



The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Local Housing Strategy

Draft

2007-2012



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Part One

Introduction

Section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires local authorities to produce housing strategies and submit them to the appropriate authority i.e. the Welsh Assembly Government. This revised and enhanced strategy takes account of both national and local policies and priorities and mainstreams key elements from the Homelessness Strategy, BME Strategy and Supporting People Operational Plan.

This strategy builds on the previous Housing Strategy for the Vale of Glamorgan and sets out how the Council will work in partnership to meet the housing requirements of the area, develop solutions and maximise opportunities to improve the well being and quality of life of residents and future residents of the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Strategy for the Vale is still evolving as work continues to identify issues and priorities and consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the way forward. The Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA), which is a crucial part of the evidence base for preparing the Housing Strategy, is still being undertaken; therefore this strategy will be further developed following completion of the LHMA in September 2007 (first draft due in July 2007).

The development of the Strategy has built on the strong links with stakeholders, a partnership approach and a genuine commitment to consultation. The views and feedback from all those who have participated in the various consultation activities for the LHMA to date have provided a foundation for this strategy together with research and knowledge about local housing issues.

The Strategy will be supported by the Housing Business Plan, which details the management, maintenance and investment needs of the council housing stock. The Council will be undertaking a new Stock Condition Survey in 2007 to provide accurate and up to date information to develop the Housing Investment Strategy and ensure the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is met.

Part One of this document provides a context for the Strategy and details the methodology and how the Strategy links to other plans and strategies in the Vale.

Part Two of the Strategy focuses on how each of the aims will be met, however they are not mutually exclusive and interlink to form a cohesive and comprehensive housing strategy for the area.

Part Three is the Operational Plan, which sets out how the aims and target outcomes in the strategy will be met and will be reviewed annually.

Introduction

It has not been considered necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the strategy. However, the strategy has been informed by the work being undertaken by the Vale of Glamorgan Transportation and Planning Service in relation to the Local Development Plan (LDP) and will be integrated and fed into the LDP. The LDP will set out the land use strategy and policies for planning and development in the Vale from 2011 to 2026, including the construction of new housing. The environmental impact of the LDP will be assessed via a Sustainability appraisal (SA) and through the SEA.

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Vision

Our priorities and how we will deliver them have been informed by the views of a range of stakeholders including residents. Our aims are:

- To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing need
- To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes
- To eradicate homelessness and ensure the public have accessible, high quality advice and information on housing matters
- To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community
- To work in partnership to make the Vale a safe and healthy place for residents of all ages.

Local Context

The Vale of Glamorgan Council was established in 1996 following local government reorganisation. It is Wales' most southern unitary authority, bounded to the north by the M4 motorway and to the south by the Severn Estuary. It covers 33,097 hectares with 53 kilometres of coastline, including 19 kilometres of Heritage Coast.

Based on the 2001 Census, the latest population estimate for the Vale is 122,932 (2005 mid-year estimate) and this number is expected to remain stable for the remainder of the decade. The estimated number of households in the Vale is 49,500 (2003 estimate); however, this will continue to grow, to an expected 52,129 households in 2011 and to 53,892 in 2016 as average household size reduces. The table below shows the household composition in the Vale.

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Figure 1: Household Composition

	Vale of Glamorgan (%)	Wales (%)
1 Person - Pensioner	13.79	15.46
1 Person other	12.85	13.69
All pensioners	10.26	9.62
Married – no children	14.40	13.13
Married – dependent children	19.40	17.48
Married – non-dependent children	6.13	6.56
Cohabiting – no children	3.75	3.81
Cohabiting – dependent children	3.35	3.35
Cohabiting – non-dependent children	0.31	0.30
Lone parent – dependent children	7.76	7.28
Lone parent – non-dependent children	2.90	3.36
Other – dependent children	2.08	2.13
All students	0.01	0.42
All pensioner	0.39	0.53
Other	2.61	2.90

Source: ONS 2001 Census

The age profile of the Vale's population is also expected to change; the number of children (age 0 - 15) is forecast to drop from 25,247 in 2006 to 21,926 in 2016 whilst the number of people aged 65+ will increase from 21,338 in 2006 to 26,124 in 2016. The table below details the age of the population of the Vale of Glamorgan and shows that the proportion of older people is slightly lower in the Vale than the national average.

Figure 2: Age Profile

	Vale of Glamorgan (%)	Wales (%)
Aged 0-4 years	6.16	5.78
Aged 5-15 years	15.32	14.44
Aged 16-19 years	5.09	5.06
Aged 20-44 years	31.09	32.44
Aged 45-64 years	25.56	24.89
Aged 65 years and over	16.78	17.39

Source: ONS 2001 Census

During the two years before the 2001 Census 1,828 people moved out of the Vale of Glamorgan area whilst 2,068 people moved in, leading to a net population gain of 240 people. The main outflows of people were to Cardiff, Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf. Similarly, the main inflow of people into the area was from Cardiff, Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

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The main settlements are Barry, Penarth, Llantwit Major, Dinas Powys and Cowbridge. Barry, the largest town with a population of nearly 48,000, is the Vale's administrative centre, a seaside resort and port. Four miles to the west of the town centre, at Rhoose, is Cardiff International Airport.

The unemployment rate in the Vale was 2.4% in March 2007 (down from 2.6% in January 2006). Within the Vale the highest rates were found in Barry, particularly in the wards of Castleland (7.0%), Gibbonsdown (4.7%) and Court (4.4%). In contrast, the rate for the Rural Vale was 1.5%.

Employment is characterised by a high proportion of people in the service sector. Compared with the rest of South East Wales, the Vale has a lower proportion of manufacturing jobs and a higher proportion in distribution, hotels and catering. The Council's on-line Business Directory list details of some 2,400 businesses in the Vale of Glamorgan. The number of VAT registered businesses in 2005 was 2,965 (revised, up from 2,950 in 2004).

In respect of pupil attainment, the Vale of Glamorgan remains one of the highest performing education authorities in Wales. Similarly, health indicators for the Vale are generally good compared to other parts of Wales.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation for Wales (2005) showed the most deprived wards in the Vale of Glamorgan to be Castleland and Gibbonsdown in Barry. These are in the top fifth of the most deprived wards in Wales; a further three Barry wards – Buttrills, Court and Cadoc – are in the second fifth.

The Council is aware of the importance of embracing equality and diversity across the Vale to ensure a healthy and vibrant community embracing the whole of the Vale's population. The Council's black and ethnic minority population is 2.2% with three wards being the most highly populated at 2.5%.

Figure 3: Ethnicity

	Vale of Glamorgan (%)	Wales (%)
White	97.84	97.88
Mixed	0.95	0.61
Asian or Asian British	0.59	0.88
Black or Black British	0.23	0.24
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	0.39	0.39

Source: ONS 2001 Census

The Council is committed to improving dialogue with black and minority ethnic residents to explore views on Council services, any specific needs and experiences of racism or inclusion within their local area. The Council aims to promote good relations between people from all ethnic groups living in the Vale with a view to building a cohesive community where everyone 'has their say' on local issues.

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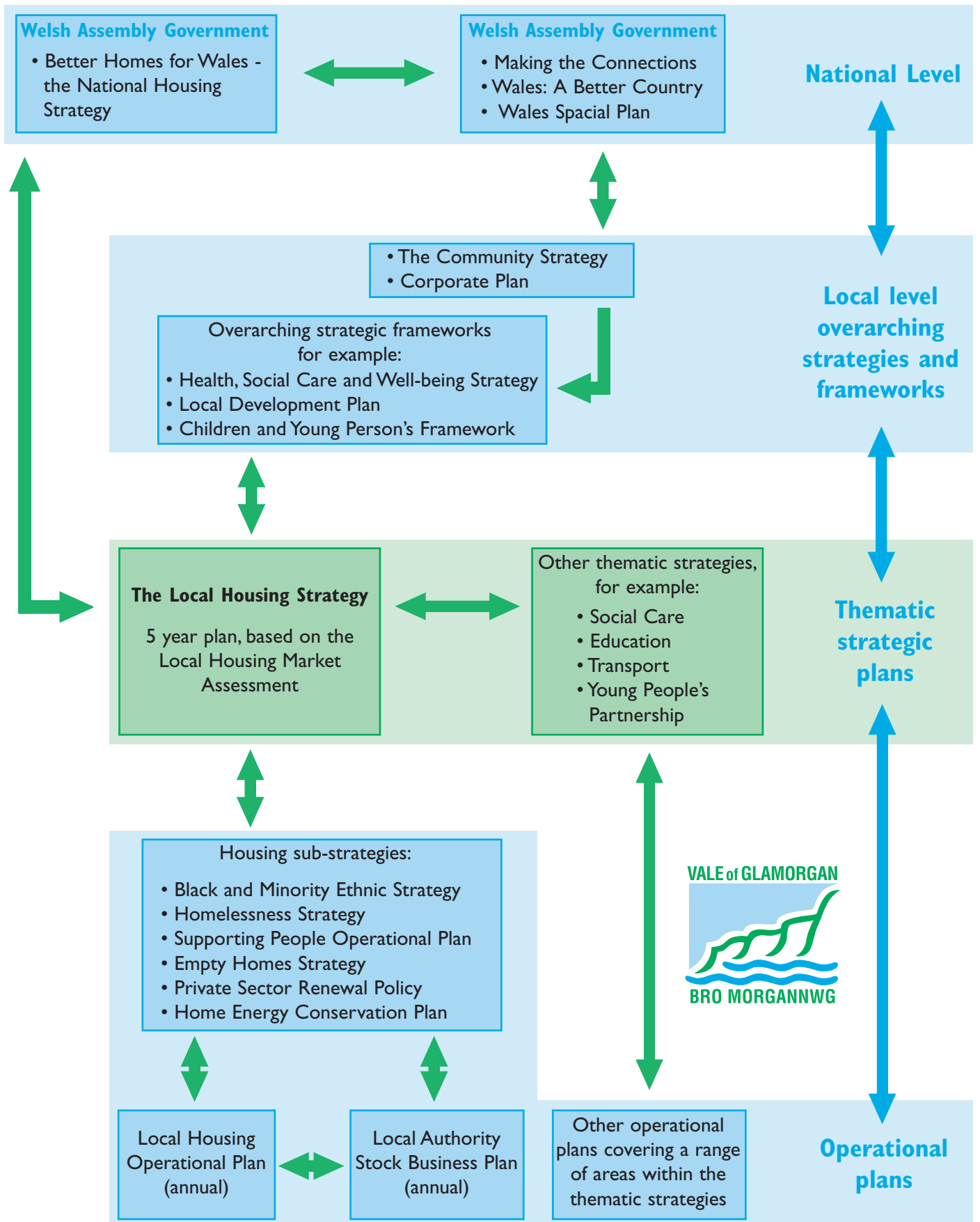
Whilst the percentage of the people who speak Welsh in the Vale has risen considerably it is below the national average (20.5%). The number of Welsh speakers in the 2001 census for the Vale of Glamorgan was 8.8% with almost 20% of the population having some knowledge of the Welsh language.

Disabled people (living with a long term illness) account for 19% of the Vale of Glamorgan's population. The Council recognises that disabled people may have specific access requirements when accessing services and housing and aims to ensure that these requirements are identified and met.

National Housing Strategy

This strategy forms part of a bigger picture in how the Council and its partners are working to improve opportunities and the quality of life for Vale residents. In preparing this strategy due consideration has been given to a range of national, regional and local plans and strategies, including 'Better Homes for People in Wales' (WAG, 2001) which details the National Housing Strategy and outlines four themes of affordability, homelessness, quality and supporting vulnerable groups. These themes are picked up within the aims of the Vale of Glamorgan Housing Strategy.

Figure 4: The Position of the Local Housing Strategy to other strategic planning frameworks and processes



Regional Working

The Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) 2004

The Wales Spatial Plan, published by WAG in 2004 sets out a direction for development in Wales up to 2024 guided by the key principles of valuing the environment, building sustainable communities, increasing prosperity and achieving sustainable accessibility. This is underpinned by a clear recognition for the need for closer collaborative working between public, private and voluntary organisations so as to ensure the goals and objectives of the WSP are delivered effectively to meet the needs of the people of Wales.

The South East Wales Regional Housing Forum

One such area where the Council has successfully worked in partnership with others has been on affordable housing, which the WSP identifies as a key issue that cuts across the aforementioned five themes of the plan. This work has been undertaken through the South East Wales Regional Housing Forum, which includes ten South East local authorities. The forum and WAG are currently looking to fund and appoint two regional housing enablers to work with local authorities to increase the amount of affordable housing in the region.

The South East Wales Regional Housing Forum aims to:

- Facilitate cross-boundary working and make a direct contribution to strengthening the important housing/land-use planning interface
- Ensure consistent interpretation of national policy guidance across the region and develop robust mechanisms through which regional differences are fed upward to influence and inform the national housing policy agenda
- Reinforce and strengthen the profile of the SE Wales Regional Housing Forum and the importance of the strategic housing role of Local Housing Authorities.
- Develop co-ordinated and sustainable approaches across the region to meeting need and demand for housing across the board and to ensure that this is linked to other relevant policy areas which both affect and are affected by housing issues
- Inform housing and other related funding regimes and programmes to ensure the co-ordinated delivery of services both at the local and regional levels

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Other Initiatives

The Council in partnership with nine other South East Wales local authorities has also jointly commissioned a Development Appraisal Toolkit to assist in the financial appraisal of the potential for the incorporation of an element of affordable housing on residential development sites.

The Vale is also undertaking a joint housing market assessment with Cardiff Council to understand the nature and level of housing demand and need within the area.

In addition to this both Councils working in partnership have already developed a supported housing project across the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff. The Vale of Glamorgan Council is also continuing to work in partnership with six South Wales authorities in co-ordinating supporting people services and developing cross-boundary working. The group has been meeting quarterly since its establishment in October 2002. The Group is currently pooling supply and needs data on all client groups in order to look at combined future service priorities and geographical need.

The Council is also working with five other local authorities in South Wales to pilot the WAG Homeloans equity release scheme. The South Wales Loan Consortium is working with partners to agree a contract with Art Homes to deliver Property Appreciation Loans in the Vale.

Local Partnership Working

The Community Strategy

The strategic approach for housing in the private and public sector has a significant contribution to make to achieving the vision set out in the Community Strategy as it is inextricably linked to people's sense of place, their lifestyle and how they perceive and experience life in their community and the area in general. The vision and objectives in the Community Strategy were approved by the Vale of Glamorgan partnership and are shown in the figure overleaf. To help deliver the Community Strategy vision a number of priorities have been identified, including, improving the standards of housing provision. To achieve this, the Council and its partners are working together to improve the availability of quality affordable housing and improve health and well-being through good quality housing provision.

Figure 5: Links between the Vision and Aims of the Community Strategy and the Housing Remit

A vision for the Vale of Glamorgan (Community Strategy)

Our vision for the Vale Of Glamorgan is a place that is safe, clean and attractive, where individuals and communities have opportunities to improve their health, prosperity and well being, and

Where there is a strong sense of community in which local groups and individuals have the capacity and incentive to make an effective contribution to the future of the area.

Overall the Vale of Glamorgan is comparatively wealthy and many of its residents enjoy a high standard of living. However there are areas within the Vale of Glamorgan, which suffer from significant economic, environmental and social difficulties such as unemployment, sub-standard housing, low educational achievement, poor health and high levels of crime. Our vision is to target those areas for improvement while seeking to conserve and enhance the best features of the Vale of Glamorgan so as to raise the quality of life for all who live in the area or visit it for work or recreation.



Aims of the Community Strategy

In tackling those issues that matter to local communities the Community Strategy will aim to:

- Develop a **diversified and sustainable** economy, which will provide a wide range of jobs, increase labour market participation and raise skill levels, where employers take seriously their environmental and social responsibilities
- Promote **lifelong learning opportunities**, which break down barriers to participation and provide opportunities for all members of the community
- Reduce levels of **crime and disorder**, targeting the social and economic factors, which can often encourage crime and disorder or the fear of crime
- Provide improved and better co-ordinated opportunities for **health, social care and well-being**, tackling the disadvantages of vulnerable people and encouraging the individuals to develop healthier lifestyles
- Promote a **sustainable future** by ensuring resources are used more wisely, encouraging environmental awareness and education to improve local environmental quality and instilling a sense of global awareness



The housing and support needs of vulnerable adults covering:

Homeless people, housing for older people, physically disabled people, those experiencing mental ill health, people with a learning disability, substance misuse, offenders and ex-offenders.

Housing, health & well-being covering:

Links between housing standards and poor health, proximity of housing to services, advice on health and housing related issues e.g. fuel and energy conservation

The housing and support needs of vulnerable children and young people covering:

Housing for young people leaving care, housing advice for young people, accommodating those with high needs or at risk, young offenders, those with support issues listed previously

Regeneration & sustainability of housing covering:

The built environment, regeneration policies, rehabilitation and conversion of properties, unfitness and disrepair, quality and housing standards in the public and private sector, affordability, development of new housing (private & public).

The provision of housing services to address the needs of the black and minority ethnic groups.

The provision of advice services relating to housing issues in all tenures.

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Key Partnerships

The development and delivery of the Housing Strategy together with the provision of frontline services, which meet the needs of the Vale, can only be achieved through working in partnership. Detailed below are the key partnerships, which are relevant to housing.

Partnership	Purpose
Residents Boards & Vale Housing Federation	The views of tenants and other residents are sought through Residents' Boards, focus groups, ad hoc consultative mechanisms and surveys. Their role is vital in appraising options and deciding how resources will be used, and helping to deliver objectives. In addition, the Vale Housing Federation – the over arching tenants and residents groups draws membership from housing association tenants' groups and is a key partnership vehicle for developing and improving services locally.
Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)	RSLs play a key role in tackling the need for affordable housing and regeneration in the area. The Vale has 4 main local developing/managing RSLs that meet regularly to discuss progress and performance on development programmes and to develop policies and recommendations on major issues such as anti-social behaviour, choice and common allocations. RSLs are essential partners in delivery of key aspects of the housing strategy, including housing supply, Supporting People and regeneration. Joint work has also taken place with RSLs on the development of a BME Strategy to address housing needs of ethnic minority tenants.
Vale of Glamorgan Supporting People Liaison Group	This is the primary vehicle for involving all stakeholders (service users, service providers, voluntary organisations, statutory agencies). Meetings are held approximately 4 times per year
Vale of Glamorgan Supporting People Planning Group (SPPG)	The group has responsibility for identifying service priorities for future years based on the detailed assessment of the individual Needs Assessment Mechanism (INAM) database, through data collected by other stakeholders and through the supply mapping of existing services. The SPPG group is made up of relevant council officers, Assistant Chief Officer South Wales Area National Probation Service, Vale Local Health Board Officer, Voluntary Sector representative (Vale Housing & Homelessness Forum). In addition to the core membership, stakeholders from a range of organisations who work with vulnerable clients are

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Partnership	Purpose
	invited to each Planning Group meeting, to have input and to submit further needs information to ensure that fully informed decisions on the future service priorities are made.
BME Housing Strategy Group	The group brings together housing providers and voluntary sector agencies to promote best practice, joint working and information sharing. The aim of the group is to promote a clear and well-publicised policy on racial harassment and a consistent approach across all landlords and advice/support agencies in the Vale of Glamorgan.
Vale of Glamorgan Housing and Homelessness Forum	The forum brings together statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure co-ordination of work and identification of areas for improvement in relation to housing, homelessness, advice and support services.
Vale of Glamorgan Partnership	The Vale of Glamorgan partnership acts as the umbrella forum for Community Planning in the Vale. It brings together a small number of senior representatives from key organisations in the Vale to manage the Community Planning process and the preparation of the Community Strategy. The partnership seeks to ensure that the subsidiary Partnerships co-ordinate their activities effectively so as to achieve common objectives and targets.
Safer Vale Community Partnership	<p>The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act is designed to tackle crime and disorder in a coherent and comprehensive way. Alongside measures to improve the criminal justice system, the Act has placed a joint statutory duty on local authorities and the Police to work in partnership and with others to prepare and publish a crime and disorder audit, to formulate a three-year strategy and to consult widely with the local community in doing so.</p> <p>The Partnership includes representatives from the Vale of Glamorgan Council, South Wales Police, National Probation Service, Local Health Board, South Wales Fire Brigade, the voluntary sector and local community groups and businesses.</p> <p>The Safer Vale Partnership has identified the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Misuse • Domestic Abuse • Youth • Prolific and Persistent offenders • Engagement with the Community

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Partnership	Purpose
Anti Social Behaviour Panel	<p>The Panel brings together Council departments, the Police and key partners to consider measures to tackle anti-social behaviour and to keep abreast of legal developments. The group considers the issuing of Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and has also looked at other remedies such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and mediation.</p>
Area Renewal Groups	<p>A number of groups have been established to enable the effective management of all private sector housing, area renewal initiatives throughout the Vale of Glamorgan.</p> <p>Steering Group – includes officers across the Council and provides the strategic direction and monitors the supporting groups</p> <p>Housing Area Renewal Group – includes relevant council officers, Care and Repair, voluntary groups and a Stakeholders Group representative. The role of the group includes the co-ordination of all housing related issues, identifying housing needs in renewal areas to develop housing renewal strategies and to develop housing related bids for renewal priorities.</p> <p>Community Area Renewal Group – successfully develops partnership working and engages local groups such as local voluntary groups, Age Concern, local faith groups, police, health group and the local primary school.</p> <p>Environmental Area Renewal Group – includes membership from relevant council services, local stakeholders and others interested in improving the environment. The work of the group includes undertaking environmental needs assessments.</p> <p>Local Stakeholder Group – provides an ongoing consultation role.</p>
South Wales Energy Partnership	<p>The partnership is based on a number of authorities entering into a preferred supplier arrangement with an Energy Supplier to benefit tenants and reduce fuel poverty.</p>
Health, Social Care and Well-Being Partnership	<p>A multi agency decision making forum (Strategic Executive Group) provides leadership and direction for planning and service decisions. The group includes senior officers from the Local Health Board, Council, Vale Centre for Voluntary Services, Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust and Bro Morgannwg Trust. A Health, Social Care and Well-being Implementation Group has also been established to oversee implementation of the strategy.</p>

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Partnerships	Purpose
Health Through Warmth	This scheme is based on the training of frontline staff from all agencies to recognise cold related symptoms and to refer clients to the Health Through Warmth Co-ordinator. The co-ordinator arranges appropriate energy efficiency grants, including from an emergency fund. Partners include Npower and Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust.
Young Person Protocol Group & Prison Leaver Protocol	The group includes Housing, Social Services, Education, YOT, Supporting People and the Community Safety Partnership and works to ensure a consistent approach to dealing with under 25 year olds and former prisoners in the Vale.

Identifying and Tracking Housing Need

To develop the Housing Strategy and plan for the future it is essential to research and understand the local housing market. To assist with this the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Cardiff City Council have commissioned consultants, Fordham Research to undertake a sub-regional Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA).

Both councils understand that Housing Markets are not constrained by administrative boundaries and that previous study evidence strongly suggests the presence of a Cardiff Housing Market which includes the Vale of Glamorgan. The LHMA has been tailored to provide an evidence base on both a sub regional and Local Authority level.

In addition the Council has previously undertaken a Housing Need Assessment (1999/2001) and a Private Sector Condition Survey (2002). As part of the LHMA the Council will be undertaking a survey into the housing needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community.

A Housing Market Analysis was undertaken in 2003 and the key themes provided an informed assessment of key housing problems and an evidence base for the Housing Strategy 2004-2009. The external drivers impacting on the housing market were identified as being, population growth, economic activity and income, ethnicity, health. The quality and condition of the stock in both the private and the public sector were identified as areas of concern.

Locality Study

A Locality Study undertaken in 2006 (as part of the South East Wales regional study) showed that the Vale has a relatively low proportion of housing stock in the public rented sector and this stock experiences very high levels of demand. The only notable low demand in the public sector is in respect of

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properties specifically designed for older persons. There is also an inadequate supply of single persons general needs housing.

The study showed high levels of private sector development activity in the Vale of Glamorgan, which centres around the main urban settlements. The Authority also experiences an active demand for land in the rural Vale.

The study identified that the net level of housing need in the Vale of Glamorgan is a total of 252 units annually. 247 units are needed annually in the Cardiff Housing Market Area in the Vale, the remaining 5 units in the Bridgend Housing Market area in the Vale. This figure represents 7.1% of housing need in the South East Wales Region.

A number of influences on the housing market were identified including development at Barry Island, RAF St Athan, the Cardiff Housing Market and also the Bristol Housing Market. A further influence on the housing market, is the 'Buy to Let' investment activity with regeneration activity attracting investment in the Cadoxton/Barry area.

The study concluded that the contrasting housing market type areas within the Authority present a number of challenges to the Authority given the diversity that exists between them. The substantial rate of house price growth in recent years means that significant numbers of low income households are now unable to afford entry level properties in the area. Levels of housing need have increased significantly since the 2000 Housing Needs Study.

Both of the housing market areas within the Authority exhibit a net annual shortfall of units of affordable housing, although these vary between the housing market areas.

As levels of housing need have increased in the Vale of Glamorgan there has been a substantial growth in new private sector development in the locality. However, these levels of development have generally been at the higher end of the market producing three bedroom semi detached and three, four and five bedroom detached properties.

In response to this study the Council is working more corporately and with a range of partners to ensure that a supply of affordable homes is developed within the locality, particularly in the Cardiff Housing Market Area in the Vale, and that developers seek to meet the needs of the local market, building a wider range of properties.

Local Housing Market Assessment

This assessment will provide information to help understand the local housing market in the area. The study will provide information on:

- The key drivers of local housing demand and supply
- The level of housing need within the Vale of Glamorgan and across the housing market region

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- The housing requirements of all tenures and client groups
- Information on the size, mix and types of households
- Issues such as migration and economic factors that affect the housing market

The Assessment will provide updated and robust evidence to inform both the Housing Strategy and planning policies.

An important part of the assessment is researching the circumstances and obtaining the views of people who live and/or work locally. This is being achieved by:

- Reviewing existing relevant research
- Undertaking a large scale household survey
- 150 personal interviews and 23,000 postal questionnaires have been distributed and interviews are being undertaken with BME households.
- Obtaining views and information from stakeholders

A stakeholder event was held in April 2007 to discuss key questions and issues surrounding the housing market in Cardiff and the Vale. In addition a detailed survey of estate agents was carried out to investigate trends in local house prices and rents. A community consultation event is being held in July 2007 to canvas the views of the Vale of Glamorgan Citizen Panel.

A summary of the issues identified at the initial stakeholder event is provided below.

The Study Area



- There was general agreement with the housing market area as defined in the map above. People generally accepted that the Cardiff housing market area coincided with most of the study area with western parts being influenced by Bridgend – although estate agents felt that the main western settlements were more strongly orientated to Cardiff.
- The new St Athan military training centre was highlighted in terms of the effect this would have on the infrastructure in the area.

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Affordable Housing

- Stakeholders felt that there was an acute and growing affordability problem. Parts of the study area were financially out of reach to first time buyers.
- The RSLs present stated an increased demand for RSL dwellings due to 'the failure of the traditional market'. They felt that if they were able to charge affordable rents rather than social rents, this would enable them to increase the supply.
- Stakeholders voiced concern about the affordability of shared ownership in the area, particularly the Welsh Home –Buy model. It was stressed that the findings of this study will be able to test the affordability of different housing options.
- It was acknowledged that terraced housing was the predominant house type in most areas, but many are out of reach of first time buyers. This was stressed particularly in the Vale of Glamorgan where prices were extremely high.
- Right to Buy properties were formerly a way of getting onto the housing ladder. Stakeholders felt that these were no longer affordable, and were not much cheaper than other dwellings. They also reported that ex Local Authority owners tended to be on lower incomes and had difficulties maintaining their homes.
- Stakeholders reported a growing number of homeless cases due to repossession and expressed concern about the future impact of interest rate rises

Private Rented Sector

- There was a consensus that the private rented sector has a growing role in the housing market.
- The student market has a significant impact on the private rented sector. The expansion of the University of Glamorgan into Cardiff will bring additional students requiring housing in the private rented sector, which could in the future extend into parts of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Land Supply and Development

- Developers present commented that a factor in the growth in apartments is that brownfield sites restrict the economics of what can be built.
- It was felt that there were a shortage of family and executive homes in the area but that more Greenfield sites would be needed to develop these

Economy and Transport

- The growth of the film and TV media industry was highlighted.
- There is job growth planned in Barry and the M4 corridor area.
- Concern was expressed that there has been relatively low housing development in the Vale of Glamorgan area and as a result there were

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concerns about the housing on offer for professional and managerial workers needed to deliver the jobs.

- Road congestion was highlighted as an increasing problem.
- There were perceptions amongst the group that the train service serving local towns is slow and infrequent and suffers capacity issues.
- It was acknowledged that transport capacity would need to be increased to support the future development of the region.

Land and Policy

- Brownfield sites have been plentiful in recent years in the Barry Docks areas, but now there is increasing pressure on redundant employment land, as well as proposals to increase densities in existing residential areas e.g. by putting additional houses in large gardens or to replace houses in large plots with apartments.
- Greenfield sites for housing were few and far between but more land was to be allocated in new Local Development Plans under preparation.
- Climate change and the risk of flooding are becoming more important considerations.

Vacant Homes

- Concern was expressed about the high levels of vacant homes in the study area.
- The authorities are taking steps to address this issue, but highlighted problems in trying to ensure that for example empty apartments are used for affordable housing purposes.
- Many investors are purchasing properties with no intentions of letting as the increase in property prices is providing the investment return without the need to rent the property out.

Older Persons

- Stakeholders highlighted the need to look at older persons housing, in particular their need for extra care housing. Policy dilemmas of independent living, staying put, under-occupation and lack of options and choices were stressed, and the need for the study to provide evidence to help inform policy decisions was agreed.
- One stakeholder felt that it was important that there wasn't a 'one size fits all' approach, and that people should have options open to them that meet their individual circumstances.

Further consultation is being undertaken focusing on the issues raised. Following completion of the fieldwork for the survey in June a draft report will be considered by the Steering Group and further consultation held with stakeholders regarding the outcome of the study. This event will provide the opportunity to reality check the results and enable stakeholders to comment on the findings. The feedback from stakeholders will then be fed into the final report.

A Housing Strategy for the Vale of Glamorgan

Completion of the LHMA will enable the Council to consult on the Housing Strategy and make any necessary revisions to ensure the final strategy reflects the research undertaken and the views of residents and stakeholders.

House Price Analysis

Drawing from information from the Land Registry it is possible to compare the extent to which house prices in the Vale of Glamorgan have risen in comparison with Wales and England and Wales. Between the 4th quarter in 2001 and the 4th quarter in 2006 property prices in England and Wales have risen by 75%, when considering the increase in Wales separately an increase of 106.8% can be seen. However prices in the Vale of Glamorgan have not increased in line with the region although they are higher than the national average with a price increase of 93.6%.

The table below shows the average prices in the 4th quarter of 2006 for each of England and Wales, Wales and The Vale of Glamorgan. Although the Vale of Glamorgan has house prices higher than regional averages they are still lower than national averages at just 87.7% of the average for England & Wales.

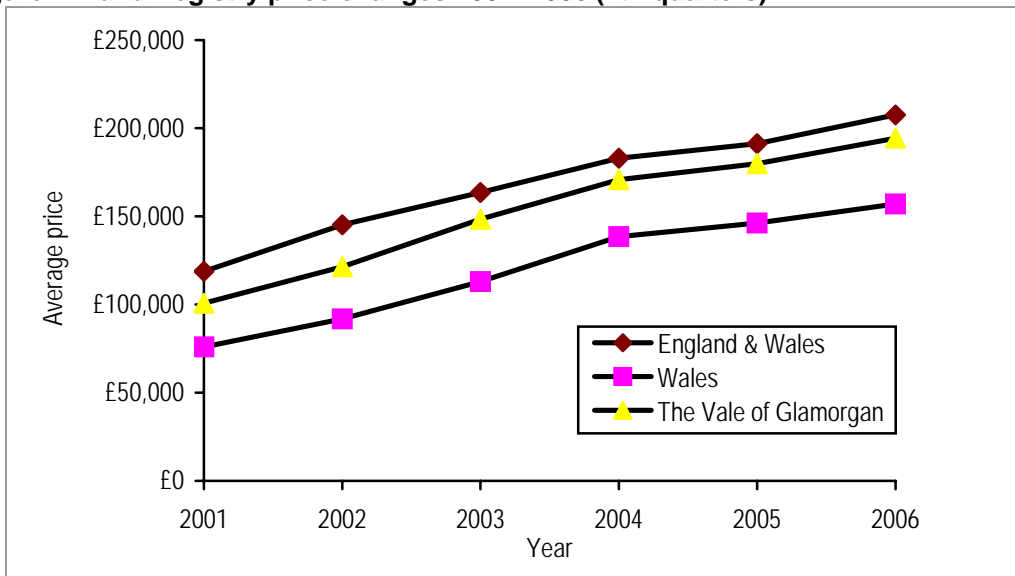
Figure 6: Land Registry average prices (4th Quarter 2006)

Area	Average price	As % of E & W
England & Wales	£207,573	100.0%
Wales	£157,010	75.6%
The Vale of Glamorgan	£194,303	93.6%

Source: Land Registry

Figure 7 shows how property prices have increased in the Vale of Glamorgan, Wales and England and Wales over the last five years.

Figure 7: Land Registry price changes 2001–2006 (4th quarters)



Source: Land Registry

A Housing Strategy for the Vale of Glamorgan

The table below shows average property prices for the county for each dwelling type, this is comparable with the same data from the Wales region. The proportions of dwelling types sold in the Vale of Glamorgan are broadly similar to those in Wales. The highest proportions of properties sold are terraced with flats sold in the smallest proportions. In each of the dwelling types the average prices in the Vale of Glamorgan are more than the corresponding ones for Wales.

Figure 8: Land Registry average prices and sales (4th quarter 2006)

Dwelling type	The Vale of Glamorgan		Wales	
	Average price	% of sales	Average price	% of sales
Detached	£287,400	28.4%	£233,830	27.6%
Semi-detached	£181,039	28.2%	£144,211	29.7%
Terraced	£139,752	36.1%	£114,095	36.5%
Flat/maisonette	£152,989	7.3%	£129,037	6.2%
All dwellings	£194,303	100.0%	£157,010	100.0%

Source: Land Registry

Figure 9 shows minimum entry level prices for a selection of settlements within the Vale of Glamorgan. The areas of Barry, Cowbridge, Llantwit Major and Penarth were the areas chosen for an internet search. The information was collected via an internet search taking the lower quartile as the entry level price. The minimum entry level for a two bedroom property averaged over the county is around £142,000 however in Barry it is possible to access the market with a two bedroom property for around £105,000, Cowbridge is the most expensive area for purchasing a property.

Figure 9: Minimum entry levels into the Vale of Glamorgan

	Barry	Cowbridge	Llantwit Major	Penarth
Bedrooms	To buy			
1 bed	£106,000*	£135,000*	na	£120,000
2 bed	£105,000	£169,500*	£145,000*	£162,950
3 bed	£124,950	£240,000	£174,950	£179,950
4 bed	£169,950	£389,000	£219,500	£250,000

Note: Data collected through internet search. The lower quartile property was taken as an entry level.

** indicates a sample of fewer than 10*

Na-no data available

Monitoring Delivery of the Strategy

Implementation and monitoring of the Strategy will be delivered through the Housing Strategy Steering Group, which is being established and builds on the joint work undertaken by the LHMA Steering Group. It will also be monitored through the corporate service-planning framework and there will be regular progress reports to the Council's Community Well-Being and Safety Scrutiny Committee.

Equal Opportunities

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has adopted the Equality Standard for local government in Wales. The standard aims to mainstream equality issues into the Council's decision-making process. The Council has conducted a self-assessment audit, which indicates that the Council has achieved level 2 of the standard. We are currently working towards level 3.

The Council has adopted a comprehensive equality policy and is committed to achieving equality in race, gender, language, disability, age, sexual orientation and religious belief.

The Council is committed to improving equality practice through its equality policies and performance management framework. Service planning in the Council, including housing incorporates regular analysis of relevant service specific equality issues and setting of specific equality targets.

Equality implications are considered in all reports to the Executive, which includes an 'equalities checklist' to identify issues and allocate resources as part of the decision making process.

All of the Council's literature is made available in English and Welsh and regular consultation is undertaken with the public, stakeholder groups and staff through focus groups, the citizen panel and specific groups on a range of issues, including housing. The Council's consultation strategies also include guidance on ensuring that consultation is accessible. Traditionally 'hard to reach' and minority groups are specifically targeted for inclusion.

In addition to these measures, in February 2007 the following Housing and Community Safety policies underwent independent Housing Equality Impact Assessment:

- Homelessness and Housing Advice
- Void management and Lettings
- Housing and Estate Management
- Supporting People
- Housing Strategy
- Environmental Health (Housing)
- Energy Management
- Community Safety (including CCTV)
- Housing Grants

This is in line with the National Assembly for Wales document, 'Better Homes for People in Wales. A National Housing Strategy for Wales 2001, which recognises that everyone has the right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect and will not encounter discrimination of any kind.

Equal Opportunities

The Organisation also has procedures in place to collect equality monitoring data relating to service delivery and an Equalities Consultative Forum and officers working group audit performance and progress against the standard, with results published in the local media, including the Council's own newspaper 'Vale Waves'.

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

Part Two

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

The Land Use Planning Framework

The current land use planning framework for housing is set out in the Adopted Vale of Glamorgan Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996-2011) and contains a number of policies on housing, including affordable housing.

In 2006 the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) that sets out the Council's requirements for the provision of affordable housing. At present both the UDP and SPG require the provision of at least 20% affordable housing on sites that can accommodate more than 50 dwellings.

Since the adoption of the SPG the Council has secured affordable housing at:

- Anchor Way, Penarth Haven
- Site of the St Athan Methodist Church, St Athan
- Jackson Quay, The Waterfront Barry

The recent appointment by the Council of a section 106 officer to implement and monitor the provision of affordable housing through legal agreements (known as 106 agreements) between the Council and private sector developers shall further assist in the delivery of affordable housing.

Despite these achievements, the Council recognises that current UDP site thresholds reduce opportunities for securing affordable housing. This is most acute in rural communities where the capacity of development sites falls considerably below that which is currently required.

Therefore opportunity for the Council to review the existing UDP site thresholds and policies for affordable housing will be undertaken as part of the Council's work on the emerging Local Development Plan, which will replace the existing UDP on its expiry in 2011. The review will be informed by the findings of the final joint LHMA, and accords with Welsh Assembly Government guidance on affordable housing as set out in Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2 Planning & Affordable Housing (2006).

Affordable Housing

The close proximity of the Vale to Cardiff and the attraction of the Vale as an accessible and desirable place to live have led to a high demand for housing. Consequently, house prices in the Vale of Glamorgan have risen significantly

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

in the last five years. In 2001 the average house price was £100,363 and in 2006 £194,303. These figures show an increase of 93.6% over the period.

Inevitably this has exerted significant upward pressure on local house prices despite the fact that average earnings from employment within many areas of the Vale are substantially below the South Wales average. As a result, the difference between local earnings and house prices - the 'affordability gap' - has widened significantly since 1997 and, at current levels, presents an enormous barrier for many potential first-time buyers seeking to enter the market.

Housing Tenure

The table below shows the tenure composition for the Vale in comparison to Wales. Owner occupation levels are higher than the average for Wales but the private rented sector is relatively small and the council housing sector is around half the national average.

Figure 10: Tenure Composition

	Vale of Glamorgan (%)	Wales (%)
Owns outright	32.53	33.99
Owns with mortgage	44.93	36.84
Shared ownership	0.34	0.49
Council	8.86	13.73
HA	4.08	4.17
Private	6.43	7.43
Other	2.83	3.34

Source: ONS 2001 Census

Housing Supply Pressures

In contrast to the increasing demand for housing, the supply of affordable and social rented homes has been constrained by a number of factors such as sales of council houses under Right to Buy (RTB); dwindling supply of land on which to build any future homes; and RSL replacement housing being less than 25% of the amount sold under the RTB. There is insufficient supply of single person's general; needs housing to meet statutory homeless people's needs and to meet a sustained high demand from younger single people. The demand for family housing remains stable although this is also the type of housing which is most likely to be sold under the Right-to-Buy provisions. The public sector is growing very slowly, at a rate of less than 50 units per year. Furthermore the net effect of Right-to-Buy sales is a steady loss of at least 50+ units every year. This means that the supply is insufficient to meet the demand for affordable housing in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is anticipated that

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

by 2008/09, on current trends the number of lettings will have reduced from 576 in 2001/02 to 351.

The securing of affordable housing through land use planning is considered to be a key mechanism for assisting in addressing affordable housing needs in the Vale of Glamorgan. For the purposes of the strategy, affordable housing is defined as housing provided to those whose needs are not met by the market, and should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at low enough cost for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices; and
- Include provision for the home to remain affordable for future eligible households, or if a home ceases to be affordable or To full ownership takes place, any subsidy should generally be recycled to provide replacement affordable housing.

It includes:

- Social rented housing
- Intermediate market housing

The Council has already introduced a number of mechanisms to increase the supply of affordable housing and these include:

- Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Three Dragons toolkit
- Affordable Housing Eligibility Criteria
- Use of S106 Agreements
- Housing /Planning Officers Board
- Resale Covenant Scheme
- Community Housing Agreements
- Affordable Housing Toolkit

(Source- Preparing Local Housing Strategies, page 48, WAG 2007)

A review of surplus housing land will be undertaken in September 2007 to assist in developing proposals and opportunities to increase affordable housing. In addition there will be consideration of other local authority land assets based on the strategic priorities of the Council. In addition a Strategic Development Group to include partner RSLs and Planning Officers will be established.

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

Regional Housing Enablers

As previously outlined in this document, part of the work being undertaken with the South East Wales Regional Housing Forum, is the joint funding and appointment of two Regional Housing Enablers. Their remit will include the following strategic and operational roles:

Strategic Role

- Assessment of affordable housing across the region
- Section 106 agreements
- Review of Supplementary Planning Guidance in use across the region
- Assist planning departments with the development and implementation of affordable housing planning policies across the region
- Mapping of proposed affordable across the region to feed into the spatial plan process, complimenting work of the regional co-ordinator
- Dissemination of relevant good practice or legislative changes throughout the region to ensure opportunities for cohesion and joint working are maximised where ever possible

Operational Role

- Assist Local Authorities with the negotiation of affordable housing, possible through the use of the Dragons toolkit
- Forward planning with local authorities to specify the level of affordable housing which will be required on sites
- Potential co-ordination across the Heads of the Valleys for the provision of affordable housing throughout the region
- Work closely with all partner RSLs, WAG, developers, landowners and rural housing enablers to identify possible development opportunities for affordable housing

Social Housing Grant / Private Finance

Increasing pressure on the Social Housing Grant programme has impacted heavily on the potential to deliver increasing numbers of publicly subsidised affordable housing units within the Vale of Glamorgan. The Council will need to continue to work closely with RSLs and developers to identify and maximise innovative affordable housing schemes where public subsidy is not available, including looking at the possible use of RSLs own financial resources. In addition the importance of securing additional affordable housing opportunities through S106 agreements will be given added importance and the appointment of the S106 officer will strengthen the enabling role.

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

Registered Social Landlords

The role of local RSLs in the Local Housing Strategy process is of considerable significance. Changes occurring in the social housing sector at this time, in particular the more 'interventionist' and enabling role adopted by local authorities, has important implications for the housing authority/RSL relationship.

RSLs play a key role in tackling the need for affordable housing, regeneration and sustainable development in the county. The Vale has four main local developing/managing RSLs that meet regularly to discuss progress and performance on development programmes and to develop policies and recommendations on major issues such as anti-social behaviour, choice and common allocations. RSLs are essential partners in delivery of key aspects of the Housing Strategy, including affordable housing supply, Supporting People and regeneration.

Each of the four RSLs, Hafod Housing Association, Newydd Housing Association, United Welsh Housing Association and Wales & West Housing Association, have made a financial contribution to the current LHMA being undertaken with Cardiff City Council. Joint work has taken place with RSLs on the development of a BME Strategy and Anti Social Behaviour Strategy. In addition to this, they are also active within the following partnership groups:

- Anti Social Behaviour Joint Working Group
- Community Safety Partnership
- Creating a Safer Environment Task Group
- South Wales Strategic Management Board for Multi Agency Public Protection
- Barry Regeneration Board
- Community Advisory Panel
- Community Enterprise Service
- Community Housing Agreement Meetings
- Communities First Community Forum
- Communities First Partnership Boards
- Creative Rural Communities
- Environmental Forum
- Healthy Eating Project
- Housing Benefit Liaison Group
- Pensioners Forum
- Race Advisory Committee
- Sheltered Housing Opportunities for Unique Tenant Involvement (SHOUT)
- Supporting People Liaison Group
- Supporting People Planning Groups
- Vale Council for Voluntary Services
- Vale Housing & Homelessness Forum
- Vale Housing Federation
- Vale Partnership
- Vine (Youth) Project

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

The four partner RSLs manage and own some 2,000 units of accommodation. The majority of these units are social rented but also include a smaller proportion of Low Cost home Ownership properties.

Working with the RSLs in agreeing approved development programmes the following additional housing units have been delivered between 2004 and 2007:

Figure 11: RSL units delivered 2004/07

Area	Number of Units
Barry Waterfront	61
Barry	91
Rhose	7
St Athan	2
Llantwit Major	2
Penarth	66
Total	229

The following pipeline units have also been identified for delivery between 2007 and 2010. Some of these units are still awaiting Social Housing Grant approval from the Welsh Assembly Government from the bidding round for 2008/10 for which the Council submitted bids of over £10 million.:

Figure 12: RSL Pipeline Schemes 2007/10

Area	Number of Units
Barry Waterfront	20
Barry	189
St Athan	16
Vale of Glamorgan Homebuy	15
Total	240

In addition to the future developments listed above, the Council is also continuing to work with Crest Nicholson and their preferred RSL partner to develop approximately 75 additional mixed tenure units of affordable housing. These will be built on the former Harbour View and Royal Close sites in Penarth. Planning permission has already been sought from the Vale of Glamorgan Council and a decision is likely in the Autumn of 2007.

Low Cost Home Ownership Policy

In December 2003 the Council introduced a new LCHO policy amalgamating the LCHO application route into the HOMES4U scheme. There is now one process for both applying for rented housing with the Council and accessing LCHO developed through Section 106 agreements.

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

Sustainable Development

In keeping with the philosophy of 'think globally, act locally', the Council seeks to encourage all development to be carried out in ways that minimise negative environmental impacts and make best use of natural resources. Promoting sustainable development is therefore central to the corporate objectives of the Council.

Accordingly the Council has developed supplementary planning guidance on sustainable development that highlights to developers the importance and benefits of ensuring that sustainability is taken into account at the earliest stages. This guidance also requires developers of new housing to submit a statement of sustainability, explaining how their proposal promotes sustainable development.

A Sustainability Checklist has been developed to assist with Statements of Sustainability which must address the following:

- Site Layout and density
- Transport and Movement
- Energy Conservation and Efficiency
- Low/Zero Carbon Energy Sources and Systems
- Low embodied Energy Material and Resource Efficiency
- Street Lighting to Minimise Pollution
- Water Conservation and Sustainable Drainage
- Waste Management
- Landscape, Trees and Ecology

In securing housing the Council shall actively engage with developers to ensure that housing contributes towards creating sustainable communities. This will be aided further through the introduction by the Welsh Assembly Government the requirement for all new house built using Social Housing Grant to meet the Ecohomes 'Very Good' standard for energy efficiency.

Transport

There are key links between the Local Transport Plan and the Local Housing Strategy since the location of new and existing housing can have a major impact on transport issues. Housing developments need to be accessible by a variety of means of transport such as cycling, on foot and by public transport. Accordingly, transport and accessibility are seen as key factors for the creation of sustainable communities. This means ensuring that housing developments have good access to local shops, schools, and employment, leisure and health facilities.

Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing needs

Defence Training Academy at St Athan

The proposed development of a Training Academy at St Athan will bring a large number of highly skilled jobs to the Vale and will transform the area for decades. There will however be many challenges to meet in terms of necessary infrastructure, education, skills and housing. The implications for housing will be considered and consulted upon as part of the planning process and wider discussions around the investment at St Athan.

Key Challenges and Activities:

- Exclusion of low income households from the local housing market due to rising house prices
- Shortfall in the supply of affordable housing
- Lack of sites for the development of affordable housing
- Provision of affordable housing in rural areas
- Carry out a LHMA and Housing Needs Survey
- Review of existing SPG guidance following LHMA findings
- Promotion of LCHO schemes
- Assessing and addressing the housing implications of the development at St Athan
- Meeting the Ecohomes 'Very Good' standard for energy efficiency

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Social Housing

Stock Retention and the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)

Following a Housing Options Appraisal carried out in 2004, the Council identified stock retention as the preferred option to providing quality-housing services for its tenants and residents. During 2005 the Council engaged consultants to provide financial, management and housing consultancy and to report on how to implement this option successfully.

Three factors were identified as the criteria for successful stock retention:

- The ability to achieve the WHQS
- The financial viability of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) (it is unlawful to plan for a deficit)
- The sustainability of the relationship with customers.

Using the work undertaken in 2005/2006, the Council have undertaken an update of the financial analysis and re-assessed the options for achieving the WHQS by 2012 and a viable HRA over 30 years.

Through the Option Appraisal stages tenants clearly expressed their opinion that the Council should retain the stock. In recognition that tenant engagement be at the core of all decisions made by the Council in respect to the Housing Stock Retention Strategy and especially in developing work programmes, the Council has funded two new posts of Tenant Development Coordinator and Tenant Development Support Officer to ensure effective communication with tenants and residents.

The result of the analysis undertaken by the consultants is that stock retention is an option for the Council as the WHQS can be met by 2012 and a sustainable revenue account exists. The funding required to achieve the WHQS is currently calculated at £60 million.

However the viability of the HRA is dependent upon the assumptions and actions included in the HRA Business Plan:

- Management costs reducing by 1% each year for 15 years to reflect efficiency savings together with other significant revenue savings
- Capital receipts from Right to Buy, land and Penarth Heights sales being received
- Prudential borrowing of £34.78 million
- Commission a new Stock Condition Survey

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

- Review Service Charges for implementation for 2008 / 2009
- Reduce by £200,000 the recharge to HRA from Building Maintenance Client from 2008 / 2009 onwards.
- Identify potential HRA Land Asset sales totalling at least £3 million by 2008 / 2009.
- Approve In principle, Prudential Borrowing of £34.780 million should Stock Retention remain viable from 2009 / 2010

Approval by the Cabinet in April 2007 for the interim investment programme and stock condition survey demonstrates the continued support for retaining the housing stock.

Maintenance of the Public Housing Stock

In order to ensure the viability of the Council's Housing Stock Retention Policy it is essential that a new Housing Stock Condition Survey be carried out. This will allow the Council to confirm its future funding requirements and will better able the Council to plan long-term maintenance / improvement programmes of work. A 10% random sample survey of the Councils Housing stock has been commissioned which will better able the Council to proceed to the design, procurement and implementation stages for the programmed work packages. It is intended that the results of this work will be available in the autumn of 2007.

The Council's Housing Business Plan was submitted to WAG in March 2007 together with an interim Investment plan for 2007/2008 and 2008/09 pending the commissioning and procurement of a new Housing Stock Condition Survey. The Plan is funded through the Council's allocation of Major Repairs Allowance from WAG and its own resources.

The Council intends to invest £11m over the next 2 years in the following programmes of work:

- completing a window and door replacement programme - estimated at £2.5m - on around 650 homes in Barry, Penarth and the western Vale;
- flat roof renewals - estimated at £1.9m - at the Gibbonsdown and Shakespeare estates in Barry;
- pitched roof renewals - estimated at £304,000 - in Llantwit Major;
- central heating and boiler work - estimated at £1.5m - across the Vale;
- electrical, i.e., rewiring and smoke alarms and detectors - estimated at £600,000 - across the Vale;
- fascias, soffits and guttering - estimated at £350,000 - in Barry, Penarth and Dinas Powys, and
- rebuilding of boundary, garden and retaining walls - estimated at £75,000.

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Work programmes for the remaining years to 2012 will be prepared from the Council's 2007 Housing Stock Condition Survey.

Registered Social Landlords and the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)

The four RSLs in the Vale of Glamorgan are also required to meet the requirements of the WHQS by 2012 and have each already put together a programme of works over the next five years and beyond to achieve this through Business Planning and Asset Management Strategies. They are also carrying out work to identify and action community based initiatives to improve the environment.

To assist in achieving the WHQS, each of the RSLs is a member of a development consortium formed with other registered social landlords in Wales through which work and materials can be procured in bulk through locally based contractors and suppliers where possible.

Private Sector Housing Renewal

The 2002 Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey helped define four main local priorities:

Area based - The survey revealed an uneven geographical spread of unfitness and also its concentration in the pre-1919 housing stock. This concentration is the main driver for the council's allocation of resources through area renewal and may assist in the development of future smaller scale area based approaches.

Client based - The survey revealed the association of poor housing conditions with social and economic disadvantage affecting the elderly in particular, together with those on low incomes and on state benefit support.

Sector Based - The survey revealed an uneven distribution of unfitness in particular housing sectors, primarily the private rented sector, pre-1919 terraced housing and vacant dwellings.

Theme Based - The survey revealed that although home energy efficiency in private housing is close to the national average there are estimated to be 12,920 households (28%) living in fuel poverty.

Through consultation the Council agreed a number of policy interventions aimed at the regeneration of the private sector housing stock on an individual and area basis: -

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Area Renewal and Regeneration

Renewal Areas form an integral part of the Council's Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy and enable the Authority to focus action on a particular community with area-based action. The areas that have been declared have high housing, social and environmental need, which makes them a priority and enables sustainable action to be targeted at them. The aims of a Renewal Area are to: -

- Improve Housing
- Improve general amenities and the local environment
- Develop partnerships
- Increase community and market confidence
- Maximise external investment into the area
- Reverse the decline of an area

Group Repair Schemes are the main tool of Renewal Areas and involve the complete renovation of the external envelope of a group of houses and flats in one project. Renewal Areas also incorporate wider regeneration issues with community and environmental benefits that enhance the appearance of an area.

Penarth Central Renewal Area

The Council allocates £500,000 per year to fund housing renewal in the Penarth Central Renewal Area. This is allocated for Group Repair, individual renovation grants etc. and Environmental and Community schemes. Penarth Central Renewal Area is currently the Council's only Renewal Area and was declared in November 2000. The area has 544 dwellings, 87% of which are in owner occupation. 38% of the residents are in receipt of one or more means tested benefits. In recognition of the wider regeneration issues and following the appointment of a Renewal Area Officer a new management structure was established to facilitate Corporate leadership of the initiatives with the aim of 'joined up' working by the Council and its many Partners. A Steering Group is used to prioritise schemes and determine an action plan for the area. Schemes are proposed by the Area Renewal Groups with comments and active participation of the Old Penarth Community Forum. Housing, Environmental, and Community Renewal Area Groups have been established to identify the needs of the local community and to develop and implement projects to meet them. The Old Penarth Community Forum has been established to ensure the participation of the people who live, visit or work in the area. An ambitious programme of group repair is now well underway and is due for completion in 2007 – 2008.

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Environmental Health (Housing) Enforcement

Standards in the Private Sector

The 2002 Private Sector House Condition Survey identified that the private rented sector contained the highest incidence of 'unfit' housing and also carried the highest repair costs of all tenures in the Vale.

The housing likely to be in greatest need of repair are the 300 (approximately) Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). These dwellings tend to be the older, larger properties that have been converted into individual units of accommodation and many of these properties are poorly or inadequately managed.

Regulation using the Housing Act 2004

The private rented sector provides a very valuable source of accommodation for people in the Vale and the majority of privately rented properties are well managed and maintained. Regulation is however necessary to ensure that standards are met and that landlords act responsibly. The Council's Environmental Health (Housing) Enforcement Team is responsible for regulating and licensing private sector properties using the powers of the Housing Act 2004:

- The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) enables the team to respond to tenant complaints regarding the condition of their accommodation. An assessment is made of the suitability of the accommodation for its occupants and appropriate enforcement action is taken as required.
- Higher risk HMOs of 3 storeys or more will be licensed under the mandatory licensing scheme. Additional licensing is an option for lower risk HMOs and is being considered for future use.
- Concentrations of privately rented properties also have the potential to cause an element of instability within existing communities. Selective licensing is an additional new measure that is now available to the Authority to help tackle issues such as persistent anti social behaviour. Consideration will be given to the introduction of a selective licensing scheme.
- The Environmental Health (Housing) Enforcement Team is also responsible for the licensing of 5 permanent residential caravan sites across the Vale. This form of accommodation provides a valuable source of accommodation for residents, such as retired people living on park home estates.

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Figure 13: Rates of Disrepair

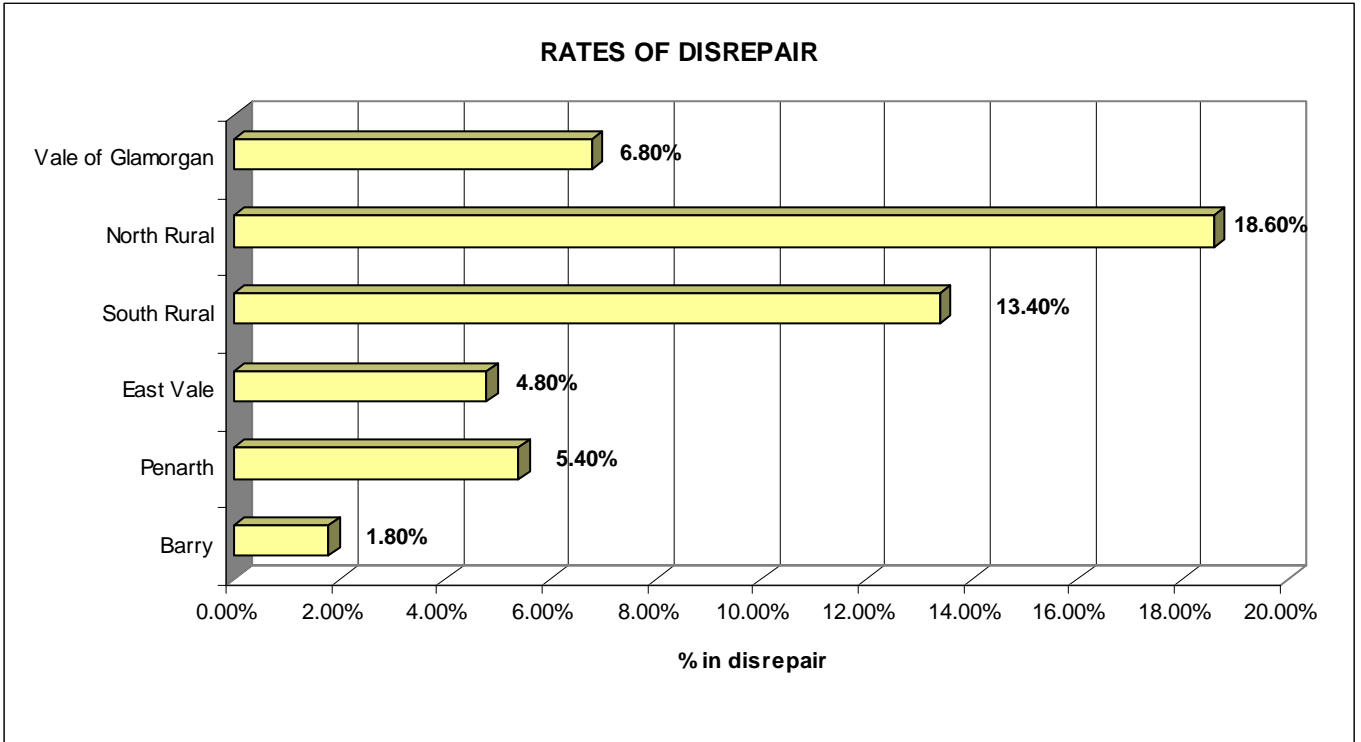
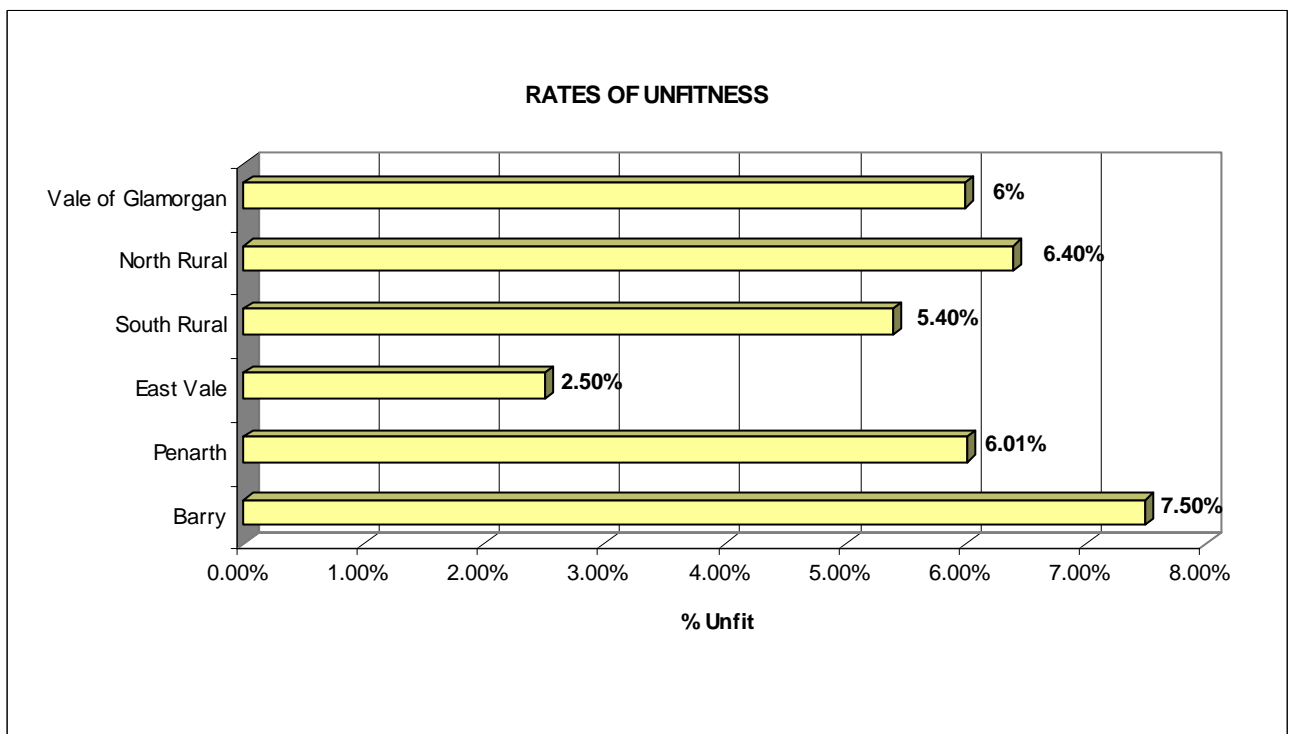


Figure 14: Rates of Unfitness



Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Support for Landlords

Over regulation of the private rented sector can discourage landlords from entering or remaining in the market. As this is a very valuable source of housing for the Vale's residents the Environmental Health (Housing) Enforcement Team is keen to ensure that the necessary advice and support is provided to landlords through the Private Sector Landlords' Forum. The Forum brings together officers, landlords and other professionals to discuss new legislation and to advise on its implementation in the Vale. For example, landlords have recently been consulted on both the renewal area assistance regime and the mandatory licensing process.

Through the forum more landlords will be encouraged to assist in meeting the housing needs within the Vale. And increase the number of landlords supporting the Vale Assisted Tenancy Scheme (VATS).

In addition the Council is collaborating with WAG to develop an all Wales accredited landlord training scheme.

Empty Homes

Despite high house prices and significant demand for properties in the Vale, there are still a number of empty properties within the private sector. As of the 1st of April 2007 there were 816 long term vacant homes (those empty for more than 6 months on that date).

Although this figure is low it is recognised that empty properties are a wasted resource and often have a detrimental impact on the neighbourhoods in which they are located. Vacant homes are often a visual problem to the community and can cause additional problems such as vermin, rubbish dumping, vandalism and anti social behaviour.

These problems are currently addressed through action by the Environmental Health (Housing) Enforcement Team as part of the reactive service provided.

A review of the Council's approach to empty homes will be carried out to include

- The need for a revised empty homes strategy
- Procedural guidance on dealing with empty homes
- Guidance on the use and application of Empty Dwelling Management Orders

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

Homeloans Equity Release Scheme

The Council is also working with five other local authorities in South Wales to pilot the WAG Homeloans equity release scheme. The South Wales Loan Consortium is working with partners to agree a contract with Art Homes to deliver Property Appreciation Loans in the Vale.

Funding is in place for 2007/2008 and when the contract is agreed loans will be offered to homeowners. The aim is for customers to be able to release monies to undertake essential maintenance repairs increasing the standard of housing conditions across the Vale of Glamorgan.

Energy Efficiency

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 required that the Council should produce a plan on how a 30% improvement in energy efficiency could be achieved and then to report on progress each year. The Council has already achieved an 11.7% improvement and by April 2007 this will have risen to around 14%. The process will now be repeated to establish a target for 2020 together with the necessary actions and resources required.

By January 2009 Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) will be required on all house sales and advertised tenancy changes. One of the key effects of EPCs will be to improve the accuracy of data held on local authority housing. The nature of the certificates will highlight practical work that can be carried out to improve the energy efficiency of those homes. Furthermore, in the private sector, EPCs may provide the information and incentive for energy efficiency work to be carried out at cost to the private individual.

There is an aspiration to comply with the energy efficiency components of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2012, with both the Council and RSLs having to meet a minimum Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating to comply. In order to comply with this standard the Council will consider the more problematic homes within its portfolio, such as solid wall properties and those with un-insulated roofs that require removal in order that insulation can be installed. In addition, many heating systems will require replacement in order to bring the stock up to the required standard.

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, (HECA) has resulted in the formation of many forums throughout the UK. The Council participates in several forums within Wales whose purpose is to share best practice for improving energy efficiency within Welsh housing and to achieve “affordable warmth” for its residents. In particular, the Wales HECA forum brings together energy officers from the majority of Welsh local authorities and is the main forum for dealing with HECA issues. The forum also serves as a contact point

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

for organizations such as the Wales Audit Office, EAGA Ltd (the organization that administers the HEES grant scheme) as well as WAG.

The Council has also negotiated a service level agreement the South East Wales Energy Agency, commonly known as the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) to provide a range of services including energy efficiency advice for householders.

Incentives

The Council will continue to highlight and publicise grant schemes that enable householders to improve the energy efficiency and/or reduce the carbon emissions associated with the running of their home. An Affordable Warmth Action Plan is being developed and will be published during 2007. The Action

Plan will show the practical steps that can be taken to reach, and improve the energy efficiency of the homes of those who under normal circumstances would remain in cold damp, and poorly heated homes.

Health Through Warmth

The Health Through Warmth Scheme has been running since October 2002 and aims to help those with long term debilitating illness to improve their living conditions principally by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. This is achieved by facilitating the installation of energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation and providing heating when it is required.

The scheme has helped over 800 households and trained over 700 Key Workers. The monthly referrals have more than doubled in the last year due to more publicity and increased knowledge of the scheme. A total of £25,385 has been awarded by charities and trusts to clients and it has been calculated that the measures installed have resulted in a reduction in emissions of 650 Tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum.

Key Challenges and Activities:

- Improving the Council's housing stock and achieving the WHQS by 2012
- Ensuring stock retention is viable through an effective HRA Business Plan
- Maintaining and developing a good relationship with tenants and residents
- Undertaking Stock condition surveys of the Council housing stock and the private sector
- Development of an Affordable Warmth Action Plan
- Improve energy efficiency in domestic properties
- Making the links between housing and health through housing renewal work
- Maximising the benefits of renewal with limited resources

Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes

- Identification of a new renewal area
- Regulation of the private rented sector to improve and maintain standards.
- Raising awareness raising of services for private sector housing both for professionals and the public
- Providing a Reactive Housing Standards enforcement service
- Providing a Proactive Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) inspection and enforcement programme in relation to High-Risk properties.
- Work with WAG to develop an accredited landlord training scheme
- Review and update as necessary Caravan Site licence conditions.
- Piloting a Home Loans Equity Release Scheme
- Review the Empty Homes Strategy

Aim 3: To eradicate homelessness and ensure the public have accessible, high quality advice and information on housing matters

Aim 3: To eradicate homelessness and ensure the public have accessible, high quality advice and information on housing matters

The Homelessness Strategy 2004/2009

Preventing and tackling homelessness is part of a broader WAG agenda of tackling inequality and social exclusion. Better Homes for People in Wales, the report of the Homelessness Commission, the National Homelessness Strategy and the Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness are key national policy documents, which have influenced the development of the Homelessness Strategy.

The Council's Homelessness Strategy has also been informed by the findings of a comprehensive review of homelessness in the Vale and by empirical primary research. It has been developed within the local context of the Vale taking account of recognised best practice in Wales and the UK.

The development of the Homelessness Strategy was overseen by the Vale Housing and Homelessness Forum. The strategy uses the Welsh Assembly Government's Homelessness Commission definition of homelessness, which is:

'where a person lacks accommodation or where their tenure is not secure.'

The local context is a key determining factor for the priorities identified in the Homelessness Strategy and the Homelessness Prevention Plan. These priorities have been divided into four key objectives:-

- Preventing homelessness and repeat homelessness from occurring wherever possible, thereby reducing homelessness
- Ensuring the provision of effective homelessness and housing advice services
- Ensuring the adequate supply of appropriate support and accommodation, both temporary and permanent
- Informing the public and involving users in developing and improving services

Reviewing the Strategy

In 2006 the Vale's Community Well-being and Safety Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of the Homelessness Strategy. The review involved consultation, visits to other authorities and consideration of best practice.

Aim 3: To eradicate homelessness and ensure the public have accessible, high quality advice and information on housing matters

The review measured the gaps between the National Homelessness Strategy and the Vale's local Homelessness Strategy and made a number of recommendations, which are being incorporated into the Vale's Homelessness Prevention Action Plan.

The recommendations from the scrutiny review included:

- That the Executive Member with the Housing portfolio be designated the Champion for homelessness issues within the Vale of Glamorgan.
- That homelessness issues be linked to the Community Strategy and be included in future issues of the Corporate Plan.
- That Vale of Glamorgan's Section 180 funding be allocated to the same organisations that received the funding in 2006/7.
- That a Housing Service Review and reconfiguration of existing staff resources so that prevention was the initial response to all homelessness enquiries, is undertaken as part of the service review.
- That funding of £30,000 for a feasibility study to consider developing a multi-agency information website and housing advice centre is undertaken.
- That the appointment of a new Private Sector Co-ordinator is undertaken
- That the ANITE Homelessness database, be considered for integration within the OneVale initiative.
- That an action plan in respect of identified gaps between the All Wales Strategy and the Vale of Glamorgan Homelessness Strategy and Prevention Plan be developed.
- That the Homelessness Forum undertake a training needs analysis in order to identify any training needs which may be undertaken within the Council at little or no cost.
- That the Council invests in the production of a DVD highlighting the realities for young people leaving home and to be shown in all Vale Schools.

Profile of Homelessness in the Vale of Glamorgan

Homelessness Trends

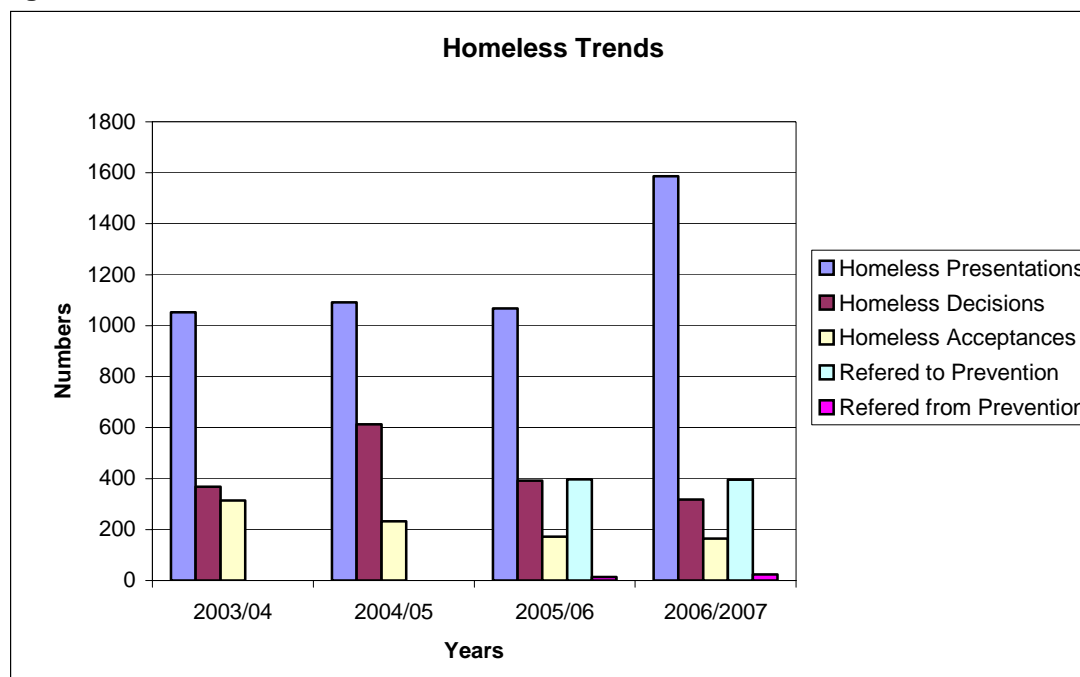
The period 2002/4 saw a significant increase in enquiries into homelessness, with the number of homelessness applications and acceptances rising. The number of acceptances rose to an all time high in 2004 when they peaked at 314 households. Despite rising applications, acceptances have remained stable reflecting the Council's pro-active prevention service.

The number of clients seeking assistance with housing issues continues to increase rising to a record 1,587 enquiries in 2006.

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These increases are illustrated in the table below

Figure 15: Homeless Trends.



Priority categories

Families continue to be the main category of priority need for homeless clients, representing around 35% of all the categories each year between 2004 & 2007. The second highest group is the 16 & 17 year olds representing between 11 & 12% during 2004 & 2005. However this increased significantly in 2006 with 16 & 17 year olds representing 29% of all categories. This trend has continued into 2007 where in the first quarter it was 25%.

Further analysis will be undertaken to establish why this group has significantly increased in recent years. The third highest priority category is domestic abuse, which was 20% in 2005 saw a drop in 2006 to 6% and was 14% in the first quarter of 2007.

Older People

Older people are under represented in homelessness acceptances, they are consistently in the region of 4% of all the priority need categories and in the first quarter of 2007 were not represented at all. Almost 50% of the Council housing stock is elderly designated and older people are usually successful in obtaining accommodation under the Council's allocation scheme prior to becoming homeless.

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Rough Sleepers

Historically there has been very little rough sleeping the Vale. The vast majority of homelessness is hidden with households sharing, sometimes unsuitable, accommodation with friends and relatives. This is exemplified in the 1,683 households on the housing register who are lodging with friends and relatives.

The National Homelessness Strategy included a commitment by the Welsh Assembly Government to introduce local counts throughout Wales to measure rough sleeping in each local authority during specific periods. In the Vale of Glamorgan, the first count was carried out on one night in March 2007 by Council staff, together with employees from other organisations in the voluntary and statutory sectors. They carried out the count in accordance with the published methodology from WAG and the results showed that only one rough sleeper was found that night.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups

BME groups are significantly under represented within these priority groups. In 2004 only 3 of the 314 households came from BME groups whilst in 2005 there were none and in 2006 there were 4 giving a total of 7 households between 2004 and the first quarter of 2007 who were accepted as homeless. This represents less than 1% of those owed a duty by the Authority. This is significantly below the 2.2% BME population in the Vale.

Asylum Seekers and Migrant workers

These groups are not represented within the profile of homelessness within the Vale and there have been no enquiries made from these groups. Although Asylum Seekers and migrant workers are represented in neighbouring authorities, there has been little migration in to this area at this time.

Gypsies and Travellers

There have been no homeless enquiries from this group in recent years, however work undertaken as part of the LHMA will assist in identifying any particular housing needs.

Main Causes of Homelessness

There has been little change in the main cause of homelessness for those accepted as homeless. Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate provides the highest number and this figure has risen during 2006 and the first quarter of 2007. This is followed by the breakdown of a relationship with a partner and the loss of rented or tied accommodation.

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Figure 16: Main Causes of Homelessness

Main Causes of homelessness		2004	2005	2006	2007 (1 st quarter)
Parent no longer willing or able to accommodate		18%	15%	25%	31%
Other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate		8%	6%	14%	6%
Breakdown of relationship with partner	1) Non-violent	5%	15%	6%	3%
	2) Violent	8%	16%	9%	22%
Racially motivated violence or harassment		1%	0%	0%	0%
Other form of violence or harassment		5%	5%	1%	3%
Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)		2%	2%	1%	0%
Rent arrears on	1) Local authority or other public sector dwellings	1%	0%	0%	0%
	2) Housing Association or other registered social landlord dwellings.	3%	1%	0%	0%
	3) Private Sector dwellings	3%	1%	5%	0%
Loss of rented or tied accommodation		17%	22%	23%	19%
In institution or care (e.g. hospital, residential home, army, prison etc.)		5%	10%	8%	6%
Other (including homeless in emergency, returned from abroad, sleeping rough or in a hostel)		26%	9%	8%	6%

(SOURCE WHO12 2004-2007)

The demand for housing by clients residing with friends and relatives is reflected in the Council's housing register where 1,683 households representing 33% of the total applicants fall within this category. Increased waiting times and reduced vacancy rates contribute to the explanation for the rises in this group.

Prevention Support and Advice

A working directory providing a brief description of core services has been developed and produced to provide a valuable service signposting tool for members of the general public and other stakeholders. This has been successfully distributed to various venues such as doctors' surgeries, clinics and the Jobcentres, and also contains the relevant contact telephone numbers, location of the service reception area and opening hours.

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Further work will be taken forward to engage with service users about their needs and provide advice and information in a range of formats including the web site. In addition the feasibility of a multi-agency information web site and a generic housing advice centre will be explored.

The Homelessness Strategy places significant emphasis on developing the homelessness prevention agenda and developing housing options. The Vale's award winning prevention service has successfully reduced the number of homelessness acceptances year on year since its development in November 2004.

The Vale Assisted Tenancy Scheme (VATS) has been successful in providing 162 supported tenancies in the private sector, predominantly used to prevent households from becoming homeless.

The successful work of the Mediation and Visiting Officer, with the accompanying spend to save budget, has assisted 130 clients to either remain in their homes or have a planned move into another property.

To compliment the homeless prevention agenda and offer housing options within the Vale the following have been developed within the service both directly and with partner organisations:-

- Bond schemes for non priority homeless
- Dialogue with landlords
- Prevention Fund
- Target hardening schemes
- Home Visiting
- Mediation for 16 & 17 year olds
- Referral to other advice agencies e.g. Shelter Cymru, Credit Union
- Specific arrangements via the Housing Register
- Advice on housing options
- EHO & Accreditation Scheme
- Tenancy Support Scheme (TESS)

The Supporting People framework plays a vital part in preventing homelessness within the Vale. In addition to providing a tenancy support scheme, which is accessed by all eligible clients in temporary as well as permanent accommodation, there are a further six client specific accommodation projects providing specialist services for clients with issues such as substance misuse, offending background, young people and domestic abuse

Move on arrangements are in place under the Councils Homes4U allocation scheme. When people are ready to move on they are allocated a priority gold card back dated to the date they entered the project. Most allocations occur from applicants with gold cards and where there is more than one applicant

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for an advertised property the person with the earliest date is offered the property.

Homelessness & Health

The Council recognises the health impact that occurs with poor housing and is committed to improving the health conditions within its area. Within the homelessness service specifically there is a commitment to providing good quality accommodation within the private sector.

The service works closely with the Environmental Health Section and refers all sub standard private sector accommodation being offered to the Council for use by homeless clients.

There are close working relationships between Social Services and the Homelessness Service for homeless clients suffering from mental health or physical disabilities and the Council recognises the importance of joint working with the Health Trusts and is committed to formulating these links.

Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2006

The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2006 (The Order) came into effect in April 2006 and is being implemented in stages in Wales. The Order specifies the standard, time periods and restrictions placed on Council's when allocating B&B and shared accommodation.

Stage one relates to social factors which need to be considered when offering temporary accommodation to clients. Stage two came into effect in April 2007 and restricts the time periods when families, pregnant women and 16 & 17 year olds can be accommodated in B&B. It also introduces standards for classifying and subsequently the duration with which the B&B should be used.

Stage three comes into effect in 2008 (2011 for local authority or RSL accommodation) and it further restricts the use of B&B and shared accommodation to all priority need categories and introduces specific standards within all shared accommodation.

The Council is preparing for the introduction of the Order by researching good practice alternatives and preparing a temporary accommodation strategy. It is envisaged that there will be an increased use of private sector accommodation and joint working with RSLs to meet the need.

New Homelessness Initiatives

There are a number of projects locally and regionally that are being undertaken with partner organisations in order to develop better services for homeless clients in the Vale.

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- The Welsh Assembly Government has awarded funding to Shelter Cymru, who the Vale are working in partnership with, to pilot a homeless administration good practice toolkit.
- In addition to this, funding has been obtained through the Community Safety Partnership to develop a DVD and learning material for secondary schools to assist in the prevention of homelessness. This is a joint project with the Vale working in partnership with the Area 41, Vibe Film Company, Llamau and Shelter Cymru.
- The Welsh Assembly Government has provided a one off grant to employ a temporary Private Sector Co-ordinator who is being employed on a project basis. The aims of the project are to :
 - Develop a local accreditation scheme
 - Develop a Service Level Agreement with Housing Benefit and the Homelessness Service for clients in the private sector
 - Work with and develop the Landlord Forums
 - Research good practice alternatives to Bed and Breakfast accommodation in preparation for the Homeless Accommodation Strategy
- The Council is funding a feasibility study to review existing statutory and voluntary homelessness services to improve access and advice in the Vale. Part of the funding will be used to assess the options available for expanding Domestic Abuse Advice Services in the area.

Voids and Allocations

The Vale of Glamorgan Council carried out a Best Value review of voids and allocations in 2002/2003 to address concerns over rising void levels and poor void performance. The review resulted in the Council securing grant monies through WAG to assist in the pro-active development of its lettings and marketing strategy for Council housing. A consultant was appointed to:

- Undertake a comprehensive review and good practice benchmark assessment of lettings and allocations to identify and determine a range of options to improve local performance.
- Review the Council's allocations, lettings and void management policies and procedures to address weaknesses and incorporate good practice and recommendations from survey findings.
- Develop a marketing strategy for the allocation of Council homes.
- Develop an information booklet for clients covering lettings, allocations, void management and marketing.

Allocations

In June 2003, following consultation with a wide range of stakeholders the council became the first local authority in Wales to adopt a choice based lettings scheme under the banner HOMES4U.

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The HOMES4U scheme has proved popular with applicants and is easily understood. Subsequently three of the four RSLs in the area, Hafod Housing Association, Newydd Housing Association and Wales and West Housing Association have joined to date, effectively resulting in 100% nominations to non-council owned stock. It is anticipated that the fourth RSL, United Welsh Housing Association will join the scheme in the very near future. A requirement of the funding being granted was that the Council provide information and assistance to any other RSL contemplating a change to choice based lettings.

The Council has also provided information to several other local authorities such as Merthyr, Swansea, Powys, Caerphilly, Neath Port Talbot, Cardiff and Wrexham. In addition there has been high profile presentations and workshops at conferences to highlight choice based lettings and the benefits of joint working with RSLs.

In March 2002 there were 479 properties allocated with 109 being allocated to those in the highest priority. In March 2007 there were 332 properties allocated with 207 being allocated to those in the GOLD band. Within this 97 properties were allocated to homeless applicants.

Void Management

Void turnaround times and void levels have also improved. In March 2002 there were 163 empty homes in the Vale of Glamorgan with an average turnaround time of 10.3 weeks. In addition to this there were 53 homes, which had been empty for over 6 months. The majority of these properties were elderly designated accommodation for which there was no demand. As part of the review a decision was made to re-designate 236 properties in 2004.

This has resulted in a steady improvement with the void levels. In March 2007 there were 31 empty homes currently achieving a void turnaround time of 7.7 weeks. In addition there were only 4 properties void for longer than 6 months. There are currently no properties awaiting long term works. Void rent loss has reduced from £628,891 in 2002 to £215,469 in 2006/7.

In general the improvement in void performance and the increase in allocated properties by tenants choice has resulted in more stable tenancies which in turn has led to more sustainable communities. The improved void performance has led the Council to review and update its Mutual Exchange Scheme. This has resulted in a greater emphasis being given to mutual exchanges and they are now actively marketed as 'EXCHANGES4U'.

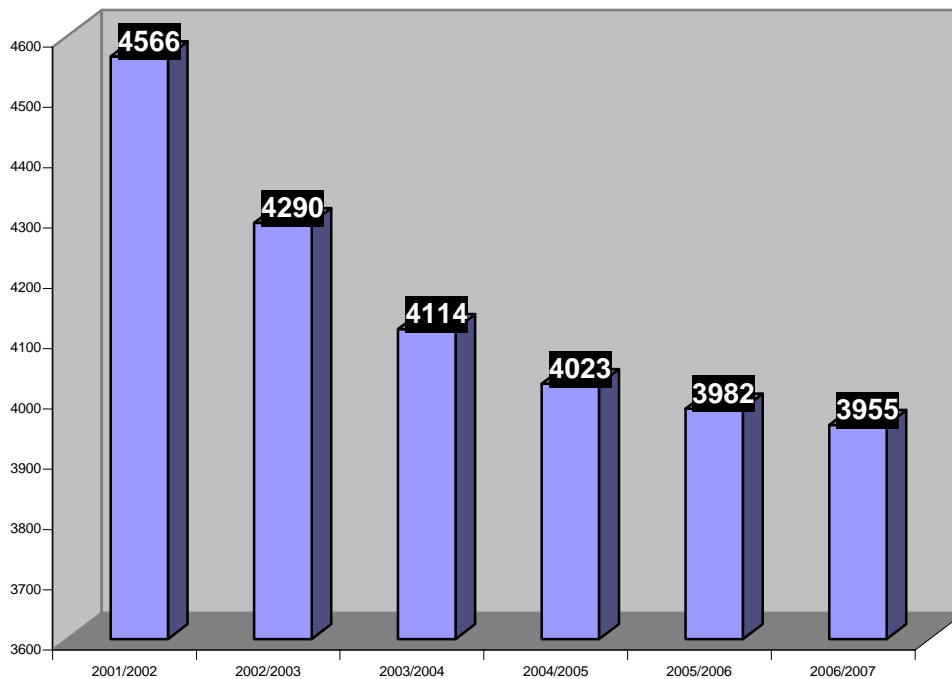
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Council Stock Profile

The graph below shows the diminishing council housing stock in the Vale of Glamorgan between 2002 and 2007.

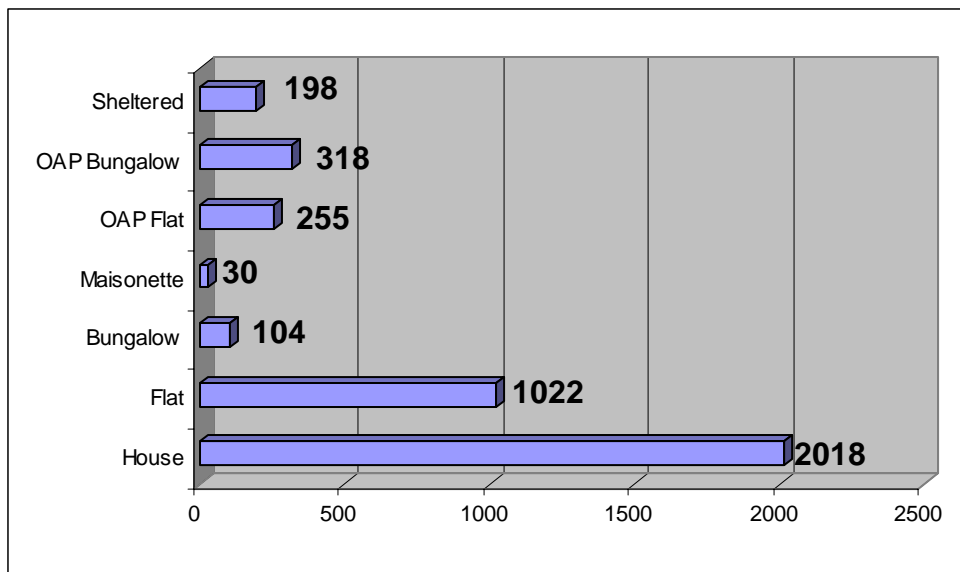
Property sales have slowed considerably in the period. In March 2002 the council had a total stock of 4,566 properties with completed sales of 109 units and in March 2007 there was total stock of 3,955 with completed sales of 25 units.

Figure 17: Number of properties within Council ownership



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Figure 18: Breakdown of council owned properties



Key Challenges and Activities:

- Review of the homeless service to consolidate the prevention agenda with the Authority
- Review Homelessness Strategy in line with National Homelessness Strategy
- Developing services within the private sector
 - SLA with Housing Benefit service
 - Developing a local accreditation scheme
 - Increasing the supply of temporary accommodation such as leased properties
- Establishing an education project within schools
- Undertaking a feasibility study to consider developing a comprehensive advice service within the Vale to include the various partner organisations located in the area
- Undertaking research into the profile of homelessness within rural parts of the area
- Working closely with other sectors such as the criminal justice and health services to ensure that homelessness is placed within their plans and strategies
- Provision of clear and accessible information and advice
- Diminishing stock of council housing
- Development of an engagement strategy for all service users
- Inclusion of the last RSL in the Homes4U scheme
- Provision of a generic advice service
- Assessment of temporary accommodation and reduction in the use of B&B
- Assisting victims of domestic abuse
- Provision of information and advice through a range of materials

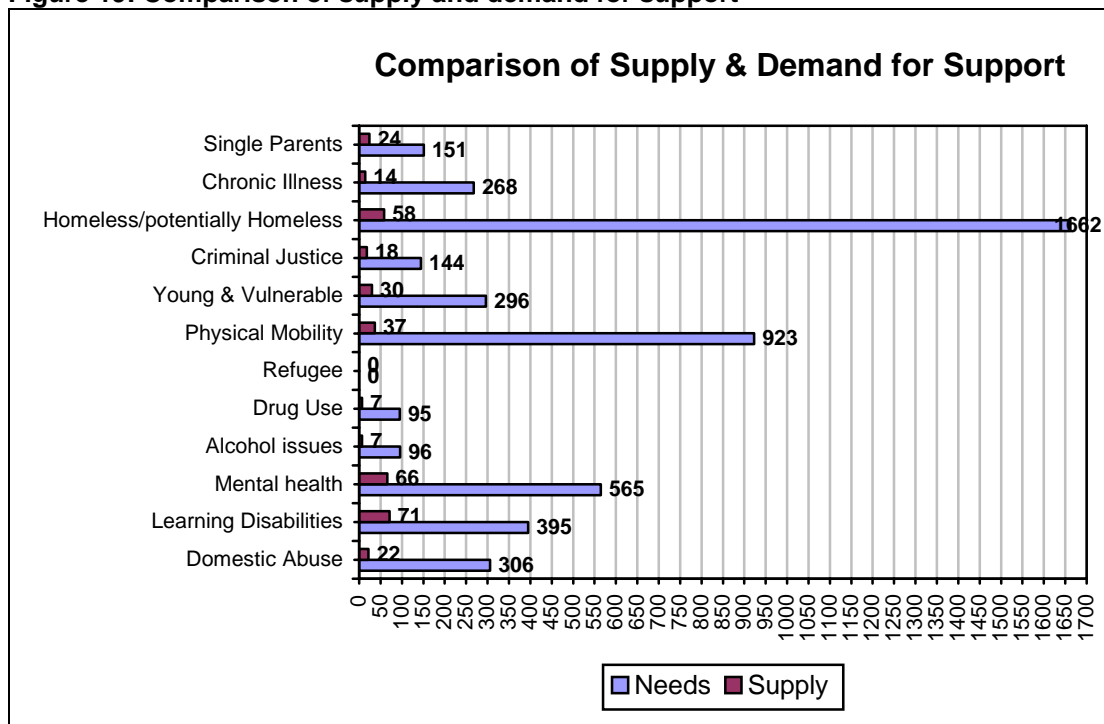
Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

The Need for Supported Housing

The demand for housing related support outstrips the supply in relation to all client groups, with the most significant areas being support for people who are homeless generally and those who have physical mobility issues. The graph below shows data taken not only from the Individual Needs Assessment Mechanism (INAM) but from other data supplied from voluntary and statutory groups who also collect information on unmet need for the clients that they work with and represent.

Figure 19: Comparison of supply and demand for support



In relation to the Individual Needs Assessment forms alone:

- 3,648 (83.3%) people who completed the forms had a support need
- 31.1% of all those who completed the forms (1,353) were aged 16 – 25
- 15.6% were aged over 61

Therefore, even without the additional data supplied by the statutory and voluntary sector, the INAMs alone show that there is a high level of unmet need in the full range of client groups.

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

A high proportion of people also specified that they had multiple issues e.g. mental health issues and substance misuse issues, which indicates the need to provide services across a range of client groups and for those with more complex needs.

The requirements of older people have been recognised as an important area of specific need focusing on options for older people including:

- The need for extra care provision
- Low level housing support to enable people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible with a need to distinguish whether support is housing related (of the type delivered by The Tenant Support Scheme TESS) or related to physical care needs.
- A consideration of solutions to support older people at home who are categorised as being elderly and mentally infirm (EMI) to prevent them entering nursing homes unnecessarily

The figures collected via the Supporting People mechanism are likely to be an under – estimate as clients who have never contacted any of the organisations that provide services will not be represented.

The Supporting People Strategy is closely linked to the Homelessness Strategy and to specific frameworks for housing and support, such as the National Housing Strategy, but also takes on community issues from Health Improvement Plans, Crime Prevention and the Community Plan. It also links with the local MAPP (Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel) in order to establish best practice in accommodating high-risk offenders.

Whilst the operational and strategic development of Supporting People Services in the Vale of Glamorgan rests with the Housing & Community Safety Division of the Council, the development of services is based on the ethos of effective partnership working with statutory and non-statutory agencies.

The Supporting People Strategy

The challenge is to ensure intervention that challenges discrimination, responds to the needs and aspirations of individuals and communities, and delivers change, health and independence. The strategy;

- Sets out the Partnership's objectives, priorities and plans for high quality, best value support services for vulnerable people.
- Is soundly based on detailed mapping of existing services and robust analyses of current and future demands, stock condition surveys, and options appraisals for schemes and projects.
- Promotes engagement and participation across all sectors, including users, carers, service providers and commissioners.

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

- Establishes contract-based operations to enable stable services, financial security, agreed standards and transparent monitoring.
- That is underpinned by comprehensive strategic review, best value planning, and a systematic rolling programme of scheme reviews.
- Is well integrated with wider crosscutting strategies for housing, health, social care and community safety in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Aims to build strong cross-authority coordination and partnership to help tackle regional priorities.

Success will have been achieved when:

- All partners feel involved in developing and delivering support services.
- All people, who are capable and want to, are living independently.
- All services are producing effective outcomes within approved tariffs.
- Service users tell us that all services are accessible and respond to individual needs and they feel valued and included.

The Council is also continuing to work in partnership with six South Wales authorities in co-ordinating supporting people services and developing cross-boundary working. The group is currently pooling supply and needs data on all client groups in order to look at combined future service priorities and geographical need. One cross authority project has already been developed by the Vale of Glamorgan Council in partnership with Cardiff City Council.

The Croes Ffin project is an 18 unit supported housing project (nine units in Cardiff and nine in the Vale of Glamorgan). The project provides temporary accommodation for clients with a previous substance misuse problem who have already completed a course of rehabilitation. The other partners on this Scheme are Newydd Housing Association who is the landlord and Wallich Clifford Community who are the support providers for all 18 units. Capital and Revenue Funding was received for this project from the Welsh Assembly Government through the Social Housing Grant programme and Supporting People Revenue Grant.

Between the end of 2006 and March 2007, officials from WAG visited the Supporting People Teams in all 22 Welsh local authorities to assess their preparedness for the transfer of the Supporting People Revenue Grant funding. The report on the Vale of Glamorgan concluded that overall the Team was performing to a good standard and that there were many areas of good practice, including:

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

- Consultation with Service Providers throughout the decommissioning and re-tendering processes.
- Regional work undertaken on identifying unmet need to inform future service development.
- Regional development with Cardiff City Council on the Croes Ffin project
- Regular liaison meetings with all stakeholders.
- Open and transparent planning process involving both the voluntary and the statutory sectors.
- Ensuring that Supporting People continues to stay on the Corporate agenda, including formal reporting to Members on the outcomes being achieved by the services, as well as findings from research and consultation exercises both at a local and national level.
- The appointment of a Cabinet Member as the Supporting People Champion.
- Evident links between the Supporting People Operational Plan and other Corporate Strategies.
- Regular and accurate payments to support providers.
- Use of eligibility criteria for all projects in the County.
- Well handled budget cuts, with minimum disruption to services and service users.
- Service/Business Planning in place.
- Benchmarking of service costs across South Wales to ensure that value for money services are commissioned.
- Move-on Strategy for Supported Housing clients through Homes4U, the Council's choice based lettings scheme run in partnership with three other registered social landlords in the vale of Glamorgan.

The report also highlighted some recommendations to be addressed:

- Put into place a process that outlines how service user views contribute to the delivery of new and existing services
- Strengthen the corporate links between Supporting People and the Community Safety and Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategies
- Review the staffing structure and capacity of the team at a corporate level if handover of funding were to take place
- Develop a directory of services
- Develop a process/policy for the decommissioning of services
- Incorporate Supporting People actions in the Homeless Action Plan
- Ensure that Supporting People is championed at a senior level to ensure that it is strategically aligned within the Local Authority
- Further develop the analysis of the needs and supply information to inform strategic planning

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

Older People

The key vehicle for obtaining the views of older people in the Vale of Glamorgan to ensure that they are at the centre of service development is the Vale's Older People's Forum, which has also been the driver for the development of the Older Person's Strategy in the Authority.

The Forum has enabled older people to identify and discuss issues of importance to them. The work of the Forum and Strategy to date has been driven by the understanding that of greatest concern to older people in the Vale of Glamorgan is the loss of their independence and the need to avoid institutionalised care. Over the next twenty years, based on population forecasts, it is also expected that the number of people over the age of 65 in the Vale of Glamorgan will increase by 15,750.

These issues have wide ranging implications for the Housing provision in the Authority and highlight the need to provide an adequate supply of special forms of housing to meet the varied needs of older people to ensure that they can remain independent for as long as possible in a safe and stable environment. In consultation with the Older Persons Forum the Council will develop an Older Persons Accommodation Strategy in 2007/8.

One of the keys to the realisation of this objective in the Vale of Glamorgan is the development Extra Care sheltered housing. This will be developed and the services delivered in partnership by Housing, Social Services and the Local Health Board.

Extra Care housing supports independent living and increases choice by providing older people with their own homes together with the support and care that meets an individual's changing needs as they get older, whilst still allowing them to remain in their own home. Schemes can also provide a mix of tenures including rented, shared ownership and outright sale.

Consultation undertaken with older people already living in the Vale of Glamorgan has also highlighted that some accommodation lacks community focus because of the lack of community facilities. This will also be addressed through the Extra Care provision as support, meals, domestic help and leisure and recreational facilities will be provided in a secure environment, while still providing people with their own home so that they can remain independent but still continue to engage and integrate into the community. The Council has identified two sites on which to develop Extra Care Schemes in the Authority and a capital funding bid for the first pilot has already been made through the Social Housing Grant programme with an RSL partner. This will provide a mixed tenure complex in Barry consisting of forty units.

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

Disabled Facilities Grants

Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory and are made available in accordance with the statutory requirements governing eligibility and scope of the works. Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant will also now be available to occupiers of park homes and houseboats.

Owners, whose homes are not suitable for adaptation, or where adaptations are extensive due to the nature or location of the property, are offered assistance to move to a more suitable or more easily adapted property.

The Council currently allocates £1,500,000 of GCF to meet the demand for Disabled Facilities Grant and £240,000 is allocated from the Council's MRA to assist in meeting the demand for adaptations from Council tenants.

As part of the Council's Social Services Change Plan the recommendations in the 2004-2005 review of Disabled Facilities Grant in Wales are being considered. This long-term plan is designed to achieve fundamental changes in the way in which the Social Services Department operates. It is proposed to review the joint working between Social Services and Housing with a targeted outcome to provide a reduction in costs of adapting more properties and making better use of resources. Proposals currently being considered include works under £1,000 being carried out by preferred providers without the need for a grant application, an intermediate DFG for works between £1,000 and £3,000, the appointment of an OT in the Housing section and other issues to streamline and improve the delivery of adaptations to disabled people.

The Occupational Therapy team prioritise requests for assessments according to need. In the Grants Section a prioritisation scheme and a fast-track system are in place to ensure the most urgent cases are dealt with, without undue delay, should demand exceed available resources.

Owners, whose homes are not suitable for adaptation, or where adaptations are extensive due to the nature or location of the property, are alternatively offered assistance to move to a more suitable or more easily adapted property.

The Occupational Therapy and Housing Assistance teams have quarterly joint team meetings to improve understanding of each other's roles and discuss matters of legislation and procedures as well as sharing innovative and good practice.

Care and Repair

The Care and Repair in the Vale agency provides high levels of support for the over 60s and disabled people who might not otherwise be able to cope with the disruption and organisation of repairs and adaptations.

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

The Council provides Care & Repair in the Vale with funding for a 'Handy Person' scheme and works with them on grant matters, the Hospital Admission Prevention Scheme (HAPS), Rapid Response Adaptation Project (RRAP) and referrals for people who fall outside the grant regime.

It is proposed to extend this partnership by providing Care & Repair in the Vale with a budget to provide emergency repair grants in the Council's Renewal Areas and to work closely with them to ensure that their client group in the Renewal Areas receive any necessary additional support during Group Repair and Renovation works. It is also proposed to introduce a new grant in Renewal Areas only, which focuses on home safety and will be administered by Care and Repair in the Vale on a fee basis. It is also proposed that Care & Repair will be based in the Renewal Area Office, one day each week to provide their core services to residents in the area."

The Housing Needs of BME Communities

The Vale of Glamorgan has a BME population of around 2,500 with the majority living in those wards with the highest indicators of social deprivation.

In May 2004 a BME Housing Strategy was produced for the Vale of Glamorgan. The Strategy was developed in partnership between the Council, Wales and West Housing Association, Hafod Housing Association, Newydd Housing Association and United Welsh Housing Association. The development and implementation of the strategy involved a wider steering group to effectively address the needs of BME community within the Vale.

Following research and consultation to inform the strategy a number of objectives were agreed and an action plan developed to address identified needs and aspirations. The strategy will be reviewed in line with the findings of the LHMA in 2007 but the current objectives are:

- To ensure that partners corporate policies and processes demonstrate a commitment to promoting race equality.
- To ensure that services provided by partners are accessible and offer choice to people from minority ethnic communities.
- To ensure that services of all partners deliver and promote race equality and eliminate discrimination.
- To ensure that all partners in their role as employers actively promote race equality.
- To formalise and maintain the partnership.

Migrant Workers

At present there are not significant housing pressures in terms of the needs of migrant workers, for example according to a recent WAG report (Statistics on Migrant Workers in Wales 2006) there have only been 200 successful

Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs within the community

applications to the Worker Registration Scheme by A8 workers in the Vale of Glamorgan. This is only 1.2% of the total Wales figure for this scheme.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

No significant need within the Vale of Glamorgan for housing services for Asylum Seekers and Refugees has been identified through either the Homelessness service or the Supporting People Team. However the Council will continue to monitor the situation and work with partners to meet any particular needs that arise or are identified through the LHMA.

Gypsies and Travellers

Work is due to be undertaken in partnership with Cardiff City Council to identify the housing need of Gypsies and Travellers within the area. The results of this work will inform both the Housing Strategy and the LDP. The BME strategy also addresses the needs of this community as identified through consultation. The Council appreciates the particular and diverse needs of this community.

Key Challenges and Activities:

- Meeting the diverse needs for housing related support
- The need for Extra care provision for older people
- Reviewing the BME Housing Strategy to ensure it delivers suitable and sufficient accommodation
- Establish the Vale of Glamorgan Equality Forum
- Assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers
- Addressing the housing needs of the growing number of older people in the Vale
- Identification and understanding of different housing and support needs
- Limited funding for Disabled Facilities Grants
- Assess the housing needs of young people

Aim 5: To work in partnership to make the Vale a safe and healthy place for all residents of all ages

Aim 5: To work in partnership to make the Vale a safe and healthy place for all residents of all ages

Housing Interventions in Community Safety

The most deprived areas of the Vale have the highest rate of crime and disorder. Consequently, tackling deprivation in these areas may result in the improvement in crime and disorder. Crime is decreasing in the Vale of Glamorgan and has done so for the past three years. It is also believed that neighbourhood nuisance, domestic violence and 'hate' crimes (e.g. homophobic and racist incidents) are under reported.

Housing has been a major partner in schemes such as Flying Start, the development of the Community Safety Partnership and the Substance Misuse Action Team.

Community Sustainability

There are a number of strategies in place to contribute towards the creation of stable communities. The Council has a range of policies, which contribute to this ideal both in enforcement and in supporting and educating tenants.

Anti Social Behaviour

In 2005 the Council adopted a joint policy statement on anti-social behaviour with the four Registered Social Landlords in the area. This statement includes some minimum standards of service which any tenant can expect regardless of their landlord.

The Council has adopted a four stage process to deal with anti-social behaviour and developed close working relationships with the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator. The Housing Service participates in joint meetings with perpetrators and can also make referrals to support agencies including the Supporting People Service and the ONSET project, which is run by the Youth Offending team. The focus of these meetings and indeed the action taken by Housing Officers is to inform and provide support to change behaviour initially. There is a particularly close working relationship with the Supporting People Team and part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Process involves making referrals for housing related support for the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

The Council makes use of a full toolkit of methods to resolve antisocial behaviour cases including, ABCs, ASBOs, Possession Action, Injunctions, Mediation and Tenants Support Service. The Council has actively supported the Mediation Service in partnership with the four local RSLs, which is hosted by the Vale Housing Federation. This service has developed a Business Plan

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and is currently bidding for funding from the Assembly to research the provision of a specialised BME mediation service.

The plan for the future is to re-examine the Anti-Social Behaviour Landlords statement and policy in line with new best practice. This will involve developing a more rigorous performance management regime and standardising and computerising processes. The intention is also to map occurrences of anti-social behaviour to more effectively target resources.

Introductory tenancies were introduced in 2002 in response to the level of neighbour complaints on estates. Their impact should not be underestimated in terms of adding to the tool kit of measures that the Council has had available to deal with Anti-Social Behaviour. The Council has used this effectively to reduce the amount of incidences of nuisance behaviour on estates indeed its existence has often removed the need to take formal legal action against perpetrators.

Sustainable Lettings

The Council has recently amended its allocations policy in consultation with its RSL partners and chosen to adopt a policy of suspension rather than exclusion in relation to applicants that have a history of anti-social behaviour and rent arrears. A Strategy has been developed with partner organizations to prioritise applicants who are ready to move on having successfully completed their supported housing placement. The process of re-designating difficult to let older persons housing has reduced voids levels and contributed to the cohesion of estates. This can be borne out by the Performance Indicator for the percentage of people who have remained in their address for 12 months or more which currently runs at 82.5% for 2006/07. Additionally for the same period there was only one case of repeat homelessness in the Vale which reinforces the effect of support in maintaining tenancies.

Interdivisional Working

The Council has adopted a formal process of interdivisional working arrangements with colleagues in Social Services to address operational issues and develop housing schemes that address unmet needs.

A scheme has been developed as a partnership between Housing, Supporting People and the Mental Health team to provide housing for young people with severe and enduring mental health problems. The scheme is located in eight one bedroomed flats in St Michaels Gardens owned by the Authority and let to Social Services. The care is provided by the Mental Health team and support provided by reconfiguring some support places from the Tenants Support Scheme.

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Rent Strategy

The Council aims to meet the needs of individuals by providing, in partnership with others, a quality service which benefits all through the effective management, prevention and reduction of rent arrears.

The key aims of the Rent Strategy, adopted in May 2004, are to

- Prevent tenants getting into arrears
- Minimise the amount of arrears owed by tenants
- Ensure that tenants have the information, support and advice they need to maximise their income and prevent or minimise debt
- Treat all customers fairly and equally
- Provide a high quality, value for money service
- Be accessible, accountable, and to listen and respond to our customers needs
- To have trained officers dealing with arrears
- To make paying rent as simple as possible
- To regularly analyse the causes of rent arrears as to ensure that services are relevant and effective
- To only use eviction if all other methods of recovery have failed and the customer persists in the non-payment of rent
- Be easy to contact and quick to respond, and to be transparent

The implementation of the Rent Strategy has ensured that officers focus on specific areas to prevent debt occurring as well as the actual recovery of rent arrears. Tenants, are kept informed and have accessible support and advice from the property offer stage to assist them to maximise their income and prevent or minimise debt in the first instance.

The Council recognises the emotional and financial impact on individuals and families who lose their home and the importance of Supporting People in helping to sustain tenancies. The Tenant Support Scheme (TESS) therefore remains a high priority service for the Council.

The Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy

The Vale of Glamorgan Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy provides a planning framework that integrates commissioning and service arrangements between the Vale Local Health Board and the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

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Health is not just the absence of illness or infirmity – the World Health Organisation provides a wider definition of it as being a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being.

Well-being not only depends on good health, but on the ability of individuals to maintain themselves independently, to sustain positive social relations and

a sense of esteem and identity, and to participate actively in their wider community.

All of the housing services, including housing support relate to a key environmental determinant of health and contribute directly to the health and well-being of residents of the Vale of Glamorgan. Continuing access to good quality housing is therefore an essential element to achieving the health and wellbeing of each individual.

Housing Services in the Vale of Glamorgan cover both Council Housing and Private Sector Housing and primarily targets its interventions under the following three headings:

- Tackling Housing Need
- Neighbourhood Renewal and Regeneration
- Investing in Council Housing

Strategies to deal with these issues have been developed from evidence based surveys and extensive consultation. The Housing Division is also working with the Vale of Glamorgan Health Alliance to establish health and housing links, which will also be used to shape future service provision.

Communities First (CF)

There are two Communities First areas in the Vale of Glamorgan. A third area, Court 3, is awaiting designation as a CF area by the Welsh Assembly Government. Communities First areas consist of the most deprived areas in the Vale of Glamorgan, and in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government identified these areas for significant investment to break the cycle of social exclusion and poverty. They are able to attract limited WAG funding for community projects (not housing) and public sector funding should be 'bent' towards these areas.

The Gibbonsdown CF area consists of six streets within the Gibbonsdown ward. These six streets consist of public housing where the Council is the landlord. There are no community facilities in the six streets, although Holm View Leisure Centre and the Gibbonsdown Community Centre are nearby.

The key housing issue in the Gibbonsdown CF area is the flat roofs that exist on most of the houses in the area. Leaks are a major problem, causing damp

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conditions. Greater insulation is needed to make the homes warmer and more energy efficient. Houses are in need of painting.

The Thompson Street CF area consists of a small housing estate in the Castleland ward. It consists of public housing managed by Newydd Housing Association. This area contains a drop-in centre and a community centre.

The Court 3 area consists of approximately one-third of the Court ward, and is larger by far than the two existing CF areas. It consists of a mixture of private and public housing, with the Council being the main public housing landlord. There are no community facilities within the area, with the exception of one playground. This area has not yet achieved CF status, although it has been applied for.

Both the Gibbonsdown and Thompson Street CF areas have partnerships boards with resident participation. There has been some capacity building to increase skills of local people, and they are supported by the public sector organisations, including the Council. Each CF area has a community action plan, and each can each area has had a number of successes in resident participation, improvements in health and policing activities and environmental improvements.

Key Challenges and Activities:

- Addressing issues in the Court 3 area
- Review and develop the Anti-Social Behaviour Landlords Statement
- Researching the provision of a BME mediation service
- Review and update the Rent Strategy to prevent rent arrears
- Develop an integrated health and housing strategy action plan
- Maximise the Neighbourhood Policy Initiative to reduce anti-social behaviour and improve community well-being.

Operational Plan

Part Three

Strategic Aim 1: To develop good quality, affordable and appropriate accommodation to meet identified housing need.							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	HSP	Promote low cost home ownership initiatives and improve the supply of affordable rented accommodation in the public and private sectors	Increased supply/availability of low-cost home ownership to Vale residents	H	Vale of Glamorgan Strategic Housing Forum	Ongoing	Ongoing
	HSP	Review supplementary planning guidance for affordable housing.	Increase the number of affordable housing units through development.	M	Head of Planning & Transport	01/10/07	31/12/07
	HSP	Carry out a Local Housing Market Assessment & Housing Needs Study	Surveys completed and published and used to update and inform the Local Housing Strategy	H	Head Of Housing	Ongoing	31/07/07

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes.							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	HIP	Undertake a Housing Asset Review and Develop a Housing Stock asset Management & Investment Strategy	Housing Service is able to work towards the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (2007).	H	Head Of Housing	01/04/07	31/03/08
	HIP	Implement and review the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Business Plan in place and Stock Retention Strategy viable	H	Head Of Housing	01/01/08	31/03/08
	HSP	Carry out a Public Sector House Condition Survey	Report published and information fed into the HRA Business Plan	H	Head Of Housing	01/01/08	31/03/08
	HSP	Carry out a Private Sector House Condition Survey	Survey completed and report published. Evidence used to support applications for the development of future renewal areas.	H	Head of Public Protection	01/04/07	31/03/08
	HSP	Pilot with 5 other Local Authorities in South Wales the Welsh Assembly Government Home Loans equity release scheme	Clients are able to release monies to undertake essential maintenance repairs increasing the standard of housing conditions in the Vale of Glamorgan	H	Principal Housing Grants and Renewal Officer	01/04/07	31/03/08

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes.							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	HSP	Undertake a complete Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment in Castleland Ward (part of Barry Town Centre Living Study)	Declaration of a Renewal Area in Main Street leading to improved private sector housing conditions and environmental works	H	Head of Public Protection	01/04/07	31/01/08
	HSP	Operate a Mandatory HMO Licensing Scheme and an inspection and enforcement programme in relation to High Risk properties	Licenses are issued for all known HMOs. Increased standards of HMO properties	H	Head of Public Protection	01/07/08	01/07/09
	HSP	Work in collaboration with WAG to develop an all Wales accredited landlord-training scheme.	An accredited training scheme is implemented with good levels of attendance by Vale landlords.	M	Head of Public Protection	01/07/07	31/03/09

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 2: To ensure existing housing is maintained and fit for purpose and neighbourhoods benefit from renewal schemes.							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	HSP	Review Empty Homes Strategy.	A revised empty homes strategy Procedural guidance on dealing with empty homes Guidance on the use and application of Empty Dwelling management Orders	H	Head of Public Protection	01/07/07	31/03/09
	SP	Work with partners and residents of the Vale of Glamorgan to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in domestic properties	Reduction in carbon emissions leading to a more sustainable future	H	Affordable Warmth Steering Group	Ongoing	Ongoing

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 3: To eradicate homelessness and ensure the public have accessible, high quality advice and information on housing matters							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	HIP	Develop a Service User Engagement Strategy for all Housing Services	Service User Engagement Team and Strategy in place	H	Tenant Development Co-ordinator	01/09/07	31/07/08
	HS	Work with Race Equality First to raise awareness of issues and housing advice and homelessness services amongst BME communities in the Vale	Outreach work commenced with BME communities	H	Head of Housing	01/01/08	31/03/08
	HSP	Carry out a feasibility study to assess the viability of developing a generic housing advice service.	Feasibility report identifies the most viable option in relation to developing housing advice services.	H	Head of Housing	01/06/07	31/03/08
	HS	Ensure that junior and secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan have access to the educational material available to teach pupils about housing and homelessness	All schools have the resources and use them To have a DVD and supporting material in all senior schools in the Vale	H	Head of Housing	01/01/08	31/12/08

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 3: To eradicate homelessness and ensure the public have accessible, high quality advice and information on housing matters							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	HS	Review the Council's Homelessness Strategy in line with the National Homelessness Strategy	To have a comprehensive homelessness strategy	H	Housing & Homelessness Forum	Ongoing	31/08/07
	HSP	Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for homeless people by exploring the potential of leasing and market renting schemes and by improving the availability and quality of emergency accommodation (2007).	To improve the quality and quantity of temporary accommodation for homelessness clients.	H	Head of Housing	01/04/07	31/03/08
	DA	Carry out a review of the legal and procedural issues that prevent victims of Domestic Abuse staying in their own home	Protocol developed to improve information sharing and to help survivors/victims either remain in their own home or find suitable accommodation	H	DA Task & Finish Group Accommodation	01/04/07	31/03/08
	HSP	Work with all Housing Associations to enable them to join a single Choice Based Lettings Scheme Homes4U	More easily accessible housing allocation system through one Choice based lettings scheme for all social housing in the Vale of Glamorgan	H	Head of Housing	Ongoing	31/03/09

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 3: To eradicate homelessness and ensure the public have accessible, high quality advice and information on housing matters							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	SP	Evaluate the impact of support on the prevention of homelessness	Data available to show the Supporting People agenda's contribution to the Homelessness Preventative Agenda	H	Supporting People Planning Group	Ongoing	31/03/08

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs in the community							
Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	SSD	Introduction of Telecare Services/Assistive Technology to enable people to remain in their own homes and achieve continued independence	More responsive service; increased efficiency and housing choice for service users	H	Head of Housing	Ongoing	Ongoing
	OLD PS	Promote an adequate supply of special forms of housing e.g. Extra Care which meet the varied needs of older people to ensure that they can remain as independent as possible	Extended range of good quality and improved housing provision available with care and support if required to meet the diverse needs of an ageing population including the development of an Extra Care Scheme	H	Head of Housing	Ongoing	2009/10
	HSP	Develop an Older Persons Accommodation Strategy	Housing for older people is available, affordable and appropriate.	H	Head of Housing	01/01/08	31/12/08

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 4: To develop appropriate housing and support solutions to meet specific needs in the community

Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	BME	To establish, formalise and maintain the VOG Housing Equality Forum	A Forum that drives forward the implementation of the BME Housing Strategy Promotion of race equality amongst service providers	H	Housing Equality Forum	01/01/08	01/02/08
	BME	Review the BME Action Plans in line with the Strategy	Targets identified in the Strategy and Plans are met	H	Housing Equality Forum	01/02/08	30/06/08

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 5: To work in partnership to make the Vale a safe and healthy place for residents of all ages.

Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	SP	Develop Strategic partnerships with the RSL Landlords in the Vale	Strategic Housing Forum established to consider how housing need to be met in the Vale of Glamorgan	H	Head of Housing	01/07/07	31/10/07
	HSP	Develop in partnership with the Police, the neighbourhood policing initiative (2007) and Social Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy	Reduction in the fear of neighbourhood crime	H	Safer Vale Partnership	01/04/07	31/03/08
	HSC&W	Develop an integrated Health and Housing Strategy and Action Plan with the Vale of Glamorgan Local Health Board	More co-ordinated approach to local services which improve health through action on housing both in the long and short term	H	Vale of Glamorgan Health Alliance	Ongoing	31/03/08

Operational Plan

Strategic Aim 5: To work in partnership to make the Vale a safe and healthy place for residents of all ages.

Sub Ref	Ref to Other Action Plans	Action	Success Criteria & Outcomes	High, Medium or Low Priority	Agency & Officer Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date
	YPP	Carry out an Audit of Young People's Housing Needs	Actions identified included in the Council's Strategic Housing Objectives	H	Young People's Partnership	01/01/08	31/08/08
	HSP	Analyse local published housing data and review and complete development of the Vale Local Housing Strategy	Local Housing Strategy published and presented to WAG	H	Head of Housing	Ongoing	31/12/07

Key Strategies, Plans and Information

The following is a list of relevant legislation, guidance and strategies, which have informed the development of the Housing Strategy. The Business Plan and the draft Secondary Literary Review report that forms part of the LHMA are attached as appendices. All other Council documents are available on request or on the Council's website.

- The Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011 and background papers
- The developing LDP for 2011 - 2026
- 2001 Census information
- Welsh Assembly Government Statistics
- The Private Sector House Condition Survey 2002
- Homelessness Strategy and Prevention Plan 2004-2009
- National Homelessness Strategy 2006-2008
- Scrutiny Committee Review of the Homelessness Strategy 2006
- Supporting People Operational Plan 2006/07 to 2007/08
- BME Housing Strategy 2004 - 2007
- South East Wales Regional Housing Market Study 2006 including Locality Study
- Local Housing Market Analysis – 2006
- Local Housing Market Assessment – initial findings June 2007
- Supplementary Planning Guidance – Sustainable Development to 2006
- Supplementary Planning Guidance – Affordable Housing 2006
- Asylum and Immigration Act, 1996
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- National immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- Environmental Protection Act, 1990.
- Home Energy Conservation Act, 1995.
- Housing Act 1985,1988,1996,2004.
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, 1996.
- Landlord and Tenant Act, 1954.
- Local Government And Housing Act, 1989
- Local Government Act 2000
- Protection from Eviction Act, 1977.
- Race Relations Act, 1976.
- Better Homes for People in Wales (2001)
- National Assistance Act 1948.
- Homelessness Act, 2002
- Homelessness Allocation Code of Guidance 2000
- Homelessness (suitability of Accommodation) Order 2006.
- Local Housing Strategy Process.
- Black & Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy for Wales 2001
- Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy.
- Crime and Disorder Act, 1998.
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Policy.
- Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy 2005 - 2008.

Key Strategies, Plans and Information

- Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002.
- Children Act, 1989
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.
- Wales Programme for Improvement 2002.
- Strategy for Older People in Wales
- The Vale of Glamorgan Strategy for Older People 2004 - 2007.
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002)
- Joint Review
- WAO Housing Audit Plan
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Corporate Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2004 onwards
- Tenant Participation Compact.
- Community Housing Agreements
- Energy Efficiency Policy - WLGA
- Anti Social Behaviour Strategy 2005
- Rent Arrears Strategy 2004 - 2007
- Stock Options Implementation Plan
- HRA Business Plan
- Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy
- Home Energy Conservation Act – Annual Report
- Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy 2005-2008
- Substance Misuse Local Action Plan 2005-2008
- Local Housing Strategy 2004 - 2009
- Tackling Domestic Abuse The All Wales National Strategy 2005
- Prison Leaver Protocol
- Young Persons Protocol