

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: HEAD OF HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

REPORT NO: HNS01/13

DATE: 4 MARCH 2013

TITLE:	Housing Strategy	
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Key Decision – the Housing Strategy has the potential to affect all wards of the District	
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Cllr T Bryant, Portfolio holder for Good Housing	
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Richardson, Head of Housing & Neighbourhoods e-mail – i.richardson@southkesteven.gov.uk Tel: 01476 406063	
INITIAL IMPACT ANALYSIS:	Carried out and Referred to in paragraph (7) below	Full impact assessment Required:
Equality and Diversity	<i>Completed 15th February 2013</i>	<i>No.</i>
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:	This report is publicly available via the Your Council and Democracy link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Housing Strategy 2010- 2013 http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1621 Equality Analysis http://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=164&MId=2803&Ver=4	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Note the outcomes of the consultation process;
- b) Approve the the Housing Strategy for 2013-2018

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present the draft Housing Strategy for approval.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Consultation

The draft strategy has been prepared following consultation with councillors, customers and other stakeholders. At the Housing Consultation event on 5 December 2012 we consulted representatives of partner agencies, including Registered Providers and developers, support providers, police, tenants and others. A separate consultation event on 29th January provided the opportunity to receive feedback from private landlords. Communities PDG has influenced the content of the strategy, as has the Community Focus Forum, and a random sample of tenants and prospective tenants has been consulted through a postal survey.

The focus of consultation on the strategy was the strategic priorities which will shape the housing agenda in the district over the life of the strategy. The consultation began with three proposed priorities:

1. High quality new affordable homes available to buy or rent
2. Improved housing standards across all neighbourhoods
3. Access to housing and well being services

During the course of consultation, feedback from the Communities Policy Development Group suggested that the wording of the second priority should be amended to make clear that the aim is to raise standards in all parts of the District and across all tenures. A fourth priority was also suggested, to emphasise the importance of sustainability; both in terms of the sustainability of communities and neighbourhoods and in terms of environmental sustainability.

The revised and recommended priorities, and their desired outcomes, now read as follows:

1. High quality new affordable homes available to buy or rent

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ More social housing available to rent from SKDC and registered providers

- ✓ More affordable housing to buy or rent or being offered on a shared equity basis
- ✓ Additional homes to meet the needs of clients with particular needs.

2. Improved housing standards across the district and for all tenures

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ Improvements to the quality of housing and environment in our neighbourhoods
- ✓ Improved management of the homes owned by SKDC
- ✓ Improvements to the quality of private sector housing
- ✓ Households being assisted to remain safely in their homes
- ✓ An increased supply of good quality private rented accommodation
- ✓ Increasing proportions of houses reaching affordable warmth standards.

3. Access to housing and wellbeing services

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ Ensuring housing options and advice are available to assist households in finding housing
- ✓ Ensuring that social housing, provided by both SKDC and Registered Providers in the district, is fairly and effectively used to meet housing needs
- ✓ Availability of services to help vulnerable households remain safely in their homes and live life to the full.

4. Promotion of sustainable neighbourhoods and communities

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ Neighbourhoods which are well integrated with transport links, have good access to employment and amenities and which have a reducing impact on the environment
- ✓ Well managed neighbourhoods in which citizens enjoy the best possible quality of life in homes which are affordable in use and meet their housing needs and where crime and anti-social behavior do not adversely impact on the quality of life.

Development of the Strategy

The drafting of the strategy has reflected the following:

- ✓ The national context
- ✓ The Lincolnshire context
- ✓ The South Kesteven context
- ✓ The related policies and strategies, within and beyond SKDC, which will impact on or influence delivery of the strategy

The intention is that the style and format of the strategy will differ from previous versions and from the 'word' format of the version appended to this report:

- ✓ The strategy will be published in both 'hard copy' and 'web' versions and will be attractive and design-led; incorporating photographs and graphics, consistent with an emergent corporate style which aims to make such documents more accessible, attractive and relatively succinct
- ✓ The 'core' strategy, deliberately concise, will be supplemented by a document of supporting evidence – including, for example, data about demographics, housing markets, etc. – and a 'delivery plan' which are intended to be dynamic documents, updated during the life of the strategy to reflect any changes to underpinning evidence and to provides information about the specific initiatives being undertaken to deliver the strategy

Once Cabinet has approved the strategy, the design work necessary prior to publication will be undertaken.

Implementation

The strategy has a proposed life of five years and the delivery plan will be updated to ensure that actions are taken, reviewed and adapted to best achieve the strategic priorities during the life of the strategy.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None: it is a requirement that the Council has a strategy to identify and meet the housing needs of the district.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct resource implications resulting form this recommendation.If approved, the delivery of the strategic priorities will have resource implications which will be managed in accordance with corporate budgets and the project management framework.

6. RISK AND MITIGATION

Risk has been considered as part of this report and any specific high risks are included in the table below:

Category Risk	Action / Controls
None	None

7. ISSUES ARISING FROM IMPACT ANALYSIS

An equality assessment was carried out on 15th February 2013 and there are no issues arising from that assessment.

8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct implications resulting from this recommendation.

9. COMMENTS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

The financial implications arising from the implementation of the delivery plan will be considered in conjunction with other financial proposals as part of the Council's annual budget setting process.

10. COMMENTS OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

S. 8 of the Housing Act 1985 requires that every local housing authority will consider housing conditions in their district and the needs of the district with respect to the provision of further housing accommodation. In addition, the provision of a Housing Strategy is a statutory requirement in accordance with s.87 of the Local Government Act 2003. It also assists the good governance of the Council for the delivery of housing provision. Any strategy should be produced in accordance with guidance issued under s.226 of the Housing Act 2004.

11. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICES

None.

12. APPENDICES:

APPENDIX NO.	TITLE
1	Draft Housing Strategy

Appendix 1

Draft Housing Strategy 2013 - 2018

Foreword

The socio-economic climate in 2013 follows a period that is being widely acknowledged as one of the most challenging since the 1930s. This strategy, responding to that challenge, is focused on meeting the housing needs and aspirations of the district. In doing so, it recognises the wider implications that housing can have: in terms of its contribution to economic development and regeneration, to the health and wellbeing of people and communities and to achieving sustainable solutions which mitigate adverse impact on the environment. South Kesteven District Council has a vision for the future and recognises the role that housing has to play in delivering on that vision.

(A 'vision' page will be included in the published version, to a similar format as page 3 of the Economic Development Strategy 2012 - 2016)

Introduction

The South Kesteven Housing Strategy 2013 – 2018 updates and replaces the strategy for 2010 -2013. The Strategy is the product of consultation with a range of stakeholders and draws upon multiple data sources in setting out an ambitious vision for the future of the District within the context of the corporate priority of ***creating the environment to support good housing for all.***

Supporting that corporate priority are four strategic housing priorities:

- Priority 1: **High quality new affordable homes available to buy or rent**
- Priority 2: **Improved housing standards across the district and for all tenures**
- Priority 3: **Access to housing and wellbeing services**
- Priority 4: **Promotion of sustainable neighbourhoods and communities.**

The creation of the environment to support the delivery of good housing for all does not take place in a vacuum: the District Council, as the local strategic housing authority, operates against a background of national housing, economic and social welfare policies which are significantly influential.

SKDC's Housing Strategy is also informed by, and should be considered alongside:

- ✓ The Lincolnshire Housing Strategy 2009 -2014, developed and agreed by the County's District Councils together with the County Council and key housing partners in the public and private sectors;
- ✓ The Lincolnshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy, which will inform the commissioning of a wide range of support services, many of which will be valuable in supporting independent living;
- ✓ The Strategic Housing Market Assessment, identified in the East Midlands Regional Plan and undertaken together with neighbouring authorities, providing information about the existing housing stock; demand for new market housing and for affordable housing; local housing costs and incomes
- ✓ Government policy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework which aims to 'deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.'

- ✓ SKDC's Core Strategy 2010, which provides the spatial policy framework for development and change in the district, and;
- ✓ The Housing Land Supply document, 2012-2017, which identifies specific sites which the Council considers are likely to contribute to the development of new housing over the five year period.

SKDC recognises that housing is important not only in providing shelter and security but also in helping to shape places, neighbourhoods and communities and in having an impact on health, education, employment and independent living. Furthermore, the potentially beneficial impact of housing on the local economy should not be overlooked: the housing strategy can contribute positively to the district's economic development strategy.

The housing market makes a significant contribution to the economy through house building, improvement and maintenance together with the associated investment in support services as people buy and sell their properties. The growth plans for the district anticipate the development of 7,500 homes in the 'sustainable urban extensions', referred to as the North West Quadrant/Poplar Farm and the Southern Quadrant; creating employment and skills development opportunities over a number of years encouraging people to live and work in the district.

Wherever we live and whatever the quality, nature and type of our housing, housing will be central to our overall wellbeing as individuals, families and communities. We cannot overstate the importance, therefore, of ensuring that we do our very best to assess housing needs, to create the conditions in which those needs can be met and to deliver the homes, communities and related services which our citizens need and to which they aspire.

South Kesteven has an ageing population and increasing numbers of people with disabilities and limiting long term illnesses. These needs are reflected in the further challenge of supporting the delivery of the County Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy; promoting health improvement and independent living. The housing strategy has an important role to play in creating the conditions and delivering actions which improve the quality of housing and ensure the effective delivery of support services.

In the local context of our district, South Kesteven District Council's Housing Strategy strives to respond effectively to these challenges. Success in delivering on the strategic aims will depend crucially upon both our effectiveness as enablers, in supporting our strategic partners, and as developers and managers of that housing which is in the ownership of the Council. The extent to which, together, we deliver the strategic outcomes will be judged not only by the Council and its corporate partners and stakeholders but by the extent to which citizens of the district, and those who aspire to live in South Kesteven, are satisfied with their homes and communities and are able to use those homes and communities as springboards to unlocking their potential to live full, happy and independent lives.

The National Context

This strategy is being produced in a climate of significant change, the effects of which are likely to be felt for some time to come. Those effects will impact on South Kesteven both in its capacity as strategic housing authority and as landlord and will impact on our strategic partners as they seek to develop and manage housing for sale and for rent. Crucially, the impact will also be felt by many existing and prospective tenants and home buyers.

This climate of change is being influenced by the government's national strategy for housing, set out in 'Laying the Foundations', by the National Planning Policy Framework, the Localism Act 2011 and the raft of welfare reforms being phased in from April 2013. The 'Social Sector Size Criteria' and 'Universal Credit' will, during the life of this strategy, certainly have an adverse impact on landlords and tenants; the uncertainty is about the extent of that impact.

A sustained period of economic downturn has been responsible for a cooling of the housing market; with house price reductions, a slow-down in the production of new homes and significantly reduced movement amongst home buyers who are frustrated by the relative lack of mortgage finance and the need for larger deposits than has been customary in recent decades. Potential house buyers and movers are adopting risk-averse strategies in the face of uncertainty about job security, income growth and the property market. This has led to pressure on the private rented market and social housing providers. The stated objectives of 'Laying the Foundations', published in November 2011, included driving up the level of housebuilding, helping new home owners and boosting consumer confidence: there is scant evidence to date of these outcomes having been achieved. Furthermore, the Government's current Affordable Housing Programme runs until March 2015 and there are no commitments to fund affordable housing beyond that date. More positively for South Kesteven, the Government's arrangements for self-financing of Housing Revenue Accounts, implemented in March 2012, present the possibility of a brighter future for council housing in the district and the potential of the New Homes Bonus also presents opportunities for further investment in the district.

The Government's 'Green Deal' initiative has attracted significant publicity. The cost of loans provided to fund improvements designed to reduce energy consumption and deliver more affordable warmth need to be evaluated against the savings in energy costs which are achieved throughout the period of the loan. Further complications relate to loans being attached to individuals rather than to properties, presenting potential complexities when individuals move to or from a property subject to an outstanding loan. During the life of this strategy, attention will be given to extracting real benefits from the Green Deal in full knowledge of the wider implications. To do so would be consistent with the aim of reducing fuel poverty.

However good housing conditions are, nationally, locally or for individual households, those conditions need to be capable of being enjoyed by the occupiers. The demographic changes being experienced nationally, and felt locally, include an ageing population, living longer and often with challenges to continued independent living presented by disability or illness. The number of households is increasing not only with population growth but by the trend towards smaller households and the diversity of the population is increasing, not least with the opening up of Europe to increased movement by economic migrants. All of these factors have implications for the provision and management of housing and for the relationships between strategic housing authorities and those responsible for health and social welfare.

In summary, the national context for housing is one in which we are facing the toughest challenges in living memory.

The Lincolnshire Context

The current Lincolnshire Housing Strategy, for the period 2009 – 2014, provides an indication of the enduring nature of the prevailing economic conditions; stating in the foreword that *'this strategy is launched in uncertain times – a challenging international economic position, a recession in the United Kingdom and a significant downturn in housing market activity across the country.'*

The Lincolnshire Housing Strategy identified four priorities:

- ✓ To increase the supply of affordable housing across Lincolnshire
- ✓ To increase the supply of affordable homes in rural communities
- ✓ To meet the challenge of our ageing population, and
- ✓ To assist vulnerable households.

The outcomes sought by the County strategy are stated as:

- ✓ More high quality affordable housing in both urban and rural communities
- ✓ Closer working between partners to provide a more effective service for local people, including a well-informed evidence base
- ✓ A wider range of choices for older, vulnerable or homeless people
- ✓ Communities, economies and existing homes that are more sustainable.

The South Kesteven context: the State of the District

We are heading towards having 60,000 homes in South Kesteven; with more than six thousand homes in council housing, a very similar number in the private rented sector, more than two thousand provided by housing associations and almost forty-four thousand homes in the owner-occupied sector. The age profile of South Kesteven's housing is more modern than the national average, with 63% built after 1944, but 60% of the private rented sector is pre-1914. The nature of the stock is also worthy of note; with a higher proportion of detached homes and bungalows than the national average and no high-rise flats.

South Kesteven is ranked in the top 40% nationally in terms of the affordability of home ownership and for levels of home ownership but for many households on lower incomes home ownership remains unrealistic. The District has seen a relatively low growth in average house prices between 1999 and 2012 of 56.8%. By comparison, average prices changed nationally by 80.13%. That said, house prices in South Kesteven, in common with much of the national market, have fallen since 2010 and are currently approximately 7.1 x earnings, compared with 5.8 for East Midlands and 6.7 nationally. This impacts on the need for affordable housing provided by the Council, registered providers (housing associations) and by the private rented sector. This need has been assessed as a requirement for an additional 667 affordable homes each year, whilst in the three year period 2008-2011 669 new homes were achieved; demonstrating that provision, for a variety of reasons, is falling well short of need. Housing completions in South Kesteven fell by 44% over the four years from 2007/8 - 2011/12 and whilst housing associations have maintained a modest but important programme of new housing, there has been no new council housing for a number of years, although change is anticipated under the arrangements made possible by the re-financing of the Council's Housing Revenue Account. It will be important to ensure that any new house building across all tenures and market sectors, and particularly in the district's growth areas of North West Quadrant/Poplar Farm and the South West Quadrant, provide appropriate responses to both the range and extent of identified housing need.

It is also important to ensure that the best possible use is made of existing housing and so this strategy must provide the framework, across tenures, to support the bringing back into use of empty homes and the rapid re-letting of rented housing and the improvement of housing conditions. There are many empty properties above shops or forming part of a commercial development which could be brought back into use or converted for residential accommodation. The housing market across the district also displays local variation, with something of a polarisation of prices, the north of the district being generally more affordable than the south, and with a mismatch between the size and types of housing provided and the emergent needs. In essence, housing tends to be a durable and relatively inflexible asset which, locally, provides less housing for smaller households than is required; a situation which will be compounded in council and housing association homes by the introduction of the 'social sector size criteria', making unaffordable any potentially available housing with more bedrooms than Government prescribes as necessary for a household in receipt of benefit.

Challenges are also presented by the need for affordable rural housing. An insufficient supply of affordable housing, to rent or to buy, in many of the villages in the district is often compounded by problems of access to transport and to amenities such as shops and schools. This can prevent young people and first time buyers being able to buy homes in the village

they grew up in and where their family still live. This can lead to older family dependants sometimes being isolated as their family home is further away in more affordable areas. With energy prices continuing to rise at rates ahead of earnings, fuel poverty is a real concern and must be addressed by the housing strategy. If the cost of heating homes and the amount of energy consumed can be reduced in all tenures, not only do the occupiers benefit from more affordable warmth but there are environmental benefits flowing from reduced carbon emissions. SAP (energy efficiency) ratings for housing are typically affected by the age and type of construction and supplementary measures to reduce heat loss, such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing. Average SAP ratings in the district (2012) were 80 (housing associations), 61 (council housing), 54 (owner-occupied housing) and 43 (private rented sector). Ratings of below 65 are considered to be an indicator of likely fuel poverty. As stated earlier, the extent to which the government's 'Green Deal' initiative is likely to assist households in overcoming fuel poverty is currently unclear and will need to be maintained.

The ageing population of the district also presents challenges for the housing strategy. The proportion of the population of the district who are over the age of 65 is forecast to increase from 19.2% (2012) to 28% by 2020. We know that frailty, both physical and mental, increases sharply with age and this will present challenges not only in terms of the suitability of housing design, layout and ease of use but also in terms of support needs and access to amenities if independent living is to be achieved and the best possible quality of life to be experienced. Meeting the needs of disabled people presents similar challenges: 3.9% of the population of working age is registered disabled and many such people would benefit from aids and adaptations in their home or from more appropriate housing than they currently enjoy. Many households in the district, specifically those who are older or otherwise vulnerable, might also be affected during the life of this strategy by changes to the commissioning and delivery of support services. These services, funded by the County Council under the government's Supporting People programme, are currently subject to review and changes to both delivery arrangements and eligibility criteria are anticipated.

Strategic Priorities

Consultation with stakeholders on the development of this housing strategy has demonstrated, as summarised in the introduction, support for four strategic housing priorities:

- Priority 1: High quality new affordable homes available to buy or rent
- Priority 2: Improved housing standards across the district and all tenures
- Priority 3: Access to housing and wellbeing services
- Priority 4: Promotion of sustainable neighbourhoods and communities.

Taking each of these in turn:

Priority 1: High quality new affordable homes available to buy or rent

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ More social housing available to rent from SKDC and registered providers
- ✓ More affordable housing to buy or rent or being offered on a shared equity basis
- ✓ Additional homes to meet the needs of clients with particular needs.

Potential solutions might include:

- ✓ Increased investment in the delivery of new affordable housing; with continuing investment by registered providers and the welcome prospect of new Council housing

- ✓ Collaborative projects to develop housing through creative use of assets and funding sources
- ✓ The development and management of adaptable homes to meet the needs of particular client groups.

Priority 2: Improved housing standards across the district and for all tenures

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ Improvements to the quality of housing and environment in our neighbourhoods
- ✓ Improved management of the homes owned by SKDC
- ✓ Improvements to the quality of private sector housing
- ✓ Households being assisted to remain safely in their homes
- ✓ An increased supply of good quality private rented accommodation
- ✓ Increasing proportions of houses reaching affordable warmth standards.

Potential solutions might include:

- ✓ Revisions to private sector renewal policies, strategies and schemes and achieving the potential benefits of 'retrofit' programmes and Council Tax policy; both to improve the affordable warmth of homes and to reduce the number of empty homes in the district
- ✓ Encouraging private landlords to ensure their properties are fit and fully utilised through an appropriate balance of positive support and enforcement
- ✓ Maximising the number of empty homes brought back into use
- ✓ Maximising the investment in improvements to the Council's existing housing stock
- ✓ Applying learning from the sustainable neighbourhoods project in order to improve the way SKDC manages and sustains tenancies and estates.

Priority 3: Access to housing and wellbeing services

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ Ensuring housing options and advice are available to assist households in finding housing
- ✓ Ensuring that social housing, provided by both SKDC and Registered Providers in the district, is fairly and effectively used to meet housing needs
- ✓ Availability of services to help vulnerable households remain safely in their homes and live life to the full.

Potential solutions include:

- ✓ Working with partners to ensure services are delivered to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable households
- ✓ Developing allocations policies framed to most effectively meet the housing needs of the district
- ✓ Maximising the initial and ongoing benefit derived from investment in adaptations in order to support independent living and the wellbeing of communities
- ✓ Through delivery and/or support of County Council funded Supporting People contracts; aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

Priority 4: Promotion of sustainable neighbourhoods and communities

This priority aims to deliver outcomes including:

- ✓ Neighbourhoods which are well integrated with transport links, have good access to employment and amenities and which have a reducing impact on the environment
- ✓ Well managed neighbourhoods in which citizens enjoy the best possible quality of life in homes which are affordable in use and meet their housing needs and where crime and anti-social behavior do not adversely impact on the quality of life.

Potential solutions include:

- ✓ Maximising the benefit derived from investment of available resources in the improvement of housing conditions across all tenures – for example creating employment and skills development opportunities for local people
- ✓ Improving housing management and community safety services
- ✓ Supporting, in partnership with the County Council, continued independent living for older and vulnerable people
- ✓ Delivery of the Sustainable Urban Extensions; providing up to 7,500 new homes, reflecting Grantham's status as a Growth Area
- ✓ Encourage town centre housing above shops and promote the vitality of our town centre and evening economy.

Delivering our Priorities

The detailed actions associated with the delivery of the strategic priorities will be contained in a Delivery Plan which will be updated throughout the life of the strategy to incorporate and report on actions taken and benefits realised. The delivery plan will be subject to periodic monitoring and review; both in relation to delivery of strategic housing priorities and to ensure that housing is able to make a positive contribution to the broader strategic vision for South Kesteven.

The North West and Southern Quadrants are part of Grantham Growth; an ambitious programme of investment to deliver 7,500 new homes and up to 4,000 new jobs by 2026. The planned growth in residential development provides Grantham with an opportunity to realise its full potential as a sub-regional centre, particularly with regard to delivering sustainable economic growth and creating new jobs in the knowledge economy.

As a result of Grantham's designation as a New Growth Point, key development sites have been identified in and around the town, not only for housing but also for commercial, employment and retail development together with social and physical infrastructure required to meet the needs of an expanding population and in promoting economic growth within the district.

North West Quadrant

- 130 hectares situated 1.5 km west of Grantham, conveniently near to the A1 and A52 interchange
- Identified for housing (up to 3,500 houses) and community facilities in adopted Core Strategy
- The site will be developed in two phases. Outline planning permission was granted in June 2011 for Phase 1 at Poplar Farm (eastern part of NWQ) comprising up to 1800 new homes (including affordable housing at 21% provision across the site), a school and community facilities, open spaces and a new link road (Pennine Way) and rail bridge, which will create a direct road link from Gonerby Hill Foot through the development to the Muddle Go Nowhere pub (Phase 1 was originally allocated in the 1995 Local Plan)
- Detailed planning permission granted for first two phases providing 204 homes to be developed by David Wilson Homes and Bellway (start on site expected next few weeks)

- The new homes will be a mixture of privately owned and affordable two, three and four bedroom homes with some shared ownership
- The delivery of Phase 2 of the North West Quadrant is anticipated post 2016. A planning application for this phase has not yet been submitted.

Southern Quadrant

- Lies on the southern edge of the built up area of Grantham between the A1 and A52. The land is situated 1.5 km south of the town centre
- Potential for up to 4,000 new homes, alongside local shops, schools and community facilities and the construction of a new southern relief road linked to a new junction on the A1
- Includes new employment area. The first phase was granted planning permission in August 2010 for three high quality industrial/distribution facilities and a new dedicated junction onto the A1. An adjoining site of 29ha is allocated in the draft Grantham Area Action Plan for the development of a prestige business park of small to medium sized enterprises within Use Classes B1, B2 and/or B8
- A 'masterplan', setting out the development principles for the urban extension, has been prepared by the Council in conjunction with the landowner (Buckminster Trust Estate) and is due, following public consultation with local residents and businesses, to be adopted by the Council on 18th February 2013 as a Supplementary Planning Document.
- A planning application for the southern relief road is expected to be submitted in the spring of 2013, followed by an application for the rest of the Southern Quadrant development later in the year.

Other developments

New housing development in Bourne should be restricted to that already committed via planning approval at the date of adoption of the Core Strategy. Development rates in Stamford and The Deepings should be maintained at a modest level to meet the needs of these market towns and to support the provision of additional community infrastructure, in accordance with Circular 05/05 and Policy SP4.

Plans provide for a modest level of development within the more sustainable villages, identified in the Core Strategy as Local Service Centres, to enable them to continue to function as sustainable local centres.

New housing development in all other areas will be restricted to affordable housing to meet local needs, including agricultural and forestry workers accommodation and conversions carried out in accordance with policy SP1 (spatial strategy).

New Council Housing

The re-financing of the Housing Revenue Account, in March 2012, has created headroom within the business plan for new investment in council housing for the district. Work is currently in progress to establish the level of possible investment and to prioritise development of Council-owned sites and investment of £3m is planned by March 2015 to kick-start the building programme.

Asset Management Strategy

The Council's strategy for investment in its housing stock is currently subject to review. The aim is to ensure that the Council's housing stock remains fit for purpose and is of the best

possible quality, now and into the future, with investment planned to improve and maintain housing and to dispose of or replace that housing which reaches the end of its useful life or for which further improvement is uneconomic. These decisions will be influenced by market conditions and by housing need; particularly taking account of the changing social demographics of the district. The review of the Asset Management Strategy is due to be completed in September 2013 and the actions flowing from this will be reflected in the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan.

Private Sector Housing Conditions

The Council will aim to balance the limited capacity to invest in the improvement of conditions in private sector housing with enabling access to initiatives such as Green Deal and in taking enforcement action where appropriate. The Council recognises the important role of the private rented sector in meeting housing need and aims to forge closer and more effective working relationships with the private rented sector. The strategies and policies specifically related to private sector housing are planned for review during 2013 and, again, detailed actions flowing from the review will be reflected in the Delivery Plan.

Monitoring and Review of the Strategy

The delivery of the strategy and assessment of effectiveness will be the subject of on-going review and outcomes will be reported as appropriate.