

# 10. REIGATE & BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL



In common with the East Surrey authorities, the demand for affordable housing is high. The number of households applying to join the Council's Housing Register is increasing each year and at the same time the number of households needing housing advice is rising. Whilst we continue to develop new affordable housing in partnership with housing associations and developers we cannot meet the rising levels of need.

As part of our homelessness prevention approach, we work closely with a range of support agencies, housing associations and public sector agencies. Our joint and proactive approach includes identifying and responding to households threatened with homelessness, providing support for tenancy sustainment, providing advice to applicants and landlords, mediating as well as identifying housing solutions appropriate to individual households.

Regeneration is a priority in Reigate and Banstead. There are four regeneration areas across the Borough; Redhill Town Centre, Preston, Merstham and Horley Town Centre. These areas aim to bring about social, economic and environmental improvements. The delivery of new housing is key an important aspect of our plans. Redhill Town Centre is the focus of Growth Points Funding having been identified as a regional hub with Reigate and a growth area. The regeneration of Redhill will deliver a programme of improvements to enhance the regional role of Redhill as a centre for significant employment, retail, and leisure facilities, new housing and transport services.

Preston regeneration aims to bring about social and physical renewal in Preston neighbourhood including development of a new community hub, new homes and improvements to existing homes and the local environment. The focus for regeneration in Merstham is the development of a multi purpose community hub. This could bring together a range of services such as GP services, the library and local church as well as rooms for community activities.

Horley is the subject of large scale development which has created an opportunity for the regeneration of Horley Town Centre. The Horley Masterplan sets out our plan for building 2,600 homes in two neighbourhoods. As part of this significant development a package of community benefits will deliver a new leisure centre, Town Park, neighbourhood centres, new public transport services and improved library and youth facilities. These additional homes have also provided the opportunity to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre through improvements to retail, social and leisure facilities, the environment, and transport.

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## Priority One: Creating Housing Opportunities

The Council has made significant improvements to the Housing Options service over the last five years with a resultant reduction in homelessness. With a focus on homelessness prevention, advice and assistance, officers undertake detailed casework to help applicants identify their housing options. The Council rarely uses bed and breakfast accommodation. The use of private sector renting is an important tool for the Options Service, and the NextStep rent deposit scheme, funded in part by the Council, has assisted many households to privately rent. During the coming years the Team expects the economic recession to impact on an increasing number of households, early intervention, partnership working and effective casework will be key to continuing the success of the Housing Options team.

More and more households are now joining the Council's housing register. Affordability remains a problem for many households on moderate or low incomes. Home Choice is proving popular with our customers but it does not increase the number of homes that are available to let.

Developing new affordable homes remains a priority for the Council. It works closely with developing housing associations and is delivering a number of new affordable homes, notably on the Watercolour and Park 25 development sites and Horley new neighbourhoods. New housing will be delivered in the regeneration areas, the Council will take a flexible approach to the delivery of affordable housing in this area to ensure it creates balanced sustainable communities.

### To deliver this priority we will:

- Implement and monitor the Homelessness Strategy 2009-14
- Develop a family intervention service to reduce evictions caused by the breakdown of family relationships
- Introduce a rent deposit scheme for non-priority homeless households
- Work with Raven Housing Trust to explore the option of taking responsibility for their transfer waiting list
- Aim to deliver 150 new affordable housing units annually in a mix of tenures and sizes

- In the Council's four regeneration areas the Council will take a flexible approach to the delivery of affordable housing taking account of socio-economic factors and the existing tenure and the mix of property types of the area
- Explore innovative solutions so that we can achieve tenure mixes on development sites taking account of the current economic climate
- Investigate opportunities to re-use or re-provision redundant affordable housing that no longer meets current housing need or standards

## Priority Two: Improving Housing Standards

The Council uses the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to identify and tackle the most serious hazards in private sector housing. We also operate a grant system to assist qualifying homeowners to undertake repairs to their homes. Increasing thermal efficiency is one of the most effective ways of assisting private homeowners to improve their homes. The Council has assisted many home owners improve their heating systems with new boilers. We are keen to target our efforts as effectively as possible and are exploring ways to collect and maintain a property database about the condition and energy efficiency of borough homes.

### To deliver this priority we will:

- Explore the potential for the compilation of a database about the condition and energy efficiency of housing stock in the borough. This information will inform new initiatives on tackling disrepair and improving the energy efficiency and sustainability of the Borough's housing stock

## Priority Three: Improving Housing & Support for Vulnerable People

Supported housing and floating support services are a valuable resource and enable many vulnerable households to live independently. The Council works closely with the Surrey Supporting People Team to identify need and develop new services.

### To deliver this priority we will:

- Seek to deliver affordable housing for a number of specific needs groups including people with autism, mental health problems and people with a learning disability



# Reigate & Banstead Borough Council Action Plan 2009-13

[To be read in conjunction with the East Surrey Action Plan]

## CREATING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

No.	Action	Performance Measure	Completion Date (s)	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
1	Implement and monitor the Homelessness Strategy 2009-14	Implement the actions in the Homelessness Strategy	2014	Housing Needs Manager	Statutory agencies Voluntary organisations Housing associations Support agencies	Existing resources
2	Identify good practice and develop initiatives such as a family mediation service, with the aim of preventing homelessness caused by family breakdown	New initiatives developed Reduction in homelessness caused by parent, other relative and friend eviction	2009	Housing Needs Manager	Surrey Housing Needs Managers Group	Existing resources
3	Introduce a rent deposit scheme for non-priority homeless households	5 households assisted in year 1 10 households assisted in year 2 10 households assisted in year 3	2010	Housing Needs Manager	NextStep	Existing Resources
4	Work with Raven Housing Trust to explore taking responsibility for their transfer list	Provision of a one stop housing options service by the Council	2009/10	Housing Needs Manager	Raven Housing Trust	Existing Resources
5	Aim to deliver 100 affordable housing units annually in a mix of tenures & sizes, through the planning process, on land currently owned by housing associations, new sites, redevelopment of existing homes	100 units delivered 2009/10 100 units delivered 10/11 100 units delivered 11/12 100 units delivered 12/13	Annually up to 2012/13	Housing Development Manager	Preferred RSL Partners	Subject to Housing & Communities Agency funding
6	In the Council's regeneration areas take a flexible approach to the delivery of affordable housing taking account of socio-economic factors and the existing property type and tenure mix of the area	Delivery of appropriate affordable housing in the Council's four Regeneration Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preston</li> <li>● Merstham</li> <li>● Redhill Town Centre</li> <li>● Horley Town Centre</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Housing Development Manager, Regeneration Manager, Property Manager	Private Developers Raven Housing Trust Local stakeholders	Subject to Housing & Communities Agency funding and s106 negotiation

No.	Action	Performance measure	Completion Date(s)	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
7	Explore opportunities to re-use or re-provision redundant affordable housing that no longer meets current housing need or standard	<p>Improve &amp; extend temporary accommodation at Massetts Road, Horley</p> <p>Prepare proposals for the improvement or replacement of temporary accommodation at Colne House, Redhill.</p> <p>Work with existing RSLs to improve or replace some sheltered housing.</p>	<p>2010/11</p> <p>2011/12</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Housing Development Manager	Raven Housing Trust and other RSLs in the Borough	Subject to Homes & Communities Agency funding and s106 negotiation

## IMPROVING HOUSING STANDARDS

No.	Action	Performance Measure	Completion Date	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
8	Explore the potential of compiling a database about the condition and energy efficiency of housing stock in the Borough to inform initiatives on tackling disrepair, improving energy efficiency and stock sustainability	Database compiled and in use	2012/13	Head of Housing	Building Research Establishment	Existing resources

## IMPROVING HOUSING & SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

No.	Action	Performance Measure	Completion Date	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
9	Seek to deliver affordable housing for a number of specific groups including people with autism, mental health problems and a learning disability	Two schemes delivered	2012/13	Housing Development Manager	<p>Surrey County Council</p> <p>Surrey Supporting People team</p> <p>RSLs</p>	<p>Subject to Homes &amp; Communities Agency funding and s106 negotiation.</p> <p>Appropriate revenue funding</p>