

Housing Strategy

Service Aims

- To assess the housing needs of the district within an overall strategy and develop plans to meet those needs.

Service Provision

- Publication of a comprehensive Housing Strategy every three years with annual updates.
- Assessment of housing needs of the District.
- Developing initiatives to help to meet the housing needs of the District.

Service Targets/Improvement

- Undertake a survey for energy efficiency and house conditions in private sector homes.
- Develop a New Housing Strategy for 2004-2009.
- Housing Strategy update completed for 2002/03.

Budget

	2001/02 Actual £	2002/03 Budget		2003/04 Budget £
		Original £	Revised £	
Cost of service	73,138	71,150	94,410	98,290
Income	-7,943	-8,940	-10,160	-7,940
Net cost of service	65,195	62,210	84,250	90,350

Private Sector Housing Renewal

Service Aims

- To improve the standard of private sector housing.

Service Provision

- Management and administration of the provision of grants for renovation and substantial repair of private housing and for adaptations for the disabled.
- Help for the elderly by assistance towards the provision of a Care and Repair Scheme.
- Assistance to residents in the private sector to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel costs.

Service Targets/Improvement

- Reduce the number of unfit properties in the district.
- Determine, subject to budget, 100% of grant applications within 6 weeks.
- Reduce the number of long term vacant properties as defined by the Government.
- Improve the energy efficiency of private sector housing using a range of measures by 2% across the district.
- Ensure resolution of complaints concerning private sector housing conditions within 60 days

Budget

	2001/02 Actual £	2002/03 Budget		2003/04 Budget £
		Original £	Revised £	
Renovation Grants(Admin.cost)	79,232	89,820	82,680	75,360
Care and Repair	12,735	26,800	34,320	27,640
Cost of service	91,967	116,620	117,000	103,000

Housing Benefits

Service Aims

- To ensure that those on low incomes receive help with their rent payments
- Encourage the take up of Housing Benefit.
- To detect and deter Housing Benefit fraud. To prosecute offenders where fraud is discovered.

Service Provision

- Payment of Housing Benefit to approximately 1,200 private sector tenants.
- Payment of Housing Benefits to approximately 2300 local authority tenants.
- Administering the DWP Verification Framework for Benefits Administration.
- Providing information and guidance for claimants.

Service Targets/Improvement

- Implement outcomes from the Best Value Review of the service undertaken in 2003/03.
- Implement changes in regulations relating to New Tax Credits and Pension Credits effectively and efficiently.
- Continue to implement action plan agreed following the Benefits Fraud Inspectorate's recommendation in 2002.
- Install Fraud case management system.
- Introduce single point of service culture.

Budget

	2001/02 Actual £	2002/03 Budget		2003/04 Budget £
		Original £	Revised £	
Housing Benefit Payments	3,753,164	4,243,000	4,203,000	4,396,180
War Widows Benefits	50,439	59,430	59,430	59,430
Other service costs	558,386	629,570	647,540	718,840
	4,361,989	4,932,000	4,909,970	5,174,450
Government Grant				
- Benefits	-3,643,985	-4,041,000	-4,062,000	-4,256,180
- Administration/Verification Framework	-111,690	-233,440	-238,690	-378,890
Net cost of service	606,314	657,560	609,280	539,380

Welfare and other Housing Services

Service Aims

- Provision of a high quality, caring, alarm call service to all vulnerable residents.

Service Provision

- Preparation and review of strategies, schemes and community care plans for special needs groups requiring housing.

Service Targets/Improvement

- Respond to enquiries for the above within 3 working days.
- Promote Contact Care service to local residents.
- Best Value Review of Housing Support Services including Contact Care and Community Care.

Cost of Service

	2001/02 Actual £	2002/03 Budget		2003/04 Budget £
		Original £	Revised £	
Welfare Services:				
Contact Care	13,557	-4,930	-270	1,110
Housing Advances	810	1,130	1,210	1,440
Other Council property	8,373	6,110	9,760	5,860
Net cost of services	22,740	2,310	10,700	8,410

Registered Social Landlords, Homelessness and Housing Advice

Service Aims

- To work in partnership with Registered Social Landlords to develop and deliver new Social Housing.
- To endeavour to prevent homelessness situations from arising wherever possible.

Service Provision

- To provide advice for those with inadequate or no housing.
- Liaison with Registered Social Landlords and other agencies to alleviate housing need by providing new housing and other services.

Service Targets/Improvement

- New Very Sheltered Housing Scheme in Stutton.
- Vulnerable parents Scheme in Great Cornard.
- Carry out a Best Value Review of the Housing Support in 2002/03.
- Develop a Homelessness Strategy to focus on prevention of homelessness and reduce Bed and Breakfast accommodation costs.

Cost of Service

	2001/02 Actual £	2002/03 Budget		2003/04 Budget £
		Original £	Revised £	
Registered Social Landlords	25,046	43,050	29,570	43,910
Homelessness	63,280	69,630	99,060	100,160
Housing Advice	19,295	18,530	18,330	20,730
Net cost of services	107,621	131,210	146,960	164,800