

Devon Strategic Partnership

stronger together

Sustainable Community Strategy for Devon

Theme Analysis

Affordable Housing

January 2007

Please send comments to:
[Devon Strategic Partnership](#)
C/o County Hall, Topsham Road
Exeter, EX2 4QD
Email: Devon Strategic Partnership
www.devonsp.org.uk

Devon Strategic Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy

Strategic Analysis Template for Evidence Base

Affordable Housing theme analysis

Context: the DSP is producing a new Sustainable Community Strategy by mid 2007. One part of this document is to be a web based evidence base to be developed by early 2007. This document contributes to the evidence base by taking the statistical data that has been identified for every theme, and providing an expert strategic analysis that ideally has the backing of key agencies and organisations in the theme. When this information is added to the views of residents, agencies and organisations regarding current issues and a vision for the future, a clear mandate will be established for the issues that the Devon Strategic Partnership should be pursuing in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Theme: Housing
Written by: Mary Ridgway
Title & Organisation: Devon Strategic Housing Group
Link to theme/ Devon Strategic Partnership (e.g. DSP theme champion, LAA lead): Devon Strategic Housing Group Co-ordinator

Agreed by Ruth Bagley – DSP theme champion

Date:

Contents

[Introduction](#)

Analysis

[Issue One - Increasing Housing Delivery](#)

[Issue Two - Reducing Homelessness](#)

[Issue Three - Making More Efficient Use of Existing Stock](#)

[Issue Four - Achieving Good Quality Homes](#)

Evidence

[Issue One - Increasing Housing Delivery](#)

[Issue Two - Reducing Homelessness](#)

[Issue Three - Making More Efficient Use of Existing Stock](#)

[Issue Four - Achieving Good Quality Homes](#)

Introduction

This theme picks up on the strategic aims and actions identified in the Regional Housing Strategy 2005 – 2011, the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (2006) and the Local Sustainable Community Strategies. The theme looks at how the regional affordable housing issues are manifested at the sub-regional level. It focuses on the need to address the current imbalance in the housing market, reduce homelessness, to make best use of the housing stock that already exists and to improve the quality of the individual homes and environment of the communities that are being built. The housing needs of vulnerable client groups are addressed in more detail within the relevant themes within the Sustainable Community Strategy e.g. Older Persons, Children and Young People. Reference is made to the move-on accommodation requirements of supported housing schemes and the need for more new homes to be built to lifetime homes standards.

The broader economic and demographic background for the affordable housing theme is set out in the general context to the evidence base. This shows that in Devon both the population growth and increase in the formation of single person households has a profound effect on the levels and types of demand for housing.

Although Local Authorities are the statutory housing bodies, both investment in, and delivery of affordable housing, cuts across local authority and county boundaries. Housing Market Areas now form the basis for government investment in Affordable Housing and for the assessment of need through Housing Market Assessments. The Housing Market Areas in Devon include; the Plymouth sub-region (Caradon, Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon); the Exeter and Torbay sub-region (East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon Teignbridge and Torbay) and the Northern Coast Strip made up of North Devon, Torrington, West Somerset and North Cornwall. There is also a Devon wide housing partnership called Devon Strategic Housing Group which is the vehicle for taking forward some of the joint actions required.

The need for affordable housing is a corporate priority within all the local authorities within New Devon. This is because there is a severe housing crisis which has long term implications for the sustainability of our communities and for many of the other themes in this strategy.

The Four Issues:

- One: Increasing Housing Delivery.
- Two: Reducing Homelessness.
- Three: Making More Efficient Use of Existing Stock.
- Four: Achieving Good Quality Homes.

ISSUE No: One

TITLE OF ISSUE: Increasing Housing Delivery

1 Identification of Issue

- a What is the issue for Devon?** Devon's Housing is some of the least affordable housing in England. This is due to high house prices which are significantly above the national average combined with low wages, which are below the national average. Demand for housing is high with a continued net in-migration and a rise in single person households, the fastest growth being amongst the elderly. Supply has not kept pace with demand which has led to unaffordable housing for first time buyers and high private sectors rent levels in many parts of Devon, particularly the County's more rural areas. Second homes and holiday lets also form a high percentage of the total housing stock in many parts of the coastal fringe, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This has led to an increased demand for Affordable Housing (both social rented, shared ownership (HomeBuy) and intermediate housing. The Regional Spatial Strategy is likely to significantly increase the overall level of housing provision across all tenures and calls for 7,500 affordable homes a year across the South West. Early findings of the sub-regional Housing Market Assessments in Devon point to a need for a substantial increase in affordable housing over and above the Regional Spatial Strategy targets.

Although investment in Affordable Housing has increased, both from public subsidy and through use of the planning system, the balance of the housing market still needs significant improvement if Devon's economy is to thrive and its communities remain sustainable.

Devon's Housing issues are fundamental and long term. To tackle the current lack of balance in Devon's housing market a whole market approach is needed with an increase in cross-disciplinary and inter-authority partnership working. Some actions will be taken forward through the Local Area Agreement and others through partnerships such as the Devon and Cornwall Housing Group and the Planning Officers Group.

- b Who does it affect?** A wide range of households, families, single persons, older persons, young people and vulnerable client groups are unable to access open market housing in Devon.
- c Does it affect all of Devon geographically or certain parts?** It is a county wide issue affecting both urban and rural communities. The problem is particularly acute in rural areas and smaller coastal and market towns.

2 Justification/ demonstration of Issue

a How do you know the issue is there? The current imbalance in the housing market is well documented through a range of statistical sources; see DSHG's Devon's Housing Evidence.

i Datasets/ indicators

Indicator One: Affordability:

- Average House price (Land Registry)
- Affordability ratio based on lower quartile housing and lower quartile earnings. (ASHE and Land Registry)

Indicator Two: Demand:

- Numbers of Applicants on Local Authority Housing Registers for Social Rented Housing. (Local Authorities and DCLG)
- Numbers of Applicants on Zone Agents Waiting list for Shared Ownership/Homebuy Housing (Local Authorities, DCLG and possibly the Housing Corporation). *This data requires more analysis and is proposed as an Indicator for the final version of the Theme Analysis.*

Indicators Three to Six: Supply:

- New Social Rented Completions with public subsidy. (Housing Corporation)
- New Shared Ownership/Homebuy Housing Completions with public subsidy. (Housing Corporation)
- The percentages of second homes and holiday lets. (LA Council Tax records)
- Supply of Rural Affordable Housing in villages less than 3000.

ii Practitioner and expert experience of issue.

Sufficient statistic evidence

iii Research

- **Links to other strategies** – There is a wide range of National, Regional and Local research reports. A selection of some key pieces of research and strategies are highlighted below:
- **National Policy Framework**
ODPM (2005) Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future.
ODPM (2005) Sustainable Communities: Homes For All.
ODPM (2005) Planning Policy Statement 3 (Draft)
Kate Barker (2004) Review of Housing Supply.
Affordable Rural Housing Commission: Final Report (2006).
Defra/DCLG
Housing Corporation (2006) Future Investment Approaches Discussion Paper
- **Research**
The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has sponsored several pieces of research e.g. Steve Wilcox (2204) Can work, Can't Buy: local measures of the ability of working households to become homeowners.
'Monitoring Housing and Neighbourhood Trends 2006.
- **Regional Strategies**
 - The South West Regional Housing Strategy 2005 -2016.
 - The SW Regional Spatial Strategy.(Draft)
- **Research**
 - The National Housing Federation 'SW Housing Crisis Campaign'.
 - The Chartered Institute of Housing (2006) 'Housing Manifesto for the SW',
 - Devon's Housing Evidence produced by DSHG.
 - DTZ (2004) Analysis of sub-regional housing markets.
 - SWRDA (2005) The Way Ahead: Delivering Sustainable Communities in the SW.
- **Local Research**
Local Housing Needs Surveys carried out at Local Authority level.
The Sub-Regional Housing Market Assessments that are starting to emerge. Plymouth Sub-Regional HMA November 2006.

(1) Web Sites:

Should you wish to explore this issue further there are a number of useful websites:

- www.housing.org.uk
- www.cioh.uk
- www.housingcorp.gov.uk
- www.landreg.gov.uk
- www.nomisweb.co.uk
- www.statistics.gov.uk
- www.communities.gov.uk
- www.dshg.org.uk
- www.jrf.org.uk

b Links to other strategies

Local, County, Regional and National Strategies and Research

[See Table One](#)

c Links to/ impact on other themes/ issues

[See Table Two](#)

3 Drawing on the above, what therefore is/ are the challenge(s) Devon must meet to address this issue?

The Challenges are:

- Ownership of the problem by all sectors and a commitment to jointly address the issue.
- To evidence the housing requirement to ensure appropriate supply in the right locations.
- For efficient use of the planning system to deliver affordable housing e.g. the Local Development Frameworks and section 106 agreements. Viable sites, with planning permission, to be brought forward in the timescale required, in order to meet the needs of all sections of the community.
- To ensure that the necessary infrastructure (transport, health, schools etc) is frontloaded to deliver sustainable housing solutions.
- For sustained investment by the public and private sectors and for that subsidy to be used as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- To improve joint working between sectors, local authorities and departments within local authorities to maximise the resources available and ensure that existing assets are used for the widest community benefit.
- To achieve the increased delivery levels identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Housing Market Assessments.
- Through links with economic strategies to address the low wage economy that prevails in many parts of Devon.
- Ensure that all strategies and actions are sufficiently rural proofed.
- To investigate and promote innovative ways of delivering affordable housing.

Increasing Housing Delivery

Indicator 1 – Affordability ratio - 2005 Average house prices (mean) vs. Average earnings

Area	House Price	Earnings	Ratio	Income required for mortgage
East Devon	£226,607	£20,242	11.2	£61,508
Exeter	£179,681	£18,161	9.9	£48,771
Mid Devon	£197,826	£19,706	10.0	£53,696
North Devon	£202,614	£18,455	11.0	£54,995
South Hams	£261,803	£21,824	12.0	£71,061
Teignbridge	£207,856	£17,785	11.7	£56,418
Torridge	£193,435	£17,090	11.3	£52,504
West Devon	£226,398	£20,324	11.1	£61,451
Devon	£212,158	£19,115	11.1	£57,586
South West	£199,129	£21,354	9.3	£54,049
England	£192,247	£24,064	8.0	£52,181

Source: Land Registry and ASHE

Note: the Income required for mortgage is calculated as follows – assumes 5% deposit and then borrowing 3.5 x earnings.

Indicator 2 – Demand – Number of applicants on Local Authority Housing Registers for Social Rented Housing

Area	2002	2003	2004	2005
East Devon	3,296	2,965	3,930	4,029
Exeter	2,286	2,582	2,899	2,450
Mid Devon	959	982	1,217	1,254
North Devon	1,617	2,186	2,625	2,970
South Hams	1,029	1,558	1,797	1,910
Teignbridge	2,476	2,573	2,744	3,399
Torridge	981	1,057	1,095	1,106
West Devon	918	967	1,077	1,335
Devon	13,562	14,870	17,384	18,453
South West	94,918	110,445	123,845	131,193
England	1,093,342	1,263,550	1,434,031	1,543,509

Source: Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix - DCLG

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Indicator 3 – Social Housing Grant funded Completions in Devon (rented)

Area	2003/04		2004/05		2005/06	
	HC NAHP	LA funded	HC NAHP	LA funded	HC NAHP	LA funded
East Devon	17	-	25	3	19	20
Exeter	37	2	66	-	123	45
Mid Devon	29	-	22	-	16	-
North Devon	2	-	61	-	26	-
South Hams	21	10	32	-	85	-
Teignbridge	49	-	39	4	6	-
Torridge	9	-	25	-	34	-
West Devon	31	-	17	5	48	-
Devon	195	12	287	12	357	65
South West	1,705	496	1,712	436	2,266	255
England	15,865	4,336	15,240	3,177	18,208	2,123

Source: Housing Corporation

Note: HC NAHP – Housing Corporation National Affordable Housing Programme,
LA funded – Local Authority funded

Indicator 4 – Social Housing Grant funded Completions in Devon (Low Cost Home Ownership products)

Area	2003/04		2004/05		2005/06	
	HC NAHP	LA funded	HC NAHP	LA funded	HC NAHP	LA funded
East Devon	-	-	15	3	7	13
Exeter	5	-	57	-	56	12
Mid Devon	-	-	2	-	32	-
North Devon	4	-	6	-	39	8
South Hams	8	4	30	-	52	-
Teignbridge	4	-	22	-	23	-
Torridge	2	-	11	-	25	-
West Devon	1	-	5	-	5	-
Devon	24	4	148	3	239	33
South West	401	61	913	57	1,185	74
England	5,907	586	6,217	508	8,687	382

Source: Housing Corporation

Note: HC NAHP – Housing Corporation National Affordable Housing Programme,
LA funded – Local Authority funded

Indicator 5 – The percentage of second homes and holiday lets

The number of household spaces recorded as second residence/holiday accommodation accounts for 3.5% of all household spaces (11,108). There are significant variations within the county, 57% of household spaces in the parish of East Portlemouth are second residence/holiday accommodation.

Source: 2001 Census

Indicator 6 – Supply of rural affordable housing in villages less than 3000

Across Devon 22,500 dwellings (equivalent to about 8,325 completions in rural areas – 37%) were completed between 2001 and 2005. Almost 30% of these were in Exeter or the sub regional centres of Barnstaple, Bideford and Newton Abbot. Around 34% were located in the Area Centres (broadly corresponding to the market towns). However, 37% were built in the smaller villages and rural areas.

However, Housing Authority returns (HSSA) for 2005 show that only 336 dwellings completed in the rural districts (all districts outside of Exeter) that year were affordable. Of these, only 81 were in communities of under 3,000 population. Most newly completed housing in the rural areas is therefore meeting the demand of the open market.

Source: Housing Evidence: Rural Devon & Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix

Note: In this context 'rural' means everything outside of the larger market towns – the Area Centres.

ISSUE No: Two

TITLE OF ISSUE: Reducing Homelessness

1 Identification of Issue

- a What is the issue for Devon?** The shortage of good quality, affordable housing is a significant cause of homelessness and overcrowding. Local Authorities are required by government to reduce the number of statutory homeless acceptances and to halve the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010. In order to deliver against these targets Devon needs to increase the housing options for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This requires Local Authorities to continue to increase and improve current homelessness prevention initiatives and work to increase access to alternative accommodation e.g. private rented sector. It is also important that households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness have access to the right kind and level of support to enable them to sustain accommodation independently. More inter-agency working, particularly between Local Housing Authorities and Social Services is required to ensure homeless people have access to consistent levels of advice, support and referrals across Devon.
- b Who does it affect?** A wide range of households, families, single persons, older persons, young people and vulnerable client groups who are unable to access affordable housing in Devon.
- c Does it affect all of Devon geographically or certain parts?** It affects all of Devon but the issues in rural areas differ from the urban centres. There can be some examples of migration towards the urban areas in order to access resources and services that are not available in rural areas. This can mean that people are forced to move away from their local support networks and put pressure on the urban centres due to the increase in need.

2 Justification/ demonstration of Issue

a How do you know the issue is there?

i Datasets/ indicators (see DSHG's Devon's Housing Evidence)

- Number of homeless applications (P1E)
- Number of statutory homeless acceptances (P1E)
- Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation (P1E)
- Homelessness prevention (BVPI 213)
- Indicators from the Children's and Young Persons theme;
 - o No. of Homeless 16-18 year olds
 - o Length of stay in temporary accommodation for young people (JAR Indicator)

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

- Number of 16-17 year olds and care leavers 18-20 who are accepted in priority need and unintentionally homeless (LAA/LPSA indicator)
- Number of affordable units of accommodation with support available for referral of young people who are vulnerable because they are care leavers, offenders or have mental health problems

ii Practitioner and expert experience of issue.

Sufficient statistic evidence

iii Research

There is a wide range of National, Regional and Local research reports which are highlighted in Table One p10. The key pieces of research and strategies that are specific to this issue are highlighted below:

- **Links to other strategies** – There is a wide range of National, Regional and Local research reports. A selection of some key pieces of research and strategies are highlighted below:
- **National Policy Framework**
DCLG (July 2006) Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities.
Housing Corporation (July 2006) Tackling Homelessness – a consultation paper.
ODPM (March 2006) Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives. A strategy for tackling homelessness).
ODPM (July 2005) BVPI 213 on prevention of homelessness through housing advice.
ODPM (March 2003) More Than A Roof: a report into tackling homelessness.
Homelessness Act 2002.
- **Research**
DCLG (June 2006) Homelessness Prevention: a guide to good practice.
DCLG (Quarterly) Homelessness Statistics and Policy Briefings.
- **Regional Strategies**
The South West Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2016.
Devon Supporting People 5 Year Strategy.
Local Area Agreement.
Devon Children and Young People's Plan.
Against Domestic Violence and Abuse in Devon Strategy (ADVA).
South West Reducing Reoffending Strategy

- **Research**
The National Housing Federation 'SW Housing Crisis Campaign'.
The Chartered Institute of Housing (2006) 'Housing Manifesto for the SW', Devon's Housing Evidence produced by DSHG.
- **Local Strategies**
Each Local Housing Authority will have a Homelessness Strategy.
Devon LPSA Target: Preventing Homelessness and Reducing Repeat Homelessness Among Vulnerable Young People. (A 50% reduction by 2008).
- **Local Research**
Local Housing Needs Surveys carried out at Local Authority level.
DSHG (October 2005) Homelessness Prevention in Devon.
DSHG and Shelter (March 2006). Towards Consistency: An investigation into How Local Authorities in Devon provide Services for Homeless People.

(1) Web Sites:

The following websites may be useful for further information:

- www.communities.gov.uk
- www.dshg.org.uk
- www.rpsouthwest.org.uk
- www.homelesslink.org.uk
- www.housingcorp.gov.uk
- www.shelter.org.uk
- www.jrf.org.uk
- www.housing.org.uk
- www.cioh.uk

b Links to other strategies

Local, County, Regional and National Strategies and Research

[See Table One](#)

c Links to/ impact on other themes/ issues

[See Table Two](#)

3 Drawing on the above, what therefore is/ are the challenge(s) Devon must meet to address this issue?

The Challenges are to reduce homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation by:

- Ensuring that a high proportion of the new affordable homes benefits homeless people.
- Increasing and improving homelessness prevention initiatives.
- Enabling more alternative accommodation e.g. in the private rented sector.
- Making appropriate, cross authority links between Supporting People services such as floating support and homelessness strategies to ensure that homeless households are given sufficient support to enable them to sustain their tenancies.

Reducing Homelessness

Indicator 7 – Number of homeless acceptances

Households accepted as homeless and in priority need during the year

Area	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
East Devon	210	276	256	151	185
Exeter	233	370	307	229	225
Mid Devon	248	170	165	165	97
North Devon	154	130	240	165	73
South Hams	182	188	172	95	58
Teignbridge	239	245	219	224	138
Torridge	44	39	81	54	33
West Devon	121	116	118	109	89
Devon	1,431	1,534	1,558	1,192	898
South West	11,436	12,777	11,495	9,684	7,632 *
England	117,740	129,753	136,545	121,179	86,081*

Source: Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix - DCLG

* calculated from HSSA 2006 LA returns –regional and national data indicated as missing

Indicator 8 – Number of homeless applicants in temporary accommodation

Area	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
East Devon	46	195	25	26	241
Exeter	184	198	276	265	311
Mid Devon	185	247	184	180	168
North Devon	15	60	31	58	70
South Hams	56	83	97	104	122
Teignbridge	418	34	17	130	115
Torridge	5	13	13	18	10
West Devon	40	61	61	31	23
Devon	949	891	704	812	1,060
South West	5,901	6,654	6,615	6,977	6,361*
England	83,226	94,269	105,708	105,586	94,946*

Source: Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix - DCLG

* calculated from HSSA 2006 LA returns –regional and national data indicated as missing

ISSUE No: Three

TITLE OF ISSUE: Making More Efficient Use of Existing Stock.

1 Identification of Issue

- a What is the issue for Devon?** The increase in demand for affordable housing is unlikely to be met by increasing supply alone. Strategies and joint working is needed in order to make better use of the existing stock. This will involve reducing the amount of long term empty homes, monitoring the level of Right to Buy Sales, having efficient social lettings policies, encouraging the development of good quality, well managed, private rented sector and developing appropriate policy responses for managing the impact of second homes and holiday lets and enabling appropriate move-on from supported housing schemes.
- b Who does it affect?** A wide range of households, families, single persons, older persons, young people and vulnerable client groups are unable to access open market housing in Devon.
- c Does it affect all of Devon geographically or certain parts?** All of Devon. A more detailed picture is being built up through the Housing Market Assessments based on sub-regional Housing Market Areas (HMA)

2 Justification/ demonstration of Issue

a How do you know the issue is there?

i Datasets/ indicators (see DSHG's Devon's Housing Evidence)

- Indicator 9: % of Empty Homes (note: a certain amount of empty homes are necessary to accommodate 'churn' in the market. The aim is to monitor the level of empty homes to identify if a geographically specific problem in some areas and to ensure the level of empty homes is not significantly greater than that required for the market to operate.
- Indicator 10: The number of Right to Buy and Voluntary Purchase Sales per year per district (Las will have data on annual returns to DCLG).
- Indicator 5 p11: The percentage of second homes and holiday lets as a proportion of total stock for Devon. *At present this is not shown at a Local Authority level comment. Should this be included?*

ii Practitioner and expert experience of issue.

Housing support providers have reported difficulties in moving people into more independent living. See Supporting People, supporting housing reviews.

iii Research

There is a wide range of National, Regional and Local research reports which are highlighted in Table One p10. The key pieces of research and strategies that are specific to this issue are highlighted below:

- **Links to other strategies** – There is a wide range of National, Regional and Local research reports. A selection of some key pieces of research and strategies are highlighted below:
- **Regional Strategies**
The South West Regional Housing Strategy 2205 2016.
The SW Regional Spatial Strategy.
- **Local and Sub-Regional Research**
Local Housing Needs Surveys carried out at Local Authority level.
Plymouth Sub-Regional Housing Market Assessment November 2006.
Exeter and Torbay Sub-Regional Housing Market Assessment due April 2007

(1) Web Sites:

The following websites may be useful for further information:

- www.housing.org.uk
- www.cioh.uk
- www.housingcorp.gov.uk
- www.landreg.gov.uk
- www.nomisweb.co.uk
- www.statistics.gov.uk
- www.communities.gov.uk
- www.dshg.org.uk
- www.jrf.org.uk

d Links to other strategies

Local, County, Regional and National Strategies and Research

[See Table One](#)

e Links to/ impact on other themes/ issues

[See Table Two](#)

3 Drawing on the above, what therefore is/ are the challenge(s) Devon must meet to address this issue?

The Challenges are to:

- Improve joint working between Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords to ensure efficient social lettings policies.
- Develop actions for improving access to the private rented sector.
- Develop actions for managing the impact of second homes and holiday lets in those communities that are worse affected.
- Monitor the numbers of empty homes to ensure that they do not exceed that level required for the market to operate efficiently.
- Improve joint working between Local Authorities, Supporting People, Housing Associations and housing support providers, to develop effective strategies for moving people on from supported housing schemes to greater independent living.

Making more efficient use of existing stock

Indicator 9 – The total number of empty properties excluding second homes, holiday lets and properties normally occupied by students.

	Total Dwelling stock as at 1 st April 2006	Vacant dwellings	Percentage of total stock
East Devon	61,684	768	1.2%
Exeter	48,296	1,098	2.3%
Mid Devon	32,047	897	2.8%
North Devon	41,949	782	1.9%
South Hams	41,274	745	1.8%
Teignbridge	55,673	1,631	2.9%
Torridge	28,362	1,917	6.8%
West Devon	22,561	846	3.7%
Devon	331,846	8,684	2.6%
South West	2,277,546	50,492	2.2%

Source: ODPM, annual HIP returns for April of each year.

Indicator 10 – Right to buy and Voluntary purchase sales

Area	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
East Devon	2,064	50	94	95	73	60	29	18
Exeter	2,118	78	132	102	166	158	100	56
Mid Devon	2,116	61	94	80	85	79	78	37
North Devon	1,850	62	91	0	0			
South Hams	1,505	54	0	0	0			
Teignbridge	2,464	92	97	112	79	120	56	0
Torridge	1,241	34	60	50	46	34	17	10
West Devon	899	19	0	0	0			
Devon	14,257	450	568	439	449	451	208	121
South West	108,139	3,277	3,709	3,032	2,750	3,058	2,525	1,443
England	1,225,949	39,639	54,141	48,894	48,371	59,283	67,672	49,983

Source: Time Bomb publication 2006, National Housing Federation

Note: Information is collected quarterly from each Local Authority. Where Local Authorities no longer manage any social housing the table has been left blank.

ISSUE No: Four

TITLE OF ISSUE: Achieving Good Quality Homes.

1 Identification of Issue

- a What is the issue for Devon?** Good quality homes are needed for new developments and for the existing housing stock in both the private and social sectors.

This is because:

- Poor quality housing can contribute to homelessness.
- If more housing is to be built, at higher densities it is important to mitigate the impact of development on the environment and climate change through good design and improvements in energy efficiency. This is controlled in the social sector by funding requirements such as meeting Eco Homes Standards and Scheme Development Standards.
- Improvements to existing homes can make an important contribution to greater energy efficiency. This can be achieved by ensuring all homes in the social sector meet the Decent Homes standard by 2010 as required, by working jointly to increase the proportion of homes in the private sector that meet Decent Homes Standard and by monitoring average SAP ratings in Devon as measured by the English House Condition Survey 2001.

- b Who does it affect?** Poor standards in existing homes particularly affects vulnerable groups such as older persons.

- c Does it affect all of Devon geographically or certain parts?** All of Devon

2 Justification/ demonstration of Issue

- a How do you know the issue is there?**

i Proposed Datasets/ indicators

Note: At present these indicators are difficult to measure, variable in data availability or in low numbers recorded. Comment is therefore sought on the usefulness of the indicators suggested.

- Number of new social housing built to Ecohomes Excellent Standard and Ecohomes Very Good Standard (Housing Corporation)
- % of lifetime homes built (Housing Corporation)
- % of Local Authority and RSL homes that are 'Non-Decent'. The national target is of all existing homes in the social sector to be Decent by 2010.

iii Practitioner and expert experience of issue.

iv Research

- **Links to other strategies** – There is a wide range of national, Regional and Local research reports. A selection of some key pieces of research and strategies are highlighted below:
- **National Policy framework**
 - Code for Sustainable Buildings (in development)
 - Scheme Development Standards
 - Decent Homes Standards
 - Building Regulations
 - Planning Policy Guidance
 - Fuel Poverty in England: The Government's Plan for Action (Defra 2004)
- **Regional Strategies**
 - The South West Regional Housing Strategy 2005 to 2016. Strategic Aim 2.
 - The SW Regional Spatial Strategy (Draft) 2006.
- **Research**
 - Designing our Environment: Towards a better built environment for the SW. Creating Excellence 2004.

(1) Web Sites:

The following websites may be useful for further information:

- www.housing.org.uk
- www.cioh.uk
- www.housingcorp.gov.uk
- www.landreg.gov.uk
- www.nomisweb.co.uk
- www.statistics.gov.uk
- www.communities.gov.uk
- www.dshg.org.uk
- www.jrf.org.uk

f Links to other strategies

Local, County, Regional and National Strategies and Research

[See Table One](#)

g Links to/ impact on other themes/ issues

[See Table Two](#)

3 Drawing on the above, what therefore is/ are the challenge(s) Devon must meet to address this issue?

The Challenge is to:

- Improve the design standards and energy efficiency of new homes built in the social sector through promotion of good practice such as the use of Design Codes and Design Review Panels, increase the percentage of new affordable housing meeting the Eco Homes Excellent standard and increase the number of new homes built to lifetime homes standards.
- Ensure all housing in the social sector meets Decent Homes Standard by 2010 and to tackle the poor quality of private rental accommodation through Supporting People and Home Improvement Agency targets.
- To understand to role of housing commissioners in promoting the use of sustainable materials and modern methods of construction.
- To disseminate learning from exemplar projects so that the development of sustainable housing can be made more cost efficient and therefore incorporated into volume delivery of housing.
- To ensure that public agencies lead by example in the commissioning of their own developments.

Affordable Housing Theme Tables One and Two

Table One: Local, Regional, County, Regional and National Strategies and Research.

Document or author	Title of document and web address?	How is issue raised?	Implications for Devon
LOCAL			
Parish Plans and The Market and Coastal Towns Association.	www.devonrcc.org.uk www.mcti.org.uk	Parish level housing needs surveys are carried out by Devon's Rural Housing Enablers. Affordable Housing emerges as a priority issue in a majority of the Parish Plans completed in Devon. There are 20 Market and Coastal Town Associations in Devon.	The retention of a rural housing programme for settlements of 3000 population of less is crucial. The Key Rural Towns in Devon of 10,000 population are an important focus for meeting the needs of a wider rural hinterland. Housing is a key part of the regeneration of the Market and Coastal Towns.
Each Local Housing Authority (District, Borough, City and Unitary) is required to publish a 'fit for purpose' Local Housing Strategy which is downloadable from their website and includes a Homelessness Strategy	www.eastdevon.gov.uk www.exeter.gov.uk www.middevon.gov.uk www.northdevon.gov.uk www.southhams.gov.uk www.teignbridge.gov.uk www.torridge.gov.uk www.westdevon.gov.uk	The level of housing needs is evidenced. Targets for new affordable housing and reduction of homelessness are identified Actions to prevent homelessness and improve the homeless service are set out.	The level of need exceed current levels of investment available. Reduction of Homelessness requires successful multi agency working e.g. between the Local Housing Authorities, Housing providers, Social Services, the Children's Trust, Mental Health Services, Supporting People, Health, the Police and the voluntary sector.
DSHG and Shelter (March 2006). Towards Consistency: An investigation into how Local Authorities in Devon provide Services for Homeless People.	www.dshg.gov.uk	Identifies differences in performance and identifies areas for improvement.	Greater consistency is needed and improvements in homeless prevention through engagement with partners organisations.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

COUNTY			
Local Area Agreement	http://www.devonsp.org.uk	<p>The Housing theme aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop a robust evidence base that can inform future requests for freedoms and flexibility in order to improve delivery. -Explore innovative ways to deliver affordable, rural housing. -Use the LAA to take forward work that requires a much wider partnership approach. 	Affordable Housing already operates within a wide network of partnerships therefore the actions agreed are those best fitted to an LAA approach. Numerous other joint actions are being taken forward through DSHG, the Rural Housing Partnership and Local Community Strategies.
Devon Supporting People Strategy 2005/6 to 2009/10	www.devon.gov.uk/supporting_people	The Devon Supporting People Partnership is responsible for housing-related support services for vulnerable people to enable them to live as independently as possible within their own accommodation.	Sets out how the housing-related support sector will be shaped to ensure local and national priorities are met through cost effective, good quality, flexible and accessible housing-related support services across the County.
Devon Rural Strategy	www.drn.org.uk	Makes reference to the importance of affordable housing for the sustainability of Devon's rural communities.	
DSHG's Devon's Housing Evidence.	www.dshg.org.uk	Sets out the data for Demand and Supply for affordable housing and homeless data in Devon's Local Authorities.	
SUB-REGIONAL			
DTZ (2004) Analysis of sub-regional housing markets.	www.swrhb.org.uk	Describes the sub-regional HMA in Devon and the methodology for identifying them	Housing Market Areas now form the basis for government investment in Affordable Housing and cut across both local authority and county boundaries. The HMA is Devon include the Plymouth Sub-region, the Exeter and Torbay sub-region and the Northern Coast Strip made up of North Devon, Torridge, West Somerset and North Cornwall).

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

REGIONAL			
<p>The South West Regional Housing Strategy (SWRHS) 2005 to 2016.</p>	<p>www.southwest-ra.gov.uk</p>	<p>The SWRHS' 3 Strategic Aims are: 1. Improving the balance of housing markets. 2. Achieving good quality homes. 3. Supporting Sustainable Communities.</p> <p>Links between the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Housing Strategy are important.</p> <p>Sets out the regional priorities and actions for reducing homelessness</p>	<p>Provides the framework through which local authorities and regional agencies are expected to take forward their housing related work.</p> <p>Local Strategic Partnerships are encouraged to make a reality of the RHS through the LAA process and LPSA targets.</p> <p>Delivery of the RHS will require joint working across a broad range of administrative areas.</p> <p>Devon's Authorities are engaged in a range of regional task and finish groups for the implementation of a range of actions to work towards the delivery of this aim.</p> <p>LHAs have a target to reduce the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010.</p> <p>Supporting People's strategies for supporting housing service to Homeless people are vital to achieving this target</p>
<p>The SW Regional Spatial Strategy (Draft).</p>	<p>www.southwest-ra.gov.uk</p>	<p>Translates strategy into proposals for the provision of new homes including the spatial policy for housing, affordable housing targets.</p> <p>See 6.1 Providing a Plentiful and Affordable Housing Supply. See Policy H1 p131.</p> <p>Within the 23,060 dwellings per annum required for the region, at least 7,500 affordable homes per annum will be provided in the period to 2026. Provision will be made for at least 30% of all housing development annually across each LA area and HMA to be affordable, with authorities specifying rates up to 60% or higher in areas of greatest need.</p> <p>This should be cross referenced with findings of the Sub-Regional Housing market Assessments which are updating the levels of need required.</p>	<p>Development of strategies and policies consistent with the RSS and that are informed by the findings of the sub-regional Housing Market Assessments.</p> <p>Partnership working to examine and better understand cross boundary housing market issues.</p> <p>Partnership working to maintain an adequate supply of land through Local Authority Local Development Frameworks.</p> <p>Efficient and effective use of planning gain to deliver affordable housing without subsidy through sharing of good practice on use of s106 mechanisms</p>

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

SWRDA (2005) The Way Ahead: Delivering Sustainable Communities in the SW.	www.southwestrda.org.uk	This strategy sets out a range of important interventions in a small number of the places Identified in RPG10/emerging RSS, including Exeter and Plymouth. These interventions are needed to make an impact on; - Building more affordable homes, and - Improving the transport infrastructure.	Exeter is a regional priority and growth point for the SW. The provision of adequate infrastructure is essential for the delivery of affordable housing.
Designing our Environment – Towards a Better Built Environment for the SW. Creating Excellence 2004	www.creatingexcellence.org.uk	Suggests ways of improving the quality of design in the SW	Promotion of Design Champions and Design review panels.
Major Regional Research... The National Housing Federation 'SW Housing Crisis Campaign'. The Chartered Institute of Housing (2006) 'Housing Manifesto for the South West.	www.housing.org.uk www.cih.org.uk		Gives the regional context to Devon's Affordable Housing Crisis.
NATIONAL			
ODPM (Feb 2003) Sustainable Communities Plan	www.communities.gov.uk	States it is vital to link housing to socially inclusive places where there are jobs, services and transport links.	Implications for local and county planning and housing policies
ODPM (2005) Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future.	www.communities.gov.uk	Sets out an action plan for tackling the imbalances between housing supply and demand and improving the condition of the housing stock. Sets out the purpose of HMAs.	Sets out a 5 year plan for housing with greater emphasis on homeownership, introducing HomeBuy and the First time Buyers Initiative. Resource allocation to focus increasingly on addressing regionally identified strategic housing priorities.
ODPM (2005) Sustainable Communities: Homes For All.	www.communities.gov.uk		
ODPM (2005) Planning Policy Statement 3 (Draft)	www.communities.gov.uk	Key Planning Policy document setting out the framework in which LAs planning policies can operate.	Consideration of greater consistency in planning thresholds across Devon
Kate Barker (2004) Review of Housing Supply.	www.communities.gov.uk	Make the case for an increase in Housing Supply nationally	
The Government's Response to Kate Barker's Review of Housing 5.12.2005	www.communities.gov.uk	Sets out the Government's commitment to build more homes by bringing forward a package of measures to reform the planning system.	
Affordable Rural Housing Commission: Final Report (2006). DEFRA/DCLG	www.defra.gov.uk	Sets out recommendations for actions to improve the supply of rural housing.	Can help inform policies and actions at the local level.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

ODPM (March 2005) Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives. A strategy for tackling homelessness)	www.communities.gov.uk	Sets out government priorities and a new target to reduce the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010 and starts to promote models of homeless prevention.	Targets to be reflected in Local Strategies.
Affordable Rural Housing Commission: Final Report (2006). DEFRA/DCLG	www.defra.gov.uk	Identifies the problem of hidden homelessness in rural communities.	Links into the need for specific strategies for homeless groups such as homeless young people from within rural areas
National Research:			
The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has sponsored several pieces of research e.g. 'Monitoring Housing and Neighbourhood Trends 2006. Steve Wilcox (2204) Can work, Can't Buy: local measures of the ability of working households to become homeowners.	www.jrf.org.uk		Identifies Devon and the SW generally as some of the least affordable areas of the country.
Halifax Key Worker Annual Review		Tracks the affordability for 5 groups of public sector workers: nurses, teachers, police officers, fire fighters and ambulance staff	Affordability for key workers is worst in the SW where the average house in all 34 towns surveyed is unaffordable for all 5 key workers groups
Urban Design Compendium. Housing Corporation and English Partnerships 2000.	www.englishpartnerships.co.uk	Gives guidance to developers and funding bodies on achieving good design in urban regeneration	Adoption of these principles in the two new communities in Devon

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Table Two: Links With Other Themes.

Theme/ issue	Possible links to/ impact of this issue on:
<p>Environmental sustainability, including climate change and sustainable energy</p>	<p>The increased delivery of housing across all tenures can make a significant contribution to the reduction of carbon emissions through investment in and implementation of sustainable construction practices in terms of design, materials and in Modern Methods of Construction. The target for the region is for 50% of all new affordable homes to employ Modern Methods of Construction by 2010. The Code for Sustainable Buildings (Housing Corporation) is promoted for all new developments receiving public subsidy.</p> <p>Improvements in energy efficiency helps address fuel poverty and makes an important contribution to reducing carbon emissions and to the % of electricity generated from renewables.</p> <p>Public sector partners in Devon are promoting the use of renewable energy on new developments and the energy efficiency standards of new social housing has been continually improving and the majority are now achieving the Very good EcoHomes rating. A number of exemplar ecoHomes pilots are being developed in Devon e.g. Oak Meadow in South Molton.</p> <p>The promotion of local materials and labour and the use of materials capable of being recycled and re-used makes an important contribution to championing of sustainable development</p>
<p>Economic sustainability</p>	<p>There is a strong link between lower than average wages, much higher house prices and the affordability crisis of housing in Devon for households on low to moderate incomes.</p> <p>The supply of affordable housing has strong links to The Way Ahead proposals led by SWRDA looking at the infrastructure requirements that are needed to underpin a vibrant SW economy.</p> <p>A balanced housing market is crucial to the retention of skilled and key workers. Delivery of Affordable housing can lead to greater investment in the sourcing of local materials and developing local skills in design and the construction industry.</p>
<p>Social sustainability e.g. community cohesiveness and individual well being</p>	<p>Access to an affordable home is a significant factor in community cohesion, health and education opportunities.</p> <p>New sustainable developments should involve people and communities in their planning and design.</p>
<p>Rural issues</p>	<p>The sustainability of many of Devon's rural communities is threatened by lack of access to affordable housing for those working in the rural economy, increasing travel to work distances for rural workers weakening family and community networks and increasing overcrowding and the poor housing conditions of those households on low to moderate incomes.</p>
<p>Health</p>	<p>Improving the quality and affordability of housing will deliver a range of health outcomes particularly for children and young families, older people. It can also help reduce fuel poverty which is linked to infant mortality and life expectancy.</p> <p>Homelessness is a significant factor affecting health e.g. The health issues for babies and children in bed and breakfast accommodation are well established.</p> <p>Lifetime homes that are designed to be adaptable to the changing needs of the occupier over a lifetime can make an important contribution to people's opportunity to retain independence by staying in their own homes and receiving care and support.</p>

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

<p>Older people</p>	<p>Devon has proportionately more older people than England and Wales as a whole. The increase in older people is a significant factor in both the net population increase and the increase in more and smaller households.</p> <p>The Housing needs of older people have an important impact on the costs of health and care provision and greater investment is needed in the development of suitable housing such as extra care and sheltered housing, maintaining and improving the existing stock and developing range of housing support services for older people.</p>
<p>Children and young people</p>	<p>The provision of affordable homes, built to a decent standard, are key components in successful health and education outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>The provision of supported housing and floating support within general needs housing are important components of Devon's Supporting People Strategy 2005/06 to 2009/10. Lack of affordable housing reoccurs in the themes for vulnerable children, young people and families.</p>
<p>Safer Devon</p>	<p>'Secured by Design' standards are required for new Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Well designed space, security of homes and the development of balanced and mixed communities all make an important contribution to Safer and Sustainable communities.</p> <p>The South West Accommodation Pathway (SWAG) is a 2 year Pathfinder project examining how improved access to secure accommodation for ex-offenders can reduce re-offending rates. This includes a 'Gateway' in Exeter and surrounding areas.</p>
<p>Strong Communities</p>	<p>Housing provision is a key component of National, Regional and local Sustainable Communities Strategies.</p> <p>Housing Authorities work closely with their Housing Association partners to improve the management of social housing stock and neighbourhoods. The National Housing Federations campaign 'iN Business for Neighbourhoods' illustrates the wider community benefits that Housing Associations can deliver.</p>
<p>Culture</p>	<p>Improving the quality of design is an important aim of regional and local housing strategies. The quality of our homes helps reinforce Devon's sense of place –its landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage. The quality of design also influences people's experience of their community, environment and wellbeing.</p> <p>Housing partners are engaged in a number of initiatives e.g. Design Champions, Design Review Panels, the use of Design Codes, the use of Enquiry by Design and in the Future Foundations initiative (www.futurefoundations.co.uk).</p> <p>New public investment in major developments will be conditional on schemes adopting the principles of the 'Urban Design Compendium' produced by English partnerships and the Housing Corporation.</p> <p>Planning contributions to well designed public open space, green spaces and amenities is set out in Local Authority s106 Policies.</p>
<p>Transport and accessibility</p>	<p>Access to affordable housing within reasonable proximity to place of work is important in reducing the high average travel to work distances in many parts of Devon.</p>
<p>Other (please specify)</p>	

