

## **WORKING DOCUMENT: NOV 08**

# **Haringey's Draft Housing Strategy 2009-19**

### **Introduction and Overview**

Haringey is the fifth most diverse borough in London, and home to 225,700 people. It contains both areas of relative affluence and concentrations of deprivation and we face exciting opportunities and serious challenges in meeting our aspirations for its housing. The borough has high levels of housing need, and many homes that don't meet required standards of decency or are situated in run-down areas. At the same time the borough contains highly successful neighbourhoods, and there are significant regeneration schemes underway.

Housing has a significant role to play in improving quality of life in Haringey and contributes to a wide range of outcomes. Many organizations and areas of work at local, regional and national levels play a part in this. This is an over-arching strategy, and articulates at a high level how these strands of work come together to contribute to achieving the overall vision shared by partners and residents, and a range of other strategies inform and support the strategy.

Our aim is to create balanced neighbourhoods of choice, which meet the housing aspirations of Haringey's residents and offer quality, affordability and sustainability. To do this we must increase the amount of housing in the borough, ensuring that a significant proportion of new homes are affordable to residents, and that they meet high standards of design. We must ensure that we make the best use of existing stock, and that all housing in the borough is well-managed and energy efficient. We must make homes a part of neighbourhoods that people want to live in, a part of sustainable communities of mixed tenure. Finally, we must provide support and advice that give residents independence and choices, with continuing opportunities to exercise these as they move through their lives and their needs change.

At the time of writing, the economic down-turn presents us with new challenges in meeting these aspirations. Over the short to medium term we will place a particular focus on making sure that excellent services ameliorate the impact of the credit crunch on residents and that regeneration and home-building projects in train in the borough are delivered. Through its 'single conversation' approach the Homes and Communities Agency will provide mechanisms through which we can make the most of regional and national support and opportunities, and explore the scope for innovative delivery models through which to drive renewal where it is needed. The council, with the Haringey Strategic Partnership, will

actively participate in this.

## **Our context: the situation in Haringey**

Haringey is a diverse and fast changing borough. Some 50% of our population overall, and three-quarters of our young people, are from ethnic minority backgrounds, and around 200 languages are spoken in the borough. The population is projected to expand by up to 10.6% by 2031. Within this there is expected to be a general shift upwards in the average age, but also an increase in the numbers of very young people.

It is the dynamics of the borough's population that lie behind the change and growth in housing demand in the borough. Currently just under half of Haringey's households are owner-occupiers, with around 30% living in the social rented sector (18% Council stock, 11% Registered Social Landlord) and 22% in private rented accommodation. Owner occupation is greater in the west of the borough, with concentrations of social rented housing in the east of the borough, reflecting a wider social and economic polarisation. 30% of Haringey's population live in central and eastern areas of the borough which are among the 10% most deprived in England, and it is in these areas that regeneration efforts are currently concentrated.

There is a high demand for housing across all tenures. In the private sector this can be seen in house prices, which rose by 94.9% over 2002-7, with the average home in Haringey costing approximately £353,800 in summer 2008. However this average house price masks significant variation across the borough, and 60% of the borough's population cannot afford to purchase a property. The need for affordable housing outstrips supply, with a shortfall in provision of 4,865 units per annum, or 52 per 1,000 head of population - outstripping the Inner London average of 32 per 1000. Housing need particularly affects BME households, with 40% of Black African and Asian households living in unsuitable accommodation.

Responding to this shortfall is a priority for the borough: 26% of residents consider affordable decent housing to be the most important thing in making somewhere a good place to live, and 17% think that it is the thing that most needs improving in the local area. Housing need is reflected in high demand for social housing. In 2007/8 1488 households joined the Housing Register, while only 868 households secured a permanent social rented home. At November 2008 about 4,800 households Haringey were living in temporary accommodation, and the borough faces a huge challenge in meeting government targets to reduce these numbers.

The borough has targets for provision of new housing, and affordable housing, based on a capacity study, and has identified a five year supply of land on which housing can be delivered, which is regularly updated. Over four fifths of new housing over the next ten years will be supplied through Tottenham Hale and

Haringey Heartlands, which are designated as an Opportunity Area and Area for Intensification respectively in recognition of the potential to provide significant numbers of new homes, jobs and regeneration benefits at these locations. The borough also has identified five priority areas which contain the highest levels of deprivation where regeneration initiatives are targeted. There is also scope to make greater use of existing stock through tackling empty homes, and increasing turn-around times on void social properties. Council tax records show that in April 2007 approximately 1000 private sector properties had been vacant for over six months. Evidence also suggests that 18.6% of homes are under-occupied, particularly within the owner-occupier sector.

Parallel to this, the 2007 Housing Needs Assessment identified 20.9% of households to be living in unsuitable housing, the main reason for which was overcrowding. Within the social rented sector 15% of households are overcrowded. This reinforces evidence about demand for affordable housing which demonstrates insufficient availability of larger, three to four bedroom, dwellings in the borough (although demand for one and two bedroom properties remains high). Support needs households are more likely than households overall to be in unsuitable housing: nearly one in five households in Haringey currently contains at least one person with a designated special need. Quality of housing environment is linked to health outcomes, and care and access requirements can tie housing provision closely to independence.

The government has set a target that by 2010 all social housing stock will reach Decent Homes standards. A survey of council stock concluded that at March 2008 42% of Council stock did not meet these standards, and an investment programme is underway to address this, with similar improvements being carried out by other social landlords in the borough. There are areas in the borough where there are wider environmental issues, for example poor design of estates, where we need to look beyond upgrade of individual homes to explore potential for wider estate renewal. A 2002 Private Sector Stock Conditions Survey identified that 15.7% of private stock was unfit, against 7.5% nationally, most commonly due to disrepair. Domestic emissions make up 50% of all CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Haringey, and improvements to the thermal efficiency of homes in the borough will be key to work to reduce poverty and contribute to the Mayor's ambitious target to reduce carbon emissions in London by 60% by 2025.

## **The National and Regional Context**

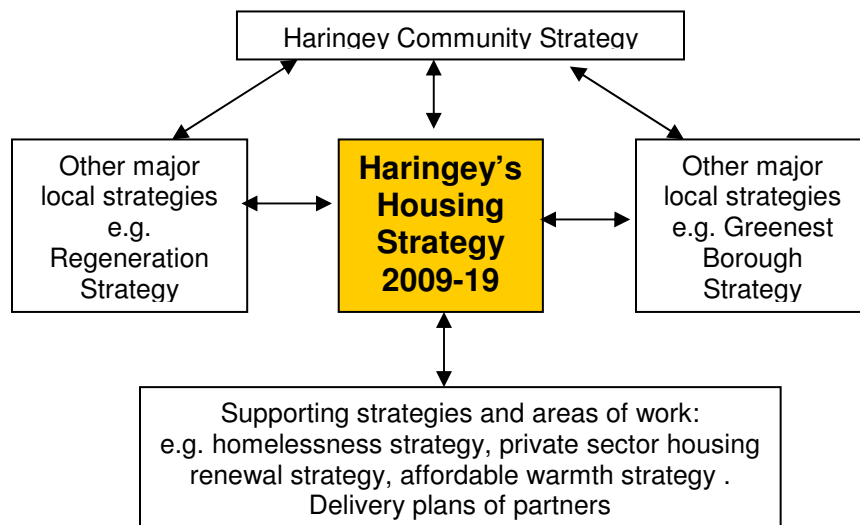
National government has committed to the provision of more homes, more affordable homes, and greener homes. Emphasis has also been placed on the need for mixed tenure and sustainable communities. Partners are being encouraged to work together flexibly and to make use of innovative models through which to deliver on this agenda, and there is a commitment to working with local authorities to enable this and to mitigate the impact of the credit

crunch.

The economic downturn has reduced the availability of credit and increased the cost of loans and mortgages. As social housing construction frequently depends on market housing through section 106 agreements, there is pressure on house building across all sectors. National government has introduced a package of reforms and support to temper the impact of this. The Homes and Communities Agency, established through the 2008 Housing and Regeneration Act, provides mechanisms through the 'single conversation' which will support local authorities and their partners in working with regional and national agencies to counter negative impacts. The introduction of the Tenant Services Authority in the same act will have a direct impact on the future management of social and council housing. This is likely to build on recent reviews which have brought to the fore the need to strengthen the voice of tenants and provision of choice, as well as a role in training and employment.

The Mayor of London's Draft Housing Strategy was published in November 2008. This identifies three priorities: the provision of additional homes, using innovative models for investment and the single conversation approach; the quality and design of new homes, regeneration of areas and greening of all homes; and working to promote opportunity, by meeting need and raising aspirations. Our North London Housing Strategy also addresses the need for increased supply of affordable and intermediate housing, mobility and choice, improved housing quality, meeting need for Supporting People services and homeless households, and contributing to the development of balanced communities.

Locally, housing is key to meeting the objectives of Haringey's Community Strategy 2007-16, particularly those on improving health and quality of life, and creating economic vitality and prosperity, and will contribute to delivery of a number of other key strategies, including the Greenest Borough Strategy, Local Development Framework and Regeneration Strategy.



## What we need to do

Our vision for housing in the borough is to create:

*balanced neighbourhoods of choice, which meet the housing aspirations of Haringey's residents and offer quality, affordability and sustainability*

In order to deliver this vision our aims must be:

1. To meet housing need through mixed communities which act as a ladder of opportunity for residents
2. To ensure housing in the borough is well managed, of high quality, and sustainable
3. To provide people with the support and advice they need
4. To make all homes in the borough a part of neighbourhoods of choice

In order to achieve these aims for Haringey our approach will be based on the following principles:

- Partnership between organisations, agencies and residents in the borough
- Strong relationships with government and national agencies (such as HCA and TSA) that will get the best deal for Haringey's residents
- Engagement with residents and communities so that decisions and service improvement are shaped by what they want

### **1. To meet housing need through mixed communities which act as a ladder of opportunity for residents**

We need to respond to housing need in the borough by increasing housing supply. We will do this through new build, and by making the most of the housing we have, for example tackling under-occupation and reducing the number of empty homes in the borough. The credit crunch has changed the housing market, and to continue to deliver new homes we will need to explore new models and products to drive delivery.

Currently different types of housing are unevenly spread in the borough. We need to create communities with a mix of housing tenure type and size. Mixed communities are more sustainable in terms of their impact on services and amenities, and allow for natural shifts in family size and the economic advancement of individuals. This aim allows housing to offer a ladder of opportunity to residents, allowing people to access housing suited to their needs and aspirations at different points in life, and providing routes for them to move up the ladder as their circumstances change, including accessible opportunities for intermediate home ownership. Residents opportunities are integrally linked to economic regeneration in the borough and efforts to increase skills and employment levels, and housing has a role to play in this.

### *1.1 Supply new housing as a part of mixed communities*

We will deliver more housing, and more affordable housing, in line with our targets, and we will use our planning policies to ensure that this delivery focuses on sustainable locations, with a view to improving the spread of housing type across the borough.

To sustain delivery over the economic down-turn we need to work closely with our delivery partners, and with regional and national agencies through the single conversation with the Homes and Communities Agency. To support delivery we will look at innovative delivery models which draw on the different strengths and assets that partners can bring together, and a range of products to meet market needs. The partnership approach will be based on flexibility, however there we will not compromise on design, or on making housing a part of mixed and sustainable communities.

Some areas in the borough are characterised by severe deprivation and low quality housing stock. Where there are opportunities for wholesale development and improvement we will explore these through masterplanning tools.

Priority actions are:

- Maximise the supply of new housing and new affordable housing. We will meet the delivery targets set out in the Local Area Agreement, including delivery of our major regeneration projects at Haringey Heartlands and Tottenham Hale
- Develop and promote a range of flexible intermediate housing products
- Develop policies for our Local Development Framework which support us in delivering housing that is part of mixed and sustainable communities
- Ensure that delivery of new housing is supported by the infrastructure and services needed to make it part of sustainable communities
- Work with our local and national partners to broker support and flexibilities which sustain new development
- Review our preferred partner arrangements with social housing developers to make sure we are maximising our opportunities
- Explore the potential to develop local asset based vehicles and other innovative models to bring together public sector assets, finance, and partners to regenerate areas

### *1.2 Connecting housing to employment and skills*

There are links between worklessness and tenure in Haringey. The 2001 Census found that the employment rate among those living in social housing was only 36%, compared to a rate of 56% for the borough as a whole. The 2007 Hills Report proposed a greater role for social housing in addressing worklessness, and strengthening our work in this area will be a key component of supporting

residents to realise their housing aspirations.

Priorities are to:

- Work with Homes for Haringey and social housing providers to connect residents to opportunities for training and employment through the Haringey Guarantee
- Ensure housing advice services and homelessness services are closely linked with employment and skills support, particularly in relation to housing for young people
- Work with contractors to help residents benefit from employment opportunities arising from their work in the borough through applying the Supplementary Planning Guidance Employment Code of Practice and Employment Training Protocol

### *1.3 Maximise the supply from existing homes by tackling empty homes, voids and under-occupation.*

There is scope to make more use of existing stock, across all tenures in meeting housing demand in the borough, tackling empty homes, identifying where 'hidden homes' can be uncovered on housing estates, reducing voids and addressing under-occupation.

Priorities are to:

- Reduce the numbers of empty homes in the borough through delivery of our Empty Homes Strategy
- Develop an Under-occupation Strategy that delivers a borough-wide approach to under-occupation in the social sector, in close partnership with support services
- Explore options to deliver 'hidden homes' on estates
- Reduce turn-around times for void properties

### *1.4 Work with residents and private sector landlords to look at alternatives to temporary accommodation*

The number of households living in temporary accommodation in Haringey is very high and the borough faces a huge challenge in meeting government targets to reduce these numbers. Of these homeless households approximately 60% have been living in temporary accommodation for at least 4 years. BME households account for 81% of households living in temporary accommodation, and young people aged 16-24 account for just over a third of single homeless people.

In addition to our work to prevent homelessness, we need to work with those in temporary accommodation to manage their expectations, and to work with private sector landlords to develop and promote affordable housing options appropriate for and accessible to homeless households.

Key actions will be to:

- Work proactively with private landlords and residents of temporary accommodation, persuading them to accept a new arrangement involving an assured shorthold tenancy
- Establish a Housing Options Team that provides specialist, comprehensive advice on a full range of housing options

## **2. To ensure all housing in the borough is well managed and of high quality and sustainability**

Improvements to the physical condition of housing stock in all sectors is needed to reach Decent Homes Standards and to raise the energy efficiency of housing in the borough, and high standards need to be applied for new build. Partners need to engage with one another and with residents in delivering high quality management, benchmarking, sharing best practice, and putting customer needs to the fore.

### *2.1 High quality new build*

To ensure that new housing in the borough meets high standards of design and energy efficiency, key priorities will be:

- To ensure that new housing is developed in line with the standards laid out within the Council's UDP and Housing Supplementary Planning Document, and forthcoming Local Development Framework, with high standards of design and energy efficiency applied. Expectations will build on the latest regional and national standards, such as the Code for Sustainable Homes and those for Lifetime Homes, the CAGE building for life standards and the forthcoming London Housing Design Guide.
- Ensure all planning applications have a sustainability and energy assessment and encourage new build to be low or zero carbon
- To work with Homes for Haringey and other housing providers and home owners to ensure investments and improvements secure the best possible environmentally sustainable solutions

### *2.2 High quality social housing*

Social housing will be brought up to Decent Homes standards. Homes for Haringey and social landlords will have clear service standards and performance targets that drive continuous improvement in terms of value for money, customer service, accessibility and quality of delivery. Tenant involvement will be at the heart of improving housing management.

Key priorities will be:

- To bring council and social housing stock up to Decent Homes standards



- To engage residents with a view to strengthening their voice, and to building choice over where they live, the services that are delivered to them and how these are delivered.
- To use the Integrated Housing Board and its supporting forums to share best practise, local intelligence, and performance information, and for constructive challenge of partner performance.

## *2.2 High quality private sector housing*

There is work to do to improve the quality and energy efficiency of private sector stock, and this is a particular priority for vulnerable households. In Haringey a relatively high percentage of households live in private sector accommodation (at 20%, against 14% in London and 9% nationally), and we need to make effective use of available tools, and strengthen our partnership with landlords to ensure that this accommodation is of a decent standard and well-managed.

Key priorities are:

- Improve the quality and energy efficiency of private sector stock through enforcement, information and provision of grants, the latter provided and registered as a charge against the property.
- To explore the potential of discretionary licensing to raise management standards in private rented accommodation
- To strengthen our engagement with private sector landlords through regular Landlords Forums and ensure that services provided by the Council are effective in helping them to deliver our aspirations.

## *2.3 High quality temporary accommodation*

A high number of households in the borough live in temporary accommodation. The council is in a strong position to ensure that this accommodation is of appropriate quality and suitability. Our priorities in ensuring that this is delivered will be to:

- Improve the condition of temporary accommodation through routine inspections and robust enforcement of contracts and standards
- In consultation with service users, provide new guidance concerning the procurement and allocation of Temporary Accommodation, and transfers within TA

## **3. To provide people with the support and advice they need**

For residents to experience housing as a 'ladder of opportunity' they need to be able to access advice and support at appropriate times. These services need to be geared towards enabling choice and independence. Early intervention and a joined-up approach will ensure the best outcomes. The economic down-turn has

increased the importance of advice and support, which must be able to address a wide range of need and be tailored to individual circumstances.

### *3.1 Provision of high quality advice*

We will deliver a full range of advice to help people across all tenures to maintain or improve their existing accommodation, or to inform them in considering options for a change in accommodation. Advice will be accessible, use outreach to increase awareness, and evidence strong linkage between services. Priorities are:

- Early intervention and the prevention of homelessness.
- Provision of specialist, comprehensive advice on a full range of housing options through a Housing Options Team that provides

### *3.2 Provide joined-up support through multi-agency working*

Support services will work with vulnerable people in a joined-up and coordinated way, and promote social inclusion and independence. The Supporting People Strategy outlines the way that agencies need to respond to a wide range of groups in need of support, and high levels of need in the borough mean that this is of paramount importance. Priorities are:

- To support delivery of the Supporting People Strategy in providing housing related support to help vulnerable people live independent lives
- To develop and deliver an Older People's Housing Strategy, including implementation of conclusions from review of supported housing and extra care sheltered housing.

## **4. To make all homes in the borough a part of neighbourhoods of choice**

Housing has a role to play in creating well-designed, attractive, clean and safe public spaces where there is a real sense of belonging and pride. Meeting this aim requires a wide range of services to work in partnership.

Key priorities are:

- For housing services to participate in area-based work to tackle key issues in local areas in a way which is responsive to local concerns
- To make use of enforcement powers to tackle environmental blight
- To improve the public realm in the borough through environmental improvement programmes on existing estates,
- To tackle the fear of crime through partnership work to improve home security
- To ensure new housing is supported by the necessary infrastructure in terms of local amenities, transport and services.

## **Our approach to delivering on this strategy:**

- **Working in partnership**

The contribution of all partners is necessary for us to achieve our vision for Haringey. Partnership work will be co-ordinated through the Haringey Strategic Partnership and the Integrated Housing Board, with regular wider stakeholder consultation with private sector landlords, social landlords and residents informing this work.

- **Engaging with residents and communities so that we can place their needs at the heart of all we do**

This principle will be central to all of our work. Engagement will be ongoing at a range of levels, with landlords and services involving tenants and service users in service improvement, feedback from residents' groups informing our work in local areas, and shared data about what local people want acting as a driver for partnership working.

- **Leading and brokering relationships with government and national agencies (such as HCA and TSA) to get the best deal for Haringey's citizens now and in the future.**

The newly established Homes and Communities Agency brings together previous fragmented bodies and programmes driving and supporting housing and regeneration, to provide a mechanism for a 'single conversation' between national and regional agencies and local authorities and other partners on the housing and regeneration needs of area. Through a strategic approach based on partnership and a holistic understanding of the needs of communities in Haringey, we will maximise the opportunities this opens up for us to regenerate Haringey.

## **Delivering and monitoring the strategy**

This strategy will be adopted by the Haringey Strategy Partnership (HSP), which brings together local public agencies, community groups and businesses. Its delivery will be overseen by the Integrated Housing Board, a thematic partnership board which supports the HSP with regards to housing issues.

This is an over-arching strategy, and below it sit a number of supporting strategies and areas of work each with their own implementation and monitoring arrangements. The implementation plan identifies where responsibility lies for delivery of this strategy, without seeking to duplicate these arrangements.

A small number of key indicators have been identified which will be monitored quarterly by the Integrated Housing Board. These indicators provide a high level picture of how we are delivering on our vision. They are underpinned by lower level indicators of success and progress which can be interrogated where issues in delivery arise.

<b>Headline indicators</b>	
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
NI 154	Net additional homes provided
NI 156	Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation
NI 187	Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating
NI 158	% Non-decent council homes
NI 160	Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services
NI 186	Per capita CO2 emissions in the LA area

## **How this strategy will be developed**

A seven week period of consultation will take place between 26 January and 15 March, through which we will seek feedback from organizations and residents on this draft. These contributions will be incorporated within a final strategy, which we aim to formally adopt in spring 2009.