

Final Report and Recommendations In depth scrutiny project 2012/13

How we plan to meet the growing demand for social rented housing in the current economic climate



July 2013

Foreword

The former Community Services and Culture Scrutiny Committee decided that the in-depth scrutiny project for 2012/13 would focus on assessing the demand for social rented housing in Southend-on-Sea and investigating ways in which demand could be better met.

Having access to a good quality home is a basic need that everyone in society should be able to enjoy regardless of their means. Southend-on-Sea is fortunate to have a large and varied housing stock that caters for a wide variety of needs and contributes to making the town an attractive place to live, work and visit.

The demand for housing in Southend-on-Sea is high and the nature of this need fluctuates over time as families expand and contract, people grow older and their economic situation changes. The private sector, both owner occupied and private rented accommodation make-up the majority of the housing provision for the town's residents. Whilst smaller in scale, representing roughly 1 in 10 of the overall housing stock in the town, the social rented sector plays a vital role in offering decent housing to those on lower incomes.

Increasing the supply of housing in Southend is complicated by the geography of the town and the nationwide downturn in the housing market since the Global Financial Crisis. In addition, there are a number of challenges to meeting the demand for increased housing supply and social housing in particular. Resources in the public sector are constrained, private developer activity is relatively low and the sector is adjusting to a new legislative and policy environment.

This project has presented an opportunity for the Council and other key actors in the provision of housing in the town to come together and deliver insight into where limited resources and energy should be focused in order to meet the housing challenges ahead.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all those who have been involved in the project for which I have been proud to take the lead and I commend this report for publication.

**Cllr David Norman,
Chair of In-depth Scrutiny Project- Housing**

The project team has consisted of Councillors: David Norman (Chairman), Ian Robertson (Vice Chairman), Mary Betson, Trevor Byford, Maria Counce, Anne Chalk, Mark Flewitt, Alex Kaye and Duncan Russell. In addition, Councillors Adam Jones and Chris Walker have attended project meetings.

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1. Objectives and Recommendations

Objectives of the project

- 1.1 Members of the former Community Services & Culture Scrutiny Committee have undertaken an in-depth project investigating how the demand for social housing for rent can be met during the current challenging economic climate.
- 1.2 Led by the cross party project team members, the project has aimed to assess the level of housing need in the town, review how housing is provided and managed and looked at ways of encouraging new development.
- 1.3 The project has also involved a review of current housing strategy and policy that the Council and its partners have in place to meet the growing demand for good quality housing. A copy of the project plan is included as **Appendix 1**.
- 1.4 The primary focus of the project is on social housing, but the nature of the questions posed mean that it has been necessary for the project team to have regard to the roles that private rented and owner-occupier housing play in Southend-on-Sea.

Our Recommendations

- 1.5 Cabinet is asked to agree the following recommendations. It should be noted that approval of any recommendations with budget implications will require consideration as part of future years' budget processes prior to implementation.

- 1. That the Council take the opportunity to actively engage in developing and building new social housing for rent.**

Over the past 30 years Housing Associations have been the dominant players in delivering new social housing for rent in Southend-on-Sea. In April 2012 changes to the way that Council housing finances are managed were introduced.

The introduction of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) self-financing has resulted in housing debt being distributed between Local Authorities. Councils can now borrow the difference between their actual housing debt and that assumed to be outstanding under the old subsidy system (their debt cap). This is referred to as the amount of 'headroom' a Local Authority has. It gives councils the opportunity to invest in new housing. At Southend, the headroom stands at £8M.

The Council has chosen to place any surplus funds generated by the HRA into a capital investment reserve.

Right to Buy policy receipts have previously been collected by central government and have not been available to the Council to re-invest in replacement housing. Changes introduced in 2012 mean that the Council will be able to invest a proportion of local Right to Buy receipts in new affordable housing projects. Whilst these receipts are not likely to be substantial they provide an additional source of funding.

2. The Council should continue to review all Council-owned land that is capable of supporting housing development.

There are very few Greenfield sites available for development in the borough and it is sometimes difficult to viably develop housing on brownfield sites.

The Council needs to take an imaginative approach to reviewing the development potential of its own land. This will entail looking not just at Council owned garage sites but also areas such as those surrounding existing buildings, under-utilised car parks and the generously provided green spaces in the 1950s and 60s Council developed estates.

3. That the Council investigate all possible options for bringing empty residential and commercial properties back into use.

The Council continues to use all powers and resources available to bring empty homes back into use including Empty Dwelling Management Orders and the granting of loans to owners to bring homes back into use dependent on available resources.

The Council should work with landowners and potential developers of empty commercial units in the town e.g. those along Victoria Avenue to bring them back into use to include an appropriate proportion of residential units. Given the current constraints on availability of land, the Council should consider all powers available to develop run-down sites in the centre of town including the practicality of Compulsory Purchase Orders if considered appropriate.

4. To review opportunities to improve and regenerate Council-owned high-rise accommodation.

For further investigations and report to be prepared outlining long term options for improving the standards of the Council's tower block accommodation with particular focus on those located in the town centre. In the current financial climate this is an area that may well require radical solutions including refurbishment, or redevelopment either Council-led or in association with partner developers.

5. That the Council continues to work with housing association partners to deliver new social housing.

As previously indicated housing associations have played a vital role in developing social housing for rent over the past thirty years in the town. There is evidence that associations are having to adjust to new financial realities in terms of reduced government grants compared with the past.

The Council should continue to develop close working relationships with locally developing housing associations as it has done recently with considerable success as evidenced by the 89 family homes developed on former Council-owned garage sites over the past 4 years.

6. The Council and social housing landlords consider new policies and initiatives which promote housing delivery and access to housing.

The Council and social partners should consider new policies which facilitate the development of new affordable housing, including:

- Whether Modern Methods of Construction offer a faster and cheaper option on a site by site basis;
- Shared Equity Schemes;
- New approaches to building environmentally sustainable housing;
- Engaging with institutional investors such as pension funds to seek financing for new development;
- Investigating the viability of a Local Authority Mortgage Scheme.

7. Partnership working between local landlords to share best practice on policy issues should be encouraged.

Local social housing landlords and the Council to work together to minimise the negative impacts of changes to the benefits system including the promotion of mutual exchanges for residents who are considered under-occupying.

8. Recognise the role of private rented housing in meeting housing needs and promoting improvement in the sector.

Although outside of the original remit of the project, the figures show that the Private Rented Sector constitutes an important element of housing in the town and will continue to do so.

The Council to continue to assist South Essex Alliance of Landlords, Agents and Residents (SEAL) in growing the membership and

effectiveness of the organisation in promoting best management practice in the Private Rented Sector.

That the Council should undertake robust enforcement action against any private rented landlords who are failing in their duty to provide well managed, good quality accommodation.

9. The Council and partners to find new ways to assess the level of housing need in the town.

Following the review of the Council's Homeseekers Register the project group are confident that the make-up of the register reflects those applicants classed as in housing need.

As has been seen in recent years pressure on the local housing market can be susceptible to rapid change. The 2011 Census shows a significant change in the size and make-up of the population of Southend-on-Sea which needs to be monitored in future. Including the many people who are attracted to the town under the European Union's free movement of trade agreement.

In addition, it has been suggested that some London Boroughs are seeking to re-house residents to cheaper areas such as seaside towns.

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 For a range of reasons Southend-on-Sea is considered an attractive place to live and it can be broadly defined as an area of high housing demand. The latest Census¹ figures show that the population of Southend-on-Sea has grown in the past 30 years to 173,658 in 2011 and future projections forecast further population increases in the short/medium term. As well as natural population growth a proportion of the projected increase in population is likely to be due to an increase in inward migration from London and other areas.
- 2.2 Latest figures show that there has been a big structural change in the Southend-on-Sea housing market over the past 15 years. The most striking aspect has been the growth of the private rented sector and the corresponding decline of owner occupation. In 2011 of the 78,603 dwellings/homes in Southend-on-Sea, 22% were classed as private rented compared to 14% in the 2001. These changes have been mirrored in the UK housing market as a whole although are more marked in Southend-on-Sea where there is a higher proportion of private rented properties than the national average.
- 2.3 The underlying reasons for the growth in the private rented sector can be attributed to two main factors: the affordability of owner occupation and the growth in Buy to Let mortgages. The average lower quartile house price (the lowest priced housing normally accessed by first time buyers) in Southend-on-Sea increased from £70,000 in 2001 to £150,000 in 2007². Despite a small drop following the Global Financial Crisis house prices in Southend-on-Sea have returned to their 2007 levels and have outperformed those in neighbouring Thames Gateway South Essex local authorities. An indicator of the affordability issues facing first time buyers is that the ratio of average earnings to average house price in Southend has increased from 3.27 (i.e. the average house is valued at 3.27 times the average income) in 1997 to 7.4 in 2012³, although this is lower than the high during the period of 8.31 times earnings in 2007. The credit crunch and tighter lending criteria by banks, have meant that mortgages are less accessible for many with no or limited deposit.
- 2.4 Another influence on the housing market is the expansion of the University of Essex's presence in the town. This has seen the construction of 561 rooms at University Square and it is estimated that there are 230 students per annum looking for accommodation in the private rented sector⁴. Demand for housing is heavily influenced by

¹ Source: Census 2011, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcn%3A77-286262>

² Source: Hometrack

³ Source: CLG, Table 577 Ratio of median house prices to median earnings 1997-2012
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/104541/table577.xls

⁴ Source: The Southend-on-Sea Housing Strategy 2011-21

economic factors and the growth of London Southend Airport is likely to have an influence on demand in Southend-on-Sea.

- 2.5 Compared to the fluctuations seen in the owner-occupier and private rented market the proportion of social housing in Southend-on-Sea has remained relatively stable representing 13% of the total stock in 2001 and 12% in 2011.
- 2.6 Demand for Social housing increased markedly in the same period with the number of households on the Council's Homeseekers Register rose from 2,981 in 2004 to 5,658 in 2012. Disaggregating this figure shows that the majority of those on the list prior to the introduction of a new Allocations Policy were not classed as in housing need (60% in Band D) and had no realistic chance of being re-housed. Following the introduction of the Council's new Allocations Policy the number of applications has reduced to some 1,200.
- 2.7 Analysis of the register shows that demand has historically been highest for 1 bedroom accommodation, but that supply is most constrained for larger properties. This ultimately means that the supply/demand gap is high for all types of accommodation.
- 2.8 The social housing sector continues to provide accommodation to those who cannot afford to access home ownership or private rented housing. The Council, with around 6,000 properties managed by South Essex Homes (SEH) on its behalf, is the largest social housing landlord in the town. The Registered Provider (Housing Association) sector manages approximately 3,800 properties in Southend-on-Sea. There are over 25 housing associations managing properties in Southend-on-Sea with Estuary Housing being the largest stockholder followed by London & Quadrant, Springboard, Guinness and Swan.
- 2.9 National and local statistics show that demand for homelessness service is rising. In 2012/13 there were 332 approaches made to the Council that were resolved before homelessness occurred and an average of 45 households in temporary accommodation at any one time. This reflects the success of the Council and partner agencies in focusing on homelessness prevention work, negotiating with family members & landlords, prioritising people on the housing register, and using the rent deposit scheme.
- 2.10 The geography of Southend-on-Sea means available development land is relatively limited. The town is bordered by the Thames Estuary to the South and East and there is a virtual absence of Green Belt land. Potential development sites are predominantly brownfield in type and relatively small-scale compared to other areas. In spite of these limitations there were 328 net dwelling completions in the Borough during 2012. This was a significant increase on the previous two years. Despite the drop in completions during 2010 and 2011, an average of

344 net additional dwellings have been built per annum since 2001, above the Core Strategy phased requirement of 335 per year⁵.

- 2.11 Southend-on-Sea's proximity to London has a profound influence on the town in terms of housing market, migration patterns, commuting and income levels.
- 2.12 The Council has set out its long term vision for housing in the town in the Southend-on-Sea Housing Strategy, 2011-21 and the findings of this in-depth scrutiny project will provide evidence which can be used to update the action plan for the above strategy in 2014.

⁵ Source: Southend Annual Monitoring Report 2012

3. Process

3.1 The Committee was supported by a project team comprising:

- Councillors: David Norman (Chairman), Ian Robertson (Vice Chairman), Mary Betson, Trevor Byford, Anne Chalk, Maria Counce, Mark Flewitt, Alex Kaye and Duncan Russell. (Councillors Adam Jones and Chris Walker also attended some project meetings).
- Officers: Project support was provided by Daniel Baker, Fiona Abbott and Nicola O’Keeffe.

Evidence Base

3.2 The project team have met on eight occasions between September and June 2013 and have considered a number of different types of evidence:

Briefings

3.3 A number of briefing papers were presented providing background on local and national issues and housing policies.

- *Housing Statistics and Policy Briefing* 24th October 2012
- Briefing paper *Stimulating Supply and managing demand: New approaches to social housing provision*, 20th December 2012.
- National briefings/papers- *Let’s Get Building: The case for local authority investment in rented homes to help drive economic growth*⁶ *More Homes, Better Places*⁷, 24th January 2013

Witness Sessions

3.4 Nine expert witnesses were called to give evidence to the project team, answering questions in relation to the project and focusing upon their particular strengths.

3.5 A list of the questions answered by the witnesses is available on request.

3.6 The list of witnesses is outlined in the table below. The project team would like to formally thank the witnesses for giving up their time to attend and sharing their insights on the topics discussed which have helped to inform this report.

⁶ Source: NFA, ARCH, CIH, LGA and CWAG http://www.almos.org.uk/news_docs.php?subtypeid=24

⁷ Source: BSHF <http://www.bshf.org/published-information/publication.cfm?lang=00&thePubID=25E04994-15C5-F4C0-99170AE24B5B0A84>

Name	Position/Organisation	Date witness session
Alison Nicholls	Group Manager of Housing, SBC	24 th October 2012
Veronica Dewsbury	Benefits Manager, SBC	24 th October 2012
Mike Gatrell	Chief Executive, South Essex Homes (SEH)	20 th December 2012
Paul Durkin	Chief Executive, Estuary Housing Association	20 th December 2012
Martin Ransom	Branch Manager, Pace plc/Spokesman for South East Alliance of Landlords and Residents (SEAL)	24 th January 2013
Ian Ambrose	Group Manager Accountancy, SBC	24 th January 2013
David Godden	Hollybrook Ltd	4 th March 2013
Trish Carpenter	Citizens Advice Bureau	4 th March 2013
Cllr Lesley Salter	Portfolio holder, Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	15 th April 2013

Site Visits

- 3.7 In addition to the formal project meetings two site visits were carried out, one to a recently developed affordable housing scheme in Southend-on-Sea and one to innovative affordable housing schemes in other parts of Essex.
- 3.8 Members of the project team visited newly completed affordable family homes on site of former council owned garages at Derek Gardens on 17th December 2012. Visitors were impressed with the standard of the accommodation and the quality of the design. The project team would like to thank Swan Housing and the residents of the properties for facilitating the visit.
- 3.9 The project team visited a number of affordable housing development sites including tower block regeneration and highly energy efficient properties in Chelmsford and an innovative straw-bale house in High Ongar. The visits were highly informative and the project team would like to thank Chelmer Housing Partnership and Hastoe for welcoming us to their sites.

4. Findings

4.1 There is a high demand for good quality affordable housing, especially social rented housing, which is not being fully met by current provision.

This is reflected in the high numbers of people in housing need (Bands A-C) on the Council's waiting list for social housing, the findings of the draft Strategic Housing Market Assessment and anecdotal evidence provided by many of the witnesses.

As the nature of the Council's housing register changes, following the introduction of the new Allocations Policy there is a need to find new ways of monitoring the level and type of housing need in Southend-on-Sea.

4.2 Improving and maintaining standards in private rented sector accommodation is increasingly important.

Social rented housing cannot be considered in isolation, according to the latest census figures more than twice as many households are accommodated in private as opposed to social rented accommodation in Southend-on-Sea.

Improving the private rented sector through enforcement action on poor landlords and working collaboratively with responsible landlords individually and through organisations such as SEAL remains a priority. The Council needs to constantly monitor whether this approach is working to improve and maintain the standard of private rented housing and consider alternative policy approaches if necessary.

The project team reviewed the positive progress that is being made in tackling empty residential properties. This includes the Council's powers to enact Empty Dwellings Management Orders and the securing of sub regional funding to provide loans to bring empty properties back into use.

The project team reviewed and informed the changes to the way that the Council's homelessness duty can be discharged into suitable private rented sector accommodation.

4.3 Changes to the Benefits system will continue to have an impact on housing provision and management.

It has been highlighted by the majority of witnesses that the Welfare reforms currently being implemented pose a substantial affordability challenge for many residents.

The Council, local landlords and support agencies are having to develop new ways to advise and assist tenants in managing their financial affairs. This has put pressure on the resources of local support agencies and will potentially increase rent arrears figures in the short/medium term.

The project team heard from witnesses about the ways that agencies have been working to reduce the negative impacts of welfare reform including partnership working to increase the number of residents mutually exchanging to more appropriate sized properties.

Some of the key housing elements of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 are outlined in the following table for information:

	Date introduced	Details
Under-occupation penalty	April 2013	Under-occupying social housing tenants will have their housing benefit reduced by up to 14% for one spare room and 25% for two spare rooms
Total Benefits Cap	From April 2013,	Total cap on household benefits (including housing benefit) of £500 a week for couples and £350 a week for single persons
Universal Credit	From October 2013	Combines means-tested benefits, tax credits and housing benefit into one monthly payment paid direct to tenants. Administered by an IT system which uses real time tax information to automatically update claimants entitlements.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Changes	From April 2011	Linking LHA rates to the 30 th percentile of rents (was 50 th percentile) meaning only the lowest 30% of properties in given area are affordable under LHA. Linking rises in housing benefit to the consumer price index instead of the retail price index

4.4 There are considerable barriers to achieving new affordable housing development

These barriers include the reduction in direct capital subsidy from central government of 60% at the last spending review with minimal prospect that this will be increased in the future and a perceived lack of viable build-ready sites.

In spite of this the project team have seen excellent local and regional examples of housing schemes being built in the recent past. Previous successes of redeveloping Council owned garage sites and other Registered Provider led developments in Southend-on-Sea and further afield demonstrate the important role that Housing Associations will continue to play in providing new affordable housing in the town.

Registered Providers are increasingly having to find new ways to finance new affordable housing through borrowing against their own assets i.e. the stock they own. This increases the need for robust financial risk management especially in light of changes to the benefits system which are putting a strain on rent collection levels.

4.5 Emergent opportunities to fund new social housing and policies to encourage development have been identified.

The project has looked at a range of new opportunities which the Council and partners can take advantage of to finance new social housing development. These were highlighted in the *Stimulating Supply and Managing demand* briefing paper the ideas in which gained broad support from Members. These policy initiatives included: Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reform, re-investing Right to Buy receipts, mortgage rescue schemes, shared equity models, Modern Methods of Construction etc.

Since 1979 official figures estimate that the Council has sold 3,299 properties⁸ the vast majority of which have been under the Right to Buy introduced in the Housing Act 1980. Since April 2012 the Council has more freedom to use Right to Buy receipts to fund new developments than in the past although it is important to note that a sizable proportion still returns to the Treasury. Right to Buy receipts are helping to fund the first Council-built property for 20 years at rear of 159 Bournemouth Park Road, Southend.

Mixed tenure development on public sector land (building market housing on some/part of sites to cross-subsidise social housing) is an option to be considered in order to finance social housing delivery. Developments on Council owned land should seek to maximise density as far as circumstances allow.

Efforts to ensure that construction costs are kept to a minimum on each site should include consideration of modern methods of construction/ 'new generation pre-fab' techniques.

There are a range of options open to the Council to kick-start development on stalled, private sites including negotiations with the land-owners to remove any barriers to delivery and as a last resort using a Compulsory Purchase Order.

The project team considered examples of energy efficient housing which have been delivered in Southend-on-Sea and elsewhere and noted the financial benefits for tenants and the wider environmental benefits. There remains an aspiration to develop new energy efficient properties and improve the efficiency of existing buildings with a realisation that

⁸ Source: CLG, Table 648 Annual social housing sales by Local Authority <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>

there is work to do in order to reconcile the financial viability of achieving this aspiration.

4.6 Opportunity to review the capacity of Council capital assets to deliver new affordable housing.

A key recurring theme in the project was that Council-owned housing stock and land provides a real opportunity to increase delivery of social housing in the short to medium term. This has been demonstrated by previous projects to develop with housing association partners and more recently on the current Council-led build project in Bournemouth Park Road, Southend.

The project team noted the good work that South Essex Homes have achieved since 2005, in delivering Decent Homes programme and meeting needs of tenants. In particular note good practice in:

- Redevelopment of former sheltered schemes Westwood and Longmans as extra care housing;
- A process to bring back vacant ex assistant sheltered housing officers accommodation into the general letting process is being successfully undertaken at present with plans to extend this process to vacant sheltered housing officers accommodation in the future, many of which are sought after three and two bedroom properties;
- Taking steps to increase revenue generation to reduce reliance on the management fee.

Whilst the standard of the Council's existing stock is generally perceived as excellent the environment in and around the town's tower blocks could be improved. Recent work to transform the image of the town centre tower blocks is ongoing. However, as the site visit to Chelmsford shows, investment can lead to transformation of the building, the surrounding physical environment and the reputation of the area. Whilst the context of the Chelmsford scheme should be noted in that it was undertaken during a period of relatively abundant resources and by a Registered Provider further investigations are required to review longer term plans for the tower blocks in Southend-on-Sea.

4.7 The role of social housing and who it is for remains a key consideration

The group considered and commented on the Council's new Allocations Policy which has now been introduced. The group also contributed to the development of the Council's Tenancy Strategy. Social Housing landlords can now offer flexible tenancies which are generally for a period of five years at which point the situation is reviewed to ensure that the property still meets the needs of the tenant e.g. is the property the right size for the household. Further details are outlined in the Council's Strategic Tenancy Strategy and individual landlord's Tenancy Policies.

New powers to amend the Council's Allocations Policy and the types of tenancies that social landlords can provide have enabled the Council and partner landlords the opportunity to ensure that housing goes to those in greatest need. The new policies also aim to encourage downsizing where appropriate and prioritise applicants in low paid employment. The Council's Draft Tenancy Policy proposes that a review of a tenant's situation will be undertaken 12 months prior to the end of their fixed term to assess whether a new flexible tenancy should be offered.

The question of 'who social housing is for' should be reviewed periodically to take into account the changing nature of the local housing market, levels of housing needs and any new legislative powers available to the Council.

4.8 Partnership working is key to realising improved housing offer.

There is a clear need for partnership working between all of the agencies involved in this project and beyond including: the Council, social housing landlords, private rented landlords, landowners, developers, the third and voluntary sectors and financial institutions in order to achieve wider housing objectives. The witness sessions have provided a number of recurring themes which can only be addressed by working together and there has been recognition from all witnesses that this is necessary.

5. Appendix 1 – Project Plan

TOPIC: Housing

HOW WE PLAN TO MEET THE GROWING DEMAND FOR SOCIAL RENTED HOUSING IN THE CURRENT POOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC CLIMATE.

Social rented housing is housing that is owned and managed by Local Authorities or Registered Social Landlords, as opposed to being privately owned. Social rented housing is let out and managed to fulfil certain social objectives such as providing affordable housing, as opposed to being run on a purely commercial basis, as is the case with most private lets.*

FRAMEWORK FOR SCRUTINY:

Issues to be addressed:

To examine current policy and strategy and the contribution that the Council and partners plan to meet the growing demand for social rented housing and barriers to achieving future development.

Objectives:

- (a) Assess level of need:
 - To gain an understanding of the level of supply and demand for social rented and affordable housing in Southend-on-Sea and the powers and resources available to the Council.
- (b) How to provide it:
 - To consider the potential role that ‘council house building’ might play in meeting Southend-on-Sea’s future housing needs, the resources needed to fund new homes and other ways of boosting housing supply.
 - To consider whether the Council is maximising the potential of its assets in meeting Southend-on-Sea’s future housing needs.
- (c) How to manage it:
 - To suggest possible changes / improvements and help inform the development of (a) the Strategic Tenancy Policy (i.e. how flexible tenancies may be used to better manage stock); (b) the review of the Allocations Policy.

Constraints (and what is not to be included generally in the scope of this review):

- Review covering 18+ (adults)
- Other tenures
- The project will have regard to the reform agenda around planning, welfare reform, new policies and the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

Method:

Gathered through project team and themed conference

Target date:

May 2013

<p>MEMBERSHIP: Councillors Betson, Byford, Dr Counce, Chalk, Flewitt, Kaye, Norman, Robertson and Russell</p> <p>Officer / partner support – Daniel Baker, Group Manager, Strategy & Planning for Housing & Culture and Fiona Abbott, project coordinator. Others TBA</p>	
<p>SOURCES OF EVIDENCE National guidance SBC policy / strategy and guidance Management information Information from partners Third sector information Registered Providers/Housing Association Registered providers HCA Visit to recent affordable housing development</p> <p>WITNESSES Chief Executive SEH Developer Estuary Housing Chief Executive SEAL/Landlords Association CAB LA Officers- Community housing, Regeneration, Planning, Finance Portfolio holders with responsibility for Housing, Finance, Regeneration</p>	
<p><i>Scrutiny process to add value and is supportive of challenges already set to be delivered have limited resources which need to be focused on providing the front line service and the priority outcomes for the Council.</i></p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS: To make appropriate recommendations to the Council & Health & Wellbeing Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the issues and share and highlight best practice • Role of social rented housing sector in meeting demand, in comparison to other tenures • To make recommendations to amend, where appropriate, the Council's Housing Strategy and Policies 	

6. Contact Details

For further information about this report please contact:

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