

9. MOLE VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL



Mole Valley covers an area of 100 square miles in the heart of Surrey and has over 80,000 residents and 36,339 households. 90% of its countryside is either designated Green Belt or is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Mole Valley is:

- Situated in one of the UK's most affluent counties. Average gross annual pay for Mole Valley in 2008 was 39,400, which is above the national average.
- Well served by all forms of transport. The area is within easy reach of both Heathrow and Gatwick airports, with frequent rail connections to London and excellent road links to London and the rest of the country.
- A high demand area. The total number of households in the area is expected to rise by 14.2% from 2006-2026.
- An expensive place to live. In December 2008 the average house price in Mole Valley was £330,000.
- Predominately private sector housing. Only 11.6% of the housing stock is owned by councils or housing associations.
- Getting Older. The age group that is forecast to have the greatest growth is those over 80 years old. There will be around 50% more people in this age group in 2026 than in 2006.

Priority One: Creating Housing Opportunities

Preventing Homelessness

The number of homelessness applications and acceptances has fallen consistently over the past ten years, mainly due to an emphasis on homelessness prevention achieved through our Homelessness Strategy 2008-13 and a comprehensive housing advice and options approach. This has meant that at any one time we have a very low number of households in temporary accommodation and we rarely use bed and breakfast accommodation. We are keenly aware of the effect the recession may have on this work and we are monitoring the situation and using the government's homelessness grant to improve debt and court desk services. To continue this work we will:

- implement and monitor the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2008-13.

Making Best Use of the Affordable Housing Stock

- The levels of overcrowding in the affordable housing stock are relatively low compared to the national average. There are problems, however, where people have older children of the opposite sex sharing bedrooms and we intend to review our allocations policy to give these households more priority for the housing register. The level of under occupation is high. We hope that the Anchor Housing Options for Older People scheme will help some older people under

occupying their homes to move and so free up their family homes for young households with children. Once again we intend to review our allocations policy to ensure we are giving sufficient priority to under occupiers. To achieve this we will:

- review the Housing Allocations Policy to assess the levels of priority awarded to those who are living in overcrowded conditions and those under occupying their homes.

Building New Homes

The Local Development Framework (LDF) highlights the need to secure a minimum of 950 net affordable units within the District between 2006 and 2026. Our draft Core Strategy requires on sites of 1-9 units an off site contribution equivalent to 20%, developments between 10-14, 30% and 15 or more gross dwellings, 40% should be affordable. Once the Core Strategy has been adopted we will:

- publish a supplementary planning document on the development of affordable housing and the calculation for offsite contributions.

When new affordable homes are developed we work with our development partner housing associations to develop homes that are a mix of sizes, types and tenures. We will in particular be encouraging our partners to develop some high quality one bedroom homes to attract under occupiers to move and free up their family homes. To achieve this we will:

- in partnership with housing associations develop new small affordable homes that will attract under occupiers

Rural Housing Development

The Council makes a financial contribution towards the work of the Surrey Rural Housing Enabler. Their work includes undertaking community-led parish housing needs surveys, working with local communities, providing independent advice and support to all parties involved in the development process.

Needs surveys have recently been completed for Headley and Newdigate and at the time of writing a needs survey was underway for Brockham with others under discussion with the parish councils. To progress this work we will:

- encourage parish councils to work with the Surrey Rural Housing Enabler to commission housing needs surveys and identify suitable rural exception site.

Gypsies and Travellers

Mole Valley currently has 17 public pitches for Gypsies and Travellers on four sites and another five pitches on four private sites. Planning permission has been granted for the development of one additional pitch at three of the four public sites. Draft proposals suggest the further provision of six or seven new pitches by 2016. Land will be identified in 2010 through the preparation of the Land Allocations Development Plan Document which forms part of the LDF.

The public sites are managed locally by the Council on behalf of Surrey County Council. The County has recently reviewed the management arrangements and the existing agency agreement with Mole Valley will be reviewed during 2009/10 to ensure clearer roles, responsibilities and improved performance by all parties involved. To continue this work we will:

- develop three additional public pitches for Gypsy and Traveller families;
- inform the process to identify land for additional pitches; and
- review the Gypsy and Traveller site agency agreement with Surrey County Council.

Priority Two: Improving Housing Standards

Mole Valley Housing Association

Mole Valley Housing Association bought the Council's housing stock in 2007 and is committed to ensure their homes meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. In Middlemead, Bookham it has a number of homes that are of non-traditional construction. The fabric is concrete panels that make the houses cold and difficult to heat and insulate. Over the next ten years the Association intends, in consultation with the tenants and in partnership with the Council, to replace these homes and redevelop the area by making better use of the land. To assist the Association we will:

- identify how we can assist with the process of replacing these affordable homes.

Mobile Home Sites

Mole Valley has over 1,100 mobile homes on sites throughout the area. The Council is responsible for licensing and monitoring these sites. Our repair grants policy includes a Park Home Assistance Grant to help with common disrepair issues, such as a lack of insulation, rotting floors and damp. To continue this work we will:

- promote the Park Home Assistance Grant to owners of mobile homes on the Council's website, in leaflets, in the local press and when staff are on inspection visits.

Disabled Facilities Grants

On behalf of the Council, Anchor Staying Put administers our Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and Roof Repair and Boiler Replacement schemes.

We wish to improve the speed and efficiency of the DFG process for the benefit of grant applicants. To do this we are looking to develop a joint a database of client records that will enable us to monitor progress. The database will be available to Anchor, the Council and Surrey County Council. To achieve this we will:

- set up a database to track clients, as they progress through the DFG application process.

Making Homes Energy Efficient

The Council offers Warmfront Grants and Warmfront Top up grants. To tackle fuel poverty a Boiler Replacement Scheme has been implemented to help vulnerable older people with failed boilers. When a boiler has failed Anchor Staying Put will immediately provide temporary heating and will then replace it and carry out other ancillary works needed. To continue this work we will:

- promote the Boiler Replacement Scheme for vulnerable older people on the Council's website and in leaflets and in the local press.

Priority Three: Improving Housing & Support for Vulnerable People

Older People

The 2007 Housing Needs Survey forecast that there will be a significant growth in the over 65 age group over the next 20 years. There will be around 50% more people over 80 years old in Mole Valley in 2026 than in 2006. This will place increased pressure on housing and support services in the area.

In October 2008, the Council commissioned David Couttie Associates to undertake a review of the housing needs of older people within Mole Valley. The study will provide information on the housing situations of older people aged 60 and over and their aspirations for the future. The conclusion of the study will inform future housing and planning policies.

A review of Mole Valley Housing Association's (MVHA) sheltered housing stock is being undertaken to tackle long-term void issues, address changes in the national agenda and the changing demands and aspirations of older people. The Council is working with MVHA and Surrey County Council to examine the use of current stock and the tackle the need for extra care sheltered housing. To continue this work we will:

- use the older persons' housing needs study to develop a strategic plan to meet the housing needs of older people;
- work in partnership with MVHA and other housing associations to review the sheltered housing stock and it's future use; and
- identify sites for extra care sheltered housing schemes.

Leatherhead Night Hostel and Pitstop

Provision and support for homeless households in Mole Valley includes the Leatherhead Night Hostel and Pitstop.

Leatherhead Night Hostel currently provides emergency direct access accommodation for twelve people in three shared rooms. Approximately 34 referrals are received per month and the average stay is ten weeks. An extensive refurbishment is planned to provide nine ensuite single rooms and one double room. A Places for Change Programme (PCP) grant has been received from the Government to part fund the refurbishment, which should be completed by March 2011. The hostel will also transform the services it currently provides by providing a higher degree of support and training to residents to prepare them for independent living.

Pitstop a voluntary run day centre where unemployed, ex-offenders, homeless and socially isolated people over the age of 16, living in and around or passing through Mole Valley can receive shelter, food and support. We are have encouraged the Pitstop to improve it is management, governance and services by working with Homeless Link, which receives government funding to promote best practice. To continue our work with these organisations we will:

- redevelop the Leatherhead Night Hostel to provide improved accommodation and services; and
- continue to encourage the Pitstop to improve and adopt best practice for the benefit of its customers.



Mole Valley District Council Action Plan 2009-13

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

Mole Valley actions

No.	Action	Deliverable	Completion Date	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
PRIORITY ONE – CREATING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES						
1	Preventing homelessness Implement and monitor the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2008-13	Complete the actions in the Homelessness Strategy	2013	Housing Needs Manager	Voluntary Sector Statutory sector	Existing resources
2	Making best use of the affordable housing stock Review the Housing Allocations Policy to assess the levels of priority awarded to those who are living in overcrowded conditions and those under occupying their homes.	Review the housing allocations policy, consult, seek Council approval and implement	2010	Housing Needs Manager Senior Housing Needs Officer	Housing associations Housing association tenants Housing applicants Voluntary organisations	Existing resources
3	Building new homes Publish a supplementary planning document on the development of affordable housing and the calculation for offsite contributions.	Produce a draft supplementary planning document on affordable housing Consult Seek approval and implement	2009/10	Senior Planning Policy Officer Strategic Housing Manager	Housing associations Developers Land owners	Existing resources
4	Building new homes In partnership with housing associations develop new small affordable homes that will attract under occupiers	Develop new small affordable homes to attract under occupiers – three per year	2013	Strategic Housing Manager	Housing associations	Existing resources

No.	Action	Deliverable	Completion Date	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
5	Rural housing development Encourage parish councils to work with the Surrey Rural Housing Enabler to commission housing needs surveys and identify suitable rural exception sites.	Conduct at least one new housing needs survey per year For each survey completed conduct a site identification and evaluation process For viable rural exceptions sites identified work with housing association partners to deliver rural affordable housing schemes Deliver one affordable housing scheme every other year	2013	Strategic Housing Manager Senior Planning Policy Officer Surrey Rural Housing Enabler	Housing associations Parish councils Residents of rural villages and settlements Land owners Developers	Existing resources
6	Gypsies and Travellers Develop three additional public pitches for Gypsy and Traveller families	Three additional pitches developed and completed	2009/10	Planning Policy Manager	Surrey County Council	Capital funding from Communities and Local Government
7	Gypsies and Travellers Inform the process to identify land for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches	Land identified for the Land Allocation Development Planning Document	2010	Senior Planning Policy Officer Strategic Housing Manager	Surrey County Council	Existing resources
8	Gypsies and Travellers Review the Gypsy and Traveller site agency agreement with Surrey County Council	New agency agreement in place and implemented	2009/10	Strategic Housing Manager Gypsy and Traveller Officer	Surrey County Council	Existing resources

PRIORITY TWO – IMPROVING HOUSING STANDARDS

No.	Action	Deliverable	Completion Date	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
9	Mole Valley Housing Association Identify how the Council can assist the association to replace the non-traditionally built homes at Middlemead, Bookham	Through established joint working arrangements with the Association contribute, as appropriate, to the redevelopment of Middlemead, Bookham	2013	Strategic Housing Manager	Mole Valley Housing Association	Existing resources
10	Mobile home sites Promote the Park Home Assistance Grants to owners of mobile homes using the Council's website, leaflets, local press and when staff are on inspection visits	Leaflet available Information on the website Information annually in the Council's magazine Increased take up of scheme	Monitor uptake annually	Principal Environmental Health Officer - Residential		Existing resources
11	Disabled Facilities Grants Set up a database to track clients as they progress through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) scheme	Improved efficiency and reduced waiting times for DFG applicants A monitoring system to be put in place to identify the efficiencies achieved	2011	Principal Environmental Health Officer - Residential	Anchor Staying Put	Existing resources
12	Making homes energy efficient Promote the Boiler Replacement Scheme and Warmfront top-up grant for vulnerable older people	Leaflet available Information on the website Information annually in the Council's magazine Increased take up of scheme	Monitor uptake annually	Principal Environmental Health Officer - Residential	Anchor Staying Put	Existing resources

PRIORITY THREE – IMPROVING HOUSING & SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

No.	Action	Deliverable	Completion Date	Lead Person / Agency	Partners	Resources
13	Older people Use the older housing needs persons study to develop a strategic plan of action to meet the housing needs of older people	Publish and implement a plan	2010	Strategic Housing Manager	Voluntary sector Surrey Primary Care Trust Housing associations Surrey County Council	Existing resources
14	Older people Participate in Mole Valley Housing Association's review of its sheltered housing stock and strategy for future use	Participated, influenced and supported the review in accordance with the strategic housing plan for older people	2010	Strategic Housing Manager	Mole Valley Housing Association Surrey Supporting People	Existing resources
15	Older people Identify sites for extra care housing schemes	Sites for extra care housing schemes identified	2011	Strategic Housing Manager	Mole Valley Housing Association Surrey County Council Surrey Primary Care Trust	Existing resources
16	Leatherhead Night Hostel Redevelop the Leatherhead Night Hostel to provide improved accommodation and enhanced day and night time service	Night hostel redeveloped Enhanced day and night time service	March 2011	Strategic Housing Manager	Leatherhead Night Hostel Raven Housing Trust Homeless Link Surrey Supporting People Homes and Communities Agency	Homes and Communities Agency Places for Change capital funding £340,000 Leatherhead Night hostel £80,000 Mole Valley District Council £80,000
17	Pitstop Continue to encourage the Pitstop to improve and adopt best practice	Monitor that the Pitstop has implemented health and safety procedures, completed risk assessments and is governed in accordance with the Charity Commission's rules	Annual review of progress	Strategic Housing Manager	Pitstop	Existing resources