



Braintree District Council

Affordable Housing Strategy:

Action Plan (2008 to 2014)

Draft Version for Consultation December 2008 to March 2009

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Overall Aim: 1. Increase the supply of affordable housing

Outcome(s)	Actions	Performance Measures	Overall Targets
1.1 Mainstream housing developments provide a consistent proportion of affordable homes	1.1 Commission a viability assessment of our proposed policies 1.2 Ensure that we achieve the highest viable affordable housing provision on major new sites 1.3 Secure housing at lower thresholds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viability assessment undertaken. • Revised proportion and threshold agreed. • New affordable housing policy adopted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing is a minimum of 35% of all new development
1.2 More affordable housing is developed in rural areas	1.4 Concentrate on securing affordable developments in key service villages 1.5 Identify specific sites for affordable housing in key service villages, allocating specific sites outside the existing villages if necessary 1.6 Secure funding for rural land supply and housing need project (jointly with Greenfields) 1.7 Explore with RSLs the cost and value-for-money of extending existing homes where there are urgent needs and no development opportunities 1.8 Consider spot-purchase where immediate needs cannot be met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish development programme agreed for key service villages • Undertake rural need and land supply study • Publish details of smaller villages that are given priority for affordable housing development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural schemes of affordable housing provide an average of 14 new homes per year • An average of 31 new units per year are provided on sites owned or acquired by BDC/Greenfields
1.3 Affordable housing is provided, independently of S106 schemes	1.9 Undertake a viability assessment with a view to securing a minimum of 50% affordable housing on council land disposals 1.10 Work with Greenfields to create a programme for development on Greenfields-owned sites. 1.11 Work collaboratively with Greenfields to ensure that the CHIP fund is used to secure additional homes that represent best value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy agreed for affordable housing on disposal of council-owned land • Programme agreed for new development on Greenfields-owned sites • Process agreed for allocation of CHIP fund to affordable housing schemes 	

Overall Aim 2: Improve the quality of new affordable housing provision

Outcome(s)	Actions	Performance Measures	Overall Targets
2.1 New homes are cheap to heat and have low carbon emissions	2.1 Ensure all new homes meet a minimum of Code Level 3 2.2 Ensure that RSLs evaluate the additional cost on all new schemes to meet code level 4 and investigate securing additional resources 2.3 Consider at least one urban and one rural scheme to meet code level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on Code Level of all new schemes • RSL evaluations available for all schemes • RSLs evaluate features and costs for Code Level 5 scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schemes meet Code Level 3 • 100% of new homes on feasible schemes meet lifetime homes standard
2.2 New homes meet needs of people with reduced mobility	2.4 All new homes should meet the Lifetime Home Standard unless there are overwhelming site constraints 2.5 Secure wheelchair standard units on every scheme over 10 units – aim to provide for 5% of all new homes to be fully adapted for wheelchair users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSLs report on Lifetime Homes for each scheme • Monitor & report on wheelchair standard units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% of units are fully adapted for wheelchair users

Overall Aim 3: Create attractive, secure, sustainable, popular neighbourhoods

Outcome(s)	Actions	Performance Measures	Overall Targets
3.1 All new homes are secure and deter opportunistic crime	3.1 All new schemes meet Secured by Design Standard unless there are overwhelming site constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Secured by Design certification for all schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Secured by Design' for all feasible schemes
3.2 All new homes have adequate space for the occupying household	3.2 All new 2 bed family homes designed for social rent are 4 person units 3.3 All new affordable homes meet HCA space standards applicable at the time of build, regardless of tenure 3.4 Make sure we enable a suitable mix of property sizes on all developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor & report on bedroom layout in rented homes Monitor & report on space standards on all schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schemes meet HCA space standards Publication of review of standard design and specification for BHP homes, taking tenant views into account
3.3 Tenants are involved in the planning of new neighbourhoods	3.5 Continue to monitor the views of tenants in new affordable homes 3.6 Undertake a study of the experience of BHP tenants across all the schemes in the district 3.7 Consider how the tenants choices at Bailey Bridge Road should inform future development 3.8 Continue to involve Housing Management officers into pre-planning design discussions on all new sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaires sent to all new BHP tenants Questionnaires sent to all existing BHP tenants Hold tenant forum Housing Management staff 'sign off' all designs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures for new lettings adopted across 'Homechoice' sub-region
3.4 All new homes are let through Choice Based Lettings (CBL) with consideration given to mixed communities	3.9 Work with RSLs to ensure that new housing schemes are fully and accurately advertised on 'Gateway to Homechoice' 3.10 Work with our CBL partners to develop the 'local lettings' system for new developments that promotes a mixed community for first let of new schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile and publish guide to 'Homechoice' for new schemes 	

Overall Aim 4: Develop a range of affordable housing for people with varied (and changing) financial circumstances			
Outcome(s)	Actions	Performance Measures	Overall Targets
4.1 Organisations developing locally have clear advice on range of intermediate tenures and their local application	4.1 Revise our affordable housing SPD to recognise changes to our policies 4.2 Publish and update guidance on the Council's website regarding our approach to intermediate tenure. 4.3 Publish guidance for developing organisations on the council's website on the acceptable service charge levels that sustain the affordability of new homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Housing SPD prepared Web-site includes guidance for developing organisations about charges for intermediate housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new homes developed for intermediate tenure are offered at costs in line with our guidance
4.2 Clear information is published for local people about the range of intermediate housing options available	4.4 Publish and update guidance for local people on the Council's website regarding the range of alternative tenures available and how to access them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web-site includes guidance for local people about alternatives to social rented housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of people registered for intermediate housing by at least 50%

Overall Aim 5: Ensure consistent delivery of our affordable housing strategy

Outcome(s)	Actions	Performance Measures	Overall Targets
<p>5.1 Partnerships in which we participate are relevant, focussed and beneficial to all parties involved</p>	<p>5.1 Participate fully in the work of the Greater Haven Gateway (GHG) housing sub-region and make sure that our strategies are complementary</p> <p>5.2 Review and update as necessary how we work with the Braintree Housing Partnership & consolidate Greenfields' role</p> <p>5.3 Work with the Stansted Area Housing Partnership to ensure that the available resources secure homes that otherwise may not have been provided through conventional sources of funding</p> <p>5.4 Co-ordinate with the housing activities agreed with partners in the Essex LAA, particularly in identification of surplus public land and provision of rural housing</p> <p>5.5 Continue to coordinate our rural programme with the RCCE and support the work of the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated GHG housing strategy published with similar aims to our strategy • Adopt and agree a new target for annual housing provided by BHP • At least one SAHP funded scheme • Undertake audit of publicly-owned land in the district • Attendance and participation in RHE steering group meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Supply chain' up-to-date, showing sufficient units to meet target of 35% affordable housing • 'Supply chain' costed – indicating resources required and shortfalls identified.
<p>5.2 Adequate resources are secured to meet our supply targets</p>	<p>5.6 Make sure that we communicate fully with HCA regarding our expected future provision and maintain an up-to-date 'supply chain'</p> <p>5.7 Review and discuss with ECC the impact on future S106 agreements of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</p> <p>5.8 Work with other Essex Districts and ECC to explore PFI funding for affordable housing</p> <p>5.9 Review how we secure and use recycled RSL funds</p> <p>5.10 Ensure that we are flexible in our use of our capital resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply chain up-to-date and shared with HCA • Viability appraisal includes consideration of CIL • Report on progress on PFI • Monitor and report on the level of RSL recycled funds from intermediate schemes in Braintree • Report on use of capital budget 	

Overall Aim 6: Continue to develop affordable housing despite difficult market conditions

Outcome(s)	Actions	Performance Measures	Overall Targets
6.1 Developers explore with us alternatives that permit development to start on stalled sites	6.1 Contact developers to see if S106 agreements can be re-negotiated to enable affordable housing to be completed 6.2 Explore a range of tenures to facilitate development & consider how units can move between tenures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 'stalled sites identified and developers contacted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 units per year average sustained during 2009 - 2014
6.2 New sites are acquired while values are depressed	6.3 Work with our RSL partners to look for opportunities to purchase sites for affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process agreed with Greenfields and other BHP partners for site purchase 	