



# **West Dorset District Council & Weymouth and Portland Borough Council**

## **Joint Housing Strategy 2014-19**

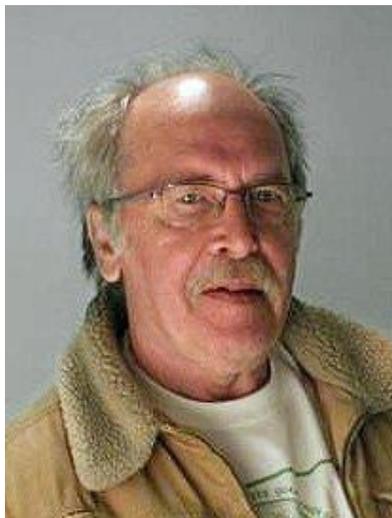
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## Foreword



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Housing Champion  
West Dorset DC



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Housing Briefholder  
Weymouth & Portland BC

We are very pleased to introduce this new Joint Housing Strategy for West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland, which sets our direction for the next five years. Housing is a major issue for residents of both areas and we are determined to provide the best opportunities we can for people to find homes suited to their needs.

We have gone to great lengths to make this strategy as inclusive and comprehensive as we can. There have been extensive consultation processes involving elected members, key partners, the public and a wide range of local agencies and organisations. This is a strategy for partnership and we have reflected that in the way we have developed it. This is also reflected in the fact that six of our key partners have signed up to endorse our approach and contribute to deliver the outcomes.

We recognise that these are difficult times for local authorities, but we have not shirked away from our commitment to address our local housing needs. We have been realistic in recognising our limitations, but retained an ambitious but deliverable programme of actions. This strategy sets out a new partnership agenda that we believe is the way forward and will serve well the needs of our Councils, our partners and our residents.

We commend it to you.

## PREFACE

This Housing Strategy is a departure from those that have preceded it. In part, this is the result of the development of a joint strategy to cover the two local authority areas of West Dorset District Council (WDDC) and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (WPBC). It reflects the close working relationship following an operational partnership between the Councils. It also reflects the fact that WDDC and WPBC form a strategic Housing Market Area (HMA), with the linkages and relationships that such a designation implies. Finally, this approach also mirrors that taken in the development of a joint Local Plan.

A further departure from previous Housing Strategies is the adoption of an outcome-focused model to identify and determine priorities for action. The need for this reflects a rapidly and radically changing environment in which major social and economic reforms continue to alter the shape of the public sector.

Although labelled a Housing Strategy, this document is about much more than housing alone. Housing is the foundation of stable and vibrant communities and is a requisite for basic well-being. Poor housing or lack of a home has consistently been proven to have a detrimental impact on employment, crime, education and health. Similarly, a wide range of non-housing factors, including those already mentioned, often have a direct impact on levels of housing need and homelessness.

As a partnership of district councils, WDDC/WPBC are limited in the housing solutions we can deliver; we are enablers and commissioners rather than housing providers. Our role is to influence and shape the local housing market to ensure it meets the needs and aspirations of local households and communities. Partnership is therefore a key structural element of this strategy. So, for the first time we have produced a Housing Strategy which has sought endorsement from our key partners, with a common commitment to deliver its objectives.

We are very much on the cusp of change. Therein lies the key challenge for delivering a sustainable five-year housing plan. We know that we cannot solely rely on the tried and tested methods of the past. We do not have sufficient resources or capacity. However, we have not yet collectively developed a new approach better suited to the times. As such, some of the means of delivering the vision in this strategy represent work in progress. However, we remain committed to meeting the needs of our communities, to delivering real improvements to housing conditions and extending realistic housing options.

## Partnership Compact

As key partners of West Dorset DC and Weymouth and Portland BC, we support the approach of this Housing Strategy, endorse the outcomes and commit to contribute to the delivery of the key actions.



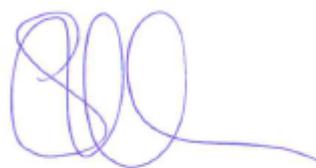
Debbie Ward, Chief Executive  
Dorset County Council



Sarah Durrans, Regional Director,  
Synergy Housing Association



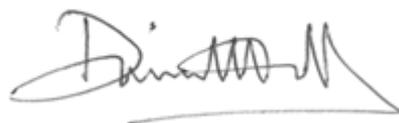
David Aldwinckle, Director  
Magna Housing Association



Stuart Davies, Neighbourhood Services  
Director  
Spectrum Housing Group



Gary Orr, Chief Executive  
Yarlington Housing Group



David Hall, Regional Director  
Raglan Housing Association

## Executive Summary

### *Introduction*

This is a joint Housing Strategy covering the two local authority areas of West Dorset District Council (WDDC) and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (WPBC), mirroring the approach taken in the development of a Joint Local Plan.

Our **aim** is a Housing Strategy that reflects the wider perspectives of community need and fully engages with the wide range of partners involved in supporting and delivering those needs. Partnership is a key structural element of this strategy. So, for the first time we have produced a Housing Strategy which has sought endorsement from our key partners, with a common commitment to deliver its objectives.

Our overarching priorities are to:

- Provide the maximum opportunity to access and support the provision of new affordable homes
- Prevent and resolve homelessness
- Work closer with the private rented sector in maintaining standards and extending housing opportunities
- Improve energy efficiency and address fuel poverty
- Provide housing and support for younger and older people and other vulnerable groups
- Provide effective and efficient housing services appropriate to users' needs

We have chosen strategic objectives based on a number of agreed outcomes rather than concentrating on outputs and processes. We will look to better engage with issues such as crime, health and social care to ensure better joint outcomes.

Registered Providers (RPs) remain our closest partners in relation to housing provision and we are committed to ensuring that WDDC and WPBC remain good and viable areas in which our RP partners can operate. We also recognise the need to work with non-housing partners, the voluntary sector and our neighbouring local authorities.

### *Economic Development*

The housing sector is a major contributor to the local economy. Delivering an affordable homes programme delivers the double benefit of much needed new homes and jobs. RPs are also large local employers and spend significantly within the local economy, supporting sizeable supply chains.

### *Housing Needs*

Housing needs significantly exceed the likely supply of affordable housing. We project that new build social housing delivery will fall across the HMA and face the prospect where social lettings will be significantly lower than past levels. To address this, **we will seek innovative methods of providing new, affordable homes**, work closely with the private rented sector and look to reduce numbers of empty properties.

### *Homelessness Prevention*

We have focused on homelessness prevention, which has meant that the number of households accepted as homeless and living in temporary accommodation has reduced and held at much lower levels than historically. The use of a bond/deposits/rent in advance loan scheme to secure private sector accommodation has led to better relationships with landlords and lettings agents, resulting in improved outcomes for all parties. We prefer to use our own temporary accommodation, which **we will review over the coming year**, where required rather than B&B. Homelessness Prevention Grant has been critical in enabling us to commission services, provided both with and externally to the Partnership, which have prevented and resolved homelessness. If this is withdrawn or significantly reduced there would be a major impediment in our ability to effectively manage homelessness.

### ***Local Lettings – Rural Need, etc***

Allocating from the housing register should be flexible, and we will negotiate local lettings plans with our partners to recognise specific locational characteristics aimed at supporting the development of sustainable communities

### ***Housing Advice and Assistance***

We are committed to providing good quality advice and information available in easily accessible formats. The objectives for our advice service are:

- To give timely advice and support to enable customers to access housing opportunities and/or to **prevent/resolve homelessness**
- To make customers aware of available options and constraints to **enable realistic choices to be made**
- To represent the views and needs of customers to ensure they **receive a fair and consistent service**
- To ensure that all customers receive **equal access to services and opportunities** irrespective of their circumstances or characteristics

### ***Financial Inclusion and Capacity***

Perhaps the single most significant factor in housing need is affordability. Housing costs in WDDC are relatively high and ability to afford market prices is a major factor in accessing housing in the HMA. Yet it is estimated that around 25% (c400) of households across the HMA cannot afford housing at current market prices/rents without some form of subsidy. Almost half (46%) the registered applicants in WDDC and 35% in WPBC had at least one member of their household in employment but annual incomes of less than £20,000.

### ***Welfare Reform***

Traditionally, the safety net for those on low incomes seeking access to housing has been through Housing Benefit (HB). Government welfare reforms have been introduced from April 2013, which have had the effect of reducing the benefit entitlement of a number of working age households. Also, a cap on the total benefit receivable has impacted on 18 households in WDDC and 38 in WPBC. Some applicants have been removed from Housing Benefit altogether. Working age households have also been faced with a cut if occupying properties too large for their needs. The majority of households on the housing register or living in affordable housing are unable to access owner occupation at market values, so a significant proportion of properties across the HMA will be denied to them. **This underlines the importance of continued support for the provision of affordable housing and an accessible private rented sector.**

### ***Working with the Private Rented Sector***

We can now discharge homelessness responsibility into the private rented sector (PRS). We will maintain the good relationships we have with local landlords as a source of accommodation. However, many landlords and letting agents often refuse, or have stated a preference not to take, households on benefits. To generate increased private rented units, we will implement a 'tenant ready' scheme, to be inform and support housing applicants to fully understand what is required in holding down a tenancy. We will also be undertaking a feasibility study during 2013 to **examine the viability of establishing a social lettings agency** to source and manage properties directly.

### ***Local Plan***

Planning policy is critical to the delivery of new affordable housing. The joint Local Plan allocates new areas for development to meet our projected housing needs. We require a proportion of 35% affordable housing (25% on Portland) within general new housing developments. This will provide the most significant source of new affordable housing.

### ***Neighbourhood Plans and Community-led Schemes***

Neighbourhood plans and community right-to-build schemes enable communities to develop their own planning policies for the local area. We are supporting a number of communities developing such plans across the local plan area, including the Cerne Valley plan, which is one of the national 'front-runners'.

### ***Affordable Housing Targets***

Targets for affordable housing provision have been reviewed for this strategy, taking into account the likely delivery through the new Local Plan, and the changes in funding arrangements. They are expressed as ranges (70-100 in West Dorset and 50-65 in Weymouth and Portland) in order to reflect the uncertainty surrounding future funding.

### ***Bringing Development Forward***

Where development is delayed, taking action to bring such sites forward will be a key priority. It may require external funding towards earlier delivery of essential infrastructure, to reduce development risk. Affordable housing can also help to bring sites forward at times when the general housing market is poor, and RPs are increasingly taking an active role, including undertaking mixed-tenure developments themselves.

### ***Grant Funding***

Since the last Housing Strategies, national funding has been significantly reduced, and is available primarily for a new tenure of affordable housing, 'affordable rent'. Funding has been allocated up to 2015, and the next round of funding has been announced, but there is considerable uncertainty over funding in the longer term. We will work flexibly to maximise the opportunities for provision and support innovative approaches.

### ***New Build Typology***

There are several different models of affordable housing provision that can all play a part in providing housing for those unable to meet their needs on the open market. We will aim to achieve the right mix of house types and sizes within individual developments in order to reflect the housing need in the area, and to encourage balanced communities with a mix of different household types. Particular needs such as housing adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities must also be taken into account.

### ***Rural Housing***

Whilst the bulk of affordable housing demand is focused on the towns, there is also significant demand in rural areas, where there are far fewer existing affordable housing properties. The main opportunities for the provision of new rural affordable housing are through rural exception sites, neighbourhood plans and community right to build schemes. These are often controversial, and we will use community-led approaches and ensure we have gathered robust data on local needs. A rural exceptions site toolkit for community use is proposed.

### ***Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers***

Gypsies and travellers are a group with specific accommodation needs, and local planning authorities are responsible for assessing these needs and allocating land to meet them, in the same way that they do for general housing. Dorset councils are working together to prepare a plan allocating permanent and transit sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people across the Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole areas.

### ***Empty Properties***

The housing need reported within both council areas demands that maximum use is made of the existing stock. Empty homes represent a wasted resource both to the community and the property owner. We have removed Council Tax exemptions to both second homes and empty homes, so that there is no incentive to leave homes unoccupied. In addition, we have invested funding secured from the New Homes Bonus to

employ an Empty Homes Officer, and have adopted a policy of 'incremental intervention' in dealing with empty property.

### ***Supporting People***

Support to maintain independent living can take the form of specialist long or short term accommodation, often provided by RPs, sometimes with specialist support. Alternatively, floating support may be delivered to people in their homes to enable them to cope. Such services are commissioned across Dorset by Dorset County Council (DCC) through 'Supporting People', a partnership comprising the County, District and Borough Councils, Probation and Health. Over 50% of Dorset SP funding is spent in WDDC/WPBC, reflecting local identified needs.

### ***Older People***

Nationally, Dorset has the highest proportion of older people in its population. The proportion of those aged over 85 is projected to almost double in Dorset by 2026. The largest increase is expected to be in WDDC. **We are committed to work in partnership to maintain a range of services to enable older people to live dignified, independent and, where required, supported lives.** Our assessment is that both WDDC and WPBC are adequately provided for sheltered housing but are deficient in relation to extra care units.

### ***Younger People***

Of those households approaching us for housing, one of the most challenging groups to deal with effectively are those under the age of 25. The Dorset approach is funnelled through Supporting People-funded services, which recognise the need to give young people housing choices and maximise opportunities to access sustainable decent, safe and secure housing. Appropriate support can also assist young people in maintaining their accommodation and prevent the crisis of homelessness. **We will examine options for supporting the provision of housing for under 35-year olds, and remain committed to playing a full and supportive role in seeking the best outcomes for young people in our areas.**

### ***Looked After Children, Leaving Care, Homeless 16/17 Year Olds and Teenage Parents***

Children in these categories often have poorer outcomes than the norm, particularly in educational achievement, homelessness and mental health. Many also have difficulty in making the transition into independent living. In recognition of this, we have built links with local agencies supporting young people, and hold regular surgeries at e.g. Youth Centres and Young Persons Advice Centres. We are committed not to use B&B for 16/17 year-olds.

### ***Vulnerable Groups***

We will work through DCC Supporting People budgets to ensure specialist housing and support services are provided for these groups, where appropriate. This may range from longer term and shorter term accommodation-based services through to floating support services. DCC also has a Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service that works with both authorities to provide permanent and transit sites. A site already exists in WDDC and Dorset councils' planning departments are working together to produce a Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document to enhance provision of authorised sites.

### ***Domestic Violence and Abuse***

Dorset Police data on domestic violence and abuse estimates 3,000 reported incidents across Dorset each year. We work with victims of domestic violence and abuse through support and partnerships with the Women's Refuge and the Hamlet (a refuge move-on accommodation project). We also actively contribute to the Dorset Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), a partnership which supports high risk victims of domestic violence and abuse.

### ***Stock Condition***

We are mindful of our duties to take action where Category 1 hazards are identified and license larger Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). Our approach to continual improvement in the condition of the housing stock is through partnership, support and liaison with local landlords, letting agents and organisations representing those groups.

### ***Housing Standards***

We will keep housing conditions in our area under review and inspect properties where necessary within the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) The most common Category 1 hazard is 'excess cold', which is identified in properties with poor insulation standards or inadequate heating. Other hazards commonly identified related to the falls resulting from poor design of stairs or access, damp and mould, and fire. The stock condition assessment evidence confirms that Category 1 hazards and non-decent homes are more frequently found in the private rented sector than other tenures.

### ***Housing and Health***

Housing is a key factor impacting the health and well-being of individuals and communities. Research confirms the relationship between housing and both physical and mental health. Many of the key health priorities can be impacted by the quality and suitability of housing and the **challenge is for us to work as effectively as possible with health and social care providers to improve well-being and deliver health-related outcomes**. Analysis of investment in housing indicates significant potential savings to health services, supported by findings from Health Impact Assessments that accompanied the Stock Condition Assessments.

### ***Working with Landlords and Letting Agents***

We wish to work with good landlords, driving improving standards in the PRS. We consider that a jointly agreed scheme of accreditation can be effective in achieving this objective. We have no plans to introduce discretionary 'Selective' licensing, but do not rule this out in the future. Accreditation has operated in WDDC since 1999. Currently over 140 landlords are part of the scheme benefitting from seminars and newsletters throughout the year. **A review of the potential to merge the WDDC scheme with a new WPBC scheme will be an early action within this strategy**. We will continue to implement mandatory licensing for larger HMOs and will review the need to introduce additional licensing schemes.

### ***Assistance to Achieve Good Housing***

We have adopted a common policy for assisting households needing to improve, repair, insulate or adapt their home. Despite funding cuts, we will continue to provide financial assistance to private householders who would otherwise be unable to maintain their home in a safe and secure condition or be able to continue to live independently. The major assistance is likely to be through DFGs, which are mandatory and subject to a test of financial resources. We work closely with DCC Occupational Therapists, the Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) and a number of local contractors to provide effective adaptation solutions for disabled households. We also have implemented a loans scheme for private householders and owners of empty property.

### ***Energy Efficiency***

We are working to promote energy efficiency and tackle 'fuel poverty'. We will continue to work through Dorset Energy Advice Centre (DEAC), which has accessed utility company and other public funding to deliver insulation schemes. We will promote The Green Deal, launched in October 2012, to those households that could benefit from it. **We will encourage utility companies to meet their 'Energy Company Obligations' (ECO). We will also review and explore the potential of partnerships with individual utility companies and insulation/heating companies.**

### ***Defining Sustainability***

Sustainability is not achieved through a standardised set of activities or processes. Communities are as varied as the locations they occupy. However, there are a number of models that we look to support which have been proven to deliver sustainability. We support the *Lifetime Neighbourhoods* (CLG, 2012) model.

### ***Engaging with Communities***

Sustainability is largely about communities achieving a level of cohesion and maturity to be able to address their collective needs and nurture their residents. We recognise that there is no simple 'one size fits all' approach to suit all communities looking to make this transition. We will aim to support communities to achieve change where required through active partnerships. Many RPs have recognised a commitment to the communities they serve both in terms of a public service ethos and a business imperative to safeguard the value of their asset base and reduce operating costs. **We fully support this approach and would expect all of our preferred RP partners to operate in this way.**

### ***Identifying Communities for Investment***

Certain areas of WPBC experience significant and multiple deprivation, and four wards fall within the top 20% of the most deprived communities in the country. Action to address problems in these areas is led by the Weymouth and Portland Partnership. In WDDC, the Working with You Initiative is primarily concentrating within the five existing Local Area Partnership areas. The focus is on deprivation, either rural or within towns, and also on leveraging in external funding to tackle inequalities. The programme aims to maximise the financial potential of partners working together with local communities.

### ***Mapping and Monitoring Community Impacts***

We will look to understand our local communities and communities of interest, including the population structure, housing, education, work and pension date plus what is important to our residents, the issues they face and the changes that are needed to support them to be more sustainable. Work is ongoing within the two strategic partnerships to define local sustainability priorities. Each partnership has an action plan with strategic objectives and targets which are closely monitored and reported on.

### ***Delivering the Longer Term Vision***

Improvements to communities are more likely to be sustainable through co-ordinated community partnership. Financial capacity is likely to become increasingly important in the future to ensure access to housing. Our key community 'hotspots' have higher levels of benefit dependency and unemployment, lower levels of educational attainment and poorer health. Our aim is to support these communities to transform themselves to become balanced and inclusive.

***This chapter evaluates past performance against the objectives set out in previous housing strategies, and reviews key national, local and Dorset-wide changes that have influenced our future strategic direction.***

Although primarily a housing strategy, this document is about so much more than housing. Housing is at the hub of all vibrant communities and impacts directly on the effective delivery of health, education, social care and on the management of crime, deprivation and community safety. It is also a significant local economic driver.

This is the first joint Housing Strategy for the Housing Market Area (HMA) which comprises West Dorset DC and Weymouth and Portland BC. It consolidates a previous position in which each local authority maintained a separate strategy, both of which expired in 2012 and mirrors an identical approach for the development of a joint Local Plan.

The provision of affordable housing in WDDC and WPBC has featured as a major corporate priority for a number of years. This is fully reflected in past housing strategies, in both levels of investment and performance.

The previous housing strategies were adopted in 2008, prior to the formation of the WDDC/WPBC Partnership, when both authorities operated totally discreetly. The performance against the objectives set out in those strategies has been largely strong, with a high rate of completion (see below).

However, this was also before the worst impacts of an extended economic downturn. The election of a coalition government in 2010 was against the backdrop of the need for major austerity measures and cuts in public spending. Alongside this has been a programme of significant restructuring and review of the public sector. The current Housing Strategy is therefore developed at a time of significant change, which has resulted to the most radical reshaping of the public sector for a generation and redefined the nature of local service delivery.

Among the changes to national government legislation and policy are: the Localism Act 2011; Welfare Reform Act 2012; a new national housing strategy, *Laying the foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (November 2011)*; Energy Act 2011; and reforms to social housing regulation. **Each has an influence over what is contained in our local housing strategy.** The main impacts of these changes are listed below:

*Localism:* The localism agenda affects government organisation, government guidance and requirements, and the powers and obligations of local authorities. It devolves powers previously the domain of central government to local councils and to communities at the neighbourhood level. The abolition of the regional tier of government means that direction from government through regional and sub-regional structures has been replaced by a general obligation on local authorities to co-operate. As a consequence, resources no longer flow from government through the Regional Housing Pot.

West Dorset District Council 2008-12	Weymouth & Portland Borough Council 2009-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400 new units of affordable housing, 7 for people with learning disabilities;</li> <li>• 93 units of affordable housing in rural areas</li> <li>• Dedicated Rural Housing Enabling Officer appointed</li> <li>• 400+ older people assisted with DFG, and Care and Repair Service has 2,000+ completed cases;</li> <li>• Private Sector Housing Policy adopted - 200 grants and over 30 equity release loans to older people;</li> <li>• Halved TA met CLG Homeless reduction target year early;</li> <li>• New CBL system + new Allocations Policy;</li> <li>• Reduced Rough Sleeping to virtually zero ;</li> <li>• Commissioned assertive Street Homeless Outreach service. No entrenched rough sleepers in WDDC;</li> <li>• Improved access to services for vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups by specialist housing panels;</li> <li>• Dorset-wide Move On Strategy for supported housing;</li> <li>• Introduction of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy and action plan in 2009;</li> <li>• Fuel Poverty Helpline introduced September 2009 with Dorset Energy Advice Centre;</li> <li>• Landlords' Accreditation scheme grown from 120 to over 140.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 200 units of affordable housing provided;</li> <li>• Policy levels of affordable housing delivered in new developments;</li> <li>• Completed a Housing Needs Survey and House Condition Survey;</li> <li>• Completed licensing of all known licensable Houses in Multiple Occupation (nearly 100);</li> <li>• Private Sector Housing Policy approved;</li> <li>• Fuel poverty targeted through Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy and action plan (Nov 2009);</li> <li>• Fuel Poverty Helpline introduced in September 2009 with Dorset Energy Advice Centre;</li> <li>• More than halved temporary accommodation;</li> <li>• Reduced Rough Sleeping levels to virtually zero and jointly commissioned assertive Street Homeless Outreach service;</li> <li>• Improved service access to vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups by establishing specialist housing panels;</li> <li>• Introduced Move On Strategy for supported housing;</li> <li>• Introduced new choice-based lettings scheme, on-line via the Dorsetforyou website;</li> <li>• Completed countywide BME housing need survey.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59 actions completed</li> <li>• 3 actions not completed</li> <li>• 11 actions partially completed</li> <li>• 4 actions not necessary e.g. superseded by Government policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 actions completed</li> <li>• 2 actions not completed</li> <li>• 12 actions partially completed</li> <li>• 1 action not necessary e.g. superseded by Government policy</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>BUT</i></b> not yet provided an Extra Care Sheltered Housing Scheme in the district, although we continue to work towards this target</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>BUT</i></b> not yet introduced a new Landlord Accreditation Scheme.</li> <li>• <b><i>BUT</i></b> minimal progress in reducing empty homes, though dedicated staff member and resources agreed early in 2012</li> </ul>

**Table 1.1: Performance Against Previous Housing Strategy Objectives**

*Changes to National Planning Policy Framework:* The government's national planning policy framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. The NPPF came into effect immediately, replacing existing national Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance, together with various government circulars and other guidance issued between 2002 and 2011. The NPPF Framework includes provisions for neighbourhood planning and the development of local plans. These changes create opportunities for local communities to plan their own development within the broader planning framework, including the possibility of the provision of additional housing focused on the provision of affordable housing. The government has also introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which will partially or completely replace delivery of infrastructure through Planning Obligations (S106 agreements) (see chapter 4).

*Welfare Reform:* has brought in major changes to the calculation and entitlement to Housing Benefit, including capping payments according to the size of property rented, increasing deductions for adult household members and the introduction of Universal Credit, capping a household's overall benefit to no more than the national average salary (see chapter 3).

*National Housing Strategy - Laying The Foundations: A Housing Strategy For England:* promoted as getting the housing market moving again, laying the foundations for a more responsive, effective and stable housing market in the future, supporting choice and quality for tenants and improving environmental standards and design quality. Measures include:

*Affordable Rent:* the government introduced a new Affordable Rent model for the delivery of affordable housing from 2011 to 2015, whereby social housing providers can charge higher rents, up to 80% of market levels, and use the increased rental income to support additional borrowing to compensate for reduced grant over this period. Affordable Rent will form the principal element of the new supply offer and new flexibilities will also allow a proportion of social rent properties to be re-let at an affordable rent (see chapter 4).

There is new flexibility over the length of tenancies that Registered Providers (RPs - the current term for housing associations) can offer in accordance with the removal of a requirement to offer lifetime tenancies. Local authorities are required to publish a tenancy strategy for their area setting out how social landlords should use flexible tenancies and the circumstances in which they should be reissued. We published our Tenancy Strategy in 2013 as part of a Dorset-wide approach agreed across all local authorities with the exception of Bournemouth. The practical implication of this has been an initial movement by RPs to issue seven year tenancies with a review process at the end. Thus, the impact has not specifically been felt in the short term.

*Housing Register:* There has also been greater flexibility offered over the management of the housing register, giving more local discretion over eligibility. WDDC and WPBC have approved changes to make households with no priority, not living in one of the respective areas, ineligible to register. We have also taken the decision to retain our existing bedroom standard, despite Housing Benefit changes. Furthermore, a new Homeswap exchange programme has been introduced for tenants (see chapter 3)

*Homelessness Duties:* A significant change to the Homelessness Code of Guidance allows local housing authorities to offer private sector tenancies to homeless households. This approach was approved in both WDDC and WPBC subject to an agreed protocol being developed about the circumstances in which such a power will be used (see chapter 3).

*New Homes Bonus:* was introduced in the financial year 2011/12. For every new home and empty property brought back into use, local authorities receive the equivalent of the annual council tax raised, together with an additional £350 for affordable units, for a period of 6 years. The scheme is

part of the government's overall strategy to substantially increase the level of house-building and is intended to incentivise local authorities and local communities to accept and encourage residential development and encourage a proactive approach to addressing long term empty homes (see chapter 8).

*Green Deal:* The Green Deal is a government scheme introduced in October 2012 to help homeowners and tenants to increase the energy efficiency of their homes. Households can make energy saving home improvements that may be partly or wholly funded over time through electricity bills. Green Deal repayments (loans) will be attached to the property (electricity meter) rather than the resident. Repayments should be no more than a typical household will save in energy costs.

Of equal significance to the raft of new legislation passed is the dismantling of the existing infrastructure within which local authorities have been used to operating. Key changes have seen the removal of regional government as already mentioned, the abolition of the Audit Commission and the demise of the Housing Corporation and its successor body the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). Housing associations moved from being Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to Registered Providers (RPs) and their regulation and funding was assumed by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). In the transition, regulation became 'light touch' with an emphasis on value for money and financial viability.

### **Local Changes**

Successive reductions in settlements for local authorities have called for new and innovative ways of maintaining services with fewer resources. West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland have become the first local authority partnership to fully integrate their staffing structure, so that one team services both authorities. This has generated £2 million per annum savings. While resulting in an inevitable reduction in resources across the combined partnership, this has improved the knowledge and working relationships across the two local authority areas, creating possibilities for wider initiatives and improving arrangements with partners who might work across the whole HMA.

### **County Issues/Partnership**

Financial pressures have also been felt in our neighbouring authorities across Dorset. This has provided even greater encouragement for more joint strategic working, in increasing overall capacity (or at least maintaining capacity against reduced resource inputs), broadening the knowledge base and helping to deliver a more consistent approach. The Districts and Boroughs in Dorset have developed joint Homelessness, Allocation and Tenancy policies and strategies, and jointly commissioned Housing Market Assessments. The joint Dorset website *dorsetforyou* hosts a Dorset-wide Homechoice choice based lettings scheme, where applicants for social housing can register and bid online for available properties each week. Other arrangements, some already in development, have the potential to deliver procurement and operational efficiencies, for instance in the management and delivery of Disabled Facilities Grant works. At a more local level, our councils have a number of contracts and service level agreements in place with other organisations to, for example, provide services to engage with rough sleepers, support victims of domestic violence and abuse, manage loans to improve properties, and give general housing and debt advice.

### **Summary**

The local impacts of these changes are detailed in Chapter 2. Collectively, they create a significantly different set of challenges and potential solutions than we have previously dealt with. Our aim is to create a Housing Strategy fit to meet future challenges rather than one located in the past.

The combination of changes has created a challenging operating environment. As a result we must create opportunities for greater collaboration, for new and extended partnerships, for reducing silo working, and focus more on outcomes, on empowering communities and supporting sustainable solutions. We intend to start this process through our approaches set out in this Housing Strategy.

## CHAPTER 2 LOCAL CONTEXT

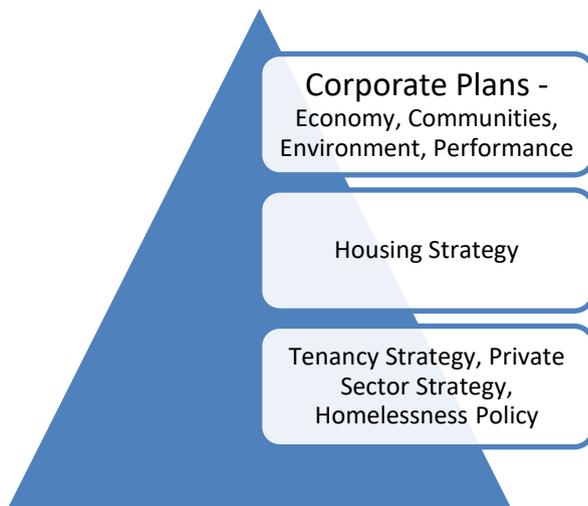
*This chapter sets out our aims and priorities, and gives details of the local areas in which we operate.*

Our **aim** is to produce a Housing Strategy that reflects the wider perspectives of community need and fully engages with the wide range of partners involved in supporting and delivering those needs.

We will look to achieve this by working towards a series of housing outcomes (see below) through which we support and actively contribute to the delivery of wider corporate and inter-agency objectives.

### **Relationships**

The Housing Strategy contains the commitment of West Dorset DC and Weymouth and Portland BC to deliver positive housing outcomes. It reflects and complements the wider range of commitments for both authorities contained in their respective Corporate Plans.



**Figure 2.1:** Corporate Plan Hierarchy

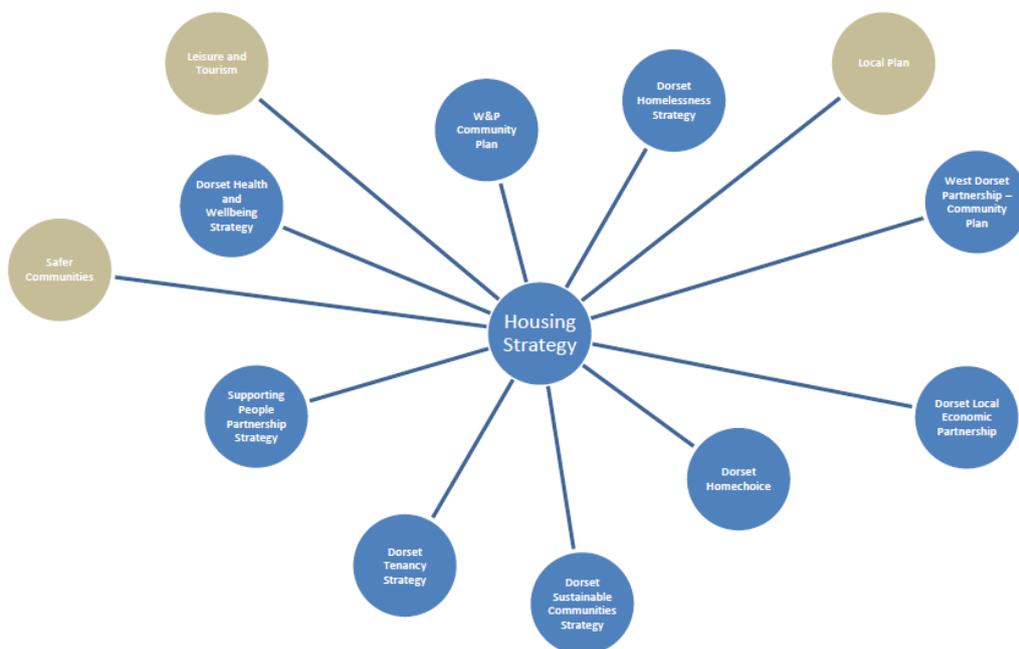
It also delivers the statutory requirement for the publication of Homelessness, Tenancy Strategies and a Private Sector Assistance Policy. Although published separately, the contents and approach are integrated into this overarching strategy.

We recognise the importance of dovetailing the approach and delivery targets of this Housing Strategy with those of other relevant corporate strategies and policies. Figure 2.2 below provides a diagrammatic illustration of these relationships.



**Figure 2.2: Housing Strategy Internal Links**

We are also conscious that there are a range of other local and county-wide strategic documents which make reference to housing, and we have sought to reflect and build on their contents and objectives.



**Figure 2.3: Housing Strategy External Links**

The effective delivery of our vision will depend on the development of an operating environment based on:

We already have examples of where such an environment successfully operates. However, we still have work to do to build and establish better working relationships with some partners, deliver more consistent approaches in some areas of practice, develop better joint methods of data collection and performance analysis and create more effective means of resource sharing and common delivery methods.

We do not expect all of these changes will happen overnight. Our delivery plan at the end of this document looks therefore to build such an environment over the short, medium and longer terms.

### ***Strategy Development***

We looked to promote a more inclusive ownership of the Housing Strategy by instigating a series of meetings within five themed areas designed to involve partners in scoping the direction, content and overall objectives of the document. A full summary of activity is contained within Appendix 1. Over 130 participants, representing approximately 30 organisations and including elected members, attended 12 meetings over a three month period. This was supplemented by input from other established partnership groups, e.g. the RP Liaison Group, the Housing Forums and the WDDC and WP Partnerships. This process was instrumental in shaping both our priorities and the agreed strategic outcomes.

This was in addition to an initial event to launch the strategy development, attended by over 100 partners and a three month public consultation, which included events in Weymouth, Dorchester, Sherborne and Bridport and a wider process using our website. Responses from the wider public consultation are detailed in Appendix 7.

### ***Priorities***

Our key overarching priorities are:

- Provide the maximum opportunity to access and support the provision of new affordable homes;
- Prevent and resolve homelessness ;
- Work closer with the private rented sector in maintaining standards and extending housing opportunities;
- Improve energy efficiency and address fuel poverty;
- Provide housing and support for younger and older people and other vulnerable groups;
- Provide effective and efficient housing services appropriate to users' needs.

We will reflect these priorities in developing effective performance management mechanisms to ensure that we deliver on our commitments.

### ***Outcomes***

We have chosen to determine our strategic objectives based on a number of agreed outcomes rather than concentrating on outputs and detailed processes. The benefits of an outcomes-based approach are that it:

- Provides the basis for an incremental development of services over the life of the Housing Strategy;
- Provides a constant performance thread in times of continued uncertainty and change, preventing strategic drift;
- Offers a framework for examining new and innovative means of service delivery rather than relying on existing methods;
- Provides the opportunity for a neutral language and process, geared towards encouraging non-housing professionals to contribute to a more holistic set of housing solutions;
- Provides an effective framework for promoting partnerships and sharing resources.

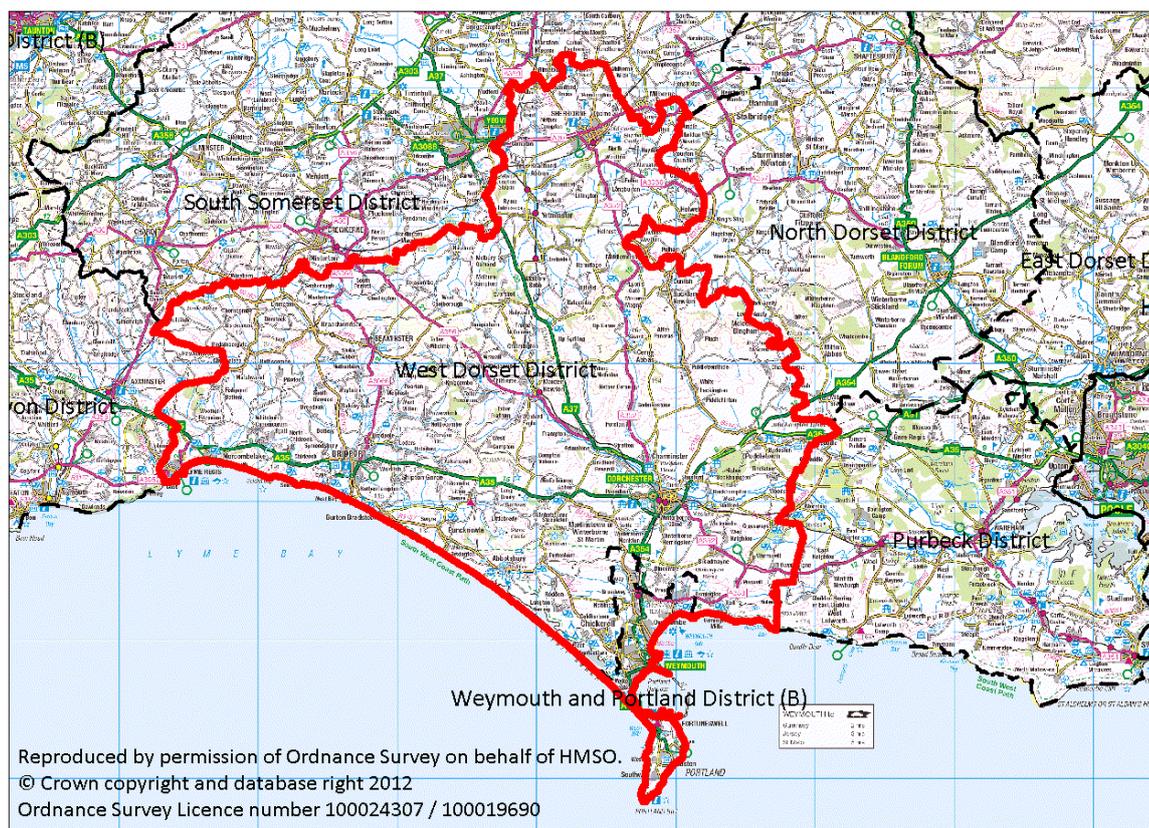
In practice, most housing strategies are heavily impacted by non-housing issues, with factors such as crime, health and social care often directly determining the effectiveness of actions and the achievement of housing targets. Our approach looks to better engage with these issues and influence them to ensure better joint outcomes.

We will judge success at the end of the strategy period by how well we have achieved the following outcomes:

- **Reduced numbers of households becoming homeless**
- Reduced number of households in temporary accommodation
- Household members able to remain as a family unit where appropriate
- Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate
- Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing
  
- **Extended levels of housing choice**
- Increased levels of access into PRS
- Easy access to advice and support services
- Delivering planned homes as projected in the Local Plan
- Investing in existing homes – improving PRS/ bringing empty properties back into use
  
- **Improved indicators of financial, social and digital inclusion**
- Increased numbers of members of `deprived' households into work
- Reduced levels of benefits dependence
- Improved indicators of educational attainment
- Creating new local jobs in the construction industry through house-building
  
- **Strong, vibrant and stable communities**
- Communities with high levels of engagement
- Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour levels, particularly in multiply deprived areas
- Thriving local networks
- Improved health and wellbeing indicators
  
- **Services and support reflecting diversity within households and communities**
- Effective information and services to reflect the diversity of local communities
- Physical environments with good access and mobility
  
- **High levels of customer satisfaction**
- Skilled, and customer-focused staff
  
- **Innovative and sustainable solutions**
- Support environmental initiatives – energy efficiency/planning
- Good quality, energy efficient homes across all sectors

Our approaches to delivering these outcomes are contained in the following chapters with detailed proposals for a programme of action contained in the delivery plans in Chapter 9.

## Key Local Data



**Figure 2.4: West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland Housing Market Area**

**It is estimated that across the HMA there is an annual need to provide 1,657 additional units of affordable housing per annum if all needs are to be met over the next five years (SHMA Update 2011)**

The WDDC/WPBC HMA represents one of two covering Dorset. Our knowledge of the area comes from a number of different data sources, most notably a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) originally commissioned in 2008 but updated in 2011, and a Stock Condition Survey (SCS) undertaken in 2013.

Area Comparisons	
WDDC	WPBC
418 square miles	16 square miles
Population 99,532 (mid-2012 estimate)	Population 65,029 (mid-2012 estimate)
Almost a half of the stock are detached houses and bungalows	High proportion of terraced houses and flats
Total dwelling stock of c50,000 – 87% owner occupied and PRS	Total dwelling stock of c32,000 – 87% owner occupied and PRS
Vacant dwellings 2012 – 1456, 550 long term	Vacant dwellings 2012 – 930, 353 long term
Half of residents live in the six towns, with the remainder in the 132 rural parishes	Weymouth third largest town in the sub-region after Poole and Bournemouth - mixture of built-up and, to a lesser extent, rural areas including open countryside, villages, the historic town of Weymouth and the 'Isle' and Royal Manor of Portland
Ranks 226 out of 354 on the Indices of Deprivation 2010. Some relative	Rank 90 out of 354 on the Indices of Deprivation 2010. 10 areas in the top 20% most deprived for Indices of Multiple

deprivation, especially in parts of Bridport and Dorchester – Appendix 2	Deprivation (IMD) – Appendix 2
4.2% of residents are not white-British	5.1% of residents are not white-British (National average 20%)
£524, the median gross weekly pay for full time male employees; £385 females	£457, the median gross weekly pay for full time male employees; £419 females
House prices 13% above the national average, and outstrip average wages by a ratio of 12.7:1	House prices 14% below the national average, and outstrip average wages by a ratio of 11.3:1
Residents with an illness limiting day to day activities, slightly above national average at 20.3%	Residents with an illness limiting day to day activities, slightly above national average at 21.6%
WDDC- 5.3% of homes are second homes. This rises to 20% and over in some towns and parishes including Charmouth and Lyme Regis. The number of holiday lets and second homes threatens the sustainability of some rural communities.	WPBC- 3% of homes are second homes.

**Table 2.5: Area Data**

In 2011 there were approximately 166,177 people resident in the HMA. The age profile is heavily biased towards older age groups, with approximately 12.3% of the population aged 75 and over (compared with 8% nationally) and 20.8% aged between 60 and 74 (compared with 14.6% nationally). WPBC has a slightly younger age structure than WDDC, which reflects a more urban nature.

### **Partnership**

Partnership remains the foundation of this Housing Strategy. Without it, we would be reduced to a very limited set of outputs that fall far short of our commitments. Organisations engaged in health, social care, advice, housing provision and all forms of housing-related support will in practice supply the bulk of the front-end delivery of the commitments within this Strategy. Key partners include the Police, Voluntary Sector, RPs, Fire Brigade, Dorset County Council, NHS, and private landlords/lettings agents. The importance of partnership working is reflected in the decision to have our key partners sign up to endorse and work towards delivering the outcomes contained earlier in this chapter. However, **we recognise that we need to review existing partnership arrangements, consolidate and extend some partnerships and examine the potential for innovative joint delivery mechanisms.**

### **Community Safety**

Community Safety is of paramount importance. Although as a county, Dorset is generally trouble free, there are a number of geographic ‘hotspots’ identified within Weymouth & Portland, and to a lesser extent, in parts of West Dorset. This takes into account recorded crime and disorder, but also a range of other factors that impact upon the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

DCC’s Vulnerable Localities Index (VLI) is based upon a methodology developed by the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science (University College London) and has identified 17 of the top 20 highest VLI scores in Weymouth & Portland, with Melcombe Regis being a key priority location (covering the town centre and Park District). The remaining are Littlemoor West, Rodwell and Chapelhay, Fortuneswell North on Portland and Westham North. Dorchester Town Centre is also within the top 20 highest VLI scores.

Our priorities for 2013-14 are those of the Dorset County Community Safety Partnership<sup>1</sup>, based on an analysis of results of the current Partnership Strategic Assessment:

- To reduce violent crime, focusing on reducing alcohol-related violence and vulnerability, tackling domestic violence (particularly in relation to high risk victims) and addressing serious sexual violence;
- To effectively address anti-social behaviour, with a particular focus on reducing harm caused by ASB;
- To maintain low levels of acquisitive crime in Dorset;
- To work with individuals and groups at risk of offending;
- To help our communities to feel safer.

There is an increasing need for local authority community safety and housing departments to work more closely together. This often requires exchange of information and data, as prescribed within the relevant partnership protocol<sup>2</sup> documents. Housing policy is a key determinant for reducing crime and disorder and enhancing community safety, but equally crime reduction policies and practice will impact on housing. Effective partnership arrangements are required, including working with public, private and voluntary sectors alike.

### ***Joint Working with Registered Providers***

Identified hot-spots or high risk locations such as Littlemoor, Westham and Portland often have significant clusters of RP housing. As such, the relationship with our key RP partners is often significant in effectively addressing more serious instances of ASB. An example of this is the Littlemoor Estate, which suffered high incidences of ASB from October 2012. Prior to enforcement action being taken, a multi-agency group was established by the Community Safety Team working with Police, Social Services, Youth Offending Team and the various housing providers. All relevant preventative and enforcement measures were considered, but ultimately a partnership approach led to possession orders being obtained against the key perpetrators. This has had the effect of significantly relieving tensions in the local area.

With reducing budgets and fewer resources available, the need for smarter, more joined-up working is clear. The Home Office has announced revisions to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to be enacted in 2014, and it is anticipated that much greater co-operation between agencies, other organisations and the community will be called for in future. In addition to this, we will look to improve joint working arrangements within the WDDC/WPBC Partnership. Areas of particular emphasis include:

- Better coordination of resources determined by evidence-led problem-solving;
- Improved communication between disciplines and more effective information sharing;
- Better understanding of competing demands and recognition of constraints placed upon service delivery;
- Appropriate management arrangements for temporary housing stock, housing advice services, private sector landlords and HMOs, taking into consideration the potential impact on crime and disorder and ASB;
- The need for improved and consistent data capture/recording processes to facilitate more detailed analysis;
- The importance of consistent working arrangements across councils;
- The need to establish clear links with existing arrangements for Safeguarding Adults and Children;
- The importance of clear, consistent and regular communication practices;
- The importance of ownership of this strategy plan at a strategic and operational level by elected members and officers alike.

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<sup>1</sup> Dorset County Council, NHS Dorset, Dorset Probation Service, Dorset Fire & Rescue Service, District and Borough Councils and Dorset Police

<sup>2</sup> Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Overarching Information Sharing Protocol (OAISP)

### ***Relationships with Registered Providers***

RPs remain our closest partners in relation to housing provision. In both local authority areas, the main RPs, Aster (originally Weymouth and Portland HA, then Synergy) and Magna (formally West Dorset HA) were established as the result of the stock transfer of the councils' housing stock in 2000 and 1993 respectively. Both RPs have changed significantly over time and other large providers have also developed or acquired stock in our areas (see Appendix 3).

Since stock transfer, RPs have been the principle vehicle for the delivery of new affordable housing, although we have also worked with private developers. This has been supported through council funding in both local authority areas and significantly through central government grant through the Housing Corporation and more lately the HCA. We have also supported this provision through the planning system, principally the Local Plan (see chapter 4) and through the provision of subsidised land.

However, we recognise that the traditional mechanisms of housing provision are changing. Government grant into new homes has reduced year by year, and despite the announcement of £3 billion of new funding for social housing, it may prove difficult to deliver viable schemes at affordable rents. Both councils' own land banks have been substantially utilised already, and our ability to grant fund has also been negatively impacted through successively reduced financial settlements.

Other 'links' with RPs, such as Audit Commission Inspection, regulation mechanisms, regional government strategic plan and council influence over grant funding have also been diluted or abolished. The result is that although RPs have a statutory duty to co-operate, the relationship has become largely consensual rather than enforceable. In general, this may not have a significant impact in the short term. Our main RP partners have consistently demonstrated a commitment to the provision of local homes and local households. However, we are aware of a changing landscape of risk and opportunities, particularly with the proposed agenda of welfare benefit changes and grant reduction.

With this in mind, we have identified key RPs with whom we will seek to build a reciprocal partnership over the life of this strategy. We have designated these associations our 'preferred partners'. These include Synergy Housing Group (now part of Aster), Spectrum Housing Group, Yarlinton Housing Group, Raglan Housing and Magna Housing Association. This does not mean that we will cease to work with other RPs in our areas. We recognise that others will continue to bring highly valuable skills, expertise and resources. Examples of this are Guinness Hermitage at Poundbury and Hastoe HA in rural locations. We will also continue to work with a range of specialist partners for the provision of supported housing. *Preferred Partner* status will usually mean that these organisations will be our first choice partners, and we will seek to develop extended platforms for partnership. We will review this status periodically.

**We are committed to ensuring that WDDC and WPBC remain good and viable areas in which our RP partners can operate. We will work especially closely with our preferred partners and will continue to review our partnerships and consider new ways in which this can be maintained.**

### ***Relationship with Other Key Partners***

The range of projected outcomes targeted in this strategy requires partnerships outside of core housing providers. We recognise the value of working closely with the other local authorities within Dorset, and examples of this include Dorset Homechoice, a joint Dorset Tenancy Strategy and the current development of a joint Dorset Homelessness Strategy.

We also enjoy close working relationships with DCC in relationship to social care for both adults and children, and the provision of Supporting People funding for housing-related support. The current agenda for evaluating the potential for integrating services across public sector organisations may significantly impact on the delivery of housing-related services over the life of this strategy (see chapters 6 and 8).

The voluntary sector offers a major resource to deliver specialist expertise and accessible and independent services to the public. We fully recognise their potential role in extending the diversity of services and attracting additional resources through a range of grant funding. We currently provide approximately £200,000 in grants based on a series of Service Level Agreements (SLAs), largely from the Homelessness Prevention Grant (chapter 3) and will look increasingly to match-fund projects in the future.

Other important relationships include the Police, NHS and private sector landlords. These all offer the potential to create improved and extended services through greater co-ordination and collaboration. We will look to develop and strengthen them over the life of this strategy.

### ***Economic Development***

Housing is recognised as a key priority within the Partnership. In addition to providing an absolutely vital resource, the housing sector is also a major contributor to the local economy, both of the HMA and to Dorset as a whole.

The link between housing and the economy usually focuses on the lack of supply in housing, high prices and lack of accessibility to affordable housing. This often adversely impacts on recruitment and labour mobility. However, in recent years, the negative impact on wealth through reducing market values and economic confidence also has major local impacts.

In areas of high cost housing such as West Dorset, employers may have difficulty recruiting to lower paid posts, which can restrict economic growth. In low wage economies, such as Weymouth and Portland, there is an acute need for adequate affordable housing. There is a critical need therefore, for a balanced housing stock, which reflects the housing needs of the locality, while also accommodating the workforce requirements of local businesses.

Housing has been recognised as a driver of prosperous local economies. *The development of new housing supports local economic growth and creates real jobs in the local economy. Every affordable home built creates 2.4 jobs in total for the UK economy.* The delivery of an affordable homes programme therefore delivers the double benefit of much needed new homes and jobs. Our key partners in this process in the HMA are a number of selected RPs. The data contained in figure 2.5 illustrates the level of activity of the major developing RPs in Dorset.

In addition to developing and managing affordable housing stock, RPs also fulfil other key functions relating to social and labour markets. Many RP residents live in areas of higher deprivation, are more likely to be benefits dependent and are often excluded from employment, either because of a skills deficit or lack of opportunity. A number of our local RPs have adopted innovative initiatives to address social and financial exclusion and increase the available workforce to meet the needs of local businesses. Examples of good practice are detailed below.

Housing associations make a significant contribution to the local economy of Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole by:

- Directly employing 1,446 people and many more in their wider supply chain;
- Recording an annual turnover of £155m within Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole;
- Managing, repairing and maintaining 29,165 homes across the area, adding £127m to the regional economy and supporting around 2,417 jobs;
- Developing 579 new affordable homes across the area in 2011-15, adding almost £45m to the regional economy and supporting around 1,028 jobs.

Further indication of RP spend across the HMA is detailed below.

### **Synergy (part of the Aster Group)**

#### ***Sail laser/Sailing academy employability project***

SailLaser, Synergy and Sportivate have joined forces in a pilot project that has delivered training to 15 young individuals of which 5 of the best have been selected to undertake a 12 week course to qualify them as RYA Dinghy Instructors. Of the successful 5, two are Synergy residents under the age of 24 who were NEET. This training will potentially turn the lives of young people in a new direction, opening doors to employment in the watersports industry.

#### ***Employment Training***

Through their Neighbourhood Toolkit for 2012-2013, Synergy invested in DT5 to provide a hub in Underhill to enable access to digital inclusion/ job clubs/ engagement with young people and of all age groups, to recognise training needs and job opportunities.

#### ***Young Advisors***

Synergy currently have 14 young advisors trained to deliver consultation for partner agencies and local businesses, and can provide a realistic view from communities and provide inputs that may otherwise not get heard.

#### ***Yarlington Housing Group***

Offer a CV writing and careers advice service to all residents, including a specific service for those for are hard-to-reach. They also support a number of job clubs with financial, IT and personnel support. They are focusing resources on employment and training and offering a wide range of support to individuals.

#### ***Spectrum Housing Group***

Have increased their Pathways trainee scheme, with some 29 people joining in various locations, completing various roles across management, maintenance and development. This has built on previous programmes of providing work experience through the Future Jobs Programme.

### ***Registered Provider Spending in the HMA***

- Raglan HA have invested over £8,000,000 on new homes in West Dorset in 2012-13 with a further £2,000,000 expected in 2013-4 through phase 1 of the Destiny Fields development in Weymouth;
- Yarlington HG have made a recent capital investment of c£3.3 million in West Dorset, plus an annual revenue spend of £40,000, while employing approximately 30 staff;
- East Borough HA has a projected capital spend of approximately £1,280,000 in 2012-2013, an annual revenue spend of £750,000 and employs 35 staff directly and 25 work in their schemes from other employers;
- Spectrum HG invested £45,000 capital in 2012-3, £214,000 revenue investment on repairs and maintenance, with a further £175,000 on other revenue projects.

While we have very effective relationships with our RPs in terms of housing provision and management, we believe there is scope for improving the scope of their involvement in the HMA with regard to wider economic partnerships. **We will therefore look to develop and exploit these potential opportunities in the future.**

## CHAPTER 3 MANAGING NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

*There is a continued high demand for affordable homes across the HMA. The profile of supply and demand is changing with the traditional sources of supply diminishing. This chapter reviews future projects and outlines how we will manage access into available properties for those in greatest need, whilst signposting other available options for other households.*

Key Outcomes	
Reduced numbers of households becoming homeless	Extended levels of housing choice
Reduced number of households in temporary accommodation	Increased levels of access into PRS
Household members able to remain as a family unit where appropriate	Easy access to advice and support services
Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	Delivering planned homes as projected in Local Plan
Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing	Investing in existing homes – improving PRS/ bringing empty properties back into use

A focus of this Housing Strategy is to recognise and respond to the diverse range of housing needs in WDDC/WPBC and where possible to ensure available housing options. Traditionally, this has focused on managing housing waiting lists as controlled access into 'social' or 'affordable' housing. Both WDDC and WPBC have transferred their housing stock, as a result of which we have no direct control over individual homes. Our key partners in providing good quality, affordable housing are Registered Providers.

We have had consistently high levels of demand for affordable housing across both local authority areas, with 2,700 registered in WPBC and 1,600 in WDDC at June 2013. This reflects the limited options available for many local households, where housing costs often outstrip disposable incomes.

One of the main changes since the development of the previous Housing Strategy has been a consistent reduction in social housing grant at both a national and local level. The impact of this has been to reduce financial viability of many schemes and to force up social rents from 'target rents' (typically 50% of market rents) to an 'Affordable Rent' level, i.e. up to 80% of market rents. The outcome has been fewer new homes let at higher rent levels.

The theme of this chapter is to review supply and demand and examine ways we can maintain or extend housing options and review how best we can safeguard the most vulnerable households for whom access to housing is critical.

### Managing Supply and Demand

#### *Housing Projections and Availability*

Office for National Statistics (ONS) population projections for local authorities in England for the 25 year period to 2031 indicate that Dorset's population is expected to grow by around 13% (less than the national

average of 18%). West Dorset should grow at 13% but Weymouth and Portland at only 3%. As households grow smaller, so their numbers are rising at a faster rate than the population as a whole.

	2011	2031	Change
WDDC	44,892	54,301	+21%
WPBC	29,217	32,424	+11%

**Table 3.1: HMA number of households projection**

Dorset is expected to continue to have the highest proportion of older people in the country. By 2033 those aged 65+ are expected to be 37% of the population, significantly higher than the England average of 22.6%. Locally, West Dorset is expected to have the highest proportion of older people (almost 41%) and Weymouth & Portland the lowest (33%), still much higher than the England average.

Weymouth and Portland displays a younger age structure than West Dorset with cheaper entry-level housing enabling younger age groups to access suitable housing. There is also in Weymouth a significant sub-market private rented sector catering for housing benefit supported tenancies and HMOs.

Estimated housing need in the HMA area, assessed using the approved CLG assessment model, indicates an **annual need to provide 1,657 additional units of affordable housing per annum if all needs are to be met** (in the five year period from 2011 to 2016). This significantly exceeds the likely supply of affordable housing.

Total allocations into the social housing sector are significantly smaller than this.

Total allocations			
West Dorset DC		Weymouth and Portland BC	
2010-11	563	2010-11	243
2011-12	441	2011-12	238
2012-13	379	2012-13	196

**Table 3.2: HMA social housing allocations**

Over the four years (2008-11), affordable housing delivery averaged 123 dwellings a year. In the social housing sector between 2010-11 and 2012-3, social housing lettings made to households nominated from our housing registers reduced by almost 30%.

The future projection is of new build social housing delivery further reducing across the HMA. We are therefore facing the prospect where social lettings are likely to be significantly lower than past levels. To avoid this position, **we will seek innovative partnership methods for providing new, affordable homes.**

Potentially significant sources of housing to fill the gap are in the PRS and through reduced numbers of empty properties. Over the two years (2010, 2011) the PRS provided 661 benefit-supported lettings per annum.

#### **Housing Register – Prioritising Access**

In 2012 both authorities joined the Dorset-wide Homechoice scheme following a review of housing applicants. The result was 1428 and 1691 households registered on the WDDC and WPBC housing registers respectively, but with many (around 70%) in the Bronze band that gives little realistic likelihood of rehousing in the short term.

An additional review in early 2013 introduced further changes, restricting the registers to applicants with a local connection and a housing need. This will reduce numbers on the register, giving those who remain a more realistic hope of housing, while also making savings on administration costs.

Specifically, the recent changes make those with no local connection, and owner occupiers and those able to afford their own accommodation (save in exceptional circumstances), ineligible to be included on the Joint Housing Register. The current bedroom eligibility standard is to be continued with the provision to allow an extra bedroom for those who have been approved to foster or adopt children. Additional reasonable preference is also to be given to certain current and ex- armed forces personnel and bereaved families leaving forces accommodation.

We have also developed a Joint Tenancy Strategy which aims to:

- Ensure that affordable housing meets locally identifiable housing need;
- Provide guidance and direction to RPs regarding their use of Affordable Rent properties, fixed term tenancies and disposals;
- Indicate to existing and prospective tenants what they can expect from an Affordable Rent tenancy;
- Sustain provision of new affordable housing;
- Help RPs increase revenue income for future investment in affordable housing.

We are aware that the changes to Housing Benefit introduced in April 2013, which removed entitlement to HB for working age households with bedrooms in excess of requirements could lead to a significant change in demand for smaller units. **We will continue to monitor any changes in demand to ensure that this is properly managed.**

### **Homelessness and Prevention**

The focus on homelessness prevention in our previous strategies has resulted in the number of households accepted as homeless and living in temporary accommodation reducing and has been held at much lower levels than historically. This is despite the economic challenges faced by families and the volatility in the housing market. Further details of our approach to homelessness are contained in our Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy, which complements this document.

West Dorset DC Homelessness 2012-13 (11-12)			Weymouth and Portland BC Homelessness 2012-13 (11-12)		
Presentations	95	(108)	Presentations	61	(73)
Acceptances	40	(54)	Acceptances	29	(38)
Prevented	184	(252)	Prevented	298	(314)

**Table 3.3: Homelessness activity 2011-12 and 2012-13**

The nature of homelessness is similar across both authorities, but there are some notable differences. The principal cause of homelessness in WDDC is parental exclusion, while in WPBC it is the ending of assured shorthold tenancies. This reflects the higher level of private rented housing in Weymouth. In WDDC, there is a greater difficulty in accessing support and services due to the dispersed geographical area. To address this, we have appointed an outreach advisor through our Homelessness Prevention Grant (see below).

We use a number of tools to prevent homelessness including a homelessness prevention fund to keep a household in their home, and a bond/deposits/rent in advance loan scheme to secure private sector accommodation. This work has led to the development of better relationships with landlords and lettings agents, resulting in better outcomes for all parties. Since 2007 we have issued over 750 Bonds, 350 Deposits and 261 Rent in Advance payments in WPBC, with an accumulated investment of £249,000 in continuing arrangements. The average Bond/Deposit payment is approximately £640, which amounts to the cost of keeping a family of four in bed and breakfast for a week. The evidence since 2007 is that these arrangements create sustainable medium-term outcomes rather than short-term fixes, which represents much better value for both councils and better outcomes for the households concerned.

We have also actively engaged in government mortgage rescue schemes to prevent homelessness when homes may otherwise have been repossessed. The result of this has been a significant shift from homelessness acceptance to prevention, with the latter accounting for the majority of our activity (see table 3.3).

We have a low usage of bed and breakfast accommodation, preferring to use our own temporary accommodation where such a facility is required. We have 35 units in WDDC, which we operate in partnership with RPs. We have 30 units in WPBC, which we manage directly and 18 units, which are managed through Synergy Housing Association. These units tend to have a low turnover and provide a supportive resource. **We will review our approach to the provision and management of temporary accommodation over the coming year.**

Our receipt of Homelessness Prevention Grant has been critical in enabling us to commission services, provided both with and externally to the Partnership, which have prevented and resolved homelessness. The programme of supported projects for 2013-4 is contained in Appendix 4. We have currently been notified that we are certain to receive it until only until 2015-16. If this is withdrawn or significantly reduced there would be a major impediment in our ability to effectively manage homelessness.

We are also conscious of the likelihood of increased demand being placed on the service in the coming year as a result of Welfare Reform and changes within the benefits system. We have already worked closely with our RP partners, our colleagues in the Revenues and Benefits Service and organisations in the voluntary sector to assess potential impact and put preventative measures in place to provide effective advice and support.

Our focus will continue on be on homelessness prevention, but we have a number of related issues that we will pursue in parallel. These include:

- Conducting a review of our provision and quality of temporary accommodation;
- Reviewing cost effectiveness of prevention initiatives;
- Pursuing the new Gold Standard for homelessness services.

### ***Dorset Families Matter***

In response to widespread civil disturbances in the UK in 2011, the Prime Minister indicated that he wanted troubled families' lives to be turned around by the end of the Parliament. A team was established within Department of CLG in November 2011 to drive this forward with a budget of £448million for all 152 upper-tier local councils to work with families in their areas over a three year period.

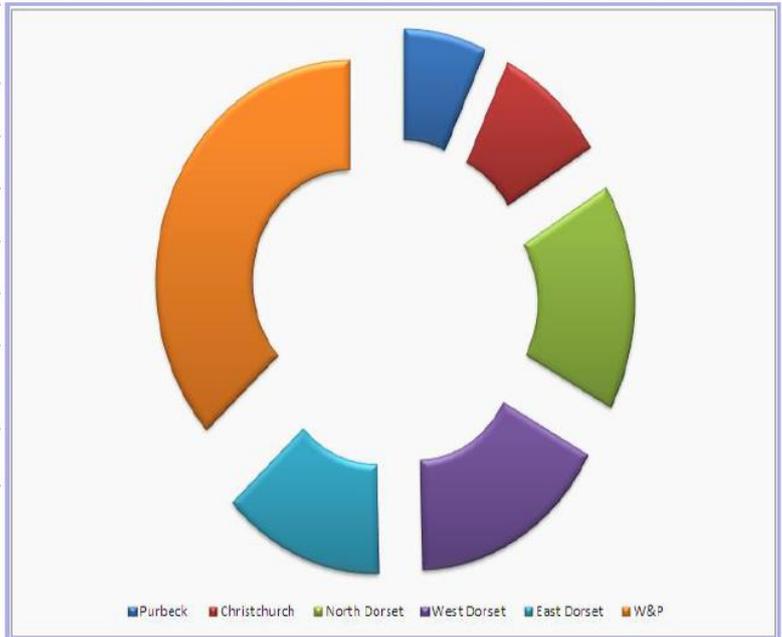
The Troubled Family initiative covers families meeting certain criteria across Dorset. The focus is to 'turn around' families who have had a resource intensive involvement with statutory services over a prolonged period. Within Dorset, the terminology 'Troubled Families' has been superseded by the programme title 'Dorset Families Matter', with the project managed by DCC.

Housing is often a significant component in the lives of such families, either in relation to their own needs or their impact on other households living nearby. As indicated in Figure 3.4 below, WDDC and WPBC account for nearly 60% of the families eligible for the programme in Dorset, the majority in Weymouth and Portland. We recognise the need to engage fully in this programme as a key partner from a District/Borough perspective and to prioritise our contribution to improved outcomes for participating families.

# Profile of families to date

% of families by district & borough area

	Total families potentially eligible	Total families potentially eligible
Purbeck	18	7%
Christchurch	24	9%
North Dorset	43	17%
West Dorset	43	17%
East Dorset	35	14%
Weymouth & Portland	95	37%
Totals	258	100%



**Please note:**

- The data illustrates potentially eligible families for the Dorset Families Matter project (some family eligibility still being checked)
- The data will be refreshed in May and June 2013; it is likely therefore that this data will change.



**Figure 3.4: Dorset Families Matter profile**

**Local Lettings – Rural Need, etc**

We recognise that allocating from the housing register should be flexible. For some communities it is important that our policy supports responses to specific local circumstances. As such, we negotiate local lettings plans with our partners to recognise specific locational characteristics aimed at supporting the development of sustainable communities (see Chapter 7). Examples include:

- Creating balanced and mixed communities;
- Protecting existing stable communities;
- Meeting housing need in rural areas by setting aside a proportion of lets to applicants with a local connection via section 106 agreements;
- Restricting where persons who have committed serious crimes can be rehoused;
- Reducing void rates and tenancy turnovers;
- Improving community stability and cohesion;
- Tackling low-demand areas and difficult-to-let estates;
- Reducing incidences of anti-social behaviour;
- Preventing future problems occurring on newly developed estates or in relation to recently modernised properties.

Local lettings plans will continue to be an important tool in supporting the development of new rural social housing developments. However, the flexibility of this approach has been complicated in some instances by the redefinition of Housing Benefit bedroom entitlement for working age households. This is particularly

relevant in West Dorset where planning conditions require priority to be given to people with a local connection to the parish or neighbouring parishes. Where used, we publish details alongside the allocation scheme.

## **Managing Need and Expectations**

### ***Housing Advice and Assistance***

A key requirement to ensure that people get access to appropriate housing, support and services is to provide good quality advice and information available in easily accessible formats.

The objectives for our advice service are:

- To give timely advice and support to enable customers to access to housing opportunities and/or to **prevent/resolve homelessness**
- To make customers aware of available options and constraints to **enable realistic choices to be made**
- To represent the views and needs of customers to ensure they **receive a fair and consistent service**
- To ensure that all customers receive **equal access to services and opportunities** irrespective of their circumstances or characteristics

We also recognise that advice and support will become an increasingly important resource to enable people to understand their options and to make informed decisions about their housing choices. We currently receive over 20,000 contacts each year to our Housing Solutions team with regard to rehousing enquiries. This may well increase in the future.

We look to increase the opportunities for easily accessible, high quality advice by grant funding voluntary organisations to the tune of £100,000+, largely to voluntary organisations such as CAB, Shelter, etc.

We will also look to develop good quality, easily accessible advice materials, which reflect the diversity of applicants' needs and abilities. These will be made available through key local access points and the Dorsetforyou website.

**We will review the effectiveness of our service provision through the collection of customer satisfaction data and the monitoring of achieved outcomes.**

### ***Financial Inclusion and Capacity***

Perhaps the single most significant factor in determining levels of housing need is affordability. Across the UK, housing is generally recognised as market driven and a source of wealth accumulation. From a high of over 80% owner occupation, the national level of home ownership has dropped to under 70% with a corresponding shift to private renting. In WDDC, home ownership accounts for 69%, private renting 14% and affordable housing 15%. In WPBC the split is 67% home ownership, 18% private renting and 15% affordable homes. Ability to afford market prices, whether in purchasing or renting, is therefore a major factor in accessing housing in the HMA.

An estimate from the 2011 SHMA Update was that:

*It is estimated that around 25% of households across the HMA cannot afford housing at current market prices/rents without the need for some form of subsidy (e.g. local housing allowance). Households in Weymouth and Portland were least likely to be able to afford housing, as were certain household groups such as lone parents and single non-pensioner households.*

Based on population levels, this would indicate a personal subsidy reliance among approximately 400 households across WDDC/WPBC. The SHMA Update further indicated that 20% of the need could be met through the provision of some form of intermediate housing, i.e. higher cost but sub-market, while the remainder (320 units) would need to be affordable rented.

Housing prices in WDDC are relatively high. From a 2013 survey of estate and lettings agents across the HMA area, the entry level cost of purchase range from £89,000 for a 1-bed flat to £271,000 for a 4-bed house. This compares to £85,000 and £227,000 in WPBC. Entry-level rents in the private sector vary significantly. One-bed flats range from £450pm in Weymouth to £525pm in Sherborne, while three-bed properties range from £625pm in Portland to £725pm in Dorchester. Overall, both house prices and rent levels have remained relatively static in recent years, but this potentially masks some significant locational variations.

The picture is therefore one of economic diversity across the HMA, with West Dorset generally offering higher paid employment opportunities balanced against more expensive housing. Weymouth and Portland is characterised by a lower-wage economy, with a larger rented sector.

In WDDC the local population is split evenly between those of working age and those who are pensionable with low levels of unemployment and higher than national average levels of managers and better paid jobs. The average gross weekly pay (£506.30) is around the national average but higher than the average for the South West (£476.50). Retired people account for a third of economically inactive residents, i.e. not seeking work, which is almost double the national average. A further significant factor in WDDC is the spread of the area covered and the rural isolation. Employment is often harder to access, wages tend to be lower and costs of transport are usually high.

In WPBC, almost two-thirds of the local population are of working age. In contrast to WDDC, the employment opportunities tend to be less well paid and the qualifications held by those seeking work are of a lower average level. In WDDC, 64% of the workforce have level 3 NVQ and above, while in WPBC this dropped to 49%, with a national average of 55%. In WPBC the average gross weekly pay is £449.10 compared to a regional average of £476.50 and a national average of £508. Over 6,000 people were claiming out-of-work benefits at November 2012, over half of which were ESA and incapacity benefits. Over 6,000 households in each authority are also in receipt of Housing Benefit.

An analysis of the housing register illustrates the financial capacity of those seeking sub-market housing, who are likely to have fewer housing options. Almost half (46%) registered applicants in WDDC had at least one member of their household in employment, with an average weekly income of £250.46. Applicants in Weymouth and Portland comprised 35% with at least one applicant in employment, with an average weekly income of £235.84. This would suggest that the annual income of the majority of housing register applicants across the HMA is likely to be less than £20,000.

At a marginally higher level, the average income of households purchasing through Shared Ownership in Weymouth & Portland is £16,417 and in West Dorset is £24,467

CORE Data – New RP Residents employment profile 2011/12				
	% Full time	% Part Time	% Seeking work	% Not seeking work
Magna HA	31	15	9	45
Synergy HA	15	15	13	57
Signpost HA	22	14	15	49
Yarlington HG	28	14	18	40
Raglan HA	23	12	23	42

**Table 3.5: New RP residents employment profile**

The table above indicates the broad split of new affordable housing residents in employment or looking for work. In most cases these include some data for households living in areas adjacent to the HMA.

Other key financial capacity indicators are:

- Average income of new RP tenants of £236pw, which is directly comparable with the average income of working applicants on the Housing Register;
- Synergy indicates that their residents in WPBC are likely to have annual incomes below £20,000 (£384pw), whereas the average amongst WDDC residents is higher at £30,000;
- Average weekly rents plus charges across local RPs are £88pw, which amounts to approximately 25% of average incomes of Synergy residents in Weymouth and Portland;
- 52% of Synergy residents in WPBC are in receipt of benefits, as are 60% of Magna residents in WDDC;
- Almost one third of Synergy residents in WPBC indicated they had a disability, which in a number of cases may indicate a dependence on benefits;
- It is estimated that over 4,000 children within the HMA live in poverty, with concentrations in the key areas of deprivation detailed in Appendix 2.

We are also aware that in both local authority areas, it can be a considerable challenge to maintain essential services due to the difficulty for key staff on low incomes accessing suitable affordable housing. In the past, key worker schemes have been introduced, partially funded by central government and employers to create additional housing options. There are no such schemes currently in place, but we may need to consider them in the future.

### **Welfare Reform**

Traditionally, the safety net for those on low incomes seeking access to housing has been the availability of Housing Benefit (HB). Although this remains in place, significant government reforms to the welfare system have been introduced from April 2013, which have had the effect of reducing the benefit entitlement of a number of working age households. Currently, 12,104 households receive HB across the HMA, equally spread between the two council areas. Of these, in WDDC 3,474 are of working age, and 4,384 in WPBC. In the context of child poverty, at least 10 areas in WPBC present situations in which 30–50% of young people live in households claiming HB, compared to 3 in WDDC.

WPBC	
Melcombe Regis Town Centre	Westham North Goldcroft Road
Westham East Knightsdale Rd	Littlemoor East
Littlemoor West	Westham North Westhaven
Melcombe Regis Carlton Road	Melcombe Regis
Fortuneswell South	Park District
Fortuneswell North	Rodwell and Chapelhay
Weymouth West Doncaster Rd	Melcombe Regis
Castletown and Chiswell	Lodmoor Hill
WDDC	
Poundbury South	Sherborne East Gryphon
Bridport Skilling	Bridport Court Orchard

**Table 3.6: Areas in WDDC and WPBC displaying high levels of child poverty**

The impact of welfare reform is therefore likely to be felt more acutely in WPBC, an area already suffering higher than average levels of economic deprivation. In addition, a cap to the total amount of benefit receivable, set at £26,000pa has impacted on 18 households in WDDC and 38 in WPBC, with an average weekly reduction of £50, but a maximum loss in Weymouth of £195pw. Some applicants have been removed from HB altogether.

A further change has been that working age households in receipt of HB have experienced a cut if they are occupying a property deemed too large for their needs. This amounts to 14% of HB for one bedroom in excess of requirements and 25% cut for two. The reductions have applied to almost 900 households across

the HMA, evenly spread across both WDDC and WPBC. Of these, 84 households in WDDC and 61 in WPBC have experienced a 25% reduction in their HB. This has only impacted on RP tenants and mirrors the situation already operating for private landlords.

To date, the impact of these changes has not created significantly increased demands for rehousing. However, there is evidence of increasing arrears for RP landlords and we recognise that this situation needs to be continually monitored. One consequence has been an increased level of mutual exchanges as households look to resolve the situation themselves.

To offset the impact of these reductions, the government has provided an increase in the level of funding for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) from £53,978 in 2012-13 to £119,046 in 2013-4 in WDDC and £82,043 in 2012-3 to £150,321 in 2013-14 in WPBC, which have enabled additional temporary payments to be made where circumstances warrant it.

In addition to HB changes, other benefit-related amendments include a new system of disability benefits, new support programmes for council tax which require all residents to make some contribution (WDDC and WPBC this amounts to 8.5% of the amount owed) and a substantial revision to the Social Fund (SF).

In Dorset the replacement to the SF is an Emergency Local Assistance Scheme, which offers assistance in kind rather than through cash payments. Partner organisations, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Shelter have indicated an increase in the level of debt-related advice and assistance they are providing. The combination of these changes has clearly placed significant pressure on some households. **We will continue to place an emphasis on working closely with our partners to monitor the developing picture of increasing debt and put measures in place to support the delivery of early advice and to prevent homelessness where appropriate.** For 2013-4, we have funded the CAB and Shelter to provide debt advice and support to households in our area.

The indication from the above financial profile is that the majority of households on the housing register or living in affordable housing would not be able to access owner occupation at market values. As such, a significant proportion of properties across the HMA would be denied to them. **This underlines the importance of continued support for the provision of affordable housing and an accessible private rented sector.**

Our approach in this Housing Strategy is to address affordability from different perspectives. We will look to address the demand for affordable rented homes as far as is possible within available resources (see chapter 4). However, together with partners, we will also look to encourage and promote the provision of support to develop employment skills, financial literacy, and other measures of financial inclusion for those on low incomes. Our aim is that through such provision we will extend life chances, build aspiration, and bring more housing opportunities within the grasp of those currently on low incomes.

### ***Housing and Health***

Housing has long been recognised as one of the key factors impacting the health and well-being of individuals and communities. Poor housing costs the health service at least £600m per year and almost half of accidents occur in the home. Research has also clearly indicated that the quality of accommodation and of housing environments has a major influence on mental health and feelings of well-being. There are further indications that social housing neighbourhoods include many of the least healthy communities.

Health remains a significant factor in housing applications, with 165 cases in WDDC and 146 in WPBC citing medical circumstances as a reason to move.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 has made significant changes to the planning, integration and delivery of clinical and public health services with the aim of improving the health and well-being of communities. Changes include the establishment of a Health and Well-being Board for Dorset and the publication of a Health and Well-being Strategy. The strategy identifies priorities for Dorset where stakeholders including GPs, local government and the voluntary sector will work together to improve health outcomes in local communities. The first six priorities are;

- Reducing harm caused by smoking;
- Reducing circulatory disease;
- Reducing harm from road traffic collisions;
- Reducing harm from Type-2 Diabetes;
- Reducing anxiety and depression;
- Improving care for people with dementia.

Many of these priorities can be impacted by the quality and suitability of housing and the **challenge is for us to work as effectively as possible with health and social care providers to improve well-being and deliver the health-related outcomes set out in chapter 2.**

### ***Working with the PRS***

Alongside the decline in the numbers of new affordable housing units has come the ability of local authorities to discharge homelessness responsibility by using properties in the private rented sector. In both councils we have developed good relationships with local landlords and we are often approached to advertise PRS properties to applicants on the housing register. While there is often a perception that private rental arrangements are usually more short-term and therefore a poorer alternative, we have found this not to be the case. An analysis of lettings between 2010 and 2013 indicates that nominees to properties in the private rented sector remained in tenancy for approximately 5 years as compared to 7 years in RP-owned housing. However, there are limitations, with many landlords and letting agents either refusing or having a stated preference not to take households on benefits. In order to bridge the expected future gap in the number of properties available to meet demand, we have to address both sets of concern and **look to generate an increased level of privately rented units, particularly in Weymouth where the scope is much greater.**

This will be predicated on the need for private landlords to deliver acceptable levels of quality and standards (see chapter 6). However, we will also be looking to **develop a 'tenant ready' scheme**, to inform and support housing register applicants to fully understand what is required in holding down a tenancy. We will also be undertaking a feasibility study during 2013 to **examine the viability of establishing a social lettings agency** to source and manage properties directly.

### **Key Actions**

- Develop the Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy;
- Review Temporary Accommodation;
- Engage in the Dorset Families Matter programme;
- Undertake Social Lettings Agency research;
- Deliver a programme of prevention through our Homelessness Prevention Grant;
- Attain the Gold Standard for homelessness service;
- Commission debt advice through the CAB;
- Promote financial inclusion through partnership arrangements;
- Develop closer working arrangements with health practitioners;
- Review the impact of Welfare Reform changes and monitor changes in the profile of poverty and debt.

## CHAPTER 4 NEW HOMES

***This chapter sets out how we can meet the area’s substantial need for affordable housing in a number of ways, including through the planning system and by bringing empty properties back into use. In the current economic climate, grant funding is much less likely and we need to maximise opportunities for the provision of new housing without external grants.***

Key Outcomes	
Delivering planned homes as projected in the Local Plan	Investing in existing homes – improving private rented sector and bringing empty properties back into use
Increased levels of access into private rented sector	Creating new jobs in the construction industry through house building
Strong, vibrant and stable communities	Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing
Reduced numbers of households becoming homeless	Unlocking stalled development sites, to help bring housing forward

Increasing the access to new homes is critical as a response to the projected growth of households in the HMA. The changing nature of housing need, particularly in relation to affordability, will require a co-ordinated and innovative approach to delivering these homes. Inevitably, these will have to come from a variety of sources, including new building for rent and sale, conversion of existing dwellings in terms of size and tenure and making best use of existing stock by bringing empty properties back into use. We also recognise that dwellings need to be accessible and achieve required standards and to collectively contribute to the development of sustainable communities. These latter themes are developed elsewhere in this Housing Strategy.

### **Local Plan**

Planning policy is critical to the delivery of new affordable housing. The Local Plan identifies the areas in which new housing will be allowed, and allocates new areas for development in order to meet the area’s projected housing needs. It also enables the provision of affordable housing through specific policy mechanisms. These include requiring a proportion of affordable housing to be included as part of general new housing developments, and having policies that allow affordable housing developments (known as ‘exception sites’) in areas where housing would not normally be allowed.

West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland both have adopted Local Plans at present, and are at an advanced stage of preparing a new Joint Local Plan, which will replace them. The new plan is due to be adopted in 2014 and will have an end date of 2031. It will allocate substantial additional areas of land for housing development across both council areas. Such new land allocations, together with the policy requirement for a proportion of affordable housing (currently 35% for most of the plan area), currently provide the most significant source of new affordable housing, and the greatest opportunity for this to be provided without external grant funding.

The existing West Dorset Local Plan seeks 35% affordable housing on all sites of 15 or more units in towns or 3 or more units in villages. The existing Weymouth & Portland Local Plan seeks 30% on sites of 9 or more units. In reviewing these policies as part of the development of the new plan, it has been important to consider the appropriate level that was likely in practice to maximise delivery. Too low a level would have meant losing opportunities for greater provision, but too high a level would make development unviable and reduce the likelihood and speed of development coming forward.

It is also important to be aware of the significant changes that have taken place in the national funding regime (see Chapter 1), meaning that affordable housing achieved through agreements with developers on housing sites is not currently likely to gain additional grant funding. The emerging plan therefore seeks 35% affordable housing throughout the majority of the plan area and 25% on Portland, where development values are lower. This was based on evidence of development viability, and assumed the use of the 'affordable rent' tenure as described below.

The new Local Plan also proposes to take away the site size thresholds above which a proportion of affordable housing is sought. On larger sites, proportions of affordable housing on site will continue to be sought, while smaller sites will make a financial contribution towards provision elsewhere. The viability evidence suggests that such payments are deliverable and this will obviously form a valuable new source of affordable housing funding.

Another major policy change in the emerging plan is the proposal to allow 'exception sites' (sites for 100% affordable housing in locations where housing is not normally permitted, for example outside defined development boundaries of settlements) on the edges of towns as well as in more rural areas. The plan does not currently allow 'cross-subsidy' on exception sites (through allowing a small proportion of market housing to help fund the affordable provision) due to the likely effect of raising land values. But the new provisions of the Localism Act, including neighbourhood plans and a community right to build schemes, will allow opportunities for this to take place where it is led and supported by local communities.

### ***Neighbourhood Plans and Community-led Schemes***

The councils are keen to support local communities developing their own housing proposals, whether through neighbourhood plans, community right-to-build schemes or community land trusts. Neighbourhood plans and community right-to-build schemes enable communities to develop their own planning policies for the local area. While they must be in accordance with the strategic policy framework of the Local Plan, and with national planning policy, they can make local changes to policy which would on adoption become part of the statutory development plan. These can include allocating new areas of land for development, and this is a means by which additional affordable housing sites, or mixed tenure housing sites, can be brought forward, under the control of the local community. The councils are supporting a number of communities developing such plans across the local plan area.

The Community Right to Reclaim Land enables individuals, community groups and other organisations, including developers, to ask that vacant or derelict land which could be better used for housing be brought back into use and even bid to buy it. This can be achieved by filling in a Public Request to Order Disposal (PROD) form and sending it to the National Planning Casework Unit at the Department of Communities and Local Government. Applicants are required to provide evidence about the land and arguments about how it could be better used for housing or local facilities. If the evidence is solid, the Secretary of State will issue a notice requiring the landowner to sell. This will normally mean that the land is sold on the open market. Applicants will have an opportunity to purchase the land on the open market and are advised to discuss proposals with the existing landowner as they may be prepared to sell at less than market value.

### **Cerne Valley Neighbourhood Plan**

Cerne Valley Parish Council (CVPC) was one of the first national 'front runners' to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, starting in 2011. CVPC agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan would cover the whole group parish area, and approved the establishment of a neighbourhood plan working group.

Clear terms of reference were set out for the group, including reporting arrangements to CVPC, which remained responsible for all key decisions. The group had external support from CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) in identifying key characteristics of the built environment and potential development sites, and from the Prince's Foundation in undertaking public consultation to guide the preparation of a draft plan, which was then published for public consultation in 2013. The draft plan has identified land for small scale housing developments at Cerne Abbas, and has set a development boundary for the smaller settlement of Godmanstone.

#### ***Case study 4.1***

##### ***Affordable Housing Targets***

Targets for the total affordable housing provision across each council area were set in previous Housing Strategies. These were 110-120 per annum in West Dorset and 65 per annum in Weymouth & Portland, and the former in particular was set as a 'stretch target' at a time when the national funding regime was very different. In the last few years, the rate of affordable housing completions has been similar in both areas, meaning that the Weymouth & Portland target has continued to be met while the West Dorset target has not. The targets have been reviewed for this strategy, taking into account likely delivery through the new Local Plan, and the changes in funding arrangements. They are expressed as ranges (70-100 in West Dorset and 50-65 in Weymouth & Portland) in order to reflect the uncertainty surrounding future funding, with the upper end of the ranges only being achievable if significant external funding is secured.

##### ***Bringing Development Forward***

The Local Plan (and neighbourhood plans) identifies land to be developed for new housing, and sets out policies for affordable housing provision within these developments. Bringing this land forward for development is however in the control of the landowners and developers, and will be influenced by the national and local economy at the time. For a variety of reasons, but particularly during difficult economic times, sites that have been allocated for development may not come forward in the timescales anticipated. This has an impact on the supply of housing to the local market, and on the delivery of affordable housing. Taking action to bring such sites forward is therefore a key priority in delivering new housing. This may require funding towards earlier delivery of essential infrastructure, to reduce development risk. Affordable housing may be key to bringing sites forward at times when the general housing market is poor, and registered providers are increasingly taking an active role in bringing sites forward, including undertaking mixed tenure developments themselves. The councils will work with their RP partners to develop and facilitate these approaches. Unlocking stalled development sites will also be a priority for seeking external funding.

##### ***Grant Funding***

Since the last Housing Strategies were prepared there have been very significant changes in national policy and funding for affordable housing. National funding through the Homes and Communities Agency has been significantly reduced, and is available primarily for a new tenure of affordable housing, 'Affordable Rent'. This involves higher rent levels than the traditional 'social rented' housing, potentially up to 80% of open market rental values. Social rented housing (at target rent levels) will only be funded in exceptional circumstances. Funding will not be available for affordable housing developed through negotiations with developers on general market housing sites: this is expected to be funded entirely through the cross-subsidy from the development of the market housing.

Funding has currently been allocated up to 2015 (including for a number of identified schemes in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland) but there is considerable uncertainty as to what if any funding will be available after this time, and it cannot be assumed that similar approaches to affordable housing provision will continue.

There are also significant implications from the move to 'Affordable Rent' tenures rather than the previous target rent approach. While this is more affordable to provide, the increased rent levels are less affordable to those in need in the area. Those on benefits will continue to have the difference met through increased benefit provision, but working people on low incomes are likely to be unable to afford the higher rent levels.

It is considered that the councils should work flexibly to try to maximise the opportunities for provision in these challenging times. On development sites, both councils are currently accepting the 'Affordable Rent' tenure where traditional social rented would previously have been stipulated, as this is the government's current model and helps to enable the provision of a greater number of homes, rather than a smaller number of more affordable ones. We are also exploring alternative models of provision that can be achieved without grant, such as the discounted-sale housing that has been provided on an exception site at Tolpuddle. Provision of a greater number of homes, and ensuring that they remain affordable for as long as there is a need (rather than just for initial occupiers) will continue to be priorities.

The councils will also continue to work with the HCA and local RPs with the aim of maximising any external funding for new affordable provision within this area.

### ***New Build Typology***

There are several different models of affordable housing provision that can all play a part in providing housing for those unable to meet their needs on the open market. These include:

- Traditional 'social housing', where rents are at identified target amounts, typically around 50% of market values. These rents are more likely to be affordable to those in serious levels of need, but such units are costly to provide and national funding is not currently provided for them;
- The new 'Affordable Rent' model currently receiving national funding, which is less costly to develop. Rents are higher than many of those in need can afford, though they are still below local housing allowance and those on benefits will be able to afford them;
- Shared equity or shared ownership housing, an intermediate housing tenure where occupants buy part of the home and rent the remainder (or the remainder stays in the hands of the owner with no rent payments made). Occupants have the opportunity to 'staircase up' towards full ownership, though upper limits may be set in some cases. This is relatively affordable to provide and can form a useful part of a mixed tenure scheme, though is more appropriate for those wishing in the longer term to progress to home ownership, rather than those in greater levels of need. It can result in properties being lost to the open market, either through staircasing or through occupants defaulting on mortgage payments;
- Discounted market housing, where properties are sold at 65-75% of market value and this discount is passed down to subsequent purchasers. This can be achieved without external funding, but it largely meets intermediate needs rather than the most urgent;
- Models bringing in private ethical investment funding, such as the RentPlus model. Under this model, housing is initially provided as 'Affordable Rent' but with the option to transfer to initially-discounted ownership within 5, 10, 15 or 20 years. The aim is that the whole development is in private ownership at the end of the 20 years, but that the funding can be recycled for future schemes.

Other types of provision that may contribute towards meeting local affordable housing needs are:

- Community Land Trusts, which enable communities to hold land and assets in perpetuity so that they can develop affordable housing, of a variety of tenures, themselves. These are community-led and the community can influence the approach to the allocation of properties (within the framework of the Housing Register), but schemes are still likely to require significant funding. These work well when the community works in partnership with an RP, in order to benefit from their knowledge and expertise. Several trusts have been developed in West Dorset, including the completed Buckland Newton scheme, and the Wessex CLT Group has been supporting and advising communities through the process;
- Self-build, where individuals buy a plot to build their own home, or an area of a larger development is reserved for self-builders. Often a 'self-finish' approach is taken, where the site developer starts the process and the purchaser takes over part-way through. This may play a useful role as part of an affordable housing development, or to meet intermediate needs, but the affordability benefits will apply only to the initial purchasers if the properties are subsequently sold on the open market;
- Co-housing, where housing is developed in a communal format, combining self-contained dwelling units with an element of shared facilities such as laundry rooms, guest bedrooms and dining and sitting rooms. This can be developed as 100% affordable housing, with an allocation process through the housing register, or could be all- or part- open market housing, though with the shared facilities reducing the cost of ownership. A co-housing scheme has been developed in North Dorset at the Threshold Centre near Gillingham.

It is important to achieve the right mix of house types and sizes within individual developments in order to reflect the need in the area, and to encourage balanced communities with a mix of different household types. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment prepared to inform the Local Plan indicated that 79% of affordable housing demand is likely to be for rented housing, and the plan policy states that on strategic housing allocations, at least 70% of the affordable housing should be for rent (social rented or affordable rented) with the remainder for intermediate tenures such as shared ownership. The appropriate mix of house types and sizes will be negotiated on individual planning applications, taking account of the evidence of need in the locality at the time, likely future needs, and the desirability of providing a mix of types within any one development. Particular needs, such as homes adapted to meet the needs of people with disabilities, will also be taken into account in deciding on the mix of affordable housing to be provided.

### ***Rural Housing***

There are some particular issues surrounding affordable housing needs in more rural areas. While the bulk of affordable housing demand is focused on the towns, such as Weymouth and Dorchester, there is also significant demand in rural areas and there are far fewer existing affordable housing properties in these areas. For those with employment, family or other connections to a particular village, opportunities for affordable housing are very restricted. Demand for market housing in villages is very high, often from people moving from other parts of the country or buying second homes, who may be able to afford higher prices than those on local wages. The attraction of areas in both WDDC and WPBC to those seeking holiday lets and second homes does have an impact on local housing markets and may create issues of sustainability for some communities, particularly rural communities. Significant changes can take place within communities if local people on lower wages have to move away and large numbers of homes are bought as second homes. Provision of rural affordable housing is therefore about maintaining cohesive communities as well as meeting individual housing needs.

The main opportunities for the provision of new rural affordable housing are through rural exception sites, or through community-led planning initiatives such as neighbourhood plans and community right to build schemes. The emerging Local Plan allows rural exception sites in a wide variety of locations provided that there is evidence of housing need. It does not allow open market housing on such sites for cross-subsidy purposes, but this can be achieved through neighbourhood plans or community right to build schemes, both of which can make additional site-specific development proposals to those in the Local Plan.

Rural housing schemes are often controversial. Community-led approaches such as Community Land Trusts can be a very good means of gaining greater community support for development, as they can involve the wider community at an early stage, and can retain some control over the allocation of homes. Opposition to rural affordable housing is often focused on impacts on the landscape and settlement character, as well as concerns about traffic and access to facilities. Generally, people are more likely to consider these impacts worthwhile if they are confident that there is local need, and that local people will be prioritised sufficiently in allocating the properties. The needs evidence used to support these proposals is therefore of critical importance. A range of guidance and good practice is available in relation to the development of rural exception schemes and preparation of local needs evidence, and it is suggested that bringing some of this together in a rural exceptions site toolkit for community use would be valuable.

#### **Buckland Newton Community Property Trust**

Buckland Newton was the first Community Land Trust (CLT) in West Dorset, and was supported by the council as a pilot project from which later CLTs could learn. The Trust secured land for the development of 10 new affordable homes on the edge of the village, developed under the exception sites policy of the Local Plan. The community-led nature of the initiative and a locally developed policy for the allocation of homes, led to strong local support for the proposal and very little opposition to the planning application.

Bringing the scheme forward involved a huge commitment from volunteers in the local community. Part-way through the project, it was agreed to work in partnership with an RP, and this has been the model followed by other CLTs since. Some of the original aims for very high environmental standards, including straw bale construction, had to change due to their high costs and difficulties in obtaining loan funding. The scheme benefited from funding from the HCA, WDDC (which provided both grant funding and a long term loan) and a charitable trust, towards the total cost of £1.4m.

The scheme has delivered 5 assured tenancy homes for rent and 5 shared ownership homes, which have been allocated to residents with close links to the village, including some working within the parish. This was the first affordable housing developed in Buckland Newton for 20 years.

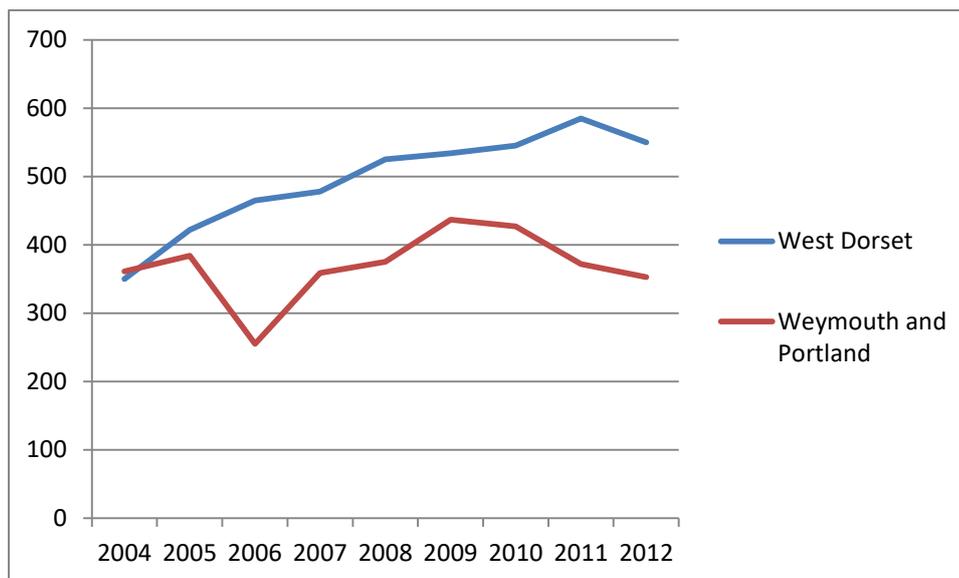
#### **Case study 4.2**

##### ***Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers***

Gypsies and travellers are a group with specific accommodation needs, and local planning authorities are responsible for assessing these needs and allocating land to meet them, in the same way that they do for general housing.

Dorset councils are working together to prepare a plan allocating permanent and transit sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people across the Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole areas. Consultation on a range of potential sites took place during November 2011 – February 2012, and a revised assessment of needs is also being carried out.

## Empty Properties



**Table 4.3: Long term empty properties**

The high level of housing need reported across the HMA requires that maximum use is made of the existing stock. Empty homes represent a wasted resource both to the community and to the owner, who will be losing rental income while needing to meet a range of expenses including insurances and Council Tax. To this end, both councils adopted an Empty Homes Strategy in 2013 (see Appendix 5).

We have removed historical Council Tax exemptions applying to both second homes and to 'empty homes'. From April 2013 properties left unoccupied and unfurnished for two years will be charged an additional 50% C Tax. By removing a potential incentive to leave a house or flat unoccupied we expect to maximise the use of the existing housing stock.

In addition, the councils have invested New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding to employ a dedicated Empty Homes Officer and have adopted a policy of 'incremental intervention' in dealing with empty property. Our expectation is that the investment in this new post will be recouped and additional income generated through NHB. The policy is based on advice and information widely available to residents informing on the true cost of leaving their property unoccupied. More detailed and tailored advice on a range of options available to bring empty property back into use is available from the Empty Homes Officer, including details of a subsidised loans scheme administered by Wessex Home Loans, a Community Interest Company (CIC), working in partnership with 19 councils across the south-west.

The councils will continue to work closely with RPs to develop options for owners of empty property to use the expertise and experience that they can provide in the management of homes, while the direct leasing of accommodation by the council to address homelessness duties will continue to be an option available to some owners of empty property.

Where advice and assistance prove ineffective in bringing empty property back into use, enforcement powers may be considered by the councils. This could involve low level enforcements to secure a building, clear a garden, or to address nuisance to a neighbouring property, but could also lead to management orders or even to compulsory purchase if the impact on the community make such actions appropriate.

### **Key Actions**

- Aim to deliver between 70 and 100 affordable homes per annum in West Dorset and between 50 and 65 per annum in Weymouth and Portland during the next five years, depending on external grant availability;
- Adopt new Local Plan with new housing development land allocations for the next twenty years, and revised affordable housing policies aimed at maximising supply in the current financial climate;
- Aim to maximise affordable housing provision through negotiations with developers on Section 106 agreements;
- Work with the HCA and local RPs to lobby for the maximum potential grant for future schemes in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland;
- Support communities preparing their own Neighbourhood Plans and Community Right to Build schemes that will deliver more affordable housing;
- Encourage the development of more Community Land Trusts;
- Prepare a Rural Exceptions Site toolkit to provide guidance to communities, clarify the process of developing these sites, and spread best practice;
- Make advice and assistance for owners of empty properties widely available by the adoption of an effective Communications Plan;
- Promote loans to owners of empty property unable to access commercial loan;
- Develop effective liaison with landlord groups, letting agents, councillors and community workers to address empty properties in every community;
- Review long term empty properties on Council Tax records to develop a reliable database for the councils' Empty Homes Officer;
- We will support innovative methods of delivery, such as self-build, kit homes, Community Land Trusts.

## CHAPTER 5

## SUPPORTED HOUSING AND SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE

*This chapter sets out how we can work in partnership to enable households to retain their independence.*

Key Outcomes	
Thriving local networks	Improved indicators of financial and social inclusion
Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	Extended levels of housing choice
Effective information and services to reflect the diversity of local communities	Easy access to advice and support services
Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing	Improved health and wellbeing indicators
High levels of customer satisfaction	Skilled, and customer-focused staff
Innovative and sustainable solutions	

Housing remains a key requirement for a stable and settled lifestyle and for some groups within the community this need is heightened by their particular needs or inability to access housing without support or assistance. Both Councils recognise statutory requirements to provide homes and services to the most vulnerable in society. These often fall within the older and younger categories and those suffering mental or physical illness.

### **Supporting People**

Support or assistance to maintain independent living can take the form of specialist long or short term accommodation, often provided by RPs, sometimes with specialist support, services and/or adaptations. Alternatively, floating support may be delivered to people in their own homes to enable them to cope, following which the support can be reallocated to help another household in need.

The timing of some of these inputs may be critical, with early contact potentially preventing the need for more complex and expensive interventions at a later stage, with greater impacts on for example health and social care services. Such services are commissioned across Dorset by DCC through 'Supporting People', a partnership comprising the County, District and Borough Councils, Probation and Health. A budget of £7.5m currently commissions services for the following client groups:

Supporting people- client groups:	Budget 2013-2014 £
Learning Disability	2,320,184
Mental Health	771,100
Older People	1,688,862
Physical Disability	10,406
Domestic Violence	346,676
Generic	526,996
Social Exclusion	550,622
Young People	1,346,159
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,561,005</b>

**Table 5.1: Supporting People client groups**

Over 50% of Dorset SP funding is spent in WDDC/WPBC, due to a combination of identified local needs, but also factors pre-2003 that resulted in an uneven distribution of services countywide. A wide range of groups and agencies have subsequently assisted DCC to develop Housing Delivery Plans/Strategies for these client groups, to help redirect resources where they are most needed. Multi-agency panels have been established to assess housing and support needs and match allocations to households seeking specialist housing, as well as consider those ready to move into independent accommodation from supported housing.

### **Older People**

Nationally, Dorset has the highest proportion of older people in its population. Within our council's areas 12.3% of the population are aged 75 and over (compared with 8% nationally) and 20.8% are aged between 60 and 74 (compared with 14.6% nationally). The proportion of those aged over 85 is projected to increase significantly, almost doubling in Dorset by 2026, rising from 3.4% to 5.8% of the county's population. The largest increase is expected to be in West Dorset, with absolute numbers doubling by 2026, and the proportion increasing to 7.1% of the total population. Many will become frail, develop dementia or develop other long term limiting illnesses. In addition, many will be dependent on care from household members (often an elderly partner), will be living with limited incomes, often in homes larger than they need, in poor repair, difficult to heat and insulate, socially isolated, and (in West Dorset in particular) subject to rural isolation. **We are committed to work in partnership to maintain a range of services to enable older people to live dignified, independent and, where required, supported lives.**

Our current provision includes:

*Extra care sheltered housing*; provision includes a scheme manager to check on well-being and co-ordinate inclusive activities, as well as housing support, care and meals. There are currently two such projects operating in Weymouth and Portland: Foylebank on Portland and Westhaven in Weymouth. However, efforts to provide a similar scheme in Dorchester in West Dorset have so far not been successful, and this will remain a priority.

*Ordinary sheltered housing* (both private sector and social housing); the nature of provision varies, but we have 1,693 units in WDDC and 1,024 units in WPBC. In recent years, a number of older social rented schemes have been reviewed and upgraded or modernised, and some that are in lower demand have been redeveloped. This has led to a position where Synergy HA is looking to reduce their sheltered stock by 17% from 805 units to 671 units by 2016. Consideration is also being given to broadening the client group that can be accommodated in terms of age and support needs.

### **Safe and Independent Living (SAIL) – example of good practice**

SAIL provides a multi-agency approach to health and well-being by signposting, support and services to people over 50 years of age or who are vulnerable.

SAIL partner agencies complete a referral form with appropriate clients identifying which services, support or information they would like to access. The referral form is sent to the hub organisations (Age UK Dorchester), which enters the client details onto its database. A referral is generated to each partner agency requested to carry out an action as agreed with the client. Referrals will only be sent on to those agencies identified by the client.

Partner agencies undertake the required action, such as completing a welfare benefits check, undertaking a home safety check, providing information on energy saving and insulation grants, helping the client to access food and nutrition, providing support to help the client stop smoking or drinking alcohol and so on.

Monitoring is undertaken for Dorset POPP (co-ordinated by the hub organisation) of all aspects of the SAIL initiative. This includes any follow-up required as a result of actions being delayed or not completed.

It is intended that referred clients are better able to access services and support, but also that SAIL agencies can extend their reach, improve partnership working and reduce duplication. A significant number of vulnerable people do not receive direct services and are excluded from support services. SAIL enables organisations to be more effective by focusing on those needing and wanting services and co-ordinating the efforts of agencies working with the public.

### **Case study 5.2**

Type	Tenure	WPBC	WDDC
Sheltered Housing	Rent	637	1382
	Leasehold	260	681
Enhanced sheltered housing	Rent	10	0
	Leasehold	0	116
Extra care sheltered housing	Rent	11	0
	Leasehold	92	0
Registered care (bed spaces)	Residential care	567	665
	Nursing care	261	609

**Table 5.3: Current housing and residential provision for older people**

Other services include:

- Older persons bungalows in the social sector are often prioritised for tenants under-occupying much larger homes;
- Home Improvement Agencies (e.g. Dorset Home Service, Care and Repair), who offer services for a range of vulnerable, mainly older, clients, irrespective of the ownership of their home. Minor repairs can be arranged, security features, major and minor mobility aids and adaptations installed, and housing advice can be given to enable the client to consider whether a move to accommodation more appropriate to their needs may be an option. The process of funding HIAs is the subject of a major review prompted by the need to retender SP contracts in 2015 (see Chapter 6);
- Floating support, which offers short term housing support to assist a client in their own home through an immediate crisis or to help with budgeting and welfare claims. When resolved, the service withdraws to assist other new clients. As with HIAs, the funding and structure of floating support is the subject of a review prompted by the need to retender SP contracts in 2015;
- Disabled Facilities Grants and loans are made available by the councils (some grants are mandatory) and some RPs to enable works to be carried out to properties to allow a client to remain at home. The Home Improvement Agencies are often involved in delivering these (see Chapter 6);

- Advice and information services (in both the statutory and voluntary sector) provide a substantial resource for older people on a range of housing issues. We are working to ensure that these are effectively co-ordinated and that any gaps and duplication of effort are addressed;
- POPP (see chapter 7) and SAIL (see above).

In terms of future provision, indications from the Housing Learning Improvement Network (a need projection tool for older persons housing), is that both WDDC and WPBC are adequately provided for sheltered housing. However, in both areas, there appears to be a shortfall in relation to enhanced and extra care units.

<b>In WDDC:</b>
Sheltered housing: <b>over-provision</b> of 243 rented and 120 leased units
Enhanced sheltered housing: <b>under-provision</b> of 0 units (no demand/need) rented and 156 leased units
Extra care sheltered housing: <b>under-provision</b> of 316 units for rent and 24 leased units
<b>In WPBC :</b>
Sheltered housing: <b>over-provision</b> of 34 rented and 14 leased units
Enhanced sheltered housing: <b>under-provision</b> of 70 units rented and 0 leased units
Extra care sheltered housing: <b>under-provision</b> of 0 units for rent and 122 leased units

**Table 5.4: Provision of types of sheltered housing**

### **Younger People**

Of those households approaching us for housing, one of the most challenging groups to deal with effectively are those under the age of 25. This is for several reasons:

- Relatively few suitable properties are available to them;
- Low incomes;
- Restrictions on their benefit entitlement to shared rooms;
- Often challenging and complex needs;
- High incidence of challenging behaviour.

At the younger age range, there is also often a much greater level of volatility, which may lead to unexpected homelessness. A significant number of those younger people approaching the councils for housing may also have issues relating to substance abuse, criminality or mental health. However, for all 'young people' under the age of 35, changes in the benefit system have resulted in much greater challenges in finding suitable accommodation because of payments limited to shared room levels. This may be forcing people in to lower quality HMO accommodation, although we currently do not have definitive evidence of this. **We do however need to examine the options for supporting the provision of suitable affordable housing for under 35-year olds.**

In the last 20 years, a significant shift in the age profile of the Dorset population has seen the number of people aged 20 to 29 falling by around 25%. This is mainly due to young people moving out of the area to find employment, attend university etc. For those remaining, the employment options available in Dorset are predominantly in the service sector, including seasonal or part-time work, with salaries below the national average. Housing opportunities are particularly challenging for young people in these circumstances, due largely to availability and affordability.

### **Oborne House – Magna HA**

Magna have worked in partnership and supported the Rendezvous project in Sherborne for several years. The council's community initiative fund has made several donations that included funding for a new kitchen in 2009. In October 2012, funding was provided by Magna for a number of their staff to offer advice and

guidance on housing-related issues to younger residents.

This relationship has grown more recently. The closure in March 2013 of the 12-bedroom accommodation at Osborne House in Sherborne prompted fears that young people would be worse off. Instead, Magna has provided accommodation there for 18 to 25 year olds. Magna will manage Osborne House as the residents' landlord, while the Rendezvous will provide any necessary housing-related support. Staff from the Rendezvous will provide daily advice and support to residents on welfare benefits, CV writing, job searching and any other identified needs. They will help residents to find alternative accommodation when they are ready to move on, and continue to provide support to enable them to live independently.

### **Case Study 5.5**

Strategically, the Dorset response is funnelled through Supporting People-funded services, which recognise the need to give young people housing choices and to maximise opportunities to access sustainable decent, safe and secure housing. In many cases, young persons' housing problems are best tackled through agencies working together to offer a cohesive packages of accommodation, support and personal development. Appropriate support can also assist young people in maintaining their accommodation and can prevent the crisis of homelessness. **We remain committed to playing a full and supportive role in seeking the best outcomes for young people in our areas.**

The SP contract for the provision of accommodation-based services for vulnerable young people in the west of the county began in April 2013 and has been awarded to Bournemouth Churches Housing Association. They have introduced a service model based on smaller grouped accommodation served by an IT call centre with monitoring technology.

	WPBC			WDDC		
	High support	Med support	Low support	High support	Med support	Low support
SP funded accommodation	15	20		-	40	
Non-SP funded accommodation	6	19	10			

**Table 5.6: Current accommodation provision for young people**

An example of how agencies are currently working together to find innovative solutions to support service delivery is West Rivers House in Bridport, which is detailed below.

#### **Looked After Children, Children Leaving Care, Homeless 16/17 Year Olds and Teenage Parents**

Children in these categories often have poorer outcomes than the wider population, particularly in relation to educational achievement, homelessness and mental health. The legal status of under-18s makes it difficult to obtain and hold tenancies (unless a guarantor can be found) and without support to develop life and budgeting skills, many have difficulty in making the transition into independent living.

In recognition of this, our Housing Advisors, some with specialist knowledge and experience of working with young people, have built links with local agencies supporting young people, and hold regular surgeries at e.g. Youth Centres and Young Persons Advice Centres. We have also produced a housing options DVD in Weymouth and Portland which has been used in local schools.

We work closely with the multi-agency panel referred to earlier, which operates in relation to young people, assessing housing and support needs, considering appropriate allocations and reviewing those ready to move into independent accommodation from supported housing.

However, one area which has failed to operate effectively is in relation to 16/17 year olds who present themselves as homeless or having a housing need. A protocol between the County, Borough and District authorities in Dorset was agreed to reinforce the commitment to the principle that young people should not be passed between services, but that services should work together to deliver the best possible outcomes and that young people's housing needs should not be considered in isolation from their other needs. In practice, these principles have not been applied locally, and a review of the protocol is underway to ensure that they are delivered. To achieve this, we need to collectively resolve situations in which young people are placed in inappropriate and expensive bed and breakfast accommodation where they and others are potentially at risk. For the Partnership, a commitment not to use B&B for 16/17 year olds is also a requirement to achieve the Gold Standard (see chapter 3) for our homelessness service.

#### **West Rivers House – good practice in partnership working**

The Supporting People accommodation-based young persons' support service contract was won by Bournemouth Churches HA (BCHA), whose model of service provision varied from that delivered by the previous provider, the You Trust. BCHA opted to move to smaller premises in Bridport, away from the 16 bedspace, Magna-owned scheme at West Rivers House elsewhere in the town. This scheme was also home to 'Oh Crumbs', as DCC sponsored training café, which provided training and employment for people with disabilities, and an IT training room for young people with equipment provided by WDDC. The closure of the accommodation threatened the continued viability of the café in this location and meant that the IT training suite would have to close. There was considerable local opposition to the loss of this facility.

Productive discussions took place between several potential partners to find a solution, as follows:

**Magna HA** – the property owner, exploring future options for their potentially empty building

**WDDC/WPBC** – looking to respond to local opposition to the closure and explore the potential to use part of the building for temporary accommodation, as well as to preserve the IT training facility

**BCHA** – who were finding it difficult to find smaller premises elsewhere in Bridport

**Oh Crumbs/DCC** – wanting to preserve the valuable café facility

**Supporting People/DCC** – who showed a degree of flexibility in the delivery of the contract

**Bridport Town Council** – who were keen to support the retention of a valuable local resource

This collaborative approach engaged with Skills Training Bridport, a local social enterprise delivering training under the National Learning in Deprived Communities banner and a forum on which all local skills training providers are represented. They co-ordinated the rental of the IT training to other users to maximise its usage. This collaboration is also likely to ensure the continued use of Magna's building for 2 units of temporary accommodation for the councils, 6 units of accommodation for young people supported by BCHA, the Oh Crumbs café and the IT training facility.

#### **Case study 5.7**

##### ***Vulnerable Groups***

Other vulnerable groups include: *people with mental health problems; people with learning disabilities; people with alcohol or drug problems; offenders or people at risk from offending; rough sleepers; gypsies and travellers.*

Specialist housing and support services are provided for these groups, in most cases funded through Supporting People funds through DCC. These range from longer term accommodation-based services (for mental health and learning disability clients for instance) to shorter term accommodation-based services (e.g. for some people with alcohol or drug problems, ex-offenders) and floating support services.

DCC has a Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service that works with both authorities to provide permanent and transit sites. A site already exists in West Dorset, and Dorset councils' planning departments are working together to produce a Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document to enhance provision of authorised sites.

Our two councils have commissioned a Rough Sleeper Assertive Outreach service to work with people who are street homeless or rough sleeping, many of whom do not engage with other services or are excluded from them. This relationship currently ensures that the number of rough sleepers in both Council areas do not normally exceed 3/4 at any given time. Each of these will be assisted where possible, but in some instances rough sleeping is a lifestyle choice. Our contract with Exeter Drug Project (EDP) also ensures that suitable emergency accommodation is available when the weather is particularly inclement. **Our contract with EDP will be reviewed in 2014.**

	WPBC	WDDC
Learning disability:		
• Residential and nursing care- 35 providers for 108 service users (NB Dorset-wide)	-	-
• SP shared/supported housing	19	21
• SP supported lodgings	43	Nil
• Shared lives, adult placements with families 38 service users (NB Dorset-wide)	-	-
• Community care supported housing placements 16 providers for 130 service users (NB Dorset-wide)	-	-
• Also 15 self-contained flats under construction in Weymouth	15	Nil
Mental health:		
• SP shared housing	27	1
• SP supported lodgings	35	Nil
• SP countywide floating support service, short term crisis intervention	-	-
• Intensive Supported Housing service (short term)	16	13
Socially excluded (including drug, alcohol, ex-offenders, single homeless etc) (short term)	41	27
Gypsies and travellers (permanent/transit pitches)	-	14 (permanent)

**Table 5.8: Current accommodation provision for other vulnerable groups**

Obtaining clear objective needs data for all these client groups is difficult. This is particularly true as vulnerability may be temporary, engagement with services may only be at point of crisis and/or housing may only be part of the picture. In such cases, we may have to use projected need level to determine our strategic response. Other client groups, such as learning disabilities, have known cohorts progressing through the education system and future needs can therefore be more reliably assessed.

### **Domestic Violence and Abuse**

Dorset Police data on domestic violence and abuse over the last 4 years shows that there are on average around 2,500 reported incidents across Dorset each year. In the year to March 2013 this was estimated to increase to 3,000. This is considered a positive development attributable to better support from specialist services resulting in victim confidence to report incidents. There is also a more robust approach by the police when dealing with domestic violence and abuse incidents. Our councils work with victims of domestic violence and abuse through our support for, and partnerships with, the Women's Refuge and the Hamlet (a refuge move-on accommodation project). We also actively contribute to the Dorset Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), a partnership which supports high risk victims of domestic violence and

abuse. At MARAC meetings, information about those at risk of murder or serious harm is shared between local agencies, to draw up a risk focused, co-ordinated safety plan to support the victim. Over 250 cases each year from across the county are considered, representing about 10% of all cases meeting the high risk threshold. In 2011-12, 52 cases were repeats and 394 children were involved with the victims referred. The majority of MARAC victims are female, but seven men were referred 2011-12.

Domestic violence and abuse continues to be in the top three reasons for homelessness in all six Dorset Borough and District Councils. Homelessness acceptances over the last 4 years (2008-12) resulting from domestic violence and abuse numbered 15 in West Dorset and 5 in Weymouth and Portland. This is from a total of 56 county-wide. **We aim to minimise the use of temporary accommodation and prevent homelessness and further abuse.** Examples of local working practices to prevent homelessness include sanctuary schemes and target hardening to enable victims to stay safely in their own homes with added security measures, rent deposit and rent in advance schemes, tenancy support and liaison schemes, and the use of targeted outreach.

A county-wide domestic violence and abuse Housing Delivery Plan, co-ordinated by DCC but with input from our authorities and a wide range of stakeholders, is due to be finalised in 2013. This will be based on a co-ordinated approach by partners, including the roles of: MARAC, Refuges, move on, outreach and floating support, sanctuary schemes, rent deposits, housing advice, and other support (e.g. from financial support to target hardening, including Victim Support, the CAB and the Safe Partnership). The SP contracts for the provision of refuge and floating support /outreach services are to be merged and tendered in 2013.

	WPBC	WDDC
Refuge bed spaces (rooms)		30 (9)
Refuge move on flats	5	

**Table 5.9: Current accommodation provision for victims of domestic violence and abuse**

### **Disability**

The latest surveys in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland have indicated that nearly 7,000 households (around 10% of households) include a family member with some form of disability. We administer mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) which fund works that are needed to support a person with a disability to live independently in their own home. The grant is available for essential adaptations to give better freedom of movement into and around the home and for essential alterations (see Chapter 6).

As a result of the high levels of older people in WDDC, a more extensive range of services has been delivered than in neighbouring authorities. This has included the provision of a discreet West Dorset Home Improvement Agency (HIA). A review of this delivery mechanism is currently underway as part of the proposed development of a Dorset Independent Living Service (DILS) from April 2015 (see chapter 6).

A key theme of the consultation processes in developing this Housing Strategy was a frequently raised concern that services provided for vulnerable groups may operate in isolation, not identifying or addressing gaps in provision and often duplicating effort. In addition, comprehensive needs data is not always available for these groups and the effectiveness of outcomes may not always be reviewed. As our partners are experiencing pressures of capacity and budget, **developing services in a targeted and joined up way will become a key action in our delivery plan.**

**Key Actions**

- Get better feedback and views from service users;
- Review the effectiveness of current services and outcomes;
- Improve access to services and information, in particular using IT-based solutions, telecare and encouraging sustainable local solutions in rural areas;
- Work proactively and flexibly in partnership to assess needs, share information, offer choices and options, and design and deliver services in different ways;
- Identify gaps and duplication of services;
- Consider the role of the private rented sector and general need social housing in meeting needs, and enabling move-on where appropriate;
- Explore more flexible use of existing property assets, and consider pooled budgets;
- Consider affordability and support people through the impact of welfare benefit changes;
- Ensure we maximise outputs/impacts from reducing budgets;
- Review mechanism for the provision of aids and adaptations.

## CHAPTER 6 PRIVATE RENTING, STANDARDS AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

*This chapter sets out how we will work with home owners and landlords to ensure good standards in the private sector, ensure access to good quality rented housing and support people to live independently in their own homes.*

Key Outcomes	
Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate.	Investing in existing Homes – improving PRS/ bringing empty properties back into use.
Improved health and wellbeing indicators.	Easy access to advice and support services.
Innovative and sustainable solutions	Support environmental initiatives – energy efficiency/planning.
Good quality, fuel efficient homes across all sectors.	

Over 80% of the housing stock in the HMA is owned privately and occupied either as individual family homes or rented out. In WPBC the percentage of property in the private rented sector has grown from 11% in 2001 to the current level of 19%. We recognise that there is an increasing need to work alongside private owners and landlords to ensure an increase in the number of properties available to rent as the supply of traditional affordable housing diminishes. We are also aware of the growing need to assist people living in their own homes to receive a range of support to continue to remain independent. Finally, we support the need to promote environmental sustainability and recognise the growing financial impact of utility cost and of the need to address the resulting fuel poverty.

### Housing Stock

Date of Construction	WDDC		WPBC	
Pre 1919	14313	30%	8252	28%
1919-1945	3340	7%	5305	18%
1945-1964	8588	18%	5599	19%
1965-1980	8110	17%	4420	15%
1981-1990	5248	11%	2357	8%
1990	8110	17%	3536	12%

**Table 6.1: Housing stock profile**

Property Type	WDDC		WPBC	
Flat	6679	14%	6778	23%
Bungalow	5248	11%	3242	11%
Terraced house	12405	26%	9431	32%
Semi-detached house	11450	24%	4420	15%
Detached house	11928	25%	5599	19%

**Table 6.2: Property types (including HMOs)**

Tenure	WDDC		WPBC	
Owner occupied	32820	69%	19040	65%
Privately Rented	6520	14%	5620	19%
Housing Association RP)	8370	18%	4810	16%
Local Authority	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47710</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29470</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6.3: Tenure**

Across both council areas there is a large proportion of pre-1919 properties, with a considerable range of construction types. There is a higher percentage of privately rented property in the pre-1919 construction group, while the majority of the social housing stock, not surprisingly, was built after the end of World War II. Owner occupation continues to be the biggest tenure type across the area despite the increase in the private rented sector in recent years. The growth in the private rented sector has, however, led to it outnumbering the social rented stock across the WPBC area.

### **Stock Condition**

The Housing Act 2004 introduced a new methodology for assessing housing conditions, revised the enforcement process available to local authorities to ensure homes provide adequate and safe accommodation, and introduced new licensing arrangements for private sector accommodation. Government funding for councils to invest in regenerating the private housing stock was removed in 2010. However, funding remains for loans schemes and in addition, the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) grants will provide further opportunities for financial assistance to the private sector.

Both councils are mindful of their duties to take action when Category 1 hazards are identified and the requirement to license larger Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). However, our preferred process to deliver continual improvement in the condition of the housing stock will be by partnership, support and liaison with local landlords, letting agents and organisations representing those groups. We are committed to developing a relationship built on mutual understanding and, where possible a 'light touch' approach to regulation. However, we recognise that such an approach can only succeed where all parties are prepared to engage fully in jointly agreed objectives and requirements. Formal enforcement procedures will therefore be adopted where necessary to protect the health and safety of occupiers of unsafe housing.

Both WDDC and WPBC commissioned Stock Condition Assessments (SCA) to inform this Housing Strategy, updating information obtained in 2007 and 2009 respectively. The latest assessments were further enhanced by Health Impact Assessments, which sought to quantify the potential cost to health services of inadequate or poor housing conditions. Recognising and understanding the impact of housing conditions on the health and well-being of local households will be an important exercise in evaluating the potential for further partnerships with health practitioners and also in determining future targets and activities in the subsequent years of this strategy.

### **Housing Standards**

The Housing Act 2004 imposed a duty on local authorities to keep housing conditions in their area under review and to inspect properties where necessary within the context of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This defines 29 hazards detrimental to an occupant's health, safety and welfare. Where a Category 1 hazard is identified, the council MUST take a prescribed action.

The most commonly identified Category 1 hazard across both council areas was 'excess cold', which is identified in properties with poor insulation standards or inadequate heating. Although cases of excess cold as a Category 1 hazard were identified across all tenures, there was clearly a higher percentage within the

private rented sector. 20.6% of the West Dorset private rented stock and 11.4% of the Weymouth & Portland stock were reported to be exhibiting excess cold, equating to 1,980 rented properties in total.

Other hazards commonly identified related to the likelihood of falls resulting from poor design of stairs or access, damp and mould, and fire. Falls are reported to account for 52% of all fatal accidents in the home, with older people being the most vulnerable group. The Health Impact Assessments suggest that intervention to eliminate defects to properties that increase the likelihood of a fall is relatively cheap, with corresponding savings to the NHS, creating attractive pay back periods (see Housing and Health below).

The suitability of a property for occupation may also be assessed by reference to the Decent Homes Standard (*A Decent Home, DCLG 2006*). This was a benchmark standard for all RP dwellings, which required that all properties should:

- Meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing ( no Category 1 hazards);
- Be in a reasonable state of repair;
- Have reasonably modern kitchen facilities;
- Have reasonably modern bathroom facilities; and
- Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

Reason	Dwellings		% of non-decent		% of stock	
	WDDC	WPBC	WDDC	WPBC	WDDC	WPBC
<b>Category 1 hazard dwellings</b>	9760	5450	42.8	40.1	20.5	18.5
<b>In need of repair</b>	1680	840	7.4	6.2	3.5	2.8
<b>Lacking modern facilities</b>	590	150	2.6	1.1	1.2	0.5
<b>Poor degree of thermal comfort</b>	10760	7160	47.2	52.6	22.6	24.3
<b>Total Failures</b>	22790	13600				
<b>Total homes failing the Decent Homes Standard</b>	16970	10760	100	100	35.6	36.5

**Table 6.4: Properties not meeting the Decent Homes Standard**

The SCA evidence confirms that Category 1 hazards and non-decent homes are more frequently found in the private rented sector than in other tenures. As such, we wish to support landlords and letting agents in providing safe, decent accommodation. While the use of enforcement action to secure improvements and repairs will be necessary in some instances, a range of tools will be used to deliver a PRS that meets the needs of local households.

We will assist this by:

- Provision of advice and assistance both individually and collectively to landlords;
- Attendance at landlords meetings;
- Regular liaison with landlords groups and letting agents;
- Publication of a regular newsletter to landlords;
- Administering a loans scheme;
- Prioritising Green Deal, ECO funding and other resources as identified, for tenanted properties when possible.

### **Housing and Health**

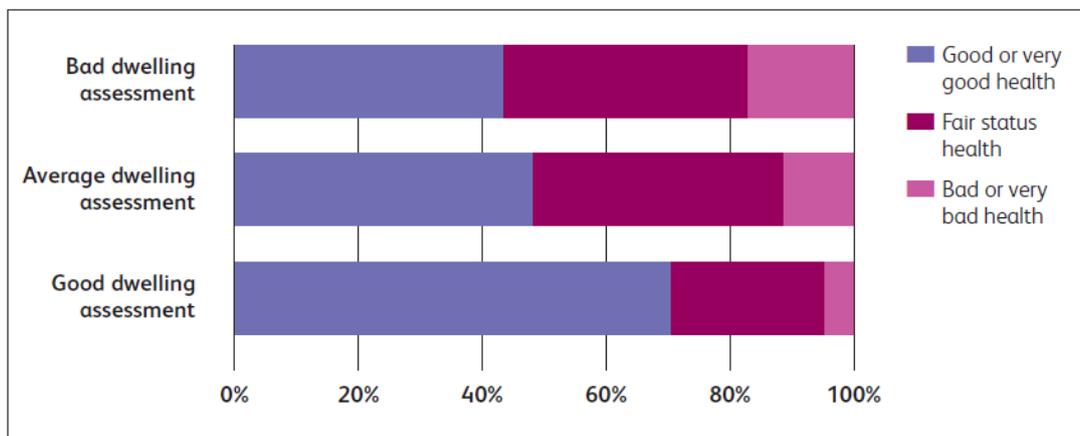
The correlation between poor housing and the health of the occupants is currently the subject of national discussion. Locally, information has been secured as part of the recently conducted stock condition surveys

which when analysed may prove an interest to the Health and Well-being Board and the Clinical Commissioning Groups as they consider the value of preventative strategies.

There is a significant body of research that sets out the relationship between housing and both physical and mental health (see figure 6.5 below). Analysis of investment in housing indicates significant potential savings to health services.

Britain reports a greater number of excess winter deaths than most other countries in continental Europe and Scandinavia. Indications are that people living in poorly heated properties are at a significantly higher risk than those occupying well heated and insulated homes, the risk to inhabitants increasing with age in a roughly linear pattern. Linkages between poorly heated homes with cardio-respiratory morbidity and health related equality of life are also widely acknowledged. Tackling the Category 1 hazard of excess cold is therefore a priority, with benefits in terms of the quality of life and well-being of the households concerned, but also potentially reducing pressure on the NHS.

**Relationship between housing quality and perceived health**



**Figure 6.5: The relationship between housing quality and perceived health**

Source: *Good Housing Leads to Good Health, CIEH*

The latest stock condition surveys were further enhanced by Health Impact Assessments, which sought to quantify the potential cost to the NHS of inadequate or poor housing conditions. Recognising and understanding the impact of housing conditions on the health and well-being of local households will be an important exercise in evaluating the potential for further partnerships with health practitioners and also in determining future targets and activities in the subsequent years of this strategy.

As indicated earlier, the HHSRS considers a range of different hazards, scoring the likelihood of an incident occurring and the severity of the outcome to derive an overall Hazard Score. Hazard Scores of 1,000 and above are the most serious hazards, and these are known as Category 1 hazards.

The proportion of dwellings with at least one Category 1 hazard in WDDC is just over 20% compared with 15% for England overall. Such hazards are more common in WDDC privately rented dwellings (over 25%) compared with owner occupied homes (20%). In Weymouth & Portland, just under 19% of dwellings had Category 1 hazards, being more common in privately rented dwellings (over 24%) compared with owner occupied homes (16%).

Excess cold and falls on stairs are the most common forms of Category 1 hazard, as is the case nationally. Based on the HHSRS scoring, around 1,200 incidents are likely to occur each year due to Category 1 hazards

in WDDC and 830 in WPBC. With suitable housing interventions, the number of incidents could be reduced to around 50 and 30 per year respectively.

The total cost of remedial works to alleviate all Category 1 hazards is assessed to be £20.5m in WDDC, and £11.1m in WPBC, which would theoretically yield savings in treatment / hospitalisation costs with a payback period of eight years on average for all hazards in both council areas.

Using costs from the HHSRS Costs Calculator, suitable housing interventions could reduce the treatment costs associated with incidents caused by Category 1 hazards by around £2.6m million per year in WDDC and £1.3 million per year in WPBC.

More targeted intervention aimed at the most vulnerable groups occupying sub-standard housing is assessed to have a reduced cost of £9.9m in WDDC and £5.7m in W&PBC. The corresponding payback periods based on savings to the Health service would then be five years and six years respectively.

In both council areas housing investment to prevent falls on stairs, falls on the level, damp and mould growth plus some other less common hazards such as 'water supply', would provide payback periods of less than five years.

The costs associated with treating excess cold is assessed to be £16.9m in WDDC and £6.3 m in WPBC, with the treatment of properties occupied by older people (over 65 years) accounting for £8m and £3.3m respectively. The payback period associated with targeted intervention works would be 6-7 years. However, the investment could also yield other benefits, so the saving should not be considered in isolation.

**An early action from this strategy will be to advise the Health and Well-being Board of the results from the Health Impact Assessment.**

#### ***Working with Landlords and Letting Agents***

We wish to recognise and work with good landlords, and to drive up standards in the PRS. We consider that a jointly agreed scheme of accreditation can be an effective mechanism to achieve this objective, in preference in the first instance to licensing. We currently have no plans to introduce Housing Act 2004 discretionary 'selective' licensing, but do not rule this out in the future. Deterioration of stock conditions, the local housing market, and emerging community issues could lead us to reconsider this position. An accreditation scheme has operated in WDDC since 1999, administered by a committee composed of landlords, letting agents, RP partners, councillors, and tenants. Currently, over 140 landlords are part of the scheme, benefitting from seminars and newsletters throughout the year. **A review of the potential to merge the W Dorset scheme with a new WPBC scheme will be an early action within this strategy.** This will involve consultation with landlords and other interested parties about the most appropriate accreditation schemes, including schemes operated elsewhere in Dorset.

The Housing Act 2004 introduced mandatory licensing for larger HMOs, and made provision for 'additional' licensing of smaller HMOs. Once again, it is not our intention to introduce an additional licensing scheme, but this will be reviewed in those wards, principally in WPBC, where there is a concentration of HMOs, should problems of poor management or community issues arise.

	WDDC	WPBC
Licensed HMOs	7	57
HMOs not subject to mandatory licensing (est.)	23	743
Converted flats (S257 HMO)	140	970

**Table 6.6: HMO activity**

In addition, **existing partnership links with the Dorset Fire and Rescue service and organisations such as the Dorset Energy Advice Centre (DEAC) will be fostered and extended to ensure that landlords and tenants are provided with the full range of support and services that such organisations can provide.**

### ***Assistance with Achieving Good Housing***

Funding for assistance has been dramatically reduced since 2010 when government halted allocations for Private Sector Renewal Grant (PSRG) to local authorities. The only central government funding now received is for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), which continues to be mandatory.

Both councils have adopted a common policy for assisting households needing to improve, repair, insulate or adapt their home. Despite the funding cuts, both WDDC and WPBC will seek to continue to provide financial assistance to private householders who would otherwise be unable to maintain their home in a safe and secure condition or be able to continue to live independently.

The work of the Home Improvement Agencies (HIA) across the HMA, plus that of DEAC, remains critical to delivering much needed assistance, while subsidised loans through Wessex CIC will continue to provide a revolving fund to assist households during the life of the strategy.

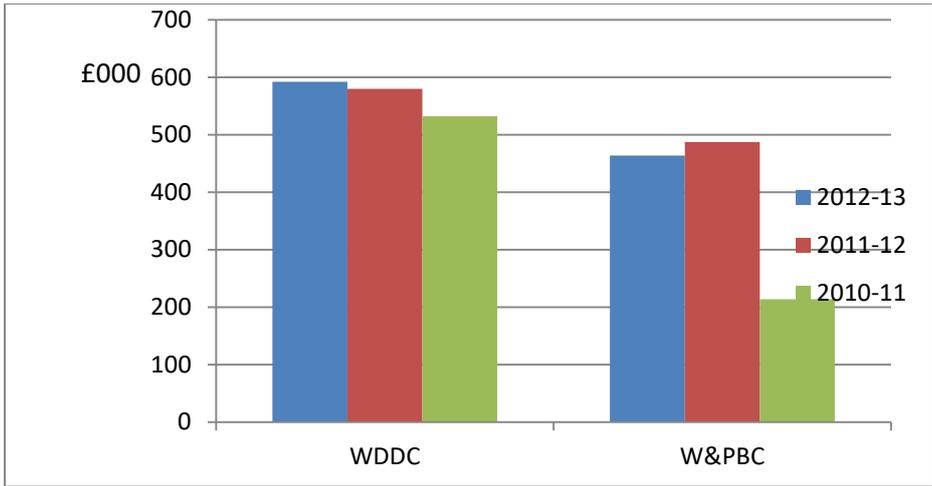
<b>HIA work 2012-13</b>	<b>WDDC</b>	<b>WPBC</b>
Number of new enquiries	1512	1153
Number of jobs valued at >£1000 completed	195	69
Value of grant funded work managed.	£669,397	£413,431
Number of jobs completed by Handivan service	588	707

**Table 6.7: Home improvement activity 2012-13**

In recent years, a small repairs/Handivan service has been available to assist older and disabled people with minor works around the home. A review of HIA services will be undertaken during 2013-14 ahead of retendering of DCC contracts in 2015. This is part of a wider range of initiatives to integrate health and social care and to provide seamless services to users at the point of access, and also to drive increased value from the SP budget. Until that time, both West Dorset Care and Repair and Mears Home Improvements in Weymouth will continue to assist older and disabled households with works to enable them to remain living independently. Assistance may be by:

- Advice;
- Grants from the council or other organisation;
- Loans from the council or commercially;
- Charity funds;
- Use of private funds.

The major mechanism for assistance is likely to be through the administration of DFGs, which are mandatory and subject to a test of financial resources. Both councils work closely with DCC Occupational Therapists, the HIAs and a number of local contractors to provide effective adaptation solutions for disabled households. Although proud of our record in delivering an efficient high quality adaptation process for our residents, a recent review of services across Dorset recommended that a more integrated approach should be pursued. The district and borough councils of Dorset together with DCC are considering alternative models of delivery which may mean that from 2015 there will be a new process for delivering adaptations to the homes of disabled households. We are keen to ensure that the high standards achieved in recent years through the provision of localised services are not lost and that any integration does improve the customer experience.

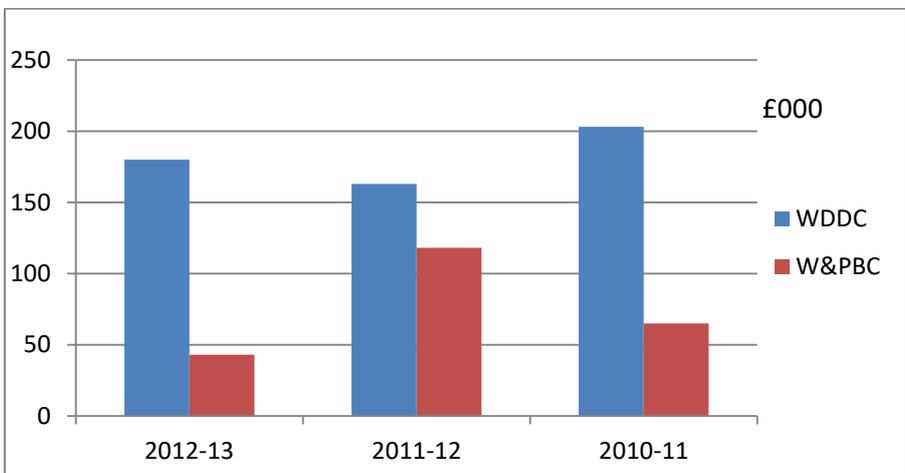


**Table 6.8: Expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants 2010-2013**

Loans schemes to assist private householders became the government’s preferred model for assistance in the mid-2000s. Wessex CIC is a not-for-profit organisation that was formed at that time to administer loans on behalf of councils in the south-west, and now does so for both WDDC and WPBC. Householders access loans by a referral to Wessex from the council, with households least able to borrow from commercial lenders and living in non-decent homes prioritised. The loans schemes are also available to owners of empty properties where it is considered appropriate to use public finance to bring a property back into use.

In WDDC, where the loan scheme has been in operation since 2005, there were 17 referrals for loans in 2012-13 resulting in eight loans at a value of £69k being drawn down. The current economic climate is most probably a factor in the low level of take-up. WDDC has a loan pot of £382k and will seek to promote financial assistance to the most vulnerable householders during the life of the strategy. WPBC introduced loans from 2013 with an initial fund of £150k available.

The assistance policy adopted by the councils in 2013 targets resources at the most vulnerable of households providing a range of assistance from the small scale works undertaken by the Handivan/small works service, Safe and Secure Grants for occupants of non-decent homes, through the mandatory DFG regime to the Wessex CIC-administered loans. However, the ability of the councils to fund assistance outside of the mandatory DFG regime is likely to be affected by anticipated cuts in government support to local authorities. The assistance policy will therefore need to be reviewed annually throughout the life of the strategy.



**Table 6.9: Expenditure on financial assistance to householders 2010-2013**

### Energy Efficiency

Poorly insulated or inadequately heated homes leading to a lack of thermal comfort is one of the main reasons why properties fail the Decent Homes Standard. The 1995 Home Energy Conservation Act made councils responsible for enabling and encouraging improvements to the heating and insulation of the housing stock.

	WDDC	W&PBC
Average SAP	57	60
% SAP < 38 (Band F-G)	14.8%	8.7%

Note: It is proposed that only properties with an energy rating of A-E will be considered suitable for letting

**Table 6.10: Energy performance of properties**

In Dorset, all councils including DCC have worked together to promote energy efficiency and tackle 'fuel poverty', which is currently defined as where a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income on heating the home. The government target is to eradicate fuel poverty by 2016, but the increasing cost of domestic fuel makes this appear increasingly unachievable.

	WDDC		WPBC	
	No.	%	No.	%
Households in Fuel poverty	9,600	20.1%	3,900	13%

**Table 6.11: Reported level of fuel poverty (May 2013)**

The number of properties not served by mains gas is a major contributor to levels of fuel poverty. In WDDC only 57% of households have gas as their main heating fuel while in the more urbanised WPBC, this rises to almost 80%. Further examination of the financial capacity issues faced by local households is included in chapter 3.

The Home Improvement Agencies (HIA) operating across the two council areas provides advice and assistance to older and disabled residents, often the client groups most likely to be facing fuel poverty or living with low levels of thermal comfort. Insulation and heating schemes can therefore be targeted at the HIA's clients as a means of reducing winter deaths attributed to cold living conditions (HECA report 2012).

Much of our energy efficiency work is undertaken through DEAC, which in recent years has accessed utility company and other public funding to deliver insulation schemes. Dorset has also been successful in attracting major funding from the Department of Health and the Total Place Programme, which has provided support to the most vulnerable households living in fuel poverty.

The government's flagship Green Deal, launched in October 2012, will be promoted to those households that could benefit from it. **We will encourage utility companies to meet their 'Energy Company Obligations' (ECO), which forms part of the Green Deal initiative, by targeting their resources at vulnerable households within our areas.** ECO funding provides grants for insulation/heating, targeted at the most vulnerable households, and we believe it could make a valuable contribution to improving the thermal comfort of many residents in the PRS.

Dorset councils expect to continue to work closely with DEAC on promoting schemes and providing impartial advice and assistance to residents. **We will also review and explore the potential of partnerships with**

**individual utility companies and insulation/heating companies as the Green Deal initiative becomes further established.**

**Key Actions**

- Target resources to continue to assist older and disabled people to remain living independently;
- Continue to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants efficiently and cost effectively;
- Review Home Improvement Agency services and agree a preferred option;
- Effectively promote take-up of the council-funded loans scheme;
- Review the Landlords' Accreditation Scheme in WDDC;
- Develop proposals for tenant accreditation;
- Review Stock Condition Assessment (SCA) reports and agree priorities for action;
- Consultation with stakeholders over the priorities from the SCAs;
- Develop streamlined but transparent enforcement policy;
- Target Green Deal and ECO funding on households occupying the least energy efficient homes;
- Promote Green Deal to landlords and the PRS generally;
- Encourage the use of ECO funding at vulnerable households in the councils' areas;
- Support the use of renewable energy to improve the energy efficiency of poorly insulated and heated homes.

## CHAPTER 7 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

***This chapter sets out how we will promote and support the development of strong, vibrant and stable communities.***

Key Outcomes	
Strong, vibrant and stable communities	Improved health and wellbeing indicators
Communities with high levels of engagement	Services and support reflecting diversity within households and communities
Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour levels, particularly in areas of multiple deprivation.	Effective information and services to reflect the diversity of local communities
Thriving local networks	Physical environments with good access and mobility

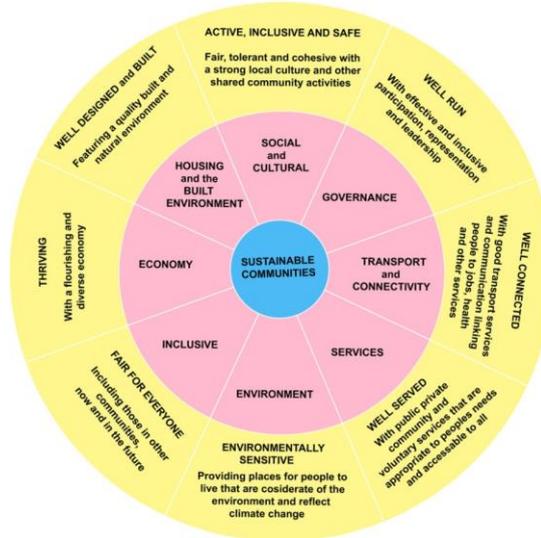
Housing strategies in the main are often focused on specific themes which address the needs of particular groups. These tend to be determined by individual characteristics, such as age, gender, health, ethnicity, etc but heavily influenced by the local circumstances, environments and communities in which people live. As resources reduce, there is an increasing necessity to address the underlying causes of these needs, increase financial capacity and extend housing options, thereby reducing dependency on reducing levels of affordable housing.

Responding to short term housing need remains a key component of this strategy. It is highly unlikely that housing will become so cheap and accessible that need/aspiration and demand is satisfied. However, a responsive approach to housing need will generally be second best to a more strategic approach which seeks to promote sustainable communities and local solutions. This also reflects the view of central government; *"I want to show how we're developing communities that last, not just building housing estates"* (Mark Prisk 30/4/13)

The most obvious shortcoming of a totally reactive approach is that it usually only addresses issues for a single household, based on the relative 'lottery' of resource availability when the need arises. A more managed approach offers better planned, more cost-effective and holistic solutions to long-term needs. As such, the promotion of sustainable communities offers the best and most enduring means of changing established patterns of homelessness and social housing dependency.

### ***Defining Sustainability***

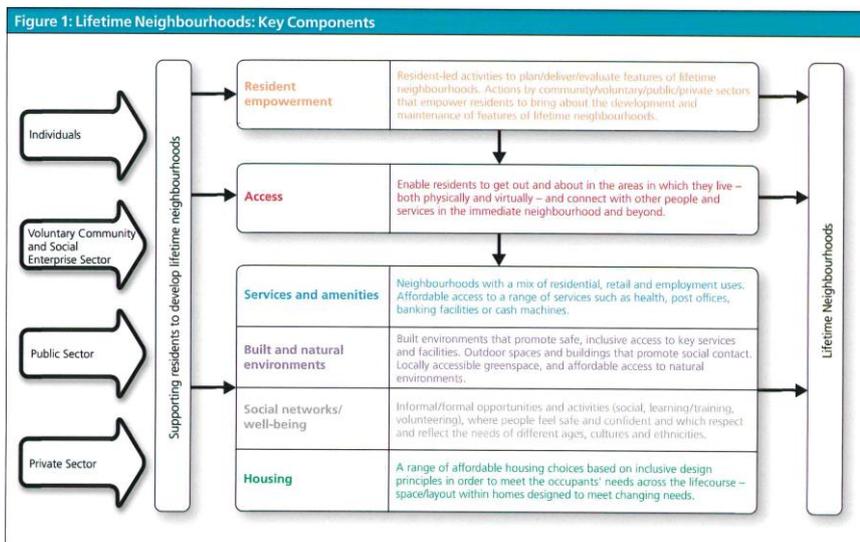
Achieving sustainability is not a standardised set of activities or processes. Communities are as varied as the locations they occupy. However, there are a number of models that we look to support which have been proven to deliver sustainability.



**Figure 7.1: Sustainability Model**

The sustainability model gaining most support in our strategy consultation is shown in figure 7.1. The issues identified reflect the balance of factors at play in effective and sustainable communities. A number of these are 'hard' provision, i.e. housing, transport, environmental initiatives and the infrastructure for service delivery. Others are 'softer', i.e. inclusivity, governance, fairness and safety. We will look to influence the built environment largely through housing provision, but with a view to recognising and contributing towards the interaction between housing and other infrastructure. We would also expect, through our key RP partners and wider partners such as health services and the Police to have a significant impact on the softer influences, particularly in areas of high affordable housing provision.

We also support the *Lifetime Neighbourhoods* (CLG, 2012) model. As with the concept of Lifetime Homes, this approach promotes the development of neighbourhoods that supports the inclusion of households and individuals of all ages and characteristics over time. This is particularly focused on accommodating older people, to prevent the need to move in later life in response to disability, illness or access to specialist facilities. In terms of services and support this is a concept actively promoted across Dorset by POPP (see below).



**Figure 7.2: Lifetime Neighbourhoods Model**

### ***Engaging with Communities***

Sustainability is largely about communities achieving a level of cohesion and maturity to be able to address their collective needs and nurture their residents. To reach this position, communities are often required to address long established issues that have developed over long periods of time. We recognise that there is no simple 'one size fits all' approach that will suit all communities looking to make this transition. Issues such as demography, location, infrastructure and social capital will all play key roles in determining the readiness and ability of specific communities to develop. We will look to support communities to achieve:

- Change (where this is required);
- Adaptation of working practices to suit existing or changing need;
- Embracing and sharing best practice, learning and skills;
- Commitment to learning and building on collective experience of communities and organisations.

To deliver these outcomes, we require active partnership working between organisations and community groups to address issues that impact on the well-being of those groups. Through effective engagement and collaboration with our partners, we aim to achieve a shared vision and understanding of what is required to support and sustain either the geographical community or community of interest.

The focus of these activities within the Partnership is the Community Planning and Development team comprising staff delivering community planning, community development, equalities and diversity and housing enabling services.

### ***Effective Community Engagement***

Our approach to community engagement includes a wide variety of activities ranging from information sharing to community consultation and, in some instances, active community participation in decision-making processes and involvement in solutions to meet their housing needs.

Effective community engagement means that we need to:

- Ensure inclusive engagement involving all sections of the community by identifying and removing barriers to involvement and actively seeking the views of all stakeholders;
- Plan for effective engagement by assessing needs and available resources; agreeing and clearly communicating the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement, the actions to be taken and how and when feedback will be provided to all interested parties;
- Use appropriate methods of engagement that are fit for purpose;
- Ensure that all information and publications are accurate, clear, concise and readily accessible to interested parties and that consultation and involvement outcomes are open and transparent;
- Evaluate and report on the effectiveness of community involvement in order to learn and build upon experience.

The benefits of effective community engagement are:

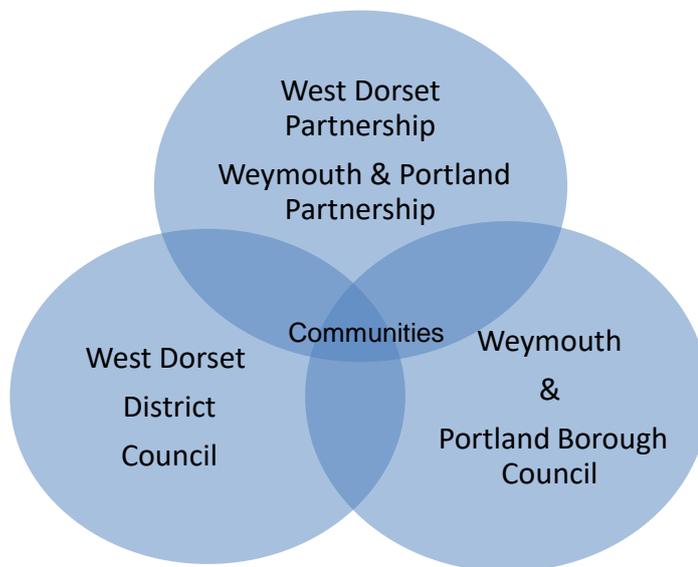
- Well informed decisions;
- Real problems addressed;
- Conflict avoided or managed;
- Relationships built (include improved reputation, trust etc.);
- Reduced costs.

### ***Building on Existing Expertise and Practice***

Developing and supporting communities within the HMA and Dorset as a whole is not a new concept. There are many examples of initiatives already in place that reflect different communities of interest, served by different partnership approaches. Our aim is to promote a position where there is effective liaison and co-

ordination between these expert services in relation to priority communities. Included below are examples of significant community development agencies.

Within the combined services Partnership, we have been working to consolidate internal practice and expertise and expand collaborative working with communities and external partners such as housing providers, developers and landlords.



**Figure 7.3: HMA Partnership model**

Across West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland there are two strategic community partnerships which allow for collaborative sharing of expertise and best practice to address the identified needs of the communities in their respective areas. These are the West Dorset Partnership and Weymouth & Portland Partnership. Both bring together a wide range of organisations which include the NHS, Dorset Police, RPs, voluntary sector providers etc.

In West Dorset, the high level strategic objectives are:

1. Housing
2. Transport
3. Economy
4. Safer communities
5. Health and well-being
6. Culture and leisure
7. Community
8. Environment

In Weymouth and Portland the high level strategic objectives are:

1. Economy
2. The built and natural environment
3. Health and well-being
4. Housing
5. Safer and stronger communities
6. Learning, culture and the arts
7. Accessibility

### ***The Role of Registered Providers***

Other key players are also locally active in terms of sustainable communities. Many RPs have recognised a commitment to the communities they serve both in terms of a public service ethos and a business imperative to safeguard the value of their asset base and reduce operating costs. **We fully support this approach and would expect all of our preferred RP partners to operate in this way.** Appendix 6 included details of specific RP-related initiatives.

In Weymouth & Portland, Synergy has been particularly proactive in developing a range of measures to support, develop and engage with their neighbourhood communities. In their Neighbourhood Management Strategy they commit to *'To plan, develop and deliver high quality customer focused neighbourhood solutions that enable residents and communities to enhance their quality of life'*.

As part of its Community Investment Strategy, Yarlington HG has introduced a scheme of Household Ambition Plans (HAP) for new tenants entering their stock. The aim of the HAP is to provide an individual or household with support to help achieve their goals, which are generally related to securing employment, followed by education or training and finally, improving general well-being.

### ***Dorset Partnership for Older People Project (POPP)***

In terms of a specific interest organisation, Dorset POPP promotes and develops viable and sustainable services for older people in the county (see below).

#### **Dorset Partnership for Older People Project (POPP) – an example of existing good practice**

##### **The Dorset POPP Vision**

“Supportive communities that enable older people to remain living in their own homes for as long as they wish”.

##### **About Dorset POPP**

- A partnership between Dorset County Council (DCC), NHS Dorset, the third sector and older people. Also includes Dorset Fire and Rescue, Dorset Police, the library service, Community Matrons, Community Pharmacies and so on
- Began in 2006 as one of 29 national Dept of Health funded pilots, and is now funded locally by DCC and NHS Dorset;
- A 'community-facing', complex, ambitious, person-centred programme, led by the needs, desires and aspirations of Dorset's older people, delivered through 33 local 'clusters'.

##### **Desired outcomes of Dorset POPP**

Older people in Dorset communities:

- Have housing suitable for their individual needs;
- Are socially integrated and not isolated;
- Are making a positive contribution and experiencing fulfilment as a result;
- Feel secure and safe;
- Feel free from discrimination;
- Feel financially secure;
- Are in good health in mind and body (can breathe, eat, walk, sleep etc);
- Have dignity, choice and control throughout their life, especially towards the end (ranging from, for example, choosing whether or not to get the bus, or choosing where to die).

Dorset POPP has 4 component parts, 3 of which are contracted to third sector organisations:

- **Champions Programme** – 33 paid staff work with service providers and older people to identify gaps in service delivery, as well as localised opportunities to develop the way services are provided;
- **Wayfinder Programme** – 66 paid staff working to provide signposting and support relating to any service that affects older people. Wayfinders are accessible in GP practices, libraries, shopping centres, Forum Meetings etc;
- **Evaluation Programme** – measuring the impact of the Dorset POPP programmes on older people and services;
- **Community Initiatives Commissioning Fund** – available to ‘seed fund’ local initiatives (over 350 so far) that have been identified by older people.

Outputs and achievements within an average year

- 63,000 contacts for POPP to customers to receive a service, activity or information;
- 2,000 activities and sessions funded;
- 1,000 people engaged in activities;
- 163 new volunteer places created (total now over 800);
- 300 outcome stories gathered and analysed (over 1,000 so far).

#### **Case Study 7.4**

The projected outcomes of POPP fully reflect those supported within this strategy. **We therefore need to ensure that the knowledge and expertise already located within the POPP approach are properly utilised and supported in future housing initiatives.**

#### **Identifying Communities for Investment**

Certain areas of Weymouth & Portland experience significant and multiple deprivation, and four wards fall within the top 20% of the most deprived communities in the country (2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2011 Census). Littlemoor, Melcombe Regis, Underhill and Westham continue to be the Weymouth & Portland priority areas.

The Borough ranks highest in Dorset (excluding Bournemouth and Poole), in terms of health needs including teenage pregnancy, adult smokers, binge drinking adults, respiratory disease, deaths from all cancer and mental health issues. The figures are particularly high in the four priority areas: for example, Melcombe Regis has the highest rate of adults with mental health issues and hospital admissions for self-harm in Dorset. The highest number of children living in poverty in the county is in Littlemoor.

Action to address problems of the four priority Weymouth & Portland areas is being led by the Weymouth and Portland Partnership hosted by the council as statutory community planning lead. The Partnership develops and delivers the Weymouth and Portland Community Plan, involving a range of partners including public, private, community, faith and voluntary representatives.

We are tackling these issues through a new initiative; **Working with You** is a way of collaborative working targeting the four priority areas of the Borough by putting communities at the heart of partnership working practice. This builds on the previous **Narrowing the Gap** programme, which also operated in these key areas. The initiative involves working more closely with communities to ensure that their priorities and those identified through statistical data are brought together, drilled down and jointly agreed before projects are developed to address them.

Working with You aims to deliver positive area improvements, build trust and respect between communities and service delivery organisations, build community capacity, address the financial “pinch” experienced by organisations by combining resources and build sustainable communities.

The Working with You principles are:

1. To improve the quality of life in all communities concentrating initially on areas of multiple deprivation;
2. To deliver positive action;
3. To place communities at the heart of partnership working practices;
4. To encourage collaborative working at all levels and to achieve more through co-ordinated action.

In West Dorset, the Working with You initiative is primarily concentrating within the five existing Local Area Partnership areas which operate within the wider West Dorset Partnership, in Dorchester, Bridport, Sherborne, Lyme Regis and Beaminster and Villages. The focus will be on pockets of deprivation, either rural or within towns and also on leveraging in external funding to tackle inequalities. Areas of focus include Bridport Centre North, Bridport Court Orchard and Bridport Skilling, the two last areas being within the top 20% most deprived nationally. Dorchester Town Centre and Fordington East will also be areas of particular focus as will issues of rural deprivation and rural sustainability.

Local Authority area	Ward	Index of Multiple Deprivation Score
Weymouth & Portland	Littlemoor	0.24
Weymouth & Portland	Melcombe Regis	0.21
Weymouth & Portland	Underhill	0.21
Weymouth & Portland	Westham North	0.18
Weymouth & Portland	Westham West	0.17
Weymouth & Portland	Westmouth East	0.17
West Dorset	Dorchester North	0.15
West Dorset	Bridport South and Bothenhampton	0.15

**Table 7.5: Top 8 most deprived wards in Weymouth and Portland and West Dorset**

The Working with You programme aims to maximise the financial potential of partners working together with local communities. Collaborative working can achieve economies of scale and lever in external funding through joint bids to deliver community projects.

### **Communities Living Sustainably Dorset Programme**

The Communities Living Sustainably in Dorset Programme is a ‘test and learn’ initiative designed to test a variety of innovative and integrated approaches to tackling climate change in England. Supported by the Big Lottery Fund, the programme aims to help people in West Dorset to tackle climate change and live more sustainably. The project aims to act as a catalyst for action, building on the work already taking place in the local area and exploring further innovative approaches.

Dorset is one of 12 similar programmes in England, but the only one in the south-west. The programme will be delivered in Bridport, Dorchester and surrounding areas.

The programme has a number of strands:

- Greener choices and energy efficiency;

- Renewable energy;
- Local food;
- Eco-schools;
- Climate change adaptation.

It is expected that the experience and good practice to emerge from these programmes will complement the improvements made in recent years to energy efficient homes to support sustainable communities.

### ***Mapping and Monitoring Community Impacts***

In measuring the impact of our actions, we first need to understand our local communities and communities of interest, including the population structure, housing, education, work and pension date plus what is important to our residents, the issues they face and the changes that are needed to support them to be more sustainable.

Work has already been ongoing within the two strategic partnerships to define local sustainability priorities. Each partnership has an action plan with strategic objectives and targets which are closely monitored and reported on.

In West Dorset there are also five local area partnerships, each with their own action plan that is reviewed annually. In Weymouth & Portland, the Working with You initiative is working to establish representative community partnerships concentrating primarily on the areas of multiple deprivation in Littlemoor, Melcombe Regis, Underhill and Westham. Action plans for these areas are under development and will be published in late 2013.

Work is also ongoing on up-to-date community profiling across West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland. Scoping work is being undertaken to assess what information is available, from whom and what is relevant. Partner organisations and the councils hold a vast amount of statistical information and the results of the 2011 census contribute significantly towards our understanding of the issues facing our communities and the trends since the last census. We know, for example, that people are living longer and this means that we may need to adapt our services to meet the growing demands of an aging population.

We will also seek community views on what is important to them and include these in our community profiles. This mapping exercise will provide us with baseline information. Once this body of evidence is available we will seek to agree priority actions for working with our communities and partners.

### ***Delivering the Longer Term Vision***

We are clear that improvements to community profiles are more likely to be sustainably achieved through a co-ordinated approach to community partnership. Financial capacity is likely to become increasingly important in the future to gain access to all housing, whether subsidised or market cost. For those individuals dependent on benefits, the future currently looks difficult, with caps on entitlements and rising rents and house prices. In our key community 'hotspots', there are higher levels of benefit dependency and unemployment, lower levels of educational attainment and poorer health. These are the components of subsidised housing dependence, which will be at a premium and is rarely a tenure of first choice. Our aim is to support these communities to transform themselves to become balanced and inclusive.

Housing is often a key component in peoples' lives and as a foundation of vibrant communities. In a significant number of instances it can either unlock opportunities or create constraints in relation to access to support, employment, schools, etc. It can determine whether a neighbourhood is desirable or undesirable. It can contribute to mobility or undermine health. **We will look to ensure that where possible approaches to housing supply, allocation and management fully support the objective to deliver vibrant and sustainable communities.**

**Key Actions**

- Building community capacity to enable communities to have an active voice in the services they receive and to enable them to take positive action in relation to their priority needs;
- Ensuring effective community engagement in relation to local matters, including service provision and policy making;
- Recording outcomes of community engagement and improving communication between service providers and local residents;
- Building community partnerships in areas where they don't currently exist;
- Providing a multi-agency evidence base by using qualitative and quantitative data more effectively, identifying local priorities and trends to inform service delivery;
- Developing and building upon existing outcome-related targets by working more collaboratively with communities and partner agencies to develop informed programmes of work based on identified priorities.

*This chapter identifies the means to enable our plans to happen.*

We recognise that simply detailing aspirations without the means of delivering them does not make an effective Housing Strategy. Indeed one of the key planks of our strategic approach as outlined in chapter 2 is that of delivery.

However, we operate within a financial framework where funding to local councils has been significantly reduced year on year. In the context of the Joint Partnership this has amounted to a reduction of £4.5 million over the past three years. The prognosis is for similar reductions in the future.

The ongoing requirement for continued savings and efficiencies has also prompted a programme of review and integration of services. In Dorset, there will be a strong early focus on integrating health and social care, both of which have a major bearing on our strategic outcomes. But re-engineering service delivery mechanisms and access channels is a key requirement for many of the partners involved in this strategy. There is a strong likelihood therefore that delivery mechanisms will change significantly over the life of the plan.

Our inability to resource the full cost of delivering our proposed outcomes is one major reason for adopting a partnership approach in this strategy. The benefit is that this spreads cost and expertise. However it also makes it more difficult to determine accurate total costs and the exact level and nature of resources available.

We will look to generate/identify resources from a number of sources:

- Direct Government grants – DFG, HPG;
- Local authority funds;
- Investment by external bodies – HCA, RPs, SP, etc;
- Levering in additional funds through matched funding;
- Partnership funds – by aligning our housing targets to a broad set of shared outcomes we hope to reduce service overlaps and recognise the benefit of their related spending;
- Restructuring services;
- Efficiency savings.

#### **Specific Resources:**

##### ***Disabled Facility Grants (DFG, chapter 6)***

DFGs represent the only mandatory grant to enable works to be completed for householders to remain independent. The resources to meet this requirement are jointly funded by the CLG and local councils. For 2013-14 WDDC received an allocation of £347,717 from CLG enabling a budget of £761,259 for all grants and loans, while WPBC received £336,717 enabling a budget of £704,339. This will fund approximately 300 DFGs across the HMA.

	2012-13	2011-12
WDDC	£592k	£580k
W&PBC	£464k	£487k

**Table 8.1:** *Expenditure on DFGs over the past two years in each authority*

Survey work indicates that approximately 20% of households in the two councils' areas have a family member with a disability, while household incomes locally are below the national average, suggesting that demand for DFGs is unlikely to diminish. Discussions with the principal RPs with stock in Dorset are ongoing with the objective of delivering a protocol that will determine the respective obligations accepted for the provision of adaptations for their residents. The protocol may serve to reduce the pressure on the DFG budgets administered by the two councils. Synergy HA and Magna HA are both involved in the development of the protocol, and both have a track record of funding aids and adaptations for their residents.

### **Loans Schemes (chapter 6)**

Both councils have allocated funds to support a subsidised loan scheme to assist householders with necessary repairs or improvements to their homes, reflecting government policy set in the mid-2000s. Loans are targeted at properties failing the 'Decent Homes' standard occupied by households unable to finance commercial loans or at empty properties that the councils wish to see brought back into use. The loans are administered by Wessex CIC. WDDC have £380k deposited with Wessex while WPBC joined the scheme in 2013 with a deposit of £150k.

Wessex CIC provides similar services to nineteen authorities across the south-west. All nineteen are reporting low take up of loans which is, no doubt, partly a reflection on the nation's current economic position. In WDDC 8 loans were drawn down in 2012-13 to a value of £69k. Promotion of the loans to those households that would benefit from such assistance will continue throughout the life of the strategy with the funding being recycled to assist more households.

### **Green Deal/ ECO (chapter 6)**

Green deal is the government's initiative to address the energy efficiency and carbon footprint of the nation's housing stock. It is a loan scheme which has a 'golden rule' attached which dictates that the cost of the loan, repaid through the household's electricity bill, is less than the savings generated by the measures introduced. The take-up of Green Deal has been very slow since its launch in 2013. However the 'Energy Company Obligation' (ECO), which is the grant scheme supporting the Green Deal, may be capable of making a considerable impact on the stock in those wards where residents may be eligible. WPBC, working in partnership with DCC and DEAC, will be seeking to maximise ECO funding in the borough.

### **Licensing/Accreditation (chapter 6)**

Currently we charge £525 plus £84 per bed space for each HMO requiring licensing for the first time in WPBC and £100 in WDDC, the licenses covering a three or five year period. Charges for renewal of an HMO license are £210 in WPBC and £100 in WDDC. There are currently 57 HMOs licensed in WPBC, but only 7 in WDDC, which reflects the nature of the housing stock. We will review these charges as part of our development of a wider private landlord offer. We are also exploring a landlord accreditation scheme in WPBC. We need to review whether it is feasible to levy a charge for this and consider ways of making this cost neutral.

### **Supporting People Funding (chapter 5)**

Supporting People funding is not passed to the councils to spend but is distributed to service providers operating within our areas. The table below details the level of funding spent in each of our areas over the past three years. For 2009-10 this represented 58% of the total SP budget, for 2010-11 52% and for 2011-12 53%.

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
WDDC	£1,935,534.06	£1,829,108.34	£1,740,083.16
WPBC	£5,634,557.86	£4,888,456.89	£4,578,786.12

**Table 8.2: Supporting People expenditure 2009/10 to 2011/12**

However, we are aware of the reducing level of the SP budget and the need to find future savings. We are committed to working closely with the SP team to ensure that any future budgets reductions take account, where possible, of the needs of WDDC/WPBC residents.

### **Homelessness Prevention Grant (chapter 3)**

This is a direct funding stream from CLG. We have been awarded £143,158 in WPBC and £97,517 in WDDC for 2013-4. We have also been informed of a similar provisional allocation for 2014-5 and 2015-16. This funds the prevention programmes detailed in Appendix 4.

### **Core Housing Services**

In delivering its statutory and related housing duties, both councils support a core staffing function. This has been reviewed in recent years as part of the process of developing the Joint Partnership. Further reviews will be undertaken in the light of the strategic direction adopted in this strategy, future financial settlements for both councils and the change agenda outlined in relation to service integration.

Other core housing funding also supports the delivery of Rent Bonds, Deposits and Rent in Advance.

### **New Homes Bonus (NHB)**

NHB is a central government grant awarded on the basis of the number of new homes built or existing long-term empty homes brought back into use. It is not ring-fenced for housing use, and to date £75,000 has been allocated by both WDDC and WPBC for the purpose of employing an Empty Homes Officer for a three year period (2012-5) and delivering the Empty Homes Strategy.

### **Housing Initiatives Grant (chapter 4)**

Both councils have previously reserved capital budgets for grant funding to help enable the provision of new affordable housing. At the time of preparing this strategy, the remaining Weymouth & Portland budget was fully allocated. The majority of the West Dorset budget was also reserved for particular schemes (including the potential extra-care scheme in Dorchester) but some support funding is also being provided towards the setting up of Community Land Trusts.

### **HCA investment (chapter 4)**

Government funding towards new affordable housing provision in the area is distributed by the HCA to the registered providers developing the schemes. Funding has currently been allocated up to 2015, and the government has recently announced the next round of funding, a total of £220 million to help deliver a further 14,000 new affordable homes across the country.

### **Registered Provider Investment (chapter 2)**

As detailed in chapter 2, RPs make a significant contribution to the local economy of the HMA. They also invest significant sums of their own resources in to new homes, repair and refurbishment of existing stock and community initiatives in the areas in which they operate. Each of these investment streams will contribute to the delivery of Housing Strategy outcomes.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (chapter 4)**

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will in future be collected from all new housing developments, other than affordable housing. It will be a standard charge, agreed through a process of evidence gathering, public

consultation and a public examination. This is currently in progress with the public examination taking place in late 2013. The levy will go towards the provision of local infrastructure to help meet the needs generated by new development. This will include a range of infrastructure including coastal defences, highway works and community facilities.

Until the adoption of the CIL, developer contributions towards local infrastructure will continue to be sought through Section 106 planning agreements with site developers. These agreements will also continue to be used to agree the provision of affordable housing on development sites (as CIL cannot be used for this purpose). Under the emerging Local Plan policy, it is also proposed to seek financial contributions towards affordable housing provision in association with the development of smaller sites on which on-site provision is not feasible. This will provide an additional source of funding to be ring-fenced for spending on affordable housing provision.

### ***Right to Buy Receipts***

As part of the agreement reached when both councils' social housing stocks were transferred to RPs, a proportion of any capital receipts generated from the Right to Buy sales of former council homes are due to either WDDC or WPBC. In 2012-3 this amounted to £222,000 in WPBC and £287,000 in WDDC.

### ***Matched Funding***

Although the future of Homelessness Prevention Grant is uncertain, we have made it clear to our partners that we will give preference to bids for prevention initiatives that attract external funding streams or resources. In this way, we will use our grant to match fund projects and lever in additional resources from elsewhere.

### ***Pooled Budgets***

Although not currently in use, we will review opportunities for the creative use of pooled or shared budgets. An example of a possible future opportunity for this could be where there is a shared responsibility with DCC for finding housing for young 16/17 year olds.

A recent review of the 'Aids and Adaptations' services across Dorset recommended the development of a new delivery mechanism to support disabled households to remain living independently in their own homes. While a business case for a new integrated service working across Dorset has yet to be made, there is a general acceptance that all of the statutory and voluntary bodies involved in providing aids and adaptations should seek to integrate services. This may lead eventually to pooled budgets in this service area.

### ***Integrated Services***

We recognise that over the life of this strategy, there may be significant changes to existing structures and service delivery frameworks. During the course of 2014, there will be a major initiative to integrate health and social care services, not just in DCC, but also including the unitary authorities of Poole and Bournemouth. The direct early impact of this is likely to result in changes to the structures and management of the Home Improvement Agencies across Dorset. However, there may be further scope for integration in the future in an effort to reduce costs and increase efficiencies.

### ***Efficiency and Value for Money***

We are continually looking for more efficient and cost-effective means of delivering services and providing outcomes, and our activities have been the subject of routine internal audit and scrutiny. We are committed during 2013 and 2014 to achieve the homelessness Gold Standard, a national accreditation of service quality. This will involve the use of peer assessment and benchmarking. On a corporate level, the Joint Partnership is also using the process of peer review to assess our collective progress in developing the Partnership further. The Housing Service will also be conducting a full service review to ensure that we are performing to an optimum level.

**Abbreviations:**

**ASB** – Anti-Social Behaviour; **CAB** – Citizens Advice Bureau; **CLT** – Community Land Trust; **CP** – Community Protection team; **CS** – Community Safety; **DCA** – Dorset Community Action; **DCC** – Dorset County Council; **DEAC** – Dorset Energy Advice Centre; **DFG** – Disabled Facilities Grant; **DFS** – Dorset Fire Service; **DP** – Dorset Police; **DWP** – Department of Work and Pensions; **EDP** – EDP Drug and Alcohol Services; **HCA** – Homes and Communities Agency; **HCPD** – Head of Community Planning and Development; **HCS** – Head of Community Safety **HETL** – Housing Enabling Team Leader; **HHI** – Head of Housing Improvement; **HHS** – Head of Housing Solutions; **HI** – Housing Improvement team; **HIA** – Home Improvement Agency; **HMO** - House in Multiple Occupation; **HPG** – Homelessness Prevention Grant; **HS** – Housing Solutions team; **HSM** – Housing Services Manager; **HSPI** – Head of Spatial Policy and Implementation; **IMD** – Indices of Multiple Deprivation; **JSNA** – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; **LA** – Lettings Agents; **LAP** – Local Area Partnerships; **LTE** – Long Term Empty; **NHB** – New Homes Bonus; **NLA** – National Landlords’ Association; **NPG** – Neighbourhood Planning Groups; **OT** – Occupational Therapists; **PRS** – Private Rented Sector; **RHEO** – Rural Housing Enabling Officer; **RP** – Registered Providers; **R&B** – Revenues and Benefits; **RLA** – Residential Landlords’ Association; **SC** – Social Care; **SCA** – Stock Condition Assessment; **SCP** – Spatial and Community Policy team; **SCPM** – Spatial and Community Policy Manager; **SHPO** – Strategic Housing Policy Officer; **SP** – Supporting People; **VFM** – Value For Money; **VS** – Voluntary Sector; **WEB** – Within Existing Budgets; **WPD** – Western Power Distribution Community Chest scheme; **WRCIC** – Wessex Resolutions Community Investment Company

## Housing Strategy Delivery Plan – West Dorset District Council (WDDC)

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Sustainable Communities	Housing Choice	Reduced numbers of households becoming homeless	DP, RP, PRS, SC, CP	Support local interventions and work with communities to resolve ASB	HCS	Annual Review		WEB – may have specific project funding requirement	Reduced number of households being evicted for ASB
		Extended levels of housing choice	PRS, RP, SCP	Deliver new affordable homes	HCPD	Annual Review	Development programme deadlines	May have capital implication	Review according to local needs
				Improve access into PRS	HHS	Annual Review		WEB	Review according to local needs
				Develop local lettings policies	HHS	Annual Review	As and when needed	WEB	Review according to local needs
		Increased levels of access into PRS	PRS, HS, HI, LA	Develop 'Tenant-Ready' scheme	HHS	2014	Implement by October 2014	WEB	Accredited scheme jointly agreed with PRS
			PRS, HS, HI, LA	Review potential for Social Lettings Agency	HHS	2014	Pilot scheme by April 2015	HPG	Feasibility study completed.
		Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	HHI, RP, HIA, OT	Deliver effective programme of DFGs	HHI	Annual Review	All applications decided within statutory timescales. Budgets met.	WEB + Govt grant	Work with OTs, RP and SP to ensure DFGs delivered effectively – outcome for all funding to be used within the financial year available
			DFS, RP, PRS, HI	Intervention to ensure adequate quality and standards	HHI	Annual Review	Publish SCA by May 2014		
			PRS, HIA, OT, HI	Support and promote access to loans	HHI	Annual Review	Private sector housing assistance policy reviewed April 2015	WEB	
			HHI, DCC, HIA	Review structure and activities of HIA	HHI	2015	Revised delivery model by April 2015	May have revenue implications	Revised operational structure for HIA

Sustainable Communities								depending on option chosen	
	Housing and environmental standards	Good quality, energy efficient homes across all sectors	PRS, RP, DEAC, DCC, NLA, RLA, NLAS, DFS	Review data from Stock Condition Assessment (SCA)	HHI	Annual review	PRS assistance policy and enforcement policy reviewed to reflect priorities April 2015	Subject to data analysis	
		Physical environments with good access and mobility	SCP, RP, OT, PRS	Deliver new homes within lifetime neighbourhood standards.	HCPD	Ongoing		May have capital funding implications	Review according to specific local needs and locations
		Reduced indicators of health inequality	DCC, NHS, CS, HI	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHI	2014	Common health / housing priorities established.  HIA to influence JSNA.	WEB	Links and partnership working with GPs, health visitors, OTs, etc to address local health issues related to housing  Informed Health and Well-being Board leading to potential health funded/ partnership housing initiatives.
	Social and Economic Inclusion	Improved indicators of financial and social inclusion	DCC, WDDC	Review IMD outcomes. Identify targeted action through community profiling.	HCPD	2014-15	Strategic partnership scoping exercise. Funding acquired. Consultancy appointed.	Cost of data analysis, collation and producing profiles.	
		Services and support reflecting diverse households and communities	WDDC	Corporate equalities policy published.	HCPD	2014	Draft policy consultation. Policy approval.	None.	
		Increased numbers of members of 'deprived' households into work	DWP, DCC, RP, WDDC	Review IMD outcomes  'Working with you' action plans	HCPD	2014	Publish initial findings.  Agree action	Cost of consultation and review.	Improved social and financial inclusion leading to extended housing options and choices.

Sustainable Communities				developed Implementation by RPs of training, skills development and apprenticeship schemes	HSM	Annual review	plans. Review impact of RP interventions at neighbourhood level			
		Reduced levels of benefits dependence	DWP, WDDC, RP	Review profiling data of residents in RP housing	SHPO	Annual review		WEB		
		Improved indicators of educational attainment	DCC, RP	Review profiling data of residents in RP housing	SHPO	Annual review		WEB		
	Community Cohesion		Strong and vibrant communities	WDDC, WPD	Community action plans published	HCPD	Ongoing			
			Articulate communities with high levels of engagement	WDDC, DCA, LAP	Community representative bodies established	HCPD	2015	Network of community bodies in WDDC	Medium cost implication	
			Reduced crime levels, particularly in areas of multiple deprivation	DP, WDDC	Multi-agency action and 'working with you' action plans developed through the Safer Neighbourhood teams.	HCS	Ongoing			
			Indications of improved levels of social capital	LAP, WDDC	Number of active community organisations	HCPD	Ongoing			

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Preventing Homelessness		Reduced number of households accepted as homeless	VS, RP, PRS, R&B,	Review impact of welfare reform on homelessness and housing need	HHS	2014		WEB	Report to Management Team
		Reduced number of households in temp. accommodation	RP, PRS, HS	Review use of temp. accommodation	HHS	April 2014	Review scoping – July 2013	WEB	Review report – strategic and VFM approach to temp. accommodation
		Extended levels of housing choice	RP, HS, LA	Work with RPs to develop consistent and strategic shared approach to tackling homelessness.	HHS	Annual Review	Part of 2014 Dorset-wide approach to h'lessness	WEB	Agreed a shared approach with RPs

Preventing Homelessness		Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing	RP, PRS, DCC, LA, HS, VS	Eliminate the use of B&B for 16 & 17 year olds	HHS	2014-15	Part of local and Dorset-wide homelessness strategy, to be agreed by councils and DCC for 2014 implementation	WEB for option appraisal. Potential resource implication for chosen option(s)	Protocol and plan for eliminating use of B&B for 16 & 17 year olds.
		Increased levels of access into PRS	PRS, HS, HI, LA	Develop 'Tenant-Ready' scheme	HHS	2014	October 2014 implementation	WEB	Accredited scheme jointly agreed with PRS
			PRS, HS, HI, LA	Review potential for Social Lettings Agency	HHS	2014-15	Pilot scheme by April 2015	HPG	Feasibility study completed
			PRS, HS, HI, LA	Review incentives to landlords - including use of Landlord Accreditation Scheme	HHS	2014-15	Incentives review – November 2013	WEB	Improved range of incentives for landlords/owners to offer homes for rent through the housing register
		Easy access to advice and support services	HS, CAB	Ensure the introduction and delivery of a money advice service	HHS	Introduce 2013-14. Review annually.		HPG	Easy access to high quality money advice for WDDC customers. VFM, numbers seen and outcomes to be monitored quarterly
			HS, LA, EDP	Minimise rough sleeper levels by maintaining assertive outreach service	HHS	Annual Review		HPG	Maintain low levels (max 3) rough sleepers in WDDC
		Effective information and services to reflect the diversity of local communities	HS, DCC, VS, RP, HI, LA, PRS	Appraise Homelessness Prevention funding – carry out options appraisal if funding ends	HHS	2015		WEB	
		Skilled, and customer focused staff	WDDC	Focused training and professional development programme	HSM	Annual Review	Training needs analysis through 1 to 1s and appraisals	Potential impact on training budget	High level of customer satisfaction and peer recognition
			WDDC	Attain Gold Standard for Homeless service	HHS	2014-18	Self-assessment toolkit available from Aug 2013	WEB	Peer- assessed nationally recognised accreditation
		High levels of customer satisfaction	WDDC	Review customer satisfaction data collection and analysis	SHPO	Annual Review	Corporate review of data collection	WEB	Annual analysis of customer satisfaction

Preventing Homelessness		Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	VS, RP, PRS, HS	Use of homelessness prevention methods, including bonds, rent in advance, etc	HHS	Annual Review	methods	WEB	Maintain performance for homelessness prevention work
		Improved health and well-being indicators	DCC, NHS, CS. HI	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHI	2014	Common Health/Housing priorities established.  HIA to influence JSNA.	WEB	Links and partnership working with GPs, health visitors, OTs, etc to address local health issues related to housing  Informed Health and Well-being Board leading to potential health funded/ partnership housing initiatives.
		Strong and vibrant communities	RP, PRS	Using homelessness prevention and housing register (inc local lettings policies) to sustain communities.	HHS	Annual review		WEB	Local lettings policy objectives achieved.
		Thriving local networks	VS, RP, WDDC, DCA	Encourage and support the development of strong local information networks to enable housing choice and avoid homelessness	HCPD/HHS	2015-16	Review possible approaches in 2014		Reduced numbers of homelessness presentations in the medium to long term

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
New Homes		Delivering planned homes as projected in Local Plan	Land-owners & dvpers	Aim to deliver 100 affordable homes per annum during the next five years	HETL	100pa over 5 years	Annual monitoring		Supply of new affordable housing (100 per annum)
			Land-owners & dvpers	Adopt new local plan with new housing dvpt land allocations for the next 20 years, and revised affordable housing policies	HSPI	By April 2014	Public examination Sept/Oct 2013		Adopted local plan providing certainty over land allocations for new housing development
			Land-owners & dvpers	Ensure there is a five-year supply of land for new housing	HSPI	Annual monitoring			Five-year supply of land for new housing development

New Homes			Land-owners & dvpers	Aim to maximise affordable housing provision through negotiations with developers on section 106 agreements	HSPI/ HETL				35% affordable housing achieved on development sites
			Land-owners & dvpers	Secure required policy % of social rented /affordable and % intermediate affordable housing (eg shared ownership) in homes delivered & permissions granted	HSPI/ HETL				Appropriate mix of affordable housing tenure on development sites, to meet local needs
			HCA, RP	Work with the HCA and local RPs to lobby for maximum potential grant for future schemes in West Dorset	HETL				Successful bids for national funding towards affordable housing developments within West Dorset
			Estates, DCC	Identify/ utilise council-owned sites for affordable housing development	HSPI/ HETL				New affordable housing through use of council owned or other public land
		Delivery of affordable homes in rural areas	Locality, parish councils	Support communities preparing their own Neighbourhood Plans and Community Right to Build schemes	HSPI	Ongoing			Adopted Neighbourhood Plans, prepared and supported by local communities, allocating new areas of land for housing development
			Wessex CLTs, NPG	Encourage the development of more Community Land Trusts	HETL	Ongoing			Active CLTs leading to successful affordable housing schemes supported by local communities
		Local communities aware of opportunities for affordable housing	Wessex CLTs, RP, DCA	Prepare a rural exceptions site toolkit to provide guidance to communities, clarify the process of developing these sites, and spread best practice	HETL/ RHEO				Achievement of rural exception site developments on appropriate sites, supported by local communities and enabling local people on low incomes to continue living there
		Services and support reflecting diverse households and communities	DCC, HCA, RP	Seek integration (possibly through planning obligations) of supported housing within new developments on, or within, suitable sites.	HSPI				

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Supporting independence		Improved indicators of financial and social inclusion	DCC RP	Review profiling data used by Dorset Families Matter	SHPO	2013-18	Engage proactively with Dorset Families Matter		Improved: -NEET -School/college attendance -Youth unemployment -Rent arrears etc
		Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	SCP	Develop an extra care scheme in Dorchester, identified within the Supporting People strategy as being a priority location.	HETL	Start 2014-15			
			HHI, DCC-SP, HIA, Dorset 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier councils	Review structure and activities of HIA	HHI	2015	Revised delivery model by April 2015		
			PRS, HIA, OT, HI	Support and promote access to loans when assessing clients options	SHPO	Introduce 2013-14, ongoing	Ensure loans considered in housing options assessments procedures for all supported housing clients		People able to remain independent at home
			HHI, RP, HIA, OT, DFS	Deliver effective programme of DFGs	HHI	Annual review	All applications decided within statutory timescales. Budgets met.		
			RP, support providers, advice agencies	Consider affordability and support people through the impact of welfare benefit changes	SHPO	Introduce 2013-14, ongoing	All housing support cases to include affordability/welfare benefit support review		Sustained tenancies despite welfare benefit changes

Supporting independence							Work with partners to promote under-occupation initiatives		
			DCC- SP and SC, NHS	Review leaving hospital, and bed blocking arrangements,	HHI	2014-15	Comprehensive, timely and enduring support plans in place. Protocol agreed for assessment of urgent works to be done to allow return home  Discharge arrangements to be considered from date of admission, not just prior to leaving hospital		People able to leave hospital without delay and with support. Reduced 'bed blocking'
			SP, NHS, DCC-SC and SP	Investigate wider use of telecare and IT	HHI	2014-15	Report, with active all-partner involvement on cost/ benefit of impact and practicality of utilising telecare/IT to enhance service delivery		Understand and assess the cost and opportunity to introduce telecare and IT in delivering services. If feasible, produce programme for introduction

Supporting independence		Extended levels of housing choice	DCC, DP	Identify and deliver required transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers	HSPI	Adoption 2016	Consult summer 2014. Consult on draft plan late 2015. Submit for 2016 examination.	Consultants undertaking work with officers of all Dorset districts.	Adopted joint Development Plan. Document allocating sites across the whole of Dorset.
			RP, PRS landlords,	Develop 'Tenant Ready' scheme	HHS	2014	'Tenant Ready' scheme tailored for supported housing clients, assisting move-on into PRS and social housing.		Clients able to move on from supported accommodation in a timely manner
			SCP	Seek integration (through planning obligations where appropriate) of supported housing within new developments on, or within, suitable sites.	HETL	2013-18	Develop and maintain an evidence base to support negotiation		More supported housing provided through planning obligations/ negotiations
			RP, PRS landlords, housing support agencies.	Promote role of the private rented sector and general needs social housing in meeting supported housing needs, to enable move-on where appropriate.	HHS	2014-15	Agreement from PRS and RPs to let their properties to appropriate supported housing clients.		Supported housing clients rehoused into mainstream housing
		Effective information and services to reflect the diversity of local communities	DCC, RP, LA	Partnership funding for the revenue cost of providing a HIA required, offsetting cost to the council. Secure continued Supporting People funding and support from Magna.	HHI	Ongoing			
		Easy access to advice and support services	DCC-SC and SP, housing support agencies,	Coordinate access to and delivery of advice/support services, considering gaps and duplication	SHPO	2013-18	Standardise referral forms and routes Co-located staff		Consistent, comprehensive, and easy to access advice/services available

Supporting independence			advice agencies, NHS				teams where appropriate  Encourage and promote sustainable local solutions in rural areas (e.g. support to community shops, home delivery)		
		Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing	DCC-SC and SP	Eliminate the use of B&B for 16 & 17 year olds	HHS	2014-15  2013-14	Report on alternative accomm. options .  Review rehousing protocol DCC/LAs		Minimise (eliminate) use of B&B for this age group.
			DCC- SC and SP, housing support agencies, Probation, NHS	Develop role of specialist housing panels	HHS	2013-14	All supported housing accessed via housing panels where appropriate.		Better needs matching to available properties, making more efficient use of limited accommodation available
		Improved health and well-being indicators	DCC, NHS	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHS	2014-15	Develop services in light of HIA review		
		High levels of customer satisfaction	WDDC	Review customer satisfaction data collection and analysis	SHPO	Annual Review	Corporate review of data collection methods	WEB	Annual analysis of customer satisfaction
			DCC- SP, Housing	Improve mechanisms for obtaining feedback and views	SHPO	2013-18	Embed feedback		More effective services, better targeted and satisfied service

Supporting independence			Support Providers	from service users			mechanisms and service user involvement through SP		users.
			DCC- SP	Review the effectiveness of current services and outcomes	DCC	2014-15	Outcomes review report completed with SP		
		Skilled and customer-focused staff	WDDC	Focused training and professional development programme	HSM	Annual Review	Training needs analysis through 1 to 1s and appraisals	Potential impact on training budget	High level of customer satisfaction and peer recognition
		Innovative and sustainable solutions	DCC- SC and SP, NHS, Probation, Housing Support Agencies, RP	Work proactively and flexibly in partnership to assess needs, share information, offer choices and options, and design and deliver services in different ways		2013-18	Co-located staff teams  'Spend to save' initiatives considered  Review information sharing protocols  Range of new service delivery models evaluated		
			RP, NHS, DCC- SC and SP	More flexible use of existing property assets, and consider pooled budgets	SHPO	2014	Pooled budgets to deliver services and offer preventative options e.g. spend to reduce acute service expenditure		

Supporting independence							Consider extending community uses at sheltered housing communal facilities		
							Consider use of e.g. sheltered housing units for other client groups		
			All	Maximise outputs/impacts from reducing budgets	All	2013-18	Monitored		Services maintained/enhanced and outcomes improved
	Services and support reflecting diverse households and communities	DCC- SP, NHS	Develop and maintain a good understanding of housing needs of vulnerable need groups to develop and target services and support.	SHPO			Improved databases of client group needs to inform service delivery		

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Housing quality and standards		Good quality, energy efficient homes across all sectors	PRS, RP, DEAC,DCC NLA, RLA, NLA, DFS	Review data from stock condition survey.  Priorities for action from SCA agreed.  Consultation with stakeholders over the priorities from SCA	HHI	2013 /14  Annual review  April 2015	Assistance and enforcement policies that reflect priorities April 2015  Comprehensive stakeholder consultation exercise completed.	WEB  Loan pot with WRCIC  Assistance policy funded support for PRS.	Effective targeting of Green Deal / ECO funding at priority households.  Lower proportion of PRS properties failing to meet the decent homes criteria  Reduced incidence of Category 1 hazards within the PRS

Housing quality and standards				Develop streamlined but transparent enforcement policy		April 2015	Increased enforcement activity with rogue landlords		
		Increased levels of access into PRS	PRS, HI, DEAC, DCC	Review Landlords Accreditation Scheme in WDDC.	HHI	2014-15	Review completed and implemented	WEB	Effective landlord Accreditation Scheme operating.
		Investing in existing homes – improving PRS/ bringing empty properties back into use	PRS, HI	Deliver an effective, cost-neutral empty property service	HHI	2012-15	Increase in NHB income meeting cost of service	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	NHB receipts resulting from LTE being brought back into use meeting cost of the service
			R&B, HI	Full review of LTE properties on C Tax register undertaken	HHI	2013. May be repeated annually	Reduction in LTE properties on Council Tax return	Nil: commission-based contract agreed	Reduction in LTE properties on Council Tax records, increasing NHB receipts.
			HI, WRCIC, LA, CAB	Increased public awareness of empty property issues	HHI	Annual Review	Literature on website 2014. Leaflets publicly displayed 2014.	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	
			R&B, HI	Maximised NHB receipts from reducing LTE properties	HHI	Annual	Year on year reduction in LTE properties on Council Tax register	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	NHB receipts resulting from LTE being brought back into use meeting cost of service
			R&B, HI, WRCIC	All owners of LTE property contacted and potential for re-use assessed	HHI	Annual	6-monthly review of Council Tax records completed.	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	Pipeline of programmed work established and records of LTEs established
			R&B, HI, WRCIC, LA	LTE properties brought back into use year on year following council intervention	HHI	2013- 18	LTE properties returned to use as a result of council assistance	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	15 properties returned to use each year as a result of council intervention

Housing quality and standards			HI, WRCIC, LA, DEAC	Increase proportion of private sector housing reaching Decent Homes Standard (DHS)/reducing Category 1 hazards	HHI	Annual	Annual increase in loans for householders to achieve Decent Homes Standard.	Annual increase in loans for householders to achieve decent home standard.  Green Deal / ECO funding to improve homes	Capital pot with WRCIC  Officer time (WEB) to attract ECO funding
		Support environmental initiatives – energy efficiency/planning	DEAC, RP, DCA, DCC	Promote Green Deal to landlords and PRS generally  Encourage the use of ECO funding at vulnerable households in the council's area  Support the use of renewable energy to improve the energy efficiency of poorly insulated / heated property	HHI	Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing	Promoted to landlords  Targeted initiative by 2015  Option promoted to PRS through landlord forum		
		Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	HHI, RP, HIA, OT, key contractors	Deliver effective programme of DFGs	HHI	Annual review	All applications decided within statutory timescales. Budgets met	Annual budget £681k (2014-15)	130 properties adapted to meet needs of disabled households each year
			PRS, HIA, OT, HI	Support and promote access to loans	HHI	Scheme launched mid-2013.	Number and range of loans provided increasing annually	WEB Capital pot with WRCIC	Vulnerable households remaining living independently in decent homes.
			HHI, DCC, HIA, Dorset 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier	Review structure and activities of HIA	HHI	2015	Council preferred option confirmed	WEB for option appraisals. Potential cost	Continued HIA service available across the district throughout the life of the strategy

Housing quality and standards			councils				2014. Revised delivery model by April 2015.	of preferred option	
		Improved health and well-being indicators	DCC, NHS, CS, HI, DFS	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHI	2013	Common health / housing priorities established.  HIA to influence JSNA.	WEB	Informed Health and Well-being Board potentially leading to health funded/ partnership housing initiatives.
		High levels of customer satisfaction	WDDC	Review customer satisfaction data collection and analysis	SHPO	Annual Review	Corporate review of data collection methods	WEB	Annual analysis of customer satisfaction
		Skilled and customer focused staff	WDDC	Focused training and professional development programme	HSM	Annual Review	Training needs analysis through 1 to 1s and appraisals	Potential impact on training budget	High level of customer satisfaction and peer recognition

## Housing Strategy Delivery Plan – Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (WPBC)

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Sustainable Communities	Housing Choice	Reduced numbers of households becoming homeless	DP, RP, PRS, SC, CP	Support local interventions and work with communities to resolve ASB	HCS	Annual Review		WEB – may have specific project funding requirement	Reduced number of households being evicted for ASB
		Extended levels of housing choice	PRS, RP, SCP	Deliver new affordable homes	HCPD	Annual Review	Development programme deadlines	May have capital implications	Review according to local needs
				Improve access into PRS	HHS	Annual Review		WEB	Review according to local needs
				Develop local lettings policies	HHS	Annual Review	As and when needed	WEB	Review according to local needs
		Increased levels of access into PRS	PRS, HS, HI, LA	Develop 'Tenant-Ready' scheme	HHS	2014	Implement by October 2014	WEB	Accredited scheme jointly agreed with PRS
			PRS, HS, HI, LA	Review potential for Social Lettings Agency	HHS	2014	Pilot scheme by April 2015	HPG	Feasibility study completed.
		Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	HHI, RP, HIA, OT	Deliver effective programme of DFGs	HHI	Annual Review	All applications decided within statutory timescales. Budgets met.	WEB + Govt grant	Work with OTs, RP and SP to ensure DFGs delivered effectively – outcome for all funding to be used within the financial year available
			DFS, RP, PRS, HI	Intervention to ensure adequate quality and standards	HHI	Annual Review	Publish SCA by May 2014		
			PRS, HIA, OT, HI	Support and promote access to loans	HHI	Annual Review	Private sector housing assistance policy reviewed April 2015	WEB	
			HHI, DCC, HIA	Review structure and activities of HIA	HHI	2015	Revised delivery model by April 2015	May have revenue implications	Revised operational structure for HIA

Sustainable Communities								depending on option chosen	
	Housing and environmental standards	Good quality, energy efficient homes across all sectors	PRS, RP, DEAC, DCC, NLA, RLA, NLA, DFS	Review data from Stock Condition Assessment (SCA)	HHI	Annual review	PRS assistance policy and enforcement policy reviewed to reflect priorities April 2015	Subject to data analysis	
		Physical environments with good access and mobility	SCP, RP, OT, PRS	Deliver new homes within lifetime neighbourhood standards.	HCPD	Ongoing		May have capital funding implications	Review according to specific local needs and locations
		Reduced indicators of health inequality	DCC, NHS, CS, HI	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHI	2014	Common health / housing priorities established.  HIA to influence JSNA.	WEB	Links and partnership working with GPs, health visitors, OTs, etc to address local health issues related to housing  Informed Health and Well-being Board leading to potential health funded/ partnership housing initiatives.
	Social and Economic Inclusion	Improved indicators of financial and social inclusion	DCC, WPBC	Review IMD outcomes. Identify targeted action through community profiling.	HCPD	2014-15	Strategic partnership scoping exercise. Funding acquired. Consultancy appointed.	Cost of data analysis, collation and producing profiles.	
		Services and support reflecting diverse households and communities	WPBC	Corporate equalities policy published.	HCPD	2014	Draft policy consultation. Policy approval.	None.	
		Increased numbers of members of 'deprived' households into work	DWP, DCC, RP	Review IMD outcomes  'Working with you' action plans	HCPD	2014	Publish initial findings.  Agree action	Cost of consultation and review.	Improved social and financial inclusion leading to extended housing options and choices.

Sustainable Communities				developed  Implementation by RPs of training, skills development and apprenticeship schemes	HSM	Annual review	plans.  Review impact of RP interventions at neighbourhood level		
		Reduced levels of benefits dependence	DWP, WPBC, RP	Review profiling data of residents in RP housing	SHPO	Annual review		WEB	
		Improved indicators of educational attainment	DCC, RP	Review profiling data of residents in RP housing	SHPO	Annual review		WEB	
	Community Cohesion	Strong and vibrant communities	WPBC, WPD	Community action plans published	HCPD	Ongoing			
		Articulate communities with high levels of engagement	WPBC, DCA, LAP	Community representative bodies established	HCPD	2015	Network of community bodies in WPBC	Medium cost implication	
		Reduced crime levels, particularly in areas of multiple deprivation	DP, WPBC	Multi-agency action and 'working with you' action plans developed through the Safer Neighbourhood teams.	HCS	Ongoing			
		Indications of improved levels of social capital	LAP, WPBC	Number of active community organisations	HCPD	Ongoing			

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Preventing Homelessness		Reduced number of households accepted as homeless	VS, RP, PRS, R&B	Review impact of welfare reform on homelessness and housing need	HHS	2014		WEB	Report to Management Team
		Reduced number of households in temp. accommodation	RP, PRS, HS	Review use of temp. accommodation	HHS	April 2014	Review scoping – July 2013	WEB	Review report – strategic and VFM approach to temp. accommodation
		Extended levels of housing choice	RP, HS, LA	Work with RPs to develop consistent and strategic shared approach to tackling homelessness.	HHS	Annual Review	Part of 2014 Dorset-wide approach to h'lessness	WEB	Agreed a shared approach with RPs

Preventing Homelessness		Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing	RP, PRS, DCC, LA, HS, VS	Eliminate the use of B&B for 16 & 17 year olds	HHS	2014-15	Part of local and Dorset-wide homelessness strategy, to be agreed by councils and DCC for 2014 implementation	WEB for option appraisal. Potential resource implication for chosen option(s)	Protocol and plan for eliminating use of B&B for 16 & 17 year olds.
		Increased levels of access into PRS	PRS, HS, HI, LA	Develop 'Tenant-Ready' scheme	HHS	2014	October 2014 implementation	WEB	Accredited scheme jointly agreed with PRS
			PRS, HS, HI, LA	Review potential for Social Lettings Agency	HHS	2014-15	Pilot scheme by April 2015	HPG	Feasibility study completed
			PRS, HS, HI, LA	Review incentives to landlords - including use of Landlord Accreditation Scheme	HHS	2014-15	Incentives review – November 2013	WEB	Improved range of incentives for landlords/owners to offer homes for rent through the housing register
		Easy access to advice and support services	HS, CAB	Ensure the introduction and delivery of a money advice service	HHS	Introduce 2013-14. Review annually.		HPG	Easy access to high quality money advice for WPBC customers. VFM, numbers seen and outcomes monitored quarterly
			HS, LA, EDP	Minimise rough sleeper levels by maintaining assertive outreach service	HHS	Annual Review		HPG	Maintain low levels (max 6) rough sleepers in WPBC.
		Effective information and services to reflect the diversity of local communities	HS, DCC, VS, RP, HI, LA, PRS	Appraise Homelessness Prevention funding – carry out options appraisal if funding ends	HHS	2015		WEB	
		Skilled, and customer focused staff	WPBC	Focused training and professional development programme	HSM	Annual Review	Training needs analysis through 1 to 1s and appraisals	Potential impact on training budget	High level of customer satisfaction and peer recognition
			WPBC	Attain Gold Standard for Homeless service	HHS	2014-18	Self-assessment toolkit available from Aug 2013	WEB	Peer- assessed nationally recognised accreditation
		High levels of customer satisfaction	WPBC	Review customer satisfaction data collection and analysis	SHPO	Annual Review	Corporate review of data collection	WEB	Annual analysis of customer satisfaction

Preventing Homelessness		Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	VS, RP, PRS, HS	Use of homelessness prevention methods, including bonds, rent in advance, etc	HHS	Annual Review	methods	WEB	Maintain performance for homelessness prevention work
		Improved health and well-being indicators	DCC, NHS, CS. HI	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHI	2014	Common Health / Housing priorities established.  HIA to influence JSNA.	WEB	Links and partnership working with GPs, health visitors, OTs, etc to address local health issues related to housing  Informed Health and Well-being Board leading to potential health funded/ partnership housing initiatives.
		Strong and vibrant communities	RPs, PRS	Using homelessness prevention and housing register (inc local lettings policies) to sustain communities.	HHS	Annual review		WEB	Local lettings policy objectives achieved
		Thriving local networks	VS, RP, WPBC, DCA	Encourage and support the development of strong local information networks to enable housing choice and avoid homelessness	HCPD/HHS	2015-16	Review possible approaches in 2014		Reduced numbers of homelessness presentations in the medium to long term

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
New Homes		Delivering planned homes as projected in Local Plan	Land-owners & dvpers	Aim to deliver 65 affordable homes per annum during the next five years	HETL	65pa over 5 years	Annual monitoring		Supply of new affordable housing (65 per annum)
			Land-owners & dvpers	Adopt new local plan with new housing dvpt land allocations for the next 20 years, and revised affordable housing policies	HSPI	By April 2014	Public examination Sept/Oct 2013		Adopted local plan providing certainty over land allocations for new housing development
			Land-owners & dvpers	Ensure there is a five-year supply of land for new housing	HSPI	Annual monitoring			Five-year supply of land for new housing development

New Homes			Land-owners & developers	Aim to maximise affordable housing provision through negotiations with developers on section 106 agreements	HSPI/HETL				35% affordable housing achieved on development sites (25% on Portland)
			Land-owners & developers	Secure required policy % of social rented /affordable and % intermediate affordable housing (eg shared ownership) in homes delivered & permissions granted	HSPI/HETL				Appropriate mix of affordable housing tenure on development sites, to meet local needs
			HCA, RP	Work with the HCA and local RPs to lobby for maximum potential grant for future schemes in Weymouth and Portland	HETL				Successful bids for national funding towards affordable housing developments within Weymouth and Portland
			Estates, DCC	Identify/ utilise council-owned sites for affordable housing development	HSPI/HETL				New affordable housing through use of council owned or other public land
		Delivery of affordable homes for local people	Locality, town councils	Support communities preparing their own Neighbourhood Plans and Community Right to Build schemes	HSPI	Ongoing			Adopted Neighbourhood Plans, prepared and supported by local communities, allocating new areas of land for housing development
			Wessex CLTs, RP	Encourage the development of more Community Land Trusts	HETL	Ongoing			Active CLTs leading to successful affordable housing schemes supported by local communities
		Local communities aware of opportunities for affordable housing	Wessex CLTs, RP, DCA	Prepare a rural exceptions site toolkit to provide guidance to communities, clarify the process of developing these sites, and spread best practice	HETL/RHEO				Achievement of rural exception site developments on appropriate sites, supported by local communities and enabling local people on low incomes to continue living there

Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Supporting independence		Improved indicators of financial and social inclusion	DCC, RP	Review profiling data used by Dorset Families Matter	SHPO	2013-18	Engage proactively with Dorset Families Matter		Improved: -NEET -School/college attendance -Youth unemployment -Rent arrears etc

Supporting independence			HHI, DCC-SP, HIA, Dorset 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier councils	Review structure and activities of HIA	HHI	2015	Revised delivery model by April 2015		
			PRS, HIA, OT, HI	Support and promote access to loans when assessing clients options	SHPO	Introduce 2013-14, ongoing	Ensure loans considered in housing options assessments procedures for all supported housing clients		People able to remain independent at home
			HHI, RP, HIA, OT, DFS	Deliver effective programme of DFGs	HHI	Annual review	All applications decided within statutory timescales. Budgets met.		
			RP, support providers and advice agencies	Consider affordability and support people through the impact of welfare benefit changes	SHPO	Introduce 2013-14, ongoing	All housing support cases to include affordability/welfare benefit support review  Work with partners to promote under-occupation initiatives		Sustained tenancies despite welfare benefit changes
			DCC- SP and SC, NHS	Review leaving hospital, and bed blocking arrangements,	SHPO, HHI	2014-15	Comprehensive, timely and enduring support plans in place, and protocol agreed for assessment		People able to leave hospital without delay and with support. Reduced 'bed blocking'

Supporting independence							of urgent works to be done to allow return home		
							Discharge arrangements to be considered from date of admission, not just prior to leaving hospital		
			SP, NHS, DCC-SC and SP	Investigate wider use of telecare and IT	SHPO, HHI	2014-15	Report, with active all-partner involvement on cost/ benefit of impact and practicality of utilising telecare/IT to enhance service delivery		Understand and assess the cost and opportunity to introduce telecare and IT in delivering services. If feasible, produce programme for introduction
		Extended levels of housing choice	DCC, DP	Identify and deliver required transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers	HSPI	Adoption 2016	Consult summer 2014. Consult on draft plan late 2015. Submit for 2016 examination	Consultants undertaking work with officers of all Dorset districts.	Adopted joint Development Plan. Document allocating sites across the whole of Dorset.
		RP, PRS landlords,	Develop 'Tenant Ready' scheme	HHS		'Tenant Ready' scheme tailored for supported housing clients, assisting move-on into PRS and		Clients able to move on from supported accommodation in a timely manner	

Supporting independence			SCP	Seek integration (through planning obligations where appropriate) of supported housing within new developments on, or within, suitable sites.	SHPO, HETL	2013-18	social housing. Develop and maintain an evidence base to support negotiation		More supported housing provided through planning obligations/ negotiations
			RP, PRS landlords, housing support agencies.	Promote role of the private rented sector and general needs social housing in meeting supported housing needs, to enable move-on where appropriate.	HHS	2014-15	Agreement from PRS and RPs to let their properties to appropriate supported housing clients.		Supported housing clients rehoused into mainstream housing
		Effective information and services to reflect the diversity of local communities	DCC, RP, LA	Partnership funding for the revenue cost of providing a HIA required, offsetting cost to the council. Secure continued Supporting People funding and support from Magna.	HHI	Ongoing			
		Easy access to advice and support services	DCC-SC and SP, housing support agencies, advice agencies, NHS	Coordinate access to and delivery of advice/support services, considering gaps and duplication	SHPO	2013-18	Standardise referral forms and routes  Co-located staff teams where appropriate  Encourage & promote sustainable local solutions in rural areas (e.g. support to community shops, home delivery)		Consistent, comprehensive, and easy to access advice/services available

Supporting independence		Reduced waiting times for appropriate suitable housing	DCC-SC and SP	Eliminate the use of B&B for 16 & 17 year olds	HHS	2014-15  2013-14	Report on alternative accomm. options  Review rehousing protocol DCC/LAs		Minimise (eliminate) use of B&B for this age group.
			DCC- SC and SP, housing support agencies, Probation, NHS	Develop role of specialist housing panels	HHS	2013-14	All supported housing accessed via housing panels where appropriate.		Better needs matching to available properties, making more efficient use of limited accommodation available
		Improved health and well-being indicators	DCC, NHS	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHS	2014-15	Develop services in light of HIA review		
		High levels of customer satisfaction	WPBC	Review customer satisfaction data collection and analysis	SHPO	Annual Review	Corporate review of data collection methods	WEB	Annual analysis of customer satisfaction
			DCC- SP, housing support providers	Improve mechanisms for obtaining feedback and views from service users	SHPO	2013-18	Embed feedback mechanisms and service user involvement through SP		More effective services, better targeted and satisfied service users.
			DCC- SP	Review the effectiveness of current services and outcomes	DCC	2014-15	Outcomes review report completed with SP		
		Skilled and customer-focused staff	WPBC	Focused training and professional development programme	HSM	Annual Review	Training needs analysis through 1 to 1s and appraisals	Potential impact on training budget	High level of customer satisfaction and peer recognition

Supporting independence		Innovative and sustainable solutions	DCC- SC and SP, NHS, Probation, housing support agencies, RP	Work proactively and flexibly in partnership to assess needs, share information, offer choices and options, and design and deliver services in different ways	All	2013-18	Co-located staff teams  'Spend to save' initiatives considered  Review information sharing protocols  Range of new service delivery models evaluated		
			RP, NHS, DCC- SC and SP	More flexible use of existing property assets, and consider pooled budgets	SHPO	2014-18	Pooled budgets to deliver services and offer preventative options e.g. spend to reduce acute service expenditure  Consider extending community uses at sheltered housing communal facilities		
			All	Maximise outputs/impacts from reducing budgets	All	2013-18	Monitored		Services maintained/enhanced and outcomes improved
		Services and support reflecting diverse	DCC- SP, NHS	Develop and maintain a good understanding of housing needs	DCC		Improved databases of		

		households and communities		of vulnerable need groups to develop and target services and support.			client group needs to inform service delivery		
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Housing Strategy Theme	Sub-theme	Outcomes	Key Partners	Actions/ Outputs	Lead Officer	Timescale	Milestones	Resource Implication	Projected Output(s)
Housing Quality and Standards		Good quality, energy efficient homes across all sectors	PRS, RP DEAC, DCC, NLA, RLA, LA, DFS	<p>Review data from stock condition survey.</p> <p>Priorities for action from SCA agreed.</p> <p>Consultation with stakeholders over the priorities from SCA</p> <p>Develop streamlined but transparent enforcement policy</p>	HHI	<p>2013-14</p> <p>Annual review</p> <p>April 2015</p> <p>April 2015</p>	<p>Assistance and enforcement policies that reflect priorities April 2015</p> <p>Comprehensive stakeholder consultation exercise completed.</p> <p>Increased enforcement activity with rogue landlords</p> <p>Discretionary Licensing/ accreditation options considered with stakeholders</p>	<p>WEB</p> <p>Loan pot with WRCIC</p> <p>Assistance policy funded support for PRS.</p>	<p>Effective targeting of Green Deal / ECO funding at priority households.</p> <p>Lower proportion of PRS properties failing to meet the decent homes criteria</p> <p>Reduced incidence of Category 1 hazards within the PRS</p>
		Increased levels of access into PRS	PRS, HI	Ensure effective processes and levels of licensing of part 2 HMOs	HHI	Annual review	<p>All licensed HMOs re-licensed when required.</p> <p>Communities surveyed for</p>	<p>WEB</p> <p>Revenue generated</p>	All part 2 HMOs licensed and free from Category 1 hazards

Housing Quality and Standards							HMOs requiring licenses		
		Investing in existing homes – improving PRS/ bringing empty properties back into use	PRS, HI, DFS	Deliver an effective, cost-neutral empty property service	HHI	2012-15	Increase in NHB income meeting cost of service	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	NHB receipts resulting from LTE being brought back into use meeting cost of the service
			R&B, HI	Full review of LTE properties on C Tax register undertaken	HHI	2013. May be repeated annually	Reduction in LTE properties on Council Tax return	Nil: commission-based contract agreed	Reduction in LTE properties on Council Tax records, increasing NHB receipts
			HI, WRCIC, LA, CAB	Increased public awareness of empty property issues	HHI	Annual Review	Literature on website 2014. Leaflets publicly displayed 2014.	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	
			R&B, HI	Maximised NHB receipts from reducing LTE properties	HHI	Annual	Year on year reduction in LTE properties on Council Tax register	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	NHB receipts resulting from LTE being brought back into use meeting cost of service
			R&B, HI, WRCIC	All owners of LTE property contacted and potential for re-use assessed	HHI	Annual	6-monthly review of Council Tax records completed.	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	Pipeline of programmed work established and records of LTEs established
			R&B, HI, WRCIC, LA	LTE properties brought back into use year on year following council intervention	HHI	2013- 18	LTE properties returned to use as a result of council assistance	£75k allocated to meet service cost over 3 years	15 properties returned to use each year as a result of council intervention

Housing Quality and Standards			HI, WRCIC, LA, DEAC	Increase proportion of private sector housing reaching Decent Homes Standard (DHS)/reducing Category 1 hazards	HHI	Annual	Annual increase in loans for householders to achieve Decent Homes Standard.	Annual increase in loans for householders to achieve decent home standard.  Green Deal/ ECO funding to improve homes	Capital pot with WRCIC  Officer time (WEB) to attract ECO funding
		Support environmental initiatives – energy efficiency/planning	DEAC, RP, DCA, DCC	Promote Green Deal to landlords and PRS generally  Encourage the use of ECO funding at vulnerable households in the council's area  Support the use of renewable energy to improve the energy efficiency of poorly insulated / heated property	HHI	Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing	Promoted to landlords  Targeted initiative by 2015  Option promoted to PRS through landlord forum		
		Households able to remain independently in their homes where appropriate	HHI, RP, HIA, OT, Key Contractors	Deliver effective programme of DFGs	HHI	Annual review	All applications decided within statutory timescales. Budgets met.	Annual budget £459k (2014-15)	75 properties adapted to meet needs of disabled households each year
			PRS, HIA, OT, HI	Support and promote access to loans	HHI	Scheme launched mid-2013.	Number and range of loans provided increasing annually	WEB Capital pot with WRCIC	Vulnerable households remaining living independently in decent homes.
			HHI, DCC, HIA, Dorset 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier	Review structure and activities of HIA	HHI	2015	Council's preferred option confirmed	WEB for option appraisals. Potential cost	Continued HIA service available across the district throughout the life of the strategy

Housing Quality and Standards			councils				2014. Revised delivery model by April 2015.	of preferred option	
		Improved health and well-being indicators	DCC, NHS, CS, HI, DFS	Review outcome of Health Impact Assessment	HHI	2015	Common health/ housing priorities established.  HIA to influence JSNA.	WEB	Informed Health and Well-being Board potentially leading to health funded/ partnership housing initiatives.
		High levels of customer satisfaction	WPBC	Review customer satisfaction data collection and analysis	SHPO	Annual Review	Corporate review of data collection methods	WEB	Annual analysis of customer satisfaction
		Skilled and customer focused staff	WPBC	Focused training and professional development programme	HSM	Annual Review	Training needs analysis through 1 to 1s and appraisals	Potential impact on training budget	High level of customer satisfaction and peer recognition

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Housing Strategy Theme Group Activity

Appendix 2: Index of Multiple Deprivation maps

Appendix 3: List of Registered Providers Operating in West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland

Appendix 4: Homelessness Prevention Grant Projects 2013-14

Appendix 5: Empty Homes Strategy – Key Principles

Appendix 6: Examples of Register Provider Community Development Initiatives

Appendix 7: Housing Strategy Public Consultation Responses

**Housing Standards and Quality Theme Group – 2 meetings**

1<sup>st</sup> meeting – 14 Attendees - 6 Council officers, 1 Shelter representative, 2 Fire and Rescue staff, 4 Councillors, 1 lettings agent

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting – 15 Attendees – 9 Letting Agents, 5 Council Officers, 1 Councillor

Issues discussed include:

- Social lettings agency may be a useful initiative that does not necessarily impact on commercial lettings companies
- Raising standards in the PRS is a priority. Licensing may be appropriate.
- Letting agents valuable allies in any work to improve standards in the PRS
- Dorset F&R are valued partners. Need to get Police and Health to become more active partners.
- SAIL project working well and need s further promoting
- Welfare reform. Universal Credit concerns
- Green Deal.
- Rural issues.
- EPCs. Tenants not influenced by them.
- Access to PRS by those in receipt of HB

**Homelessness Prevention Theme Group – 3 meetings**

1<sup>st</sup> meeting - 11 Attendees - 6 Council officers, 2 CAB staff, 1 Registered Provider, 1 Voluntary sector organisation, 1 Shelter representative

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting – 10 attendees, 3 WDDC councillors, 2 WPBC councillors, Dorchester CAB, Shelter and 3 staff

3<sup>rd</sup> meeting - 9 attendees – 2 Councillors, 2 Voluntary Sector, 1 Shelter, 1 CAB, 3 Council Officers

Issues discussed include:

- Reducing homelessness was promoting financial literacy and welfare reform.
- Emphasis on the importance of partnerships (especially increasing the involvement of health), making sure that holistic advice is available, accessing social and PRS tenancies and providing appropriate tenancy-related support.
- Size, type and location of temporary accommodation
- Do people have a realistic choice over their housing and how far is choice out of their control?
- Private rented properties can be a very good choice, is a flexible option and can be more secure than people think, but we need to promote them as an option, and not as “Second best”. We also need willing landlords with good, affordable, properties
- Provision of new houses is important, and the planners have a major role. We could do more to promote sustainability in villages by promoting low impact, local need development, and continuing to explore CLTs.
- Is the housing register a register of need, or does it promote false hope?
- How much choice is there for people who need supported housing?
- We should promote low cost home ownership for those who can afford it, including exploiting any new legislation that comes along and not forgetting older people who want to buy.

### **Older and Vulnerable Households Theme Group - 3 meetings**

1<sup>st</sup> meeting (older people) 8 Attendees - 3 councillors, fire service, RP care services manager, 2 HIA , 1 Council officer

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting (young people) 8 Attendees - 3 councillors, fire service, DCC early intervention team manager, 2 Council officers

3<sup>rd</sup> meeting (other vulnerable groups) 13 Attendees – 6 councillors, 2 Registered Providers, 2 Mears, 1 DCC (SP), 1 Voluntary Sector, 1 Council Officer

Issues discussed include:

- Improve access to information to inform choices, highlight options, awareness of services available. Single point of contact?
- Develop and co-ordinate referral routes: e.g. SAIL, POPP Wayfinders, CAB, HIAs
- Develop awareness and delivery of Fire Safety home visits.
- Develop single assessment process but note that data protection protocol needed as there is resistance to share info from some agencies
- Overcome issues about housing engagement with health
- Improve access for young people to the private rented sector - consider tenant accreditation and tenant ready certificates
- Raise awareness of housing options e.g. in schools, colleges, YP advice centres/agencies
- Consider potential for co-locating staff/services and hold joint appointments/interviews
- Ensure support packages happen and then continue in place after immediate housing issue has been resolved
- Support plans,
- Review how services delivered e.g. pool staff and budgets,
- Spend to save,
- Consider developing use of SAIL by all agencies as a standard process,
- Choice,
- Consistent service delivery across diverse geographies.

### **Affordable Housing Theme Group - 2 meetings**

1<sup>st</sup> meeting - 11 Attendees – 4 Councillors, 2 Council officers, 2 Private developers, 1 Registered Provider, 1 Private landlord, 1 Voluntary sector

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting – 12 Attendees – 5 Councillors, 2 Registered Providers, 1 Voluntary Sector, 2 Private Sector, 1 Council Officer

Issues discussed include:

- Need for some affordable housing to be adapted to those with special needs
- Strong links to health and wellbeing issues – quality of housing improves health & wellbeing
- Affordability not just about traditional social housing – need to try and keep young people in area
- Importance of mixed communities
- Increased levels of new housing reserved as affordable housing? But has to be viable to develop.
- Local connections are important in allocating affordable housing
- Shared ownership/intermediate housing is important for encouraging young families and working people.
- Role of private rented sector – agreed that this will be meeting the needs of many of those who can't afford to buy. Too expensive? Is there enough of it?
- Role of local plan, and difficulty of allocating development land due to strength of local objection.

- Some sites allocated but not coming forward – financial/economic issues – need to try to make sure proposals are achievable and encourage them to come forward.
- Intermediate market housing
- Importance of allocating enough land for housing in local plan.
- Empty homes – around 500? Initiative currently to work with owners and try to get them back into use

**Sustainable Communities Theme Group - 3 meetings**

1<sup>st</sup> meeting – 10 Attendees - 4 council officers, 3 Registered Providers, 1 NHS officer, 1 Parish Councillor, 1 DCC – POPP

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting – 9 Attendees - 2 council officers, 2 Registered Providers, 4 Councillors, 1 DCC – POPP

3<sup>rd</sup> meeting – 6 Attendees – 2 Councillors, 1 Registered Provider, 1 Dorset CC, 2 Council Officers

Issues discussed include:

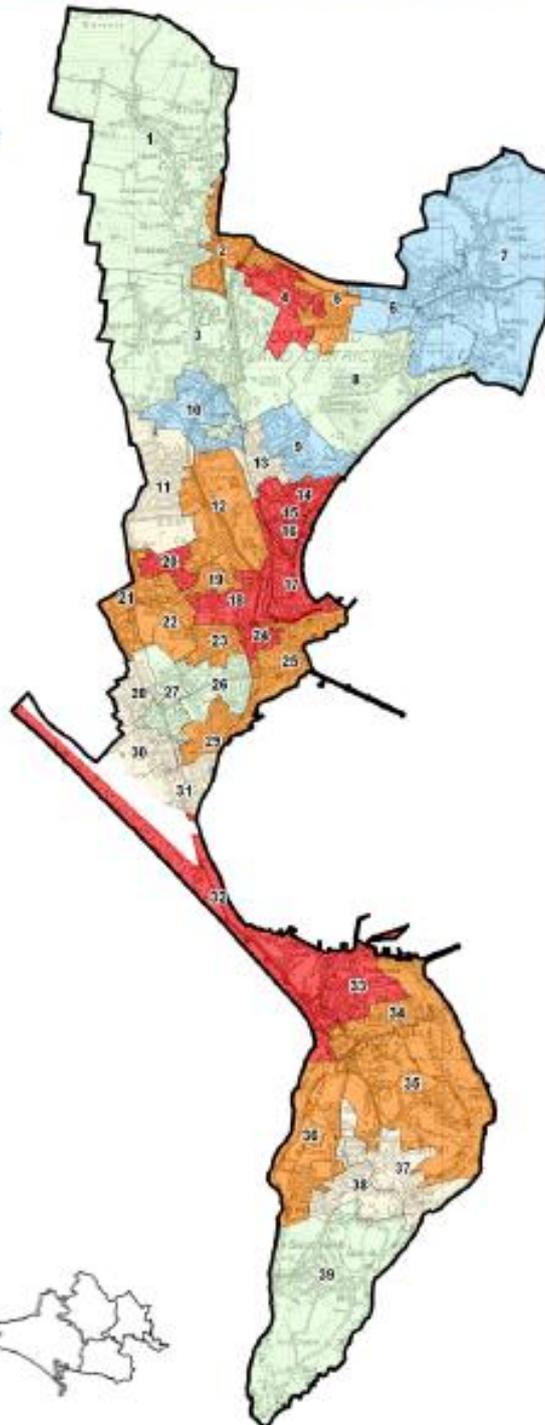
- Contribution of sustainable communities in preventing homelessness and housing need
- Diverse nature of sustainability
- Range of agencies and interests working with local communities
- Issues of effectively mapping community impacts
- Need to have targets and objectives which recognise the need to build on progress over the life of the housing strategy.
- Need for better communication, liaison and partnership
- Process of identifying communities for investment
- Means of engaging with communities
- Nature of sustainable communities

## APPENDIX 2

## INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION MAPS

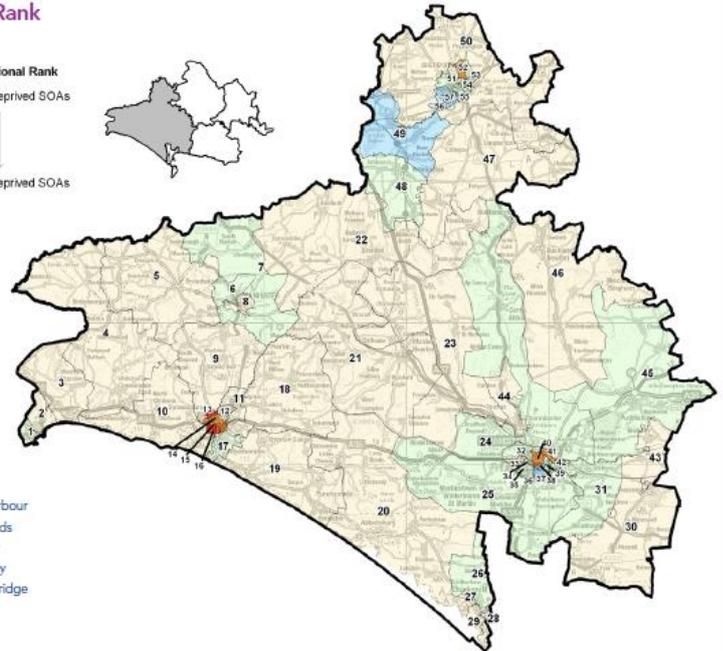
### Weymouth & Portland Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010, National Rank

1. Upwey and Broadway West
2. Upwey and Broadway East
3. Wey Valley and Nottingham Redlands
4. Littlemoor West
5. Littlemoor East
6. Preston
7. Preston Sutton Poyntz
8. Preston Overcombe
9. Radipole East
10. Radipole North & Village
11. Westham North Southill
12. Westham North Goldcroft Road
13. Radipole West
14. Melcombe Regis Lodmoor Hill
15. Melcombe Regis Carlton Road
16. Melcombe Regis Park District
17. Melcombe Regis Town Centre
18. Westham East Knightsdale Road
19. Westham East Abbotsbury Road
20. Westham North Westhaven
21. Westham West Lanehouse
22. Westham West St Augustines
23. Weymouth West Everest Road
24. Rodwell and Chapelhay
25. Rodwell and the Nothe
26. Weymouth West Buxton Road
27. Wyke Regis All Saints
28. Wyke Square
29. Weymouth West Doncaster Rd
30. Wyke Regis Castle Hill
31. Wyke Regis Ferrybridge
32. Castletown and Chiswell
33. Fortuneswell North
34. Fortuneswell South
35. Tophill East Grove Road
36. Weston West
37. Tophill East Easton
38. Weston East
39. Southwell and Portland Bill



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## West Dorset Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010, National Rank



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### APPENDIX 3

### LIST OF REGISTERED PROVIDERS OPERATING IN WEST DORSET AND WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND

Housing Association	LA Area	General Needs - SC Owned low cost rental accom by LA area	General Needs - Bedspace (non-self-contained) - Owned low cost rental accommodation by Local Authority area	Supported housing - Owned low cost rental accommodation (units / bedspaces) by Local Authority area	Housing for older people - Owned low cost rental accommodation (units / b/s) by LA area	General Needs - Self contained - Managed low cost rental accommodation by Local Authority area	General Needs - Bedspace (non-self-contained) - Managed low cost rental accommodation by Local Authority area	Supported housing - Managed low cost rental accommodation (units / bedspaces) by Local Authority area	Housing for older people - Managed low cost rental accommodation (units / bedspaces) by Local Authority area	Low Cost Home Ownership Units Owned where Purchaser has <100% Equity	Low Cost Home Ownership Units (Managed Only) where Purchaser has <100% Equity
Advance Housing and Support Limited	WDDC			1				1		2	
Advance Housing and Support Limited	WPBC									2	
Almshouse of St John the Baptist & St J Evangelist	WDDC	0	0	0	18						
Anchor Trust	WPBC				58				58		
Bournemouth Churches Housing Association Limited	WDDC	9	0	7	0						
Bournemouth Churches Housing Association Limited	WPBC	0	0	15	0						
Chubb, Whetstone and Napper's Almshouses	WDDC	0	0	28	0						
East Boro Housing Trust Limited	WDDC	0	0	15	0						
East Boro Housing Trust Limited	WPBC	0	0	46	0						
Hanover Housing Association	WDDC	1			88	4			88		
Hastoe Housing Association Limited	WDDC	97	0	0	0	97	0	0	0	54	0
Home Group Limited	WDDC	0	0	0	0						
Home Group Limited	WPBC	0	0	0	0						
Housing 21	WDDC				60				51		
Housing 21	WPBC				87				74	11	

Knightstone Housing Association Limited	WDDC	11	23	20			23			7	
Knightstone Housing Association Limited	WDDC	226	0	8	25	226		4	25	16	
Magna Housing Association Limited	WDDC	3464	0	52	1450	3469	0	12	1450	68	0
Magna Housing Association Limited	WPBC	224	0	36	0	224	0	6	0	22	0
Moat Homes Limited	WDDC									1	0
Raglan Housing Association Limited	WDDC	303	3	9	0	303	3	9	0	30	2
Raglan Housing Association Limited	WPBC	120	0	0	0	120	0	0	0		
Sanctuary Housing Association	WDDC	27		0	0	27		0	0		
Signpost Care Partnerships Limited	WDDC			10							
Signpost Care Partnerships Limited	WPBC			17							
Signpost Housing Association Limited	WDDC	208				222		10		11	
Signpost Housing Association Limited	WPBC	110		3		111		20		13	
South Western Housing Society	WDDC	2									
Sovereign Housing Association Limited	WDDC	119				119				6	
Sovereign Housing Association Limited	WPBC	62				62				22	
Synergy Housing Limited	WDDC	158	0	0	22	158	0	0	22	17	10
Synergy Housing Limited	WPBC	2359	0	0	645	2359	0	11	645	46	
The Abbeyfield (Lyme Regis & District) Society Ltd	WDDC				8						
The Abbeyfield Society	WDDC				27				27		
The Guinness Partnership Limited	WDDC	194				194				23	
The Margaret Jane Ashley Almshouse Charity	WDDC	3									
Westcountry Housing Association Limited	WDDC										
Western Challenge Housing Association Limited	WDDC	3									
Western Challenge Housing Association Limited	WPBC	1									
Yarlington Housing Group	WDDC	29				29				10	

<b>APPENDIX 4</b>	<b>HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT PROJECTS 2013-14</b>
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<b>West Dorset Projects [Grant £97,517]:</b>	<b>£</b>
Housing Advisor post (half)	12000
Mears Crisis Support for Older People	9000
EDP Street Homelessness Outreach Project	29000
CAB Dorchester Debt and Budgeting advice	24000
Bridport CAB Home Visiting service	5000
Synergy PSLs	5000
First Dorset Credit Union non-priority homeless funding	7200
Discretionary Homelessness funding	10000

**Weymouth and Portland Projects [Grant £143,158]: £**

Research into Social Lettings Agency viability	11940
PRS staff secondment	26000
Mears Crisis Support for Older People	9000
EDP Street Homelessness Outreach Project	29000
Housing Advisor post (half)	12000
Shelter ongoing court desk support	18000
Discretionary Homelessness funding	20000
Weymouth CAB Debt Advice	18000
Property Management Contingency Fund	5000

- 2.1 The council seeks to reduce the number of long term empty homes within the borough through a mix of proactive work conducted as part of the WDWP partnership, and responsive investigation.
- 2.2 The council adopts a policy based on ‘Incremental intervention’, commencing with the provision of advice and assistance made widely available, progressing to the provision of tailored support and assistance to individual property owners, with redress to enforcement of legal provisions where appropriate and if necessary.
- 2.3 The council develops the Communications Plan designed to support a programme of action to address the issue of empty property within the council area, producing bespoke literature and advisory documentation. The advice and information will be available in leaflet and electronic format, providing general advice and information about empty property, specific information regarding the council’s services, and enabling notification of empty homes.
- 2.4 The council provides a loan scheme, available to owners of empty homes to assist in the financing of works necessary to bring an empty home back into use.
- 2.5 The council appoint Wessex Home Loans Ltd as the loan provider with an initial capital investment of £150,000 from the council.
- 2.6 The council commit to working with its partners and stakeholders to continually review schemes and initiatives that might be effective in reducing the number of empty homes within the borough and to support such schemes and initiatives as appropriate. The council will seek to support initiatives that may benefit households in housing need.
- 2.7 The council confirms the intention to use the full range of enforcement powers available to bring empty property back into use in accordance with the adopted scheme of delegation, if all reasonable efforts to resolve the issue by negotiation have failed or if there is a need for expediency.
- 2.8 The policies and procedures adopted with regard to Empty Homes be incorporated into the emerging Housing Strategy which will be the subject of wider consultation during 2013, and subject to a process of annual review.

## APPENDIX 6 EXAMPLES OF REGISTERED PROVIDER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Actions	Origin	Council	Target/outputs	Timeframe & Milestones	Evidence	Cost/Resource
Develop and maintain 5 neighbourhood panels consisting of a minimum of 10 members per neighbourhood zone.	Synergy Neighbourhood & Community Development strategy (attached)	WPBC	Maximise involvement with residents Budget for each Panel £16k per annum NP to shape and deliver 2 local offers per zone to meet priority needs of neighbourhood.	5 year strategy.	Budget spend Delivery of local offers	Staff time £16k per panel
Implementation of neighbourhood tool kit	As above Neighbourhood toolkit (attached)	WPBC	Invest in priority areas identified through the Neighbourhood dashboard for the investment of £100k split between two neighbourhood zones per annum.	5 years	Budget spend Outcomes against dashboard priorities	£100k.
Customer Board members	Synergy Governance structure	WPBC	Minimum of 6 customer board members for Dorset			
Involvement in estate walkabouts	Synergy					
Investment & support young people to become community voices - Weymouth Young Advisors – commission work	Synergy					
Weymouth volunteers – support tenancy sustainment, maintaining estates, commissioning volunteers to gaining skills & employment opportunities - training for residents to have capacity to deliver /influence decisions	Synergy					
Consultation – i.e. building community - engagement	Synergy					
Training for residents specifics –	Synergy					£30k Synergy budget

hard to reach groups e.g. Adult Learning,						
Partnerships	Synergy					£170k match funding through neighbourhood panels £299k match funding through team
Implementation of Magna Community Strategy	Magna		Delivery of outcomes in strategy	2015		
Resident Involvement Strategy	Magna		Improved engagement with tenants	2015		
Working groups	Magna		Range of working groups delivering improved services	Annually reviewed and targets set through service standards		
Implementation of neighbourhood plans and GNA's	Magna		Reduced crime, improved social cohesion, increased ownership of estate issues			
Money Matters Advisors @ 2	Magna		Reduced evictions through money advice			
Community connections	Magna		Constituted tenants group looking at policy decision affecting local communities in West Dorset			
Good links with Local Area Partnerships	Magna		Delivery of LAP objectives in areas where MHA have stock			
Mobile Office service	Magna		Delivering services to hard to reach areas in West Dorset – more opportunities to develop this service with other agencies			

**APPENDIX 7**

**HOUSING STRATEGY PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

Questions	Number/nature of responses received	Comments from those responding to the consultation	Councils' response
<p>Q1 Do you feel that the priorities listed overleaf adequately identify the main areas of housing need?</p>	<p>Yes= 11 No= 6 Don't know = 2</p>	<p>General observations: We found it hard to answer questions consistently, as some questions could be answered by "any man in the street", others appeared to be directed at actual (or potential) service users. But without capturing our status, you lose the value which answers to questions such as Qs 9,23 could have given you. We also found it hard to respond to the Questions as supplied, so have recorded our reactions in the following.</p>	
<p>Q2 Please indicate what you feel has been missed or could be changed.</p>		<p>Building of more Social Housing in Dorset  <b>Access to Affordable Homes has to be linked with access to Infrastructure (Transport, Schools, Facilities, Shops etc)</b>                      A bit more support for working homeowners as well. For example, boiler and heating replacement help  <b>Building your own social housing for local young families</b>                      Provide accommodation for homeless people in flats not houses. Those with no housing should be discouraged from coming here  <b>There is not sufficient provision for unemployed immigrants</b>                      Relevance to the singular local environment  <b>More help given to those in fear of losing their homes through unemployment</b>                      The outcomes fail to emphasise the need to reduce domestic energy demand and to reduce the number of households in fuel poverty  <b>Should be very close link to housing and public transport- aim should be to reduce dependency on cars</b>                      Somehow the outcomes seem to miss the spot: the over-arching outcome has to be to achieve <i>Strong, vibrant and stable Communities</i>- but with the crucial addition that they have a balanced age range  <b>There should be an outcome related to reducing the number of adult children having to live at home, and of overcrowding more generally</b>                      It should be about local need, not meeting need from outside the area which will be unsustainable + change area too much.</p>	

		<p><b>Make sure there are enough one bedroom properties built to avoid extra bedrooms having bedroom tax imposed. You can't move to a one bedroom flat if none available</b></p>	
<p>Q3 We will review our existing partnership arrangements, and examine the potential for new ways of working to deliver housing services. Do you feel there are housing services we could deliver better?</p>		<p>Yes much better very poor in Dorset</p> <p><b>Facilities for single pensioners linked to Infrastructure and facilities</b></p> <p>Yes - better ways to improve existing housing stock. Many older people cannot afford necessary repairs/environmental upgrades</p> <p><b>See below</b></p> <p>As above - also helping those who work and own their homes</p> <p><b>Working more effectively with private landlords to stop rogue landlords to improve the quality of housing and reducing anti-social behaviour</b></p> <p>Yes x2</p> <p><b>Homeless people should only be offered accommodation in flats not in houses. We had to live in a flat for many years</b></p> <p>again the comment has been made to me that if you offer someone already with housing association you then have another property to let, but they lose out on priority because they have a home even if it is no longer suitable for them</p> <p><b>No you are doing too much already and it should be reduced to nothing</b></p> <p>Access to and sheltered parking for electric mobility vehicles</p> <p><b>I find the current facilities satisfactory</b></p> <p>Top up grants for energy efficiency measures are more popular than loans</p> <p><b>Yes- women's refuges, more space available</b></p> <p>Access to information/advice needs to be jargon free, straight forward and timely.</p> <p><b>Fell more 'rented' affordable housing needed in present financial climate</b></p>	
<p>Q4 Are there any ways you feel we could be delivering our housing services more effectively?</p>		<p>Build or provide more Social Housing in Dorset</p> <p><b>Yes by matching the provision to where the real demand is, not following opportunist development based on land availability.</b></p> <p>if housing association tenant wants to move why must they stay as bronze when it would free another property anyway ?</p> <p><b>Yes- don't impose, ask what is needed of those who need it.</b></p> <p>See below</p> <p><b>Let the local towns &amp; parishes be included in the housing allocation if it is in their parish</b></p> <p>Encourage private builders to build affordable flats not affordable houses</p>	

		<p><b>No</b> Parochial involvement in planning <b>Make it easier in public to explain how the system works to obtain social housing e.g. a magna house, bungalow or flat.</b> Staff training to understand green deal and eco, especially among customer facing staff <b>Encourage elderly who need help in their large houses to team up with people seeking homes through council tax reductions.</b></p>	
Q5 Are there other organisations you feel we could work more closely with to improve the effectiveness of our services?		<p>You Trust/First Point, Housing Associations and Social Care <b>Yes Parish councils to actually determine if there is a real local need not based on extrapolated data from small responses.</b> More local consultations <b>Yes Social services and mental health groups, parents and families.- put all trouble groups together away from poor innocent people.</b> Energy suppliers/home improvement companies? <b>Parish &amp; town councils who might then have trust in the housing allocation system</b> Try listening to local people who continually vote against new local housing in villages and are continually ignored <b>housing associations to move existing tenants between properties</b> British National Party <b>Social services with GPs e.g. the very elderly/infirm manhandling heavy loads of medical waste for collection</b> Major infrastructure improvements particularly trunk and main roads and access e.g. A30 and A303. <b>All organisations that have a vested interest in building houses</b> DEAC <b>Women's Refuge</b> Police <b>Transition Bridport; CPRE; Bridport environment group.</b></p>	
Q6 We will review our approach to providing temporary accommodation over the coming year. Do you feel our provision of temporary	<p>Y = 10 N = 2 Don't know = 5</p>		

<p>Q7 Would you like to make any comments about improving our temporary accommodation provision?</p>		<p>Build more of it  <b>More supported facilities for single parent families in areas that have infrastructure.</b>          Make it less easy for people to pick and choose how and what they do, make themselves homeless not paying bills o get better place - joke.  <b>Ensure that temporary accommodation is only for the most needy and is only offered on a temporary basis and is not a long term solution</b>          Build a large unit to take the homeless until you can move them on to permanent housing  <b>Discourage people from coming to west Dorset who have no accommodation and no means of support.</b>          Too much is provided for the feckless unemployed and workshy  <b>It is cheering that the numbers in B&amp;B have dropped</b>          If 'temporary' accommodation includes 'travellers' provision of planned static sites with immediate access off trunk &amp; main roads, combined with police powers to remove 'travellers' vehicles from lay byes and other places of trespass  <b>Only that those who need it are comfortably provided for</b>          No  <b>Women's Refuge</b>          I think stability is very important for children including being able to stay at same school and in an area with friends.  <b>Try to phase out bed and breakfasts</b></p>	
<p>Q8 <b>The objectives for our advice service are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To give timely advice and support to enable customers access to housing opportunities and/or to prevent or resolve homelessness.</li> <li>• To make customers aware of available options and constraints to enable realistic choices to be made.</li> <li>• To represent the views and</li> </ul>	<p>Fully =          Partially = 7          Almost = 4          Not at all = 1          Don't know = 5</p>		

<p>needs of customers to ensure they receive a fair and consistent service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that all customers receive equal access to services and opportunities irrespective of their circumstances or characteristics.</li> </ul> <p>How much do you feel we currently achieve the objectives above?</p>			
<p>Q9 How would you prefer to receive housing advice? Please rank in order from 1 (Favourite method) to 5 (Least favourite method) by typing one number in each box.</p>	<p>Face to face in council offices=1st Face to face in other locations=2nd Telephone advice=3rd Through email=4th Online/self-help systems=5th</p>		<p>The preference for delivering housing advice remains face-to-face. However, the Partnership's medium term preference is to shift access channels wherever possible to online delivery</p>
<p>Q10 We are likely to have fewer resources to deliver housing services in the future. What do you consider to be the key priorities for housing services in the future?</p>		<p>Change of Government <b>Affordable Private rented in main towns</b> Be more innovative - e.g. help private landlords to access funds <b>Number3</b> Help encourage more people into work by making it less easy to get a 'free' house <b>Helping those most in need</b> Use your resources better <b>Discourage people from coming to west Dorset who have no accommodation and no means of support. We do not have the jobs either</b> This is great news that the taxpayer and employed will be paying less <b>Reducing domestic energy demand.</b> Reducing the number of households in fuel poverty. <b>As per your six priorities</b> Stop earmarking some housing for holiday use only. Allow the building of annexes so elderly people can live with their families. Let them be big enough</p>	

		that they can be independent homes in future. <b>Consider taking empty housing back (compulsory purchasing if necessary)</b>	
Q11 If you are likely to be looking for housing through the Housing Register, what are most important when choosing your future housing options? Please rank in order from 1 (Favourite method) to 5 (Least favourite method) by typing one number in each box.	Landlord type = 4th Rent levels = 2 <sup>nd</sup> = Location = 1st Condition = 2 <sup>nd</sup> = Length of tenancy offered = 5th		
Q12 How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Housing Register should give priority to local households, i.e. those living within the local authority area?	Strongly agree = 13 Agree = 2 Neutral = 0 Disagree = 1 Strongly disagree = 1		
Q13 As you grow older, would you prefer the option to move to a property more suited to your changing needs, or instead to be supported to remain in your existing home (for example through property adaptations)?	Move to more suitable property = 5 Supported to remain in existing home = 7 Either = 6	No mention of the idea of providing a monitored system whereby lodgers are given a home in return for keeping an eye on older person <b>There is a clear conflict which needs resolving between the policy to support people in their own homes, and to encourage people to move on/downsize.</b>	
Q14 If you expect to move, what sort of housing would you look for? (Please tick all that apply)	General flat/bungalow = 9 Sheltered housing = 2 Sheltered housing for sale = 3 Extra care housing(i.e. more supported) = 1		
Q15 If you would prefer to stay in your home, what would help you to achieve	Physical adaptations = 12 Floating support-housing	One of the key factors missed: <u>access to local shops selling daily necessities</u>	

this? (Please tick all that apply)	related support in the home = 10 Extra community facilities = 7 More accessible neighbourhood = 7 Ability to release equity = 7		
Q16 Do you believe that the introduction of a scheme recognising good landlords managing good properties (a landlords' accreditation scheme) would help to raise standards within the private rented sector?	Y = 13 N = 3 Don't know = 2	Likely to swallow time and money resources with no direct linkage to desired outcome.	
Q17 What would you consider to be the most important in making a loans scheme attractive? (Please mark in order of priority where 1 is most important and 5 is least important)	Equity release products = 5th Variable interest rates reflecting ability to pay = 3rd Loans targeted at owner occupiers = 4th Loans targeted at owners of empty properties = 1 <sup>st</sup> Loans targeted at landlords providing affordable accommodation = 2nd	Ethical lender	
Q18 Do you have any other suggestions for making a loans scheme attractive?		Only provide loans where a demonstrated local and specific need is being met. <b>Could it not be compulsory so that claiming no money is not an excuse ?</b> Very low interest rate or the idea is worthless <b>LANDLORDS ONLY GET THIS ON GOOD TERM CARRY OUT WITH TENANTS THEY KEEP &amp; HAVE A TENANCY AGREEMENT</b> Make sure the criteria are the same for all, i.e. definitely not variable interest	

		<p>rates!</p> <p><b>Allow a time grace if tenants cannot afford to pay back loan payment</b></p> <p><b>None should be provided again it is the feckless and workshy that you are trying to provide for</b></p> <p>That the interest rates are competitive</p> <p><b>0% interest and available to everyone</b></p>	
Q19 Would you be likely to secure energy efficiency works to your home through such an arrangement?	<p>Y = 6</p> <p>N = 6</p> <p>Don't know = 5</p>		
Q20 If not, what would be your major concern(s) about the scheme that might put you off from applying?		<p>I do not believe in borrowing. It is better to spend only the money you have</p> <p><b>Cost to those who are working or have worked subsidising lazy people who are supported by the Labour and Liberal parties</b></p> <p>To be able to continue to make payments</p> <p><b>Out of context visual damage to group character in Conservation Area/listed buildings</b></p> <p>I have suspicions about ultimate costs</p> <p><b>Change in household composition will change savings achieved.</b></p> <p>Any charge on the property puts off potential buyers or tenants.</p> <p><b>arranging loans through energy supplier makes it too complicated</b></p> <p>I have been advised that as it is a loan scheme I would be worse off than paying for improvements outright.</p>	
Q21 What would you consider to be our priorities for new affordable housing? (Please mark in order of priority where 1 is most important and 5 is least important)	<p>Lowest possible cost to occupiers even though fewer of them would be built = 2nd</p> <p>Greatest number of houses delivered (though may not be affordable to those in greatest need ) = 4th</p> <p>Housing that is protected as affordable social housing for as long as possible = 1st</p> <p>Housing likely to meet</p>	<p>Other not ranked:</p> <p>Use your surplus properties to transform into social housing units</p> <p><b>Only build houses where local people want them. Have a local community vote. Respect democracy.</b></p> <p>Provide for those who are in permanent employment and have been so employed for 5 years not that I exclude the self-employed.</p> <p><b>Effective 106 agreements in rural areas</b></p>	<p>Use of public land for new affordable housing is referred to in strategy</p> <p><b>A community vote is a part of the process of preparing 'neighbourhood plans'. But the councils in their local plans are required to meet the objectively identified housing needs of their areas. Greater restriction is also likely to increase affordable need. Part of planning process</b></p> <p>This is required under planning policies</p>

	<p>the needs of particular groups = 3<sup>rd</sup>  Other :  Any affordable housing has to meet specific local needs and include infrastructure = 2  Help people find land and finance to build their own homes = 5  Make occupiers always pay something back to make them feel part of community=5  As sustainable as possible e.g. COSH6 =1</p>	<p>Layout and design in character with environment- e.g. assimilation into important historic town and landscapes  <b>You require developments to be a mix of 'affordable 'housing plus more 'upmarket' housing. You could ask for a development to be either affordable or upmarket housing, but not a mixture of both, with the choice being determined by local circumstances. This could result in houses being built more quickly.</b>  Behind all the questions, these issues/points should be considered:  1) As suggested in the General Overview section, the overarching outcome has to be to achieve <i>Strong, vibrant and stable Communities</i> - but with the crucial addition that they have a balanced age range. Possibly the Jobs outcome as second key outcome. All the rest are sub-targets along the way to achieving these two key outcomes.  2) There should be a target related to reducing the number of adult children having to live at home, and of overcrowding more generally.  3) There should be mention of second homes being a key part of the problem and therefore of the possible solutions e.g.: utilising "bought for retirement" homes for rental.  4) there should be consideration of using market rate housing to "subsidise" the rental/purchase price of "affordable housing" to a level where it can be afforded by people on local wages.  <b>We would like to confirm to WDDC that the Lyme Regis CLT does not believe it is appropriate for Lyme Regis to consider allowing market rate housing on exception sites as a subsidy for affordable housing. There is such a dearth of land around Lyme Regis for any type of housing that we fear even the mention of such a policy would increase the cost of any potential site to the point that our CLT would be unviable.</b>  Increased shared ownership housing   <b>If the 35% of housing in proposed local plan identified to be affordable for local need can't be built to be then don't build.</b>   More rented affordable housing. Think building figure is too low. Should be aiming for 250 a year.</p>	<p><b>Mix of affordable and market housing on main development sites enables affordable housing to be cross-subsidised by the market housing, as well as enabling more mixed communities</b>  These are all considerations in new developments and local affordable housing provision   <b>Noted. The submitted Local Plan does not allow market housing on exception sites, though</b>   Mix of affordable tenures normally sought on sites, depending on need  <b>Sympathise with the point, but this could actually reduce the total amount of affordable housing delivered, as it could lead to less development taking place.</b>  Councils committed to maximising delivery, but funding and site availability are limitations. Targets are considered to</p>
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<p>Q22 Are there alternative types of provision that you think we should explore further?</p>		<p>Buying old stock  <b>Yes more One Bed or 1.5 bed to meet a shifting demographic (both new entrants and elderly downsizing)</b>  Yes - do not waste money on prestige buildings in towns e.g. WDDC HQ. <b>We do not believe it has saved any costs whatever.</b>  MOBILE HOME AND STATIC CARAVAN SITES  <b>As Above do not rely on others get up and do it yourself.</b>  Discourage people from coming here who have no accommodation and no means of support. Only provide affordable flats to locals  <b>Tents could be provided for a period of no more than 6 months from the unemployed and those on Employment Support Allowance</b>  Managed hostels for i) the vulnerable and ii) obdurate homeless  <b>Permit more 'off-grid' self-built rural housing for those who wish to make a living from the land.</b></p> <p>Derelict land and buildings to be acquired for the purpose of affordable housing  <b>No more bungalows: increase urban density, not its footprint, but allow provision of adequate green space for leisure.</b></p> <p>Sort out a fixed site for travellers, but then support the police when they wish to move on 'new' travellers.</p> <p><b>Cooperative eco-housing such as the example in Bridport being planned. Getting approval, funding + insurance package for straw bale housing.</b>  'Empty office space' no planning permission needed from next April 14, scope for town centre office space to be converted to flats!</p>	<p>be stretching but achievable</p> <p><b>Allowed under rural exceptions and agricultural occupancy policies of local plan, but need to control environmental harm of scattered development, away from facilities.</b></p> <p>Supported</p> <p><b>Higher density development supported where appropriate. Open space considered in planning applications.</b></p> <p>Subject of the planning document for traveller accommodation currently being prepared</p> <p><b>Referred to in strategy</b></p>
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<p>Q23 If we are to extend housing opportunities in the private rented sector, what are the most important requirements of the housing provided? (Please mark in order of priority where 1 is most important and 6 is least important)</p>	<p>Affordable rents e.g. within LHA=1st Decent facilities and condition of property = 2nd Efficient/affordable heating = 3rd Good standard of management by landlord including repairs response = 4th Landlord willing to address any anti-social behaviour issues affecting tenants = 5th Other= back up by local government to address any issues arising from either side landlord/tenants = 6 Number 1 is the biggest problem in total for my local area DT48 = 5 Access to employment &amp; services=1</p>	<p>Other not ranked: The current cap is too generous and encourages the feckless, the employed and those who claim to be too ill, but are too lazy to work <b>Renewable energy</b> For places such as Lyme Regis, we feel that the potential of holiday letting has reduced/almost eliminated possible open market rentals at affordable rents. <b>Appropriate size of property for family unit</b> Make sure housing is provided for the most vulnerable e.g. homeless, mentally and physically ill, children etc. <b>'Cap' put on private sector rents, to stop unscrupulous landlord profiteering!</b></p>	
<p>Q24 The ability to afford rents, mortgages and other housing costs is one of the most important issues for most households. How can we best support you to achieve this? (Please mark in order of priority where 1 is most important and 6 is least important)</p>	<p>Through providing direct advice = 1st Through funding other agencies e.g. CAB to do this on our behalf = 3rd To provide regular surgeries = 4th To provide an advice newsletter = 5th To offer a financial advice hotline = 2nd</p>	<p>Other not ranked: Tell people to only take what accommodation they can afford in the long term <b>The direct advice should be "we are not spending any more taxpayers money on you- get a job"</b> Online support with financial self-assessment software available</p>	

	<p>Other = they must pay something, not all given even £1 a week so they feel part of an area and community</p> <p>Instead of repossession let the person pay rent until they can start repaying their mortgage = 1</p>		
<p>Q25 What changes do you think need to happen to make your community more sustainable, e.g. more affordable housing, starter homes, homes suitable for older or disabled people?</p>		<p>More Social housing more realistic support getting less well-off people on the ladder</p> <p><b>Improved Infrastructure, it is pointless putting home where there are no facilities</b></p> <p>Do not think there is land to make these things happen without running the village</p> <p><b>People are told and educated about being good neighbours look after and care for the area and good community spirit.</b></p> <p>Less social housing amongst owner-occupier areas. Sounds harsh, but am experiencing problems due to social housing tenants</p> <p><b>More help available to support people in sustaining tenancies</b></p> <p>Have rent and rates payable to income one shoe does not fit all</p> <p><b>To stop any new house building in our village Bradford Peverell because it is unsustainable.</b></p> <p>Council houses with rent control and no right to buy</p>	<p>Aims set out in strategy.</p> <p><b>Local plan aims to focus majority of development in areas with more facilities. Developer funding also taken towards infrastructure</b></p> <p>Decisions about development at villages need to balance environmental and social considerations. Local plan has focused development at larger settlements, but smaller developments at villages can be considered through neighbourhood plans or rural exception policy.</p> <p>Needs to be addressed through good management of affordable housing</p> <p><b>Local plan focuses development on larger settlements and does not propose development in Bradford Peverell, though a neighbourhood plan or rural exceptions affordable housing scheme could be developed if the community wished.</b></p>

		<p><b>Build more houses for immigrants and workers</b></p> <p>Increase number of houses/flats to rent at a level which reflects the local wage levels</p> <p><b>West Dorset-low wages high accommodation costs</b> Priority given to providing the <u>proved</u> need for affordable housing within a particular local environment</p> <p><b>Limited growth in affordable homes in rural areas to ensure local families remain within their communities</b> Again, we would want to add "age-balanced" to the key outcome of <i>Strong, vibrant and stable communities</i>.</p> <p><b>Housing that can be afforded by those <u>working</u> in the immediate area.</b> More affordable housing</p> <p><b>More provision for older people in terms of supportive housing in every way possible to stay in the community- from light touch support to local extra care housing options to residential care as needs increase..</b> As stated before, more affordable rented housing in present financial crisis</p>	<p>Local needs surveys are used to justify rural exception sites for affordable housing</p> <p><b>Allowed under rural exceptions policy and supported through rural enabling work</b></p>
<p>Q26 In your opinion, which factors contribute most to achieving a sustainable community? Please tick all that apply.</p>	<p>Good housing quality and the built environment = 14</p> <p>An active, inclusive and safe community = 13</p> <p>A thriving economy with good skills and employment prospects = 13</p> <p>A community that is fair and which considers and includes everyone = 10</p> <p>Good affordable transport and communication links = 12</p> <p>Environmentally friendly and energy efficient</p>	<p>Other not ranked:</p> <p>Strict policing and housing and landlords policing – tenancy and neighbour charter.</p> <p><b>Restrictions on unsustainable building. Democracy - accepting the majority view on new housing. Being a good neighbour.</b></p> <p>Excellence in education at all levels and categories</p> <p><b>Urgent vital improvements to infrastructure-particularly main and trunk roads and accesses.</b></p> <p>The ability to move with the changing needs of a community</p> <p><b>Community schemes and involvement such as allotments, community orchard and community farms.</b></p> <p>Good local bus services making sure villages are not cut off from main towns!</p>	

	homes = 9 Good and accessible local services = 14 Well run communities with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership = 11		
Q27 How effective do you feel the council is at working with residents on housing and related matters?	Very effective = Quite effective = 9 Neutral = 2 Quite ineffective = 1 Very ineffective = 5 Don't know = 1		
Q28 Are there any improvements you think the council could make with regards to working with residents on housing and related matters?		<p>More involvement with Parish Councils to listen and understand local needs.  <b>Be more inclusive. The people these things affect are not likely to be completing this form.</b>  Do not give out loans to people that owe already, make them pay back money they owe, be stronger and more direct and formal, firm but fair.  <b>Again, remembering the owner-occupier population, not just concentrating on those who choose to not work and be given a free house</b>  As above  <b>Listen to local people and respect communities wishes to have no more housing</b>  Abolish Weymouth council  <b>Make them stand up on their own two legs instead of pandering to left wing wishy-washy policies and safe us money</b>  The present 'bidding system' has now been in place long enough for most people to understand it, but there are still those who need help.  <b>Accentuate the 'local' in all dealings</b>  More advertising and prominent local surgeries  <b>Yes, far more support to move families who cause ASB to other residents.</b>  improve availability of affordable housing  <b>Ensure consultation is carried out with 'real' people and not just the usual 'go to' groups.</b></p>	

		<p>Promote more eco-friendly housing co-operatives. Give people a way of fending off developments other than through neighbourhood plan.</p> <p><b>Feel local people should get priority on housing lists above retired people coming from big cities!</b></p>	<p>Co-housing referred to in strategy. Strongest means of being able to 'fend off' unwanted development is to allocate enough development in local plan to meet identified needs. Neighbourhood plans are a means of providing additional development where it is wanted.</p>
<p>Q29 How important is the existence of a strong local community in your choice of housing?</p>	<p>Very important = 6 Quite important = 7 Neutral = 2 Quite unimportant = 1 Very unimportant = 1</p>		
		<p><b>General comments from those responding to the consultation:</b></p> <p><u>From the Weymouth and Portland Partnership:</u> The Weymouth &amp; Portland Partnership Board supports the overall objectives of the Housing Strategy as it supports the priorities within the Community Plan for Weymouth &amp; Portland 2013-16. Statistical evidence for the Borough and the Community Plan for Weymouth &amp; Portland 2013-16 highlights that there is a significant affordability gap between wage levels and house prices in Weymouth &amp; Portland. WPP believe that it is correct that this remains a key Corporate Priority for the Shared Services Partnership of WPBC and WDDC and features strongly within the Housing Strategy. The priorities stated within the Community Plan are: -Improve the supply and quality of affordable housing for all -Investigate new ways of tackling housing issues and prioritising for local people -Encourage home owners and landlords to make homes more energy efficient The WPP Board agrees with the stated shift towards an outcome- based model and overall view that, "Housing is the foundation of stable and vibrant communities and is a requisite for basic wellbeing. Poor housing or lack of a home has consistently been proven to have a detrimental impact on employment, crime, education and health. Similarly, a wide range of non-</p>	<p>Generally supportive comments endorsing the approaches proposed within the strategy. No additional issues raised, although emphasis of the need to deliver quality outcomes in a range of areas.</p>

		<p>housing factors, including those already mentioned often have a direct impact on levels of housing need and homelessness.”</p> <p>The WPP Board supports the intention of the Housing Strategy and Shared Services Partnership to adopt a more partnership-based approach to tackling housing needs and believes that this is vital to meeting the needs of our communities.</p> <p>The WPP Board believes that with the current financial pressures and changes to public services, new ways of working will be critical to meeting the needs of the local area and our most disadvantaged communities. WPP has recently launched the ‘Working with You’ programme with partners from the public and private sectors, voluntary and community groups, with the aim of placing communities at the heart of partnership working practices and achieving real improvements to the quality of life for residents in the four disadvantaged wards of Weymouth &amp; Portland – Westham, Melcombe Regis, Underhill and Littlemoor. A key part of the ‘Working with You’ programme is encouraging new and innovative approaches to tackling local issues. WPP is encouraged that the Housing Strategy indicates that innovative ways of working will be examined and WPP would like to see relevant work integrated with the ‘Working with You’ programme.</p> <p>Consultations linked to the Community Plan and ‘Working with You’ have highlighted significant local housing needs. WPP would like to see housing allocations prioritising local people.</p> <p>With the evident shift in housing provision towards the private rented sector, the WPP Board is concerned that vulnerable individuals will face difficulties. Earlier in 2013, WPP submitted an Expression of Interest to become a national pilot for the Making Every Adult Matter programme (MEAM) to support a more targeted partnership-based approach towards tackling homelessness, mental health and criminal justice. Whilst this bid was unsuccessful, local partners indicated a strong commitment towards more partnership working in this field. WPP would like to see closer partnership working in the Borough to support vulnerable individuals and those with an increased risk of homelessness.</p> <p>WPP welcomes the stated aim for the Housing Strategy to work in collaboration with the Dorset families matter initiative. The highest concentration of families identified through this initiative are based in Weymouth &amp; Portland, so WPP believes that a targeted partnership approach</p>	
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		<p>will be critical to achieving real change and benefits for the families involved. WPP particularly supports the stated aim of building community capacity improving effective engagement with communities.</p> <p><u>From the West Dorset Partnership:</u>  The Partnership supports the proposed Housing Strategy and particularly the sustainable communities section which will deliver the overall aims of the West Dorset Community Plan 2010-26.  The West Dorset Partnership would like to emphasise the need for more affordable housing and in particular the need to ensure planning policies are enforced to deliver 35% affordable housing numbers within new developments. The partnership recognises this is an issue for the Local Plan but hopes the Housing Strategy will stress the need for more affordable housing and look at ways to stop planners from being held to ransom by developers who argue that developments are not viable with affordable housing levels set out in planning policies.</p> <p>The Partnership feels however that the strategy should stress the importance of the private rented sector. We understand that new laws are being brought in from 2018 which will stop properties with a SAP rating of F and G from being rented out. While we agree this is a positive step forward we are concerned that this may have an impact on existing tenants if the costs of raising the energy efficiency of these houses are transferred to the tenant. Any measures the Housing Strategy can include to address this would be supported.  The Partnership would like to see the inclusion of actions to support the Rent a Room scheme. We feel this may have wider benefits than just maximising housing stock because it may support older people living on their own for longer by having someone else in the house who can keep an eye on the home owner. Older people may be concerned about the safety of this scheme so actions to support this would be beneficial to the community.  The Partnership has a Climate Change Steering Group which met on 16 September, and received a presentation from Geoff Joy on the draft housing strategy. The Group noted the findings of the Health Impact Assessment which had fed into the strategy, and expressed concern about the number of poorly insulated and hard-to-heat properties remaining in the District. The Group wish to encourage the Council to do all it can to improve the condition of the</p>	<p>There is already a strong element of recognition that the PRS is a critical component of housing delivery over the life of this strategy. We have estimated a need for approximately 40-60 additional PRS units p.a. to respond to potential reduction in the provision of new build homes. We are also working to improve standards, including energy efficiency in private homes. We have been silent on the promotion of any scheme relating to lodgers. This is largely because of a potential concern about the regulation and management of any scheme. We would not be in a position to identify or endorse individuals and any arrangement is at the risk of the householder. We could possibly review this position in the future.</p>
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		<p>housing stock, through working with the Government on its promotion of the Green Deal and in other ways.</p> <p>Below sets out the aims from the community plan which support the outcomes within the housing strategy. The community plan aims have been spilt into the five themes from the housing strategy to highlight the synergies:</p> <p><u>Managing needs and expectations</u></p> <p>Increase the amount of affordable housing across a range of tenures (including social, rented, shared ownership), especially to support and encourage young people to live in the area.</p> <p>Ensure accommodation meets the requirement of everyone including those with specific needs, for example those who are homeless, Gypsies and Travellers, and people with learning or physical disabilities or mental health issues.</p> <p>Focus effort and support on people who experience the worst health to reduce social and health inequalities.</p> <p>Help people understand and use the benefits they are entitled to and advice that is available to them.</p> <p>Improve care in people's homes to support independent living.</p> <p><u>Housing for independence</u></p> <p>Increase the amount of affordable housing across a range of tenures (including social, rented, shared ownership), especially to support and encourage young people to live in the area.</p> <p>Ensure accommodation meets the requirement of everyone including those with specific needs, for example those who are homeless, Gypsies and Travellers, and people with learning or physical disabilities or mental health issues.</p> <p>Promote the building of new homes and adaption of existing houses to the lifetime homes standards and to meet the decent homes standard.</p> <p>Provide enough supported, sheltered or extra care housing for local people.</p> <p>Provide support for older people and help them understand the options that are available.</p> <p>Focus effort and support on people who experience the worst health to reduce social and health inequalities.</p> <p>Support work to help vulnerable people by closer working across agencies and improve data sharing.</p> <p><u>Housing quality and standards</u></p>	
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		<p>Help homes to become more environmentally sustainable – including improving energy efficiency and water conservation and using sustainable construction methods.</p> <p>Provide support for older people and help them understand the options that are available.</p> <p><u>New homes and housing opportunities</u></p> <p>Increase the amount of affordable housing across a range of tenures (including social, rented, shared ownership), especially to support and encourage young people to live in the area.</p> <p>Ensure accommodation meets the requirement of everyone including those with specific needs, for example those who are homeless, Gypsies and Travellers, and people with learning or physical disabilities or mental health issues.</p> <p>Make sure the infrastructure needs and facilities from new housing are met through development, for example public transport, green spaces and IT, so that communities are sustainable.</p> <p>Direct new housing provision – affordable and market – to meet local need or where it can help provide a better balance of homes and jobs for all ages; and maximise the use of the existing housing stock.</p> <p><u>Sustainable communities</u></p> <p>Ensure accommodation meets the requirement of everyone including those with specific needs, for example those who are homeless, Gypsies and Travellers, and people with learning or physical disabilities or mental health issues.</p> <p>Direct new housing provision – affordable and market – to meet local need or where it can help provide a better balance of homes and jobs for all ages; and maximise the use of the existing housing stock.</p> <p>Support joined up services in local centres, for example post offices in local pubs; joint oil deliveries in communities; community information and activity hubs.</p> <p>Increase community participation in decision making, particularly through the local area partnerships and parish plans. Include particular emphasis on encouraging involvement of minority groups and those under-represented in public life – for example disabled people, young people and those from ethnic minorities.</p> <p>The Partnership is keen to work with the councils to deliver the joint housing</p>	
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		<p>strategy and work together where relevant.</p> <p><u>From Dr Jon Orrell, NHS Dorset/Dorset Clinical Commissioning group locality deputy chairman.</u></p> <p><u>Transition Towns W+P Chairman.</u></p> <p>A safe and stable document with no surprises. This is a solid basis upon which one might build a bolder vision of the future. The current document is well suited to life as it is now. There are a number of drivers facing us in the next 30 years, namely;</p> <p>1) Peak Oil – or rather peak everything with resources. Conventional oil has peaked and the shortfall is being made up by gas from Russia and the Arctic with fracking to squeeze the dregs from the energy fossil fuel bonanza of the last century. The peak will still hit as demand rises to deal with the prevailing paradigm of endless exponential growth. The non conventional resources are filling the gap but will become exhausted at a faster rate and at greater cost than the easy Gulf oil of the past. Peak water and Peak Phosphate also loom ahead for the globe.</p> <p>2) Peak Money – The economy has been based for 300 years on debt. The fractional reserve banking system and compound interest rate mechanisms work by feeding from natural resources be they environmental or human labour. In order to service the debt new money must be created. If new debts are not increased each year the system collapses as with 2008. The energy from fracking and stimulus from the mortgage guarantee schemes have got this mechanism spinning for the last time. We can use this respite to further inflate asset values of house prices as before, or like Norway use the money to develop a sovereign fund to develop a Green future.</p> <p>3) Peak Carbon- the IPCC issued another report in September 2013 outlining the 95% certainty of anthropogenic temperature rises and impending climate chaos. For many this will bring droughts, for us in the UK, more floods and extreme weather and paradoxical cooling with the gulf and jet stream disruptions.</p> <p>The result of these three drivers, alone or in combination, and of unknown ferocity, is that the future 30years will not be like the past. We would do well to entertain the idea that the times they are a’ changing. So it would be wise and prudent to consider a different type of housing strategy to address these</p>	<p>These comments are largely predicated on a very long-term perspective, outside the scope of this strategy. A number of the</p>
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		<p>drivers.</p> <p>The good news is that the structure of the review already recognises this with the notion of sustainable communities. The word sustainable has been devalued to the point of near meaninglessness. To the accountant it means having a funding stream for the coming year. To the conventional corporation and his sponsored politician it has been totally corrupted to mean “sustained economic growth” of the old fossil fuel variety. This is the exact opposite of its true meaning. The Brundland definition of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs “ is open to wide interpretation and similar ambiguity. It could be real sustainability or permit ongoing rape of the planet for our ease and profit as long as we leave enough for our grandchildren to exist at a lower level . I would propose a strong definition of sustainability. That is living within environmental limits. This means not depending on ancient fossil energy and its derivative fossil fuel fertilisers, pesticides and mass transport and supply chains. It means living on with the earth can produce from the available sunshine, tides, wind and waves.</p> <p>At the level of housing there are strong implications. The mind-set of high carbon growth gave us discrete residential estates that assumed the use of private cars mainly to go to the other zones of employment, often 30 miles away, and then more driving to out of town shopping malls or remote leisure resorts. The weak adaptation to sustainability being to include a few buses that are the first to be cut when funds are tight or retro fitting of inadequate and disconnected cycle lanes.</p> <p>The high carbon model assumes cheap enough fuel to head leaky houses and insists on insulation fit only for the last century.</p> <p>A sustainable community is radically different. It is intensely local and totally integrated and interconnected. So we see a future with a rich mix of all types of dwelling in the same area, some private, much more social and elements of self-build and community owned units. The places of employment are mixed into the neighbourhood with workshops and industrial units near to schools and surgeries. Nowhere is too far to travel on foot or cycling. No one goes by car ever as there is no need. It is not a luxury but rather a total liability to have the redundant costs of private fossil fuel dinosaurs.</p> <p>Energy is generated at the local level with domestic energy micro-installations a standard feature of the vast majority of homes. The default setting will be to</p>	<p>comments relate to national policy positions.</p> <p>The comments suggest that this is a strategy for now, but in fact it does look to a changing future but recognises that we have to start from the current position.</p>
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		<p>have all south, east or west facing roofs as solar PV panels de novo rather than retrofitted. Rainwater will be harvested. Insulation will be of Scandinavian standards as will the glazing. No more the high costs to the person and planet of cheap and shoddy building regulations that permitted the quick profits of greedy developers. Now we will have homes fit for living in.</p> <p>Food will be more local. All housing developments especially those of high density will have nearby allotments for those who are fit and capable. Verges, roundabouts , open spaces and parks will grow vegetables and fruit as shown by Incredible Edible Todmorden. Local small holders and farmers will have ready access to local shops and markets to bring fresh produce to residents with zero food miles.</p> <p>This is the vision for sustainable communities. A community that can live and thrive within environmental limits, using low carbon.</p> <p>Back to the grimy reality of the present. There is a pressing need for strong action to correct the market failure that is the private rented sector. The changes to benefits under the guise of austerity have created a perfect storm for the poor and young. The bedroom tax, the extension to the council tax, the capping of total benefits combined with a ruthless crackdown on the disabled and sick under ATOS and the changes to the DWP benefits with the ESA procedures that make it easy to sanction the vulnerable who have been pushed into applying for insecure and low paid jobs and who lose benefits for months for minor rule infringements are causing immense suffering. The private sector housing has been a 30 year bonanza for land owners, developers, banks and second home owners. Rents can rise and lets will still happen as the tenants are desperate and in a weak bargaining position. In the Park district are many houses of multiple occupancy with very poor levels of insulation or none, with single glazing and draughty doors. The electricity meters can be tampered with by landlords to siphon off fuel payments. The person trying to recover after addiction or rebuild a life after prison in such shoddy flats cannot complain as they risk immediate eviction either by legal re-letting or ending of leases or equally commonly illegal evictions and intimidation. It is no surprise that there has been little progress with supervision of this corrupt and degrading HMO racket.</p> <p>Social housing has been in a state of crisis for 30 years since the post war housing boom with homes fit for heroes giving way to very expensive and crippling mortgages that are beyond the reach of those on the minimum wages</p>	<p>We have made a strong commitment to work more closely with the PRS, both to encourage good landlords and to address bad ones. We, of course, have no control over the current government's programme of welfare reform.</p>
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		<p>of the tourist or hospitality or care home workers. The housing policy of recent years has failed the poor badly and served the rich very well. The current proposals to further weaken the requirement for building social housing as part of any residential development are to be deplored. The idea of paying for off-site construction of social housing has failed. Look at the Hardy blocks of Osprey. Where is the social housing that came from this massive private development? Why does a block stand empty for a decade when there are hundreds of people desperate for housing? We must do better in our housing plans.</p> <p>I would favour a new massive housing programme, on the sustainability principles outlined above. This would depress house prices as the report says. This is a good thing for new families, those on low wages and the poor. Existing homeowners are not really disadvantaged as the apparent gains of recent years are really only vapour and an illusion. The value was not earned. The increased price is only gained by a market failure that has not matched supply to demand and thus given windfall profits to landowners, banks and developers at the expense of crippling mortgages for the few and costly rents for the many. Let more houses be built and the costs fall to affordable levels. It is good for society as a whole not just the 1% on the top.</p> <p>Finally I would push for a new policy of encouraging low impact development outside planning boundaries for those who will live off the land with zero carbon. If families are ready to build using cob, earth or bale and live off grid with micro-generation and waste recycling we should actively encourage them. This is real sustainable living. The bland fields of monoculture with few hedges and an industrial tractor appearing twice a year are not the traditional rural England. The modern view is a mere shadow of the rich diversity of habitat , species and form of past millennia, where far more of the population lived on the land. A low carbon future would see more families living directly on small scale mini farms they have built themselves.</p> <p>Let's have a bold vision for a low carbon future. One that is healthy for the individual, for the community and for the planet.</p> <p><u>From Bridport Town Council</u>  In general Bridport Town Council welcomes the Strategy.  It particularly welcomes the priority given to affordable housing.  The Town Council's Town Plan includes a project to "identify sites for</p>	
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		<p>affordable housing and to achieve changes in the criteria and levels for affordable housing to be provided in private housing developments.”</p> <p>It would though like to see a reference in the Strategy to building more affordable homes, so that the priority would read:</p> <p>“Provide the maximum opportunity to build and access affordable homes”</p> <p>It would also like to see the achievement of high levels of affordable housing in private housing developments, with an element of affordable housing in all sizes of development, as proposed in the draft Local Plan.</p> <p>The Town Council is pleased to see the support for community land trusts and Community Right-to-Build schemes to deliver more affordable housing</p> <p>The Strategy refers to the new Local Plan and the new housing development land allocations for the next 20 years, with the accompanying aim to maximise affordable housing provision through negotiations with developers on Section 106 agreements</p> <p>The Town Council is currently considering the proposed modifications on the Local Plan and Vearse Farm in Bridport is one of the key housing allocations in the Plan. The Town Council has commented on the need to ensure a high level of affordable housing on this site. It is also seeking more information on the development of the site and to ensure that there is full involvement from the local communities and local councils in respect of how the site is developed.</p> <p>West Dorset District Council worked closely with the Town Council and the community in delivering the fully affordable housing scheme at Flaxhayes (Dibdin View), which maintained the full support of the community. This is a good example of how housing projects can be developed ensuring public involvement and consultation.</p> <p>The Town Council is working with neighbouring parishes, through the local area partnership, to look at a neighbourhood plan, which could be a way to bring forward affordable housing schemes, as well as ensuring local influence on the development of Vearse Farm. The Strategy’s support for neighbourhood plans is therefore welcomed.</p> <p>The priority to improve energy efficiency and addressing fuel poverty is welcomed and it is hoped that the District Council will seek to ensure the highest possible environmental standards for new homes.</p> <p>Overall therefore, the Town Council welcomes the Strategy and hopes it will have the opportunity to be involved in taking forward some of the priorities, particularly in respect of delivering more affordable housing.</p>	
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## APPENDIX 8

## LINKS TO KEY REFERENCES

### Background documents:

#### Preface

SHMA <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=170147&filetype=pdf>

Local Plan <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/410428>

#### Chapter 1

**Localism Act 2011** <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents>

**Welfare reform Act 2012** <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents/enacted>

**National Housing Strategy 2011** (includes:

Affordable rent/flexible tenancies

Housing Register

Homelessness duties

New homes bonus)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7532/2033676.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7532/2033676.pdf)

**Joint Local Plan** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/410428>

**Energy Act 2011** <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/16/contents/enacted>

**Localism Act** <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents>

**National Planning Policy Framework ( NPPF)**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

**Green deal** <https://www.gov.uk/green-deal-energy-saving-measures>

**Joint Homelessness Strategy (in preparation)**

**Tenancy Strategies** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=180578&filetype=pdf>

**Homechoice**, (includes:

Allocation Policy )

<http://www.dorsethomechoice.org/dorset-homechoice/>

#### Chapter 2

**West Dorset District Council & Weymouth & Portland Borough Council Corporate Plans**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=186976&filetype=pdf> and

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=186979&filetype=pdf>

**Homelessness Strategy (in preparation)**

**Tenancy Strategies** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=180578&filetype=pdf>

**Private Sector Assistance Policies** <http://webapps-wpbc.dorsetforyou.com/apps/housing/housingDownloads.asp>  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/397306>

**Private Sector Strategy** <http://webapps-wpbc.dorsetforyou.com/apps/housing/housingDownloads.asp>  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/397306>

**Local Plan** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/410428>

**Empty Homes** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/emptyhomes/westandweymouth>

## **Weymouth & Portland Community Plan**

<http://www.weymouthandportlandpartnership.org/community%20plan/community%20plan.html>

## **West Dorset Community Plan**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=157836&filetype=pdf>

**Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)** <http://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/>

**Homechoice** <http://www.dorsethomechoice.org/dorset-homechoice/>

## **Dorset Sustainable Communities Strategy**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=157580&filetype=pdf>

## **Supporting People Partnership Strategy**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=170523>

**Dorset Health and Wellbeing Strategy** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/healthandwellbeingboard>

## **Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2011**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=170147&filetype=pdf>

## **Stock Condition Survey 2013**

**Population and household statistics from** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/statistics>

## **DCC Vulnerable Localities Index**

**Dorset County Community Safety Partnership- priorities 2013-14**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/395960>

## **Bournemouth, Dorset, Poole Overarching Information Sharing Protocol**

[http://www.dorset.police.uk/pdf/OAISP\\_Final\\_V1.pdf](http://www.dorset.police.uk/pdf/OAISP_Final_V1.pdf)

**Housing Association employment initiatives-** <http://www.yhg.co.uk/community-zone/CommunityFund.aspx>

## **Chapter 3**

**ONS population projections and DCC Population Projections- from**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/statistics>

**Homechoice** <http://www.dorsethomechoice.org/dorset-homechoice/>

## **Allocation Policy Review 2013**

[http://media.weymouth.gov.uk/docstore/demdocs/PDC\\_committee/PDC-R13-20130218.pdf](http://media.weymouth.gov.uk/docstore/demdocs/PDC_committee/PDC-R13-20130218.pdf)

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=180152&filetype=pdf>

**Tenancy Strategy** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=180578&filetype=pdf>

## **Changes to Housing Benefit 2013 (Excess bedroom)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authorities-removal-of-the-spare-room-subsidy>

## **Homelessness Strategy (in preparation)**

**Rent in advance/Bond/Deposit scheme (documentation/procedure)**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=188597&filetype=pdf>

**Mortgage Rescue Scheme** <https://www.gov.uk/mortgage-rescue-scheme>

**'Gold Standard' for Homelessness Services** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1-7-million-gold-standard-sets-new-homelessness-benchmark>

**Dorset Families matter** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsetfamiliesmatter>

## **Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=170147&filetype=pdf>

**CORE data** <https://core.communities.gov.uk/>

**Analysis of Child Poverty in Dorset (July 2011)** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/403855>

**Discretionary Housing Payments** <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/discretionary-housing-payments-guide.pdf>

**Emergency Local Assistance Scheme (DCC)** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/emergencygrants>

Health and Wellbeing Board <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/healthandwellbeingboard>  
Health and Social Care Act 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted>

#### Chapter 4

Joint Local Plan <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/410428>. **Background papers on the pattern of development** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=170147&filetype=pdf>  
**and on housing** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=185821&filetype=pdf>

**Neighbourhood Plans – further information at**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/neighbourhoodplanning/west/weymouth>

**Community Right to Build** <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/giving-people-more-power-over-what-happens-in-their-neighbourhood/supporting-pages/community-right-to-build>

**Cerne Valley Neighbourhood plan** - <http://www.cernevalley.org/>

**Community land Trusts** <http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/home>

**Housing typologies: see definitions of affordable housing in Annex 2 (glossary) of the National Planning Policy Framework**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

**Affordable rent tenure: see** <http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/ourwork/affordable-rent>  
**Threshold Centre co-housing project (Gillingham)** - <http://www.thresholdcentre.org.uk/>

**Community Land Trusts** <http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/home>

**Buckland Newton Community Property Trust**

<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/upload/public/Case%20Studies/Buckland%20Newton%20Community%20Property%20Trust.pdf>

**Dorset-wide Gypsy and Traveller (including travelling showpeople) Site Allocations Development Plan Document** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/travellerpitches>

**Empty Homes Strategies** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/emptyhomes/westandweymouth>

#### Chapter 5

**Dorset Supporting People Partnership Strategy**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=170523>

**Dorset Supporting People service directory (not referenced)**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/supportingpeople>

**Dorset Supporting People Older Peoples Housing Strategy** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/403987>

**SAIL (Safe and Independent Living)** <http://www.dorsetfire.gov.uk/working-with-us/partnerships/formal-partnerships/sail/>

**Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs)** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsethomeservice>

**Partnership for Older People Programme (POPP)** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/popp>

**Dorset Supporting People Young Peoples Housing Strategy** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/403988>  
**16/17 year old housing protocol (in preparation)**

**Gold Standard, Homelessness** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1-7-million-gold-standard-sets-new-homelessness-benchmark>

**Dorset Supporting People Mental health Housing Strategy** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/403990>

**Dorset Supporting People Learning Disability Housing Strategy**

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/404086>

**Dorset CC Gypsy and Traveler Liaison Service** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/2483>

**Dorset Domestic Violence Housing Delivery Plan ( 2013) (in preparation)**

**West Dorset Care and repair (HIA)** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsethomeservice>

## Weymouth & Portland Mears Home Improvements (HIA)

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsethomeservice>

### Chapter 6

#### Stock condition Surveys (WDDC 2007, WPBC 2009)

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=159845&filetype=pdf>

#### WPBC? XXXXX

Green deal <https://www.gov.uk/green-deal-energy-saving-measures>

Energy Company Obligation (ECO) <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-households-to-cut-their-energy-bills/supporting-pages/energy-companies-obligation-eco>

Houses in Multiple Occupation Policies WDDC/WPBC <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/395197>

#### Housing Health and Safety rating System (HHSRS)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/9425/150940.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9425/150940.pdf)

#### Decent Homes Standard (A decent home DCLG)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decent\\_Homes\\_Standard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decent_Homes_Standard)

Dorset Fire and Rescue <http://www.dorsetfire.gov.uk/>

Dorset Energy Advice Centre <http://www.deac.co.uk/>

Private Sector renewal Policies <http://webapps-wpbc.dorsetforyou.com/apps/housing/housingDownloads.asp>

Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsethomeservice>

Wessex Home Improvement Loans <http://www.wrcic.org.uk/whil/>

West Dorset Care and Repair <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsethomeservice>

Mears Home Improvement Ltd <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsethomeservice>

Disabled Facilities grants (DFGs) <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants>

Dept. of health funding/Total Place programme funding

[http://www.swcouncils.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a\\_id=6025](http://www.swcouncils.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=6025)

### Chapter 7

#### Sustainable Neighbourhoods (DCLG 2012)

<http://www.thepep.org/ClearingHouse/docfiles/Sustainable.Future.White.Paper.pdf>

Partnership for Older People Programme (POPP) <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/popp>

West Dorset Partnership <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/communityplan/west>

Weymouth & Portland Partnership <http://www.weymouthandportlandpartnership.org/>

Yarlinton- Community Investment Strategy -> Household Ambition Plans

<http://www.yhg.co.uk/downloads/sHAPe%20Household%20Ambition%20Plans/Custom%20Guide.pdf>

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/401817>

Working With You programme WPBC <http://www.weymouthandportlandpartnership.org/>

#### Narrowing the Gap programme

[http://media.weymouth.gov.uk/docstore/demdocs/MAN\\_Committee/MAN-R19a-20101102.pdf](http://media.weymouth.gov.uk/docstore/demdocs/MAN_Committee/MAN-R19a-20101102.pdf)

#### Dorset Communities Living Sustainably Programme (CSLP)

<http://www.dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk/Dorset%20Communities%20Living%20Sustainably>

WDDC- 7 Local Area Partnerships <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/1833>

### Chapter 8

#### Local authority budget cuts

[http://media.weymouth.gov.uk/docstore/demdocs/MAN\\_Committee/MAN-F-20130903.pdf](http://media.weymouth.gov.uk/docstore/demdocs/MAN_Committee/MAN-F-20130903.pdf)

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=187780&filetype=pdf>  
**Disabled Facilities Grants** <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants/overview>  
**Loans Scheme** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/grantsandloans/housing>  
**Green deal** <https://www.gov.uk/green-deal-energy-saving-measures>  
**Energy Companies Obligation (ECO)** <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-households-to-cut-their-energy-bills/supporting-pages/energy-companies-obligation-eco>  
**HMO Licensing/Accreditation** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/395197>  
**Supporting People** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/supportingpeople>  
**Homelessness Prevention Grant** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/safety-net-against-homelessness-continues-to-2015>  
**Bonds/Deposits/Rent In Advance**  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=188597&filetype=pdf>  
**New Homes Bonus**  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6004/1846530.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6004/1846530.pdf)  
**Community Infrastructure Levy** <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/giving-communities-more-power-in-planning-local-development/supporting-pages/community-infrastructure-levy>

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Others useful links, but not particularly referenced in the document:

**-English Local Authorities Statistics of Housing Data Return (ELASH), Annual return to CLG**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-housing-data>

**-Study of the Housing Requirements of BME Housholds in Dorset and Poole (2010)**  
<http://www.boroughofpoole.com/your-council/how-the-council-works/research/housing-requirements-of-bme-groups/>

**-The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) ( West Dorset February 2011 and Weymouth & Portland December 2009)** <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/410419>

**-Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) (2012)**  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/healthandwellbeingboard>

**-SP Commissioning Strategy (2012)**  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=177461&filetype=pdf>

*Housing Strategy Seminar Presentation – Oct 2012*

[http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCwQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dorsetforyou.com%2Fmedia.jsp%3Fmediaid%3D178064%26filetype%3Dppt&ei=RoVzUojRLcG\\_0QW0vYC4DQ&usq=AFQjCNGtQ3pjAGOOtldpQMVvdFK0RwFCRQ&bvm=bv.55819444,d.d2k](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCwQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dorsetforyou.com%2Fmedia.jsp%3Fmediaid%3D178064%26filetype%3Dppt&ei=RoVzUojRLcG_0QW0vYC4DQ&usq=AFQjCNGtQ3pjAGOOtldpQMVvdFK0RwFCRQ&bvm=bv.55819444,d.d2k)