused by it.

Tackling homelessness

Young people

Aim 4

To strengthen the support to local communities.

Local Development Framework

Gypsies and Travellers

Reducing disadvantage

Continuing to meet residents' needs

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Housing Strategy 2009 – 2014 Action Plan

Notes on reading the Action Plan

- SDC = Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
- The themes are as described in the Strategy text.
- The actions are strategic actions (that is, they are not detailed operational plans).
- The resources column has a list of main contributors (not necessarily headed by the 'lead' agency) but also includes key materials and some funding sources. The list relates to the action not the milestones / targets.
- **'Report'** means the production of a formal written report to be considered by the appropriate committee or meeting.
- **'Agree'** means agreement at the appropriate level (e.g. portfolio holder, Housing Advisory Panel, Warwickshire Heads of Housing) with a written record of the decision (e.g. meeting minutes making a clear reference to the document agreed).
- **'Review'** can mean anything from a focused discussion through to research and consultation leading to a formal report. The scale of the review should be appropriate to the action, but all reviews must have a recorded outcome (what considered, findings, recommendations or decisions, who involved, date) to allow for transparency, auditing and progress monitoring.
- **'Annual'** or **'financial year'** refers to the period from the beginning of April to the end of March the following year.

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Aim 1: To increase the supply and choice of good quality affordable housing for local people.

Action	Resources	Milestones or targets	Progress
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Theme A: Enabling more and better affordable housing

1	Seek to negotiate and deliver the optimum amount and type of affordable housing on every relevant development site.	<p>Planning policies and needs analysis.</p> <p>SDC, Homes and Communities Agency, partner housing associations.</p>	<p>1. Report (by September 2010 and then annually) on the number, percentage, tenure, type and size of the affordable homes negotiated / completed in the previous financial year.</p> <p>2. Agree (by March 2011) a Statement of Intent setting out the principles of the partnership working between SDC, Homes and Communities Agency and partner housing associations.</p>	<p>Green 2011</p> <p>Achieved (Warwickshire Local Investment Plan)</p>
2	Seek the maximum investment in the District from the Homes and Communities Agency and establish a medium to long term budget for District Council support to increase or enhance affordable housing provision.	<p>National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) and SDC's Affordable Housing Investment Programme fund (AHIP).</p> <p>SDC, Homes and Communities Agency, partner housing associations.</p>	<p>1. Agree (by July 2010) a medium to long term budget for the Council's Affordable Housing Investment Programme.</p> <p>2. Report (by September 2010 and then annually) on the engagement undertaken with the Homes and Communities Agency and the investment secured in the previous financial year.</p> <p>3. Review (by September 2011) with partners the approach to public subsidy on private development sites.</p>	<p>Achieved £1.5M for 2012-2015 <i>but may need to revisit</i></p> <p>Green 2011</p> <p>Achieved</p>

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Theme A: Enabling more and better affordable housing (continued)				
3	Ensure new affordable housing is allocated so as to enhance the long-term sustainability of communities.	<p>Planning obligations and policies.</p> <p>SDC, partner housing associations, parish and town councils, local communities.</p>	<p>1. Review (by June 2010) the model Section 106 agreements that govern who can be offered affordable housing provided as part of new developments (including the local connection criteria).</p> <p>2. Agree (by June 2011) a template for a local lettings scheme for all new developments to reflect identified housing need.</p>	<p>Achieved – no change to current policy</p> <p>Achieved</p>
4	Continue to seek the highest practicable quality standards for affordable homes to help deliver sustainable communities.	<p>Planning policies and funding requirements.</p> <p>SDC, Homes and Communities Agency, partner housing associations.</p>	<p>1. Seek detailed feedback on success of each completed scheme.</p> <p>2. Report (by September 2010 and then annually) on the quality of affordable housing secured /completed in the previous financial year.</p>	<p>Green 2011</p> <p>Green 2011</p>

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Theme A: Enabling more and better affordable housing (continued)				
5	Continue to encourage and enable rural communities to meet their housing needs.	<p>Planning policies and housing needs surveys.</p> <p>Rural Housing Enabler, SDC, parish councils, local communities.</p>	<p>1. Facilitate or instigate at least 11 community engagement programmes (either local housing needs surveys or site canvassing exercises) each year. 2010-2011: 8 housing need surveys completed and 2 surveys underway; 9 site canvassing exercises completed</p> <p>2. Report twice a year on progress on rural housing enabling to Housing Advisory Panel.</p>	<p>Achieved 2010-2011 but ongoing</p> <p>Green</p>
6	Establish and deliver an on-going rural development programme.	<p>National Affordable Housing Programme and SDC's Affordable Housing Investment Programme fund.</p> <p>Warwickshire Rural Housing Association, SDC, Homes and Communities Agency, Jephson Housing Association.</p>	<p>1. Agree (by October 2011) a rural affordable housing development programme.</p>	<p>Green</p>

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Theme B: Better homes

7	Provide enhanced programmes of assistance for people in their own homes.	<p>Disabled Facilities Grant funding, SDC funding, learning and potential funding from regional sources, Tradeline.</p> <p>Dedicated officers within SDC, Warwickshire County Council, Warwickshire Heads of Housing, Age Concern Warwickshire.</p>	<p>1. Complete (by December 2013) the county-wide Home Improvement Agency review.</p> <p>2A. Commit (every year) at least 95% of the annual adaptations budget.</p> <p>2B. Meet performance targets for time taken to process adaptation grant applications.</p> <p><u>2010-2011</u> target from referral by occupational therapist to approval of works is 140 days, outcome 111 days</p> <p><i><u>2011-2012</u> target still to be confirmed but time from referral to approval will increase because of a reduction in SDC staff</i></p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Achieved <u>2010-2011</u> but ongoing</p> <p>Achieved <u>2010-2011</u> but ongoing</p>
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Theme B: Better homes (continued)

7	Provide enhanced programmes of assistance for people in their own homes <i>(continued)</i>		<p>3A. Report (by June 2011) to Housing Advisory Panel on prospects, options and possible sources of funding for providing loans so that more vulnerable and low income homeowners can be assisted to improve the condition of their homes.</p> <p>3B. Subject to agreement following consideration of the options report, establish (by Sept 2012) a loans scheme.</p> <p>4. Review (by June 2012) how the advice and support service for individuals undertaking work to their homes can be improved, and implement any changes necessary.</p> <p>5A. Commence (by January 2012) a programme to promote the take-up of assistive technology (telecare).</p> <p>5B. Increase by 10% (by January 2013) the number of private rented or owner occupied homes in rural areas with assistive technology installed.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Amended target</p> <p>Green</p> <p>Amended target</p> <p>Amended target</p>
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Theme B: Better homes (continued)

8	Take enforcement action when necessary to protect tenants in private rented accommodation, and encourage local private landlords to join Midlands Landlords Accreditation Scheme.	Enforcement powers, policy and training. Dedicated officer within SDC, Landlords Forum, National Landlords Association.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report (by September 2010 and then annually) on the number of properties where intervention from SDC has resulted in the removal of Category 1 hazards to private tenants. 2. Track local membership of Midlands Landlords Accreditation Scheme and (from June 2011) report progress annually to Housing Advisory Panel. 	<p>Green 2011</p> <p>Green</p>
9	Deliver a well resourced programme of interventions to bring empty homes back into use.	<p>Empty Homes Strategy interventions (including SDC grant assistance, policy, Empty Dwelling Maintenance Orders).</p> <p>Dedicated officer within SDC.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver (between April 2008 and March 2011) at least 50 interventions that result in an empty property being brought back into residential use; outcome 56 homes. 2011-2012 target is 25 empty homes. 2. Report (by September 2010 and then annually) on (a) the number and kind of empty homes interventions and their outcomes in the preceding financial year, and (b) a review of the Empty Homes Strategy. 	<p>Achieved 2008-2011</p> <p>New target</p> <p>Green 2011</p>

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Theme B: Better homes (continued)

10	Review the assistance available to help people stay warm in their homes.	<p>Various sources of subsidies and grants to individuals, home works grants.</p> <p>SDC, Act on Energy, Warwickshire Home Improvement Agencies.</p>	<p>1. Review the South Warwickshire Affordable Warmth Strategy and report (by September 2010) on the opportunities, funding sources and potential budget requirements for an enhanced programme of assistance to householders.</p> <p>2. Subject to agreement following consideration of the opportunities report and the setting of a budget, establish (by March 2011) a programme of assistance.</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
11	Undertake a further programme of improvements to existing homes to reduce their environmental impact and the running costs for occupiers.	Orbit Heart of England Housing Association, Warwickshire NHS Primary Care Trust.	<p>1. Complete (by October 2011) a large scale refurbishment project designed to reduce substantially the amount of fuel used in each home.</p> <p>2. Evaluate (by March 2012) the costs and impact of the refurbishment project, and consider the options for widespread application of the design principles to both refurbishment and new build programmes.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Green</p>

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Theme C: Housing for older people

12	Following a detailed review of each scheme, progress the modernisation / replacement of existing sheltered accommodation to provide more sustainable housing.	Sheltered housing schemes. Orbit Heart of England Housing Association, Warwickshire County Council and Supporting People, SDC, development partners.	1A. Orbit Heart of England Housing Association to complete by March 2010 the review of all its sheltered housing schemes. 1B. Orbit Heart of England Housing Association to review during 2011/12 the option of converting some sheltered schemes to Extra Care housing. 2. Orbit Heart of England Housing Association to invest during 2010 – 2012 in a programme of upgrades (e.g. Telecare) to its sheltered accommodation.	Achieved Green Green
13	Promote the development of further 'Extra Care' schemes and specialist care provision to widen the housing and care options open to older people.	Warwickshire County Council, Homes and Communities Agency, specialist development and management partners.	1. At least three further Extra Care schemes (or at least two further Extra Care schemes and one specialist residential care scheme) – each incorporating a high proportion of affordable dwellings / places – newly committed in the District by December 2014.	Green

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Theme C: Housing for older people (continued)

14	Develop a housing options service for older people to promote awareness of housing and care options to assist older people to choose the most appropriate option for them. Provide support to older people who choose to move home but need support to do so.	Warwickshire County Council, SDC, FirstStop, advice agencies, Voluntary Action Stratford-on-Avon District.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt (by December 2009) a project plan for a County-wide housing options service. 2. Appoint housing options and support worker to provide the scheme locally to older people. 	<p>Achieved (FirstStop project launched)</p> <p>Achieved (Summer 2010)</p>
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Aim 3: To prevent homelessness and reduce the harm caused by it.

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Theme D: Tackling homelessness

15	Keep the operation and impact of Home Choice Plus under review to identify any necessary improvements.	Home Choice Plus system. SDC, Home Choice Plus Partnership, District Housing Forum.	1. Complete (by December 2011) a review by SDC Overview and Scrutiny of the impact of Home Choice Plus on service users and partners, and implement any changes necessary. 2. Complete (by December 2011) a review of the operation of Home Choice Plus across the sub-region, and implement any changes necessary.	Green Green
16	Continue to deliver a successful housing options service to prevent homelessness.	Homelessness Prevention Fund and other finance. SDC, District Housing Forum.	1. Review (by June 2010 and then annually) the operation, budget and customer understanding of the Rent Express Scheme and other private tenancy support services, and implement any changes necessary. 2. Report (by January 2011 and then annually) on the success of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme and on all other current or potential homelessness prevention activity.	Green 2011 Green

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Theme D: Tackling homelessness (continued)

17	Maintain good performance for dealing with housing benefit claims and applications for discretionary housing payments.	Dedicated team within SDC.	<p>1. Meet annual performance targets for time taken to process new claims for housing benefit and changes to claims.</p> <p>Target for 2011-2012 (NI 181) Combination of new claims and changes to claims: 17 days</p> <p>2. Spend at least 80% of the Discretionary Housing Payment budget each financial year.</p>	<p>Green New target</p> <p>Amended target</p>
18	Consider the adequacy of current accommodation and support (including emergency access provision) in the District for single homeless people and people who sleep rough.	Warwickshire Supporting People, SDC, providers, District Housing Forum.	<p>1. Report (by March 2011) on the adequacy of current provision for single homeless people and people who sleep rough, and make recommendations in respect of any shortfall between supply and need that the review may find.</p> <p>2A. Agree (by December 2012) an action plan with partners.</p> <p>2B. Implement (by December 2013) the action plan</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Amended target</p> <p>Amended target</p>

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Theme E: Young people

19	Enhance mediation services available to families that include young people at risk of homelessness.	SDC, potential providers.	1. Review (by July 2012) existing provision and if appropriate undertake work to enhance provision.	Amended target
20	Work in partnership to ensure that proper accommodation and support is available to all vulnerable 16 or 17 year olds.	Warwickshire County Council, SDC, District Housing Forum, accommodation and support providers.	1. Adopt (by September 2011) a County-District protocol that allows each authority to meet its obligations to vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds. 2. Report (by March 2012 and then annually) to Housing Advisory Panel on the operation of the Protocol, and on individual outcomes for vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds in the District (irrespective of whether the protocol has been applied in their case). 3. Report to Housing Advisory Panel by March 2012 on whether to seek the establishment of a multi-agency panel, to include Warwickshire County Council, to consider cases where agreement cannot be reached on the form of assistance which will be provided to a 16 or 17 year old who has applied for housing.	Achieved Green Green

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Theme E: Young people (continued)

21	Improve the emergency access and longer-term accommodation and support for homeless young people (aged 16-24) within the District.	Warwickshire Supporting People, Orbit Heart of England Housing Association, potential providers, SDC, District Housing Forum.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish (by June 2010) a project steering group to evaluate options and to secure additional provision. 2. Ensure that the accommodation and support needs of young people are included in action 18.2A and 18.2B. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Amended target</p>
22	Keep under review the feasibility of enabling a residential foyer (with emergency access) for 16-24 year olds.	Warwickshire Supporting People, Homes and Communities Agency, SDC, potential providers, District Housing Forum, housing associations, community groups.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report (by March 2011 and then every 12-18 months) and make recommendations to progress enabling of a foyer if the review suggests a scheme is feasible. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>March 2011 but ongoing</p>

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Aim 4: To strengthen the support to local communities.

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Theme F: Local Development Framework

23	Ensure Local Development Documents (including the Core Strategy) plan for the appropriate level, type, distribution and specification of market and affordable housing across the District to help achieve balanced housing markets.	Housing market evidence, including on the need for additional affordable housing. SDC, Housing Partnership Meeting.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply (throughout drafting of each Local Development Document) the relevant learning from housing market assessments, house condition survey, and other research. 2. Present, as necessary, the relevant evidence at the Examination in Public on the Core Strategy. 	<p>Achieved 2010 but ongoing</p> <p>Green</p>
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Theme G: Gypsies and Travellers

24	Promote good site management and the provision of appropriate facilities for all authorised Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites.	Warwickshire County Council, SDC, Gypsies and Travellers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult (by March 2012) on a draft site management and facilities standards document to be applied to all authorised sites. To be incorporated in an Interim Guidance Note for Gypsies and Travellers. 2. Adopt (by November 2012) a final standards document, and apply to all authorised sites. 	<p>Green (Amended target)</p> <p>Green</p>
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Theme H: Reducing disadvantage

25	Expand financial advice and products available to District residents.	Citizens Advice Bureau, South Warwickshire Credit Union, Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advice Service, Voluntary Action Stratford-on-Avon, SDC, Warwickshire County Council, Orbit Heart of England HA, support providers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the Council's approach to supporting and promoting initiatives to increase financial inclusion (by June 2011). 2. Provide (by date to be agreed) an information sheet on financial advice and products available to District residents to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 	Green New target
26	Develop improved access to housing and other public and community services through the application of digital technology.	SDC with the assistance of a multi-agency partnership.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree (by June 2010) an action plan to increase the use of digital television across the District. 	Achieved

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Theme J: Continuing to meet residents' needs

27	Continue to ask service users and residents about housing issues in order to inform service improvements.	Customer satisfaction surveys. SDC, District Housing Forum.	1. Ask service users and residents their views on the service provided / general housing issues, and report findings and how services have been amended (by September 2010 and then annually).	Green 2011
			2. Undertake (by June 2010 and then annually) diversity audits for frontline housing services.	Green 2011
28	Maintain an up to date understanding of local housing circumstances.	Housing market assessment, private sector house condition survey. Orbit Heart of England Housing Association, SDC, District Housing Forum, Warwickshire Supporting People.	1. Review (by March 2011 and then annually) all research and other evidence sources that support the delivery of this Housing Strategy.	Achieved 2011
			2. Supply (within given deadlines) evidence to inform Supporting People and county-wide needs analyses and service reviews.	Green 2011

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Theme J: Continuing to meet residents' needs (continued)

29	Monitor the success and impact of the Housing Strategy.	SDC, Housing Partnership Meeting, District Housing Forum, Stratford District Partnership.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report (twice yearly) to Housing Advisory Panel on progress against, and risks to the timely implementation of, each action in the Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy. 2. Housing Partnership Meeting and District Housing Forum to each review annually the impact of the Housing Strategy. 3. Undertake an equality impact assessment and review the Housing Strategy (incorporating the Homelessness Strategy) by December 2012. 	<p>Green 2011</p> <p>Green 2011 Amended target</p> <p>Amended target</p>
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