

“ Decent Homes, Decent Neighbourhoods”

Oldham’s Corporate Housing Strategy 2006 – 2009



Local Housing

Partnership

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Foreword

Housing in Oldham is challenging, dynamic and changing. We are entering new phases in our development and in embedding our various strategies. There are real challenges and opportunities available to us. For instance:-

- Housing Market Renewal
- Private Finance Initiative
- Local Area Agreements
- Delivering Excellence
- Oldham Beyond

Oldham's "Decent Homes, Decent Neighbourhoods" housing strategy reflects our commitment to improve the homes and choices for people in our neighbourhoods. Our views mirror those of central and regional government, and we have adopted a clear concentration on achieving 'Decent Homes' underpinned by our commitment to sustainable communities, localism, social cohesion, economic growth and regeneration. An introductory section sets out the strategic context and vision to give an overall picture of our approach and the means by which we have developed this strategy. Then there is a profile of our town.

In order to bring about improvements for local neighbourhoods, we need better understanding of how our local housing markets operate. We need to fully understand the need and demand for housing, changes to demographic structures and the issues that make our neighbourhoods sustainable. Chapter 1 outlines our approach and priorities.

Everyone has aspirations about the type of home they would like and therefore in Chapter 2 we outline our approach to improving housing quality and choice by working with key partners like our ALMO, First Choice Homes Oldham.

One of the key themes within this strategy is improving housing related services for the most vulnerable members of our communities. In Chapter 3 we indicate our progress in this area and the work that we have done in tackling homelessness, supporting people, fuel poverty and private sector renewal. We have achieved much through innovation, partnership working and most of all commitment that has underpinned our approach. However we are not complacent, there is still more to do, and our action plan developed with staff, partners and others working alongside a range of agencies demonstrates our impetus for improvement.

In Chapter 4 we outline our approach to investments and resources that will help meet our priorities. We need to ensure that resources are maximised to resolve issues of housing affordability and deprivation.

Community Cohesion is fundamental to what we do as a Local Authority in ensuring that we create sustainable communities now and for our future generations. The approach to this is outlined in Chapter 5.

We firmly accept that our ambitions for decent homes and neighbourhoods will not become a reality without our partners. Chapter 6 details our the way our partners feed into delivering the strategy and explanation of the strategy will be wrapped around a robust Performance Management Framework.

I hope that you find this document interesting. It contains many housing issues for us all to tackle. So I strongly urge all partners to read and above all, to use our Housing Strategy and work with us to make sure that it address the housing issues that are important to us all.

Councillor Phillip Harrison
Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services

Executive Summary and Strategic Context

This section explains the purpose of our housing strategy and provides an overview of the issues affecting housing in Oldham. These include the physical, organisational and resources factors as well as placing housing within its regional and sub regional context.

Purpose of the Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy “Decent Homes, Decent Neighbourhoods” sets out how we will meet housing need and how we will continue to influence and contribute to the regeneration of Oldham and its communities.

It sets out our priorities for the next three years and is influenced by national and regional housing agendas. It is closely linked to a wide range of local strategies for planning, economy and social care. It is based on a sound understanding of housing needs and demand and of the effects of a changing housing market. The housing strategy sets out our aims and the priorities for action are set out in an action plan, which includes clear targets and information about how we will progress and measure our performance. It also sets out our funding requirements.

The strategy considers all types of housing in the borough, social rented, private rented, owner occupied, general needs and supported housing. It looks at unmet need, including the requirements of homeless households and people living in unsuitable housing.

Its purpose is to:

- Communicate the vision for housing in Oldham,
- Provide an over arching context for a number of theme based strategies such as the Homelessness Strategy and the Young People’s Housing Strategy,
- Show how housing fits within a wider social and economic context within Oldham,
- Strengthen the linkages between housing and the wider sustainability activities such as crime reduction and community cohesion,
- Identify the priorities for action,
- Establish targets and show the mechanisms that will provide / ensure timely delivery

This housing strategy covers three years from 2006 to 2009. Annual action plans will be prepared which will review the previous year’s performance and set targets for the future. The strategy is set within a robust performance management framework, which will ensure that performance, and improvement are delivered and monitored effectively.

Oldham – The Place

Oldham Metropolitan Borough is situated in the north east of the Greater Manchester conurbation, approximately 7 miles from Manchester city centre. The borough covers an area of 55 square miles (142.5 square kilometres). Approximately half the borough is open moorland and protected landscape areas and a small proportion of the southeast corner of Oldham falls within the Peak District National Park.



Map of Oldham and links to major transport routes

Oldham is a borough of contrasts of diversity, challenge, achievement, with tremendous potential and opportunity. It has a diverse geography – a mix of urban and rural. The high-density urban areas are a legacy of the Borough's industrial past and contrast with more rural areas.

Its geography brings with it a number of housing challenges. In the inner areas there is an oversupply of terraced housing flats and maisonettes giving limited choice for people to meet their housing aspirations. In the more rural areas, the lack of affordable housing creates problems for those who want to get on the housing ladder and the effect of rising prices in elsewhere is a major problem.

Oldham's location on the motorway network is a significant advantage. With the move to a "city region" approach, Oldham is ideally positioned to take maximum advantage of the objectives of the Northern Way and the wider regional and sub-regional agendas.

The national, regional and sub - regional context

Our strategy shares the aims, outlined in 'Sustainable Communities: Building for the future (The Communities Plan)' and 'Making it Happen: the Northern Way' to build 'successful, thriving and inclusive communities' by developing partnerships to improve planning and attract resources to deliver change.

In 2005, further recommendations were published in 'Sustainable Communities: Homes for All' and its sister document 'People, Places and Prosperity' The wider links made between housing, sustainable communities and the liveability agenda are very welcome. This echoes the focus of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR), where the government gave a clear signal of its intention to deal with low demand and abandonment. Oldham with Rochdale was declared, as one of the nine HMR Pathfinders in 2003.

The Housing Act 2004 also offers opportunities to create fairer access to a housing market strengthened by HMR initiatives, and to modernise the role of the Council in assessing poor housing conditions and enforcing where necessary when conditions are poor or bad practice is occurring. In later chapters we will outline our plans to utilise these new powers.

The North West Regional Housing Board has produced The North West Regional Housing Strategy 2005 (RHS), which sets priorities for the 'single pot for housing allocations'. We will continue to work with the board and as part of the Greater Manchester Housing Strategy Officers' Group to influence regional strategy and developments. The four regional strategic priorities for housing are:

- Providing affordable homes to maintain balanced communities
- Delivering decent homes in thriving neighbourhoods
- Urban renaissance & dealing with changing demand
- Meeting the needs of communities and providing support for those who need it.

High quality housing is a vital part of the North West's competitive position and will be a catalyst for realising the vision set out in the North West Regional Economic Strategy.

However, it is recognised that an inadequate housing supply could be a barrier to economic growth. To counter this, the Greater Manchester (GM) Strategic Housing Group, has been established by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA). It includes representatives from partner organisations such as the voluntary sector, Housing Corporation, English Partnerships and the Regional Development Agency. We are a key member of this group.

Map to show location of Oldham within the sub-region



This group will develop a sub-regional housing strategy for Greater Manchester that will reflect more accurately housing markets and economic relationships between GM local authorities. It will directly link to the City-Region Development Plan (currently being prepared) and related sub-regional strategies. Linking the main elements of the RHS and Regional Spatial Strategy will:-

- Give a stronger voice and profile to GM authorities, within the region and nationally.
- Develop shared methodology for housing and planning strategy functions, such as evaluation and monitoring.
- Develop a long-term view on the fitness for purpose of all housing supply in the sub-region and suitable actions to address this.
- Undertake further research into the sub-regional housing market, its constraints on economic performance and the spatial implications of this.

Supporting the housing needs and choices of vulnerable people to maintain independent living is central to this strategy. The Supporting People programme, requires us to:

‘Offer vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by providing stable environments which enable independence’; and
‘Deliver high quality... housing related services which are cost effective and reliable and complement existing care services.’

The Corporate Context

Vision and objectives

Oldham Council's Corporate Plan clearly states its mission, main aims and priorities for action over the next few years demonstrating how these align with national and local priorities, in particular the Borough's Community Strategy.

Our mission is: *"...to improve everyone's lives, by providing quality local services and effective community leadership in a regenerated Borough"*.

This will be achieved and supported through our main aim, which is: *"regenerating the Borough in a way that achieves greater Community Cohesion"*.

Our corporate themes provide a high level focus for the wide range of services we provide. In light of local and national changes these themes have been amended slightly. The priority "well educated and highly skilled people" has been revised to reflect the national and local focus on children's services to "realising the potential of children, young people and families". The priority "a well managed council" has been changed to "an improving Council striving for excellence", as it is felt this better reflects the council's current position and its ambition to improve. The revised themes are:

- Community cohesion
- Realising the potential of children, young people and families (*formerly well educated and highly skilled people*)
- An improved environment
- A prosperous borough
- Healthy and well cared for people
- An improving Council striving for excellence (*formerly a well managed council*)

In response to the Government's modernisation agenda, Oldham Council has undergone major changes in its political management arrangements through the formation of a Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Council has put in place robust processes to enable effective public scrutiny of major decisions about Council's services such as housing and wider concerns to the residents of Oldham. The Council has carried out a corporate restructure, which has transferred the strategic housing function to the newly formed Adult and Community Services Department which will ensure improved person centred based housing and social care services.

Oldham Partnership Vision for Housing in Oldham

The Oldham Community Strategy vision for housing is:

“Oldham’s housing market will be confident and thriving, offering real choice and providing good standard accommodation which meets the needs and aspirations of all who wish to live here”.

This statement also forms the vision for the Local Housing Partnership. To achieve this vision we will need to;

- Eradicate obsolete housing
- Involve local people in deciding what should replace it
- Give people greater influence and responsibility for the management of their neighbourhoods, and
- Create harmonious communities where diversity is respected.

Restructuring the housing market is the most significant objective of this strategy. We will do this through the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR), whose overall aim is:

“To deliver a transformation in the housing markets in our area, that will create sustainable communities and lead to greater community cohesion”

Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal

Oldham’s approach to regeneration is driven by the Community Strategy and by the various thematic strategies such as for Crime and Disorder, Lifelong Learning and Community Cohesion. The Area Plans will now form part of that approach too. There is a thematic thread running through all of these strategies and the Local Strategic Partnership is committed to taking a thematic approach to regeneration. This means that we aim to use our mainstream and external resources towards helping people in need wherever they live in Oldham.

This is currently made more difficult because, as a general rule, external funding which helps us to provide more innovative schemes, is allocated to specific geographic areas where there are concentrations of need such as poor health, high levels of crime, unemployment and poor housing. This focus upon areas suffering deprivation and decline is essential, but we also want to ensure that we tackle pockets of need elsewhere. People who are unemployed may need support irrespective of where they live, anti-social behaviour is unacceptable wherever it occurs and we all need access to quality open space and community facilities.

Our thematic approach will ensure that we achieve the Government’s vision for neighbourhood renewal that aims to: -

- Narrow the gap between the most deprived areas and the rest of England so that within 10-20 years no-one is seriously disadvantaged by where they live;

- Help England's poorest communities benefit from:
 - Economic prosperity and reduction in joblessness
 - A safe and clean local environment that is free from crime
 - High quality schools
 - Decent housing that is well managed
 - Better access to health services generating longer, healthier lives.

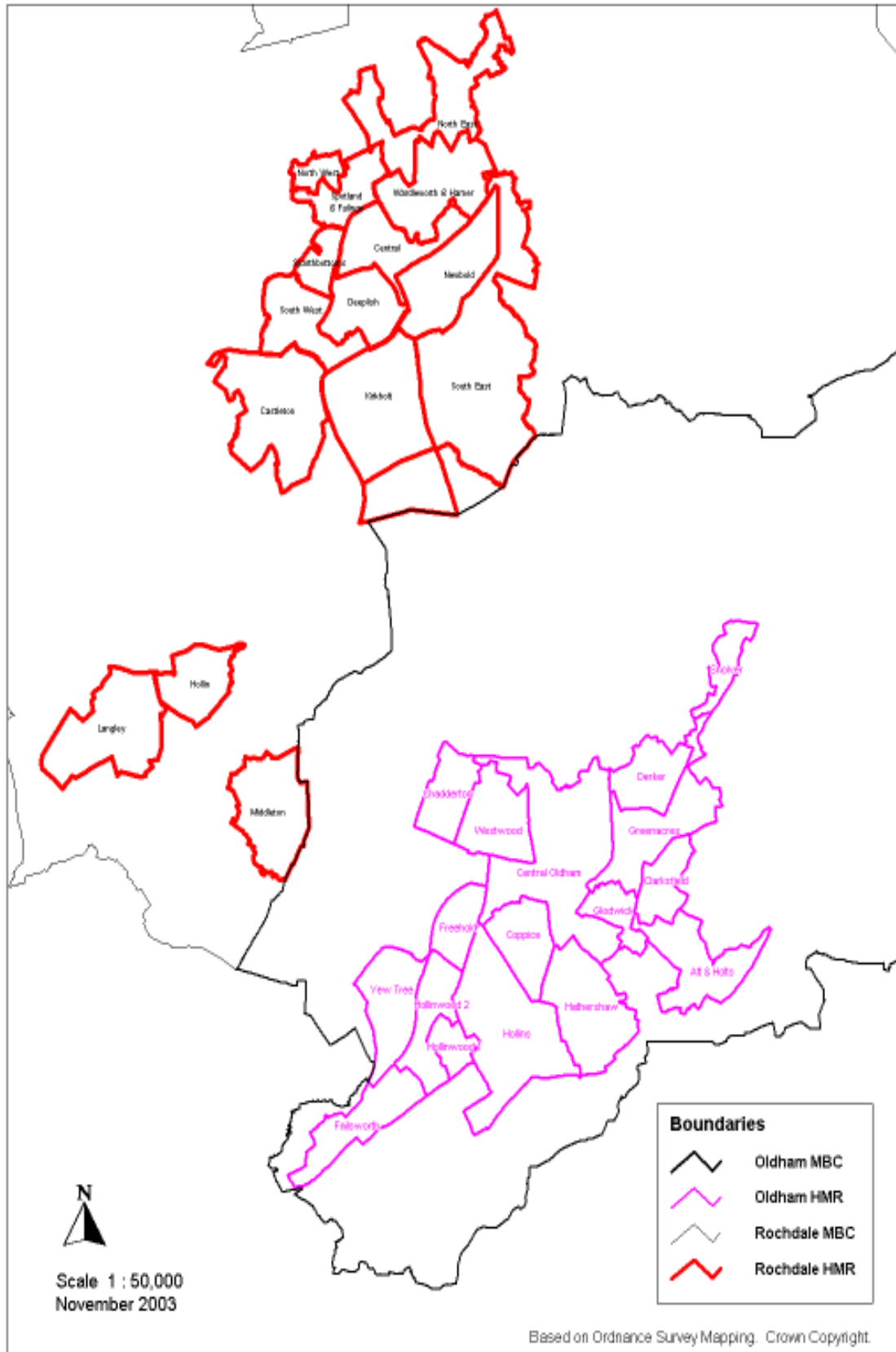
The council's Community Strategy provides the strategic framework for regeneration, investment and service improvements in Oldham, reflecting the key priorities of residents and communities. It includes the framework to enable us to deliver our housing strategy objectives, which are firmly grounded within the council's corporate aims and objectives. Housing is inextricably linked to good health, social well-being and performance in schools, so it is vital that we ensure linkages between our housing strategy and the community plan are clear.

The council is striving to ensure resident's quality of life is improved and that everyone also has a right to live in a decent environment. This means residents living in a clean, safe and secure environment with cohesive communities where people from diverse backgrounds can and want to live and participate in social activity.

As a result of pressures on the local housing market and its evident dysfunction, Oldham and Rochdale have been established as one of the nine **Housing Market Renewal Funding** (HMRF) Pathfinders nationally. A 15-year action plan to transform the local market was agreed in 2003. This will involve significant levels of demolition of obsolete housing, building new replacement homes and improvement /conversion of existing homes to increase the amount of large family homes and essential infrastructure improvements. In the first two years £53.5 million was spent. Another £67.5 million for 2006-08 has been allocated by the DCLG. Over the 15-year programme, more than £400 million HMR funding will be required, which will attract some £3 billion of other private funding. This is clearly the biggest ever regeneration project in Oldham.

To date, the HMR delivery plans on Derker and Werneth have focused on acquisition and demolition of obsolete terraced housing and low demand social rented housing. It has been difficult to do this, due to the shortage of houses for people to move into from the properties earmarked for demolition. The original priorities have now been re-evaluated as part of the Scheme Update and HMR will now focus on a build first – clear later strategy. This will involve a land assembly programme on sites previously occupied by commercial property and on sites on peripheral housing estates where there is land available and a need to diversify the existing stock. Modern, high quality, mixed tenure housing will be built on these sites, which will increase the housing options available to the existing residents who live in housing, which has been identified as obsolete and requires demolition. In time the vacated sites will then become available for demolition and redevelopment.

Oldham and Rochdale Pathfinder showing HMR neighbourhoods



As well as HMR, the council has other significant housing regeneration schemes taking place. The **New Deal for Communities** is a £53 million regeneration scheme covering the area of Hathershaw and Fitton Hill includes the £6.9 million transfer of 1,300 council homes in the latter ward to Villages Housing Association.

Last year we were successful in obtaining approval of a £130 million **Private Finance Initiative** covering 1,600 sheltered homes. This is a significant achievement for Oldham and will help us achieve decent homes for these properties but also go a long way to meet the health and social care needs of elderly people. Currently we are preparing an Outline Business Case for another PFI scheme covering three estates in Crossley, Primrose and Clarkwell. This should bring in further investment of £130 million to regenerate these areas.

The **Oldham Beyond** Visioning initiative launched in 2003 sets out challenging plans to regenerate the borough using multi-agency and boroughwide approaches to develop all aspects of the Oldham economy, cultural life and landscape. It places Oldham as part of the Northern Way and the city region, and identifies the particular role the borough can play within it. This vision to be delivered over fifteen years is based around six key themes:-

- Wealth creation
- Liveability
- A learning community
- A sustainable Oldham
- Common Ground and
- New Oldham.

First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO)

FCHO, our ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation) was set up in 2002 to manage our Council housing. It is a key partner in our drive to achieve decent homes and in the delivery of excellent housing services that are value for money. Major strides have been made, as in 2005 it retained its 2 Star rating from the Audit Commission. Since its inception, FCHO have shown continuous improvement in the delivery of services and have made efficiency savings. We are well on our way to achieving our Decent Homes Targets for social housing. Over £120 million will be spent to make Council homes decent by March 2007.

The ALMO also provide several statutory services on behalf of Oldham MBC. These include homelessness, housing support, and asylum seekers support and leaseholder services. Through a robust performance management framework, and service level agreements, we are able to monitor performance of its delivery in major service areas. See Appendix 4 about the ALMO's performance between 2002-05 and how it compares with others.

Oldham Housing Investment Partnership (OHIP)

The Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) who make up OHIP are key to the delivery of our strategic objectives, whether through development and improvement of homes, community cohesion initiatives or the delivery of excellent social housing services. They are also an essential part of the restructuring of the housing markets in Oldham through the HMR Pathfinder.

The Partnership is long established and has evolved over the years to keep pace with the ever changing housing agenda. OHIP is a key driver for change in the Borough and contributes greatly to meeting our objectives.

Oldham's Local Area Agreement 2006-2009

The overarching aim of Oldham's Local Area Agreement is 'increasing life opportunities for all'. Oldham has reflected the importance of housing in achieving its aim with the inclusion of a Housing Block. The LAA is being used to streamline the partnership structure around the blocks of the Agreement and recognises the important role that the Housing Partnership will play in monitoring the achievement of the targets outlined within the Housing Block. Further information on our LAA can be found at the Oldham Partnership website www.oldhampartnership.org.uk

The targets will not be achieved without effective multi agency working to deliver the work programmes resulting from approval of the Local Area Agreement. Physical regeneration is an integral component of the agreement, with a focus on the quality of new developments and improving the image of Oldham. The Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder has been aligned with the Local Area Agreement as the authority seeks to address the significant housing issues in Oldham, which lie outside the HMR Pathfinder area.

For presentational purposes the Housing element has been included within the Safer and Stronger Communities Block but in terms of performance and delivery the Housing 'block' will have its own partnership board and working structure.

The three main strategic outcomes that have been identified within the Housing block are around:

- improving both socially rented and private sector properties to decent homes standards,
- improving services for homeless households and preventing homelessness
- to empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services.

Within these outcomes are a range of indicators which will assist in achieving the outcomes, for example, targets are set for improving thermal comfort, bringing empty properties back into use, increasing the numbers of

households for whom housing advice prevents homelessness, improving provision and effectiveness of services to help those who experience domestic abuse and measuring tenant satisfaction with their landlords.

The Block includes a stretch target, where it is intended that further improvements in performance will be achieved, this target focuses on reducing the level of homelessness acceptances and reflects the importance of effective measures to tackle and prevent homelessness. The LAA homelessness targets, including the stretch target, are also mirrored in the borough's Homelessness Strategy 2006-2010.

Development Planning

The relationship between the process of statutory development planning and our strategic housing objectives is particularly crucial in Oldham as we enter a period of transformational change. Many factors contribute to the complexity of the issues to be tackled, for example:-

- The significant housing demolition and neighbourhood remodelling accompanied by large scale new build development as envisaged by HMR;
- There is a comparatively limited amount of land available for new development and many competing pressures put upon this land. For instance we must balance the need for economic development against the requirement to find space for accommodating additional households;
- There are very different issues in eastern part of the Borough e.g. Saddleworth, where developments will have to be restrained to support HMR, but local affordability problems will still have to be addressed due to high property values in this area.

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP but now replaced by Local Area Development Framework) produced under the Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) supports Oldham's status as an HMR Pathfinder. This encourages the use of previously developed brownfield land across the Borough for new investment and development. The RPG requires us to work in partnership with neighbouring Local Authorities to ensure such developments do not have a negative impact on housing markets or the future regeneration of these areas. RPG sets annual targets for new housing provision and currently Oldham's annual target is 270 dwellings net of clearance properties and 80% of these must be on brownfield land.

Our housing strategy objectives and challenges

To deliver the vision of the Local Housing Partnership, it has agreed the five principal objectives (in no priority order) that we support and we believe will allow us to focus our actions on making a real difference to the quality of life for the people of the Borough. The challenges within these objectives are as follows:-

| OBJECTIVE | THE CHALLENGES |
|--|---|
| Responding to local housing markets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gather market intelligence • Responding to the findings of the Housing Market assessment (HMA) and the Housing Needs survey; • Responding to the priorities identified by the Boroughwide housing stock condition survey; • Addressing the housing stock mismatch in the Borough; • Delivering improved housing services through the LAA; |
| Improving housing quality and choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a greater range of housing options across all tenures; • Providing quality affordable homes to meet identified need and to address the impact of Right To buy and demolition; • Ensure that our new homes meet modern design methods • Significantly increasing the supply of large family homes of all tenures; • Reducing the number of empty properties; • Assessing the future needs for social housing in the Borough; |
| Meeting Vulnerable people's housing needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To move away from institutional care, promote independence and move towards a greater choice of housing based options and flexible support; • Preventing homelessness; • Improving the standard of services to vulnerable people; • Making general needs housing and adaptations more accessible; • Working in partnership with other agencies to support victims of domestic violence, coercion or community exploitation; |
| Investment to provide excellent retained housing and improved neighbourhoods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing all social rented homes to Decent Homes Standard by 2010 and in particular bringing decent homes to 70% of vulnerable household by 2010 • Raising housing standards in the private sector • Aligning the investment strategies of housing providers to complement the objectives of the housing strategy; • Developing our Asset Management Strategy for council housing stock and considering options for the improvement of all remaining Council housing stock not covered by Decent Homes or PFI programmes • Support delivery of Housing Market Renewal across all tenures • Delivering the transfer of the management of sheltered housing to the new provider as part of the PFI 2 Scheme and developing our proposals PFI Round 4 • Deliver our LAA resources • Improve energy efficiency in our council stock and private sector |
| Achieving community cohesion and sustainable communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement recommendations of the Cohesion Review • Regenerating the Borough in a way that achieves greater Community Cohesion; • Managing neighbourhoods in transition: • Creating the conditions that allow confident and cohesive communities to grow; • Continuing our research to understand the issues and drivers preventing community cohesion |

OUR PRIORITIES

| Responding to local housing markets | Widening choice and improving quality | Meeting vulnerable people's housing needs | Investment to provide excellent retained housing and improved neighbourhoods | Achieving community cohesion and sustainable communities |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with our HMR pathfinder to acquire housing market information • We will develop our policies in response to the conclusions of the Housing Market Assessment, Housing Needs Survey and the Kwest survey; • We will refocus our strategies and programmes in the private sector to match the findings of the surveys; • We will make our contribution to the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse and apply the findings of the HMA / HNS • Develop an affordable housing policy • Provide more appropriate new build housing to address needs / aspirations • Convert existing low demand flats to family homes • Bring empty homes back into use • Make better use of private rented homes • Ensure that allocations policies make best use of FCHO homes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will implement the aims and objectives of our Supported Accommodation Strategy and deliver improved services through our pioneering Sheltered PFI Project (PFI 2) • We will prevent homelessness through targeted services such as the Mediation service, Pre-Tenancy Training, Tenancy Relations Service, Private Sector Leasing, Rent Deposit and Accredited Landlords | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to implement our decent homes programme for the council stock and develop our standards in the private sector • In implementing our Private Sector Renewal Strategy, we will seek to introduce policy to raise standards • We will work with all housing providers to ensure that effective processes are in place to ensure investment is targeted at the priorities identified by this strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with our partners to implement the recommendations of the Cohesion review. • We will support the delivery of HMR community cohesion and FCHO equality targets to ensure the impacts of regeneration initiatives are minimised for local people and local communities. • We will deliver the market restructuring necessary to ensure that new housing is complemented by improved local facilities and services and by developing people's skills and knowledge. |

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| <p>contribution to the housing market restructuring as required by the HMR Pathfinder;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will make optimum use of LAA resources to provide homes that meet people's needs; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a PFI bid to improve Clarkwell, Crossley and Primrose Bank estates Asset management planning for FCHO stock Improving private rented homes Improving owner occupied homes Encouraging improved design | <p>Schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review our Temporary accommodation, including the Nightstop scheme, and we will make a bid for resources to support emergency direct access accommodation. We will continue to support the Oldham Family Crisis Group (OFCG) and develop further floating support and the Sanctuary Scheme We will deliver an improved adaptation service for people with disabilities across all tenure; We will carry out a needs assessment for Gypsies and Travellers; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review our asset management plan We will deliver the outcomes and outputs that have been set by the HMR Pathfinder for the early and future intervention areas; We will deliver on the PFI2 scheme for sheltered housing and ensure our PFI4 outline business case is successful We will align / pool our resources through the LAA to achieve maximum benefit We will continue to invest in energy efficiency measures for council housing and work with our partners to deliver affordable warmth for the private sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work with all our partners to tackle all hate crime and other antisocial behaviour and improve support for vulnerable households, so that everyone can feel confident in their neighbourhood. We will work with all our partners to improve consultation and involvement opportunities, and related capacity building, for all community members We will complete Equality Impact Assessments on all significant Strategies. |
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How our strategy was developed

We have consulted with a wide range of stakeholders during the preparation of this strategy. This included: -

- A briefing to all parties in the council
- Integral involvement of the lead member for housing
- Presentations to the overview and scrutiny commission and Cabinet
- Presentation to the Housing Strategy Development Team, Oldham Housing Partnership, Oldham Housing Investment Partnership and others
- Involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in theme based focus groups
- Involvement of a wide range of stakeholders commenting on draft versions of the strategy
- Ongoing consultations as part of the Housing Market Renewal initiative particularly in the Derker and Werneth areas of the borough.

We also held a successful Housing Summit, at the Bower Hotel, Oldham in September 2005 involving key stakeholders from all sectors to discuss and amend the draft strategy (see delegate list at the back of the document).

Overall the consultation events were successful and they served to refresh and update our aims and to re-evaluate progress on implementation with partners on this strategy. For instance it further helped us to alter the housing strategy by adding action points to the action plan to help achieve the objectives and have developed priorities within each chapter of the strategy.

Linkages and Partnerships

This housing strategy represents a comprehensive vision for the future of housing within the wider objectives of boroughwide neighbourhood regeneration. There are close links between the Local Housing Partnership, HMR, private sector renewal, OHIP, FCHO and our Housing Strategy Team. This has allowed greater synchronicity between research and the strategy work in these sectors. We have further renewed links between housing, other council services and partners, and works to place housing strategy at the centre of wider strategy.

As the Council moves towards a “Localism” approach to delivering services that targets, objectives and outcomes contained within the strategy will contribute greatly.

The next few chapters present details about key housing issues and how we aim tackle them.

Profile of Oldham

Oldham – Its People and Community

Oldham is a place with diverse needs where people are proud of their community and their heritage. Our efforts to deal with poverty and deprivation in the borough have made major strides in the past few years, acknowledged by the fact that we are now the 43rd most deprived Local Authority in England (up from 38th most deprived in 2000). These improvements have been realised by adopting a holistic approach to change and working in partnership with others. This strategy reflects that approach and links to the Council's principle aim of:

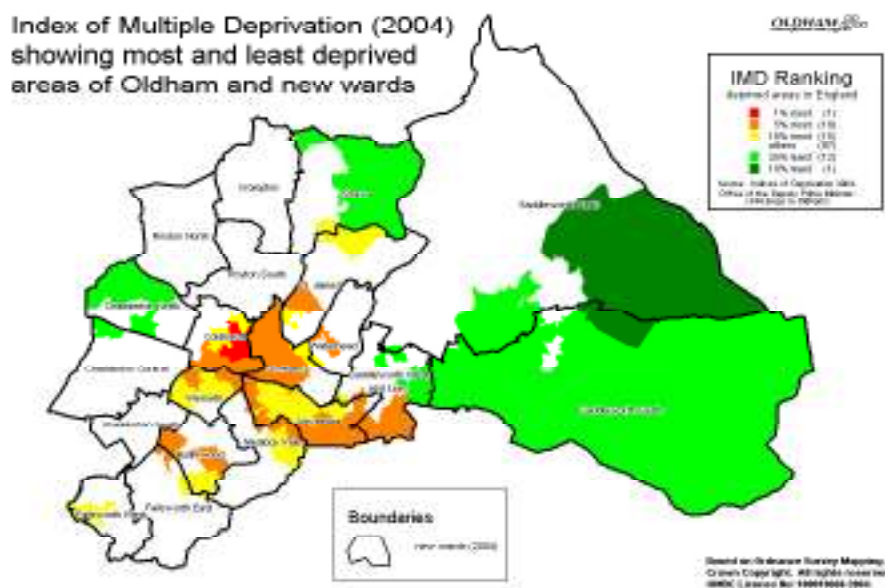
“Regenerating the borough in a way that achieves greater Community Cohesion”

Deprivation

The improvement of housing conditions and social and economic regeneration has been a significant factor in the recent history of the Borough.

Despite this improvement Oldham still has a disproportionate number of deprived neighbourhoods when compared with the country as a whole;

- Almost one quarter of the Oldham's local areas are in the most deprived 10% nationally.
- One Super Output Area (SOA), in the St Mary's ward is amongst the most deprived 1% of SOAs nationally
- Nineteen SOAs are in the top 5% most deprived.
- In contrast, SOAs in Saddleworth are amongst the 10% least deprived nationally.
- The greatest areas of deprivation are found in parts of central Oldham and includes residential areas where private sector housing dominates as well as areas where there is mostly public sector housing.



Although no SOAs in Oldham are in the top 10% deprived for ‘Barriers to housing and services’, more than a quarter are ranked in the top 10% for crime, and there are significant problems with education, skills training, health, disability and employment, causing localised quality of life issues that can damage the sustainability of neighbourhoods.

Key Facts About Oldham

Population

At the 2001 Census, the resident population of Oldham was 218,550 residing in 87,824 households. Although the population is fairly stable, with a projected marginal increase to 221,650 by 2021, there is expected to be a growth in household numbers as the trend to smaller households continues.

The proportion of people coming from Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage is expected to rise from 18,000 in 2001 to 47,000 by 2021 following recent trends. Most of this growth has been due to natural growth (more births than deaths) as the South Asian population is generally quite young. There is some international migration, but most members of these communities were born in the UK.

Meanwhile, the white population is expected to decrease slightly, continuing the trend over the period 1991 – 2021, due to the older age demographic in this community and following the migration trends of other small industrial towns. The table below outlines the ethnic identity of the population in 1991 and 2021 when compared to overall national figures.

A major plus for Oldham is that it has a growing younger population. It is important that this is used to maximum advantage in terms of housing young people, “fit for purpose” for work and able to realise their aspirations.

Population forecast by The University of Manchester May 2005

| | <i>Oldham</i> | <i>White</i> | <i>Black</i> | <i>Indian</i> | <i>Pakistani</i> | <i>Bangla- deshi</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| <i>1991</i> | 218,500 | 198,650 | 2,050 | 1,600 | 9,350 | 5,300 | 1,500 |
| <i>1996</i> | 219,200 | 195,000 | 2,200 | 1,600 | 11,500 | 7,000 | 1,800 |
| <i>2001</i> | 218,550 | 188,100 | 1,250 | 1,600 | 13,900 | 9,950 | 3,800 |
| <i>2006</i> | 217,750 | 181,000 | 1,200 | 1,500 | 16,500 | 13,200 | 4,400 |
| <i>2011</i> | 218,250 | 175,150 | 1,150 | 1,400 | 18,950 | 16,550 | 5,100 |
| <i>2016</i> | 219,850 | 170,300 | 1,050 | 1,300 | 21,500 | 19,650 | 5,950 |
| <i>2021</i> | 221,650 | 165,500 | 950 | 1,250 | 24,250 | 22,750 | 6,950 |

The Oldham economy

A recent Labour Force Survey in 2003, found that 6.4% of the borough's working age population of 131,000 is unemployed, higher than Greater Manchester and regional figures, although the numbers claiming Job Seekers Allowance have decreased by more than half since 1996. The 2001 census highlighted that the Coldhurst, St Mary's and Werneth wards had particularly high numbers of unemployed.

The survey also showed that with economic activity at 79% there was less economic inactivity in Oldham than regionally or nationally. Higher levels of economic inactivity corresponded closely with wards with the highest unemployment, with only the addition of Failsworth West. Many economically inactive people are registered sick or disabled; their number grew by 35% between 1991 and 2001, more than the regional increase of 27%. This has hampered our efforts to reduce concentrations of deprivation in these areas.

Overall, the range of employment sectors offering jobs in Oldham has contracted in recent years, with more than 6 out of 10 jobs provided by only 22 sectors in 2002. People looking for higher paid work may be channelled out of the borough, most notably towards Manchester, where wage levels for skilled occupations are considerably better, although there is less incentive for other groups. Developing further links for Oldham people into the sub – regional labour market is an important part of Oldham's Economic Strategy.

These restrictions in income have a direct affect on the ability of residents to access suitable accommodation within the Oldham housing market. Regional studies suggest there are links between housing supply and economic performance, where the areas of most intense deprivation are the areas with poorest economic performance and little housing choice. This is supported by findings of the Housing Market Assessment (HMA) that provides further details later in this document.

The census 2001 found that a quarter of the working age population have no qualifications – well above the regional average – while fewer Oldham residents are educated to degree level or above than regionally. In particular, the Oldham population has lower levels of basic (literacy and numeracy) skills and lower GCSE attainment than the GM sub – region or nationally. This restricts access to higher skilled occupations, both within Oldham and in neighbouring travel to work areas.

Most of the travels to work trips beginning in Oldham were destined for another area of Oldham, although more people travel out of the borough to work (primarily to Manchester, Salford, or Tameside) than travel into Oldham from elsewhere. Although most journeys by public transport are for short localised trips, patterns appear to link with rail connections. Public transport is a particularly important method in accessing Manchester job markets and will be supported by the planned Metrolink extension.

BME Communities (Black and Minority Ethnic) are mainly concentrated in three wards in Oldham; Coldhurst, St Mary's and Werneth. The Pakistani community is primarily found in the wards of Alexandra, St Mary's, and Werneth while the Bangladeshi community has mainly settled in Coldhurst, with smaller communities in Alexandra, St Mary's and Werneth wards.

| | Working Age Population | Economically Active | Economic Activity Rate | Unemployed | Unemployment Rate (%) | Economically Inactive | Economic Inactive Rate (%) |
|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Oldham | 131,000 | 103,000 | 78.6 | 7,000 | 6.4 | 28,034 | 21.4 |
| Rochdale | 124,000 | 91,000 | 73.7 | 6,000 | 6.2 | 32,612 | 26.3 |
| GM | 1,527,000 | 1,156,000 | 75.7 | 65,000 | 5.6 | 371,061 | 24.3 |
| North West | 4,077,000 | 3,083,000 | 75.6 | 170,000 | 5.5 | 994,788 | 24.4 |
| England and Wales | 31,898,000 | 24,958,000 | 78.2 | 1,270,000 | 5.1 | 6,953,764 | 21.8 |

Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey (March 2002 – Feb 2003)

Many BME households live in sector terraced housing in central Oldham neighbourhoods. For instance:

- Many families live in small 2 bedroom terraced houses that are overcrowded and in poor condition.
- Most homes have no gardens, small rear yards and no parking restricting usable outside space.
- Although property values are comparatively low there is generally little abandonment.

South Asian communities effectively sustain demand in these areas, and this is likely to continue if projections of BME population growth are borne out. However, housing market dysfunction exists, as local communities are often constrained by lack of resources or fear of potential harassment if they move to other areas with better quality homes. Larger family households are predominantly from the South Asian communities but there is a shortage of suitable, affordable accommodation to meet their housing needs on the open market in areas of their choice. In effect, many households are living 'parallel lives' in communities separate to the white community.

Analysis by the Housing Market Assessment (further details in next chapter) confirms that few 'non – white' households migrated between wards in Oldham during the year 2000/1 whereas there were higher levels of internal localised movement within wards with significant BME communities. However, while migration into these wards has expanded BME populations in 'traditional settlement areas', some movement can be seen into 'growth' areas in neighbouring wards where there are already smaller BME communities. There is also some settlement by more affluent Asian families in areas such as Shaw.

Home ownership amongst South Asian communities fell by 12% during the 1990s as households began to rent from private landlords, FCHO, and RSLs as they moved out of traditional settlement areas. This is despite the cultural preference for home ownership, particularly within Pakistani and Indian communities.

Unemployment levels in BME communities are also high when compared to local, regional and national averages. Unemployment rates for BME people are three times that of the white population in Oldham. 20% of young people of Bangladeshi or Pakistani

origin are unemployed. This is double the proportion for young white people. Pupils of Bangladeshi, Pakistani or African Caribbean origin have lower average levels of GCSE attainment, which further restricts their options in the job market.

However, there are also pockets of severe deprivation within the wider community across the borough, such as at Fitton Hill, Sholver and Alt. For these reasons Oldham takes a borough wide approach to regeneration and funding initiatives to ensure funding is not geographically determined, but is focused on need and identified locations that could be drivers for a stabilised market. We believe that this is essential if we are to have mixed and balanced communities that are sustainable.

In some outlying areas, most notably Saddleworth, where suitable private properties are available, many local people are priced out of the market by high prices. Demand is high for council or RSL properties in these areas but supply is decreasing due to low property turnover rates and a high number of Right To Buys. The HMA found there is significant demand for 'social housing' across Oldham, but suggested that 'social' in this context could be taken to mean 'affordable', in a variety of forms (and not only and always 'socially' rented) as demand and aspiration for owner occupation increases.

An Affordable Housing Policy is being developed to take account of these issues and our approach to dealing with them. For instance two schemes have been developed in Saddleworth, where homes were sold with a Resale Covenant to ensure the properties were offered at a discount rate when resold in the future.

It has long been recognised that overcrowding can seriously affect mental and physical health and can particularly harm the life chances of children. In the worst affected ward, Coldhurst, more than 2 in every 10 households are overcrowded, compared with the national average of 7%. There are also serious problems in Werneth, St Mary's and Alexandra. Although levels have dropped for all communities since 1991, overcrowding is still a major problem and is particularly severe within the Bangladeshi community.

Chapter 1 Responding to local housing markets

Key Objectives:-

- Ensure that housing market analysis is upto date
- Ensure that we implement the findings of our housing assessments and surveys
- Develop our approach to delivering the findings of the borough-wide stock condition survey
- To restructure local housing markets to meet the aspirations of our communities.
- Utilise the LAA to align resources that enables improved housing services and more effective use of resources



OUR PRIORTIES TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES

- We will work with our HMR pathfinder to acquire housing market information
- We will develop our policies in response to the conclusions of the Housing Market Assessment, Housing Needs Survey and the Kwest survey;
- We will refocus our strategies and programmes in the private sector to match the findings of the surveys;
- We will make our contribution to the housing market restructuring as required by the HMR Pathfinder;
- We will make optimum use of LAA resources to provide homes that meet people's needs;

Oldham's Housing Market

The north west has been acknowledged as having the highest concentrations of low demand properties. As a consequence, 'Urban renaissance and dealing with changing demand' is the primary priority for the North West Housing Strategy. Like many other

northern towns, Oldham has experienced fundamental changes in the housing market – changes that seriously impact on our ability to successfully deliver borough wide regeneration. Increasing evidence of housing market dysfunction in some parts of Oldham has refocused our strategic thinking and we welcome the Government’s support for the Housing Market Renewal Initiative.

It has long been recognised that structural imbalances exist within Oldham’s housing markets. Most strikingly, there are 23,000 pre-1919 terraced homes; many of these are of poor quality, do not reach the decent homes standard, and do not meet residents’ current needs and aspirations. Oldham has more of these terraced properties than any other borough in the country, apart from the city of Liverpool, and many of these are in the HMR Pathfinder area. There are also fewer detached or semi-detached houses than are generally found in Greater Manchester stock profiles. This is a key problem in the mismatch between supply and demand.

Housing Market Dysfunction
 “A mismatch between available housing and householder aspirations, in terms of housing size, the quality of the housing product and associated environment” HMA 2005

Imbalances within the housing market extend across tenures. For example, Oldham’s Arm’s Length Management Organisation (ALMO) - First Choice Homes Oldham [FCHO] - has a disproportionate number of small flats and maisonettes, which are unsuitable for most families seeking accommodation and often do not appeal to the aspirations of other need groups.

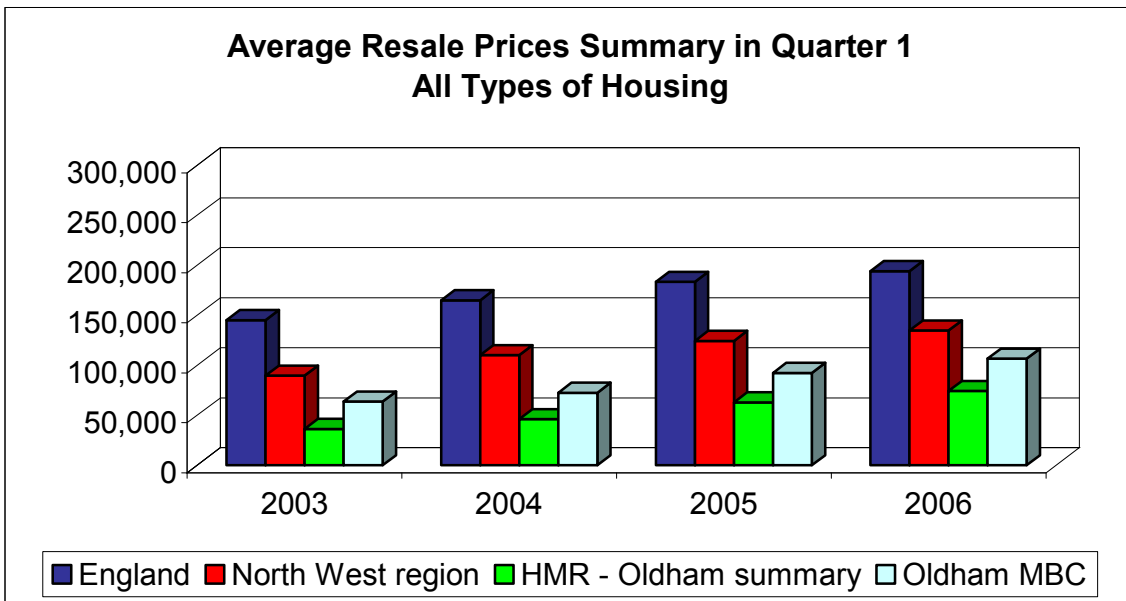
House Prices

2006 shows that house prices in Oldham MBC and Oldham HMR are lower than those in England and the North West per se, with Oldham MBC house prices being almost half the England average, and Oldham HMR lower still. Although generally lower overall, house prices in the North West are fairly inline with England in terms of the different types of housing. However, when broken down by house type, patterns emerge within house prices in the Oldham MBC and HMR areas.

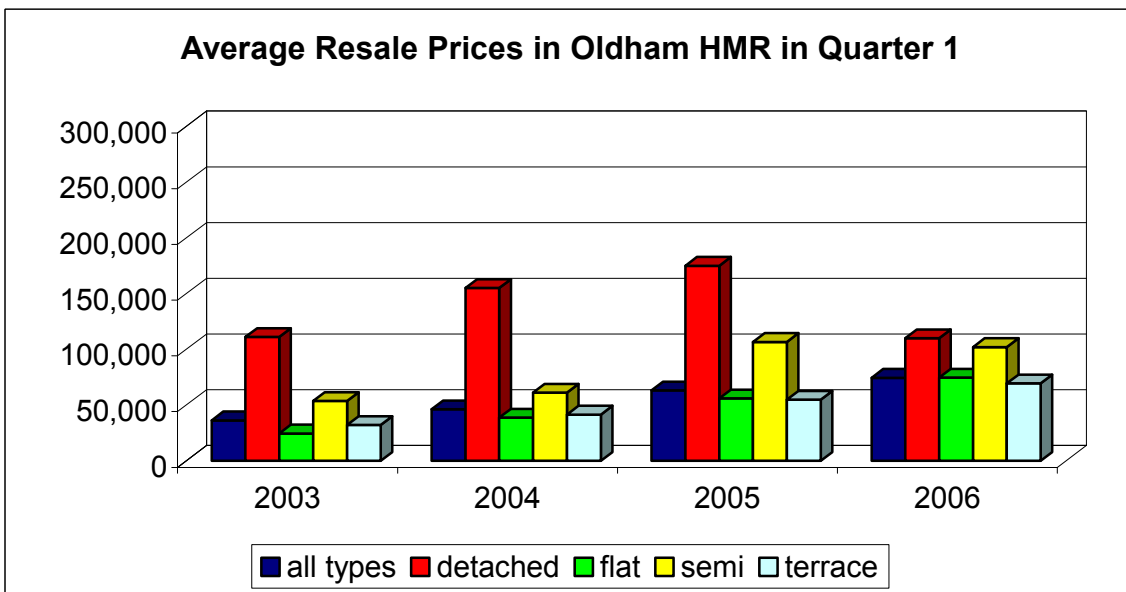
| Tb 1. Summary of Average Resale Prices Based On Quarter 1 of 2006 | | | | |
|--|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | England | North West | Oldham MBC | Oldham HMR |
| All Types | 194,108 | 134,788 | 106,720 | 74,415 |
| Detached | 301,750 | 260,141 | 225,995 | 109,995 |
| Flat | 177,718 | 117,057 | 81,727 | 74,600 |
| Semi Detached | 177,194 | 143,322 | 135,336 | 102,086 |
| Terrace | 154,507 | 93,797 | 83,056 | 69,498 |

Average resale prices in Oldham compared to North West and England.
 Source: Community Data sets 2006. (J Vidakovic HMR Core Team)

Graph 1



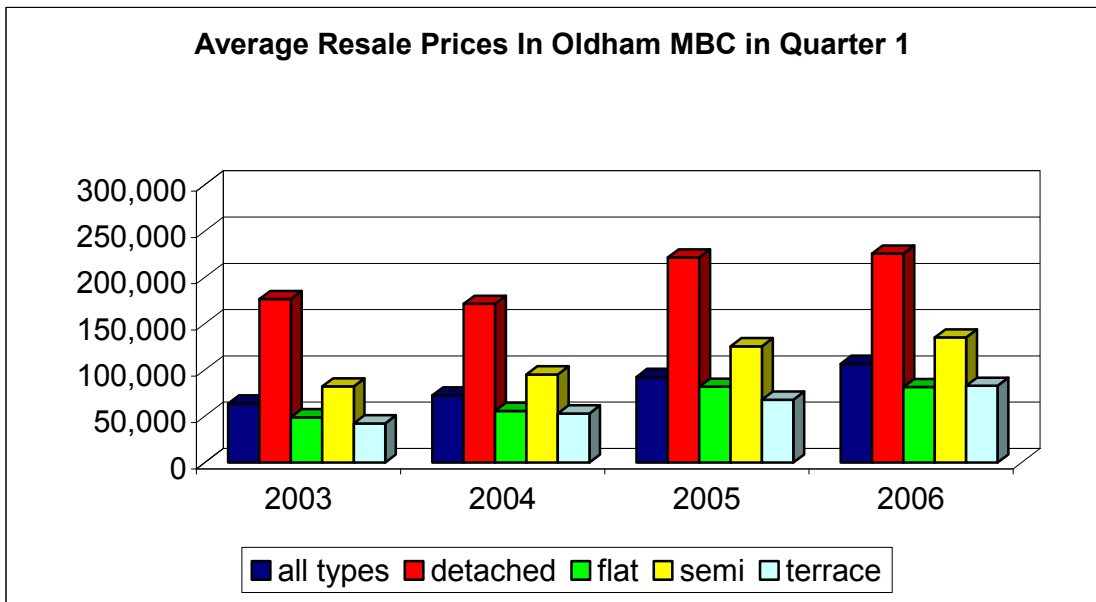
Graph 2



Source: Community Data Sets 2006 HMR

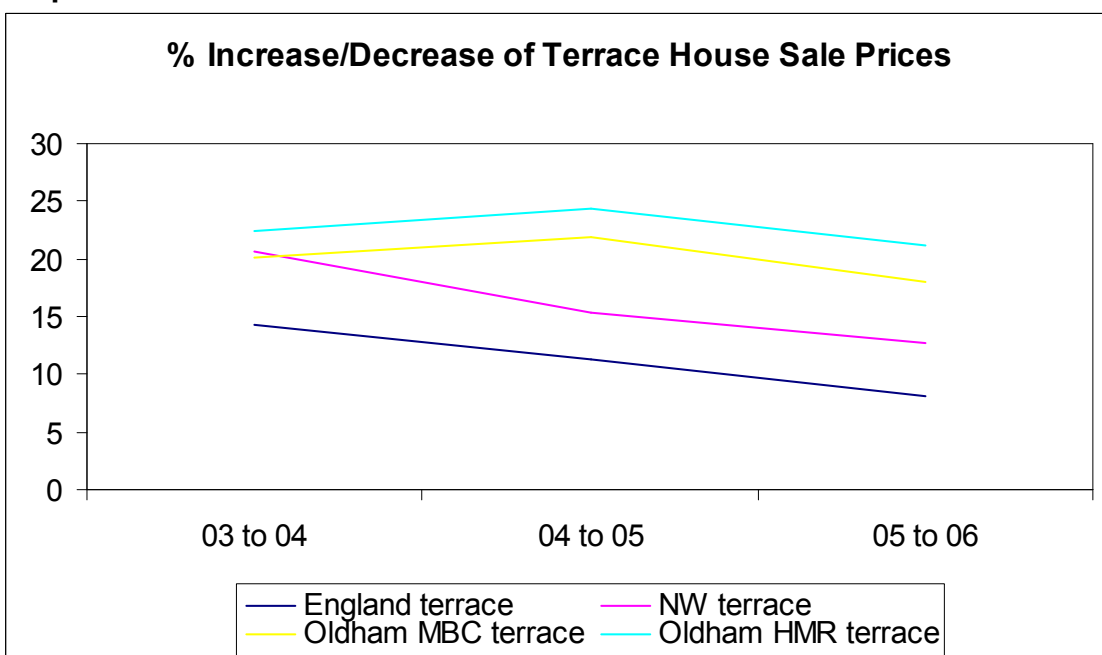
Where there is still a high demand for terrace housing in Oldham MBC and HMR areas compared to England per se, the smallest variation in prices is showing within the market for semi detached housing, showing a higher demand for larger, higher quality affordable housing in these areas.

Graph 3



All areas of the country have experienced a much slower increase in house prices in 2005/2006. England has demonstrated only a 6% increase in all types of housing compared to a 10% increase in 2004/2005. Analysis of house prices over the last 3 years shows that house prices peaked in Oldham MBC and HMR areas in 2004/2005. These figures have now dropped quite dramatically in 2006 with an increase in all types of housing at just 13% for Oldham MBC and 15% for Oldham HMR compared to 21% and 27% in 2004/2005. Detached house prices have fallen substantially in 2006 in the Oldham HMR areas. It should be noted that this figure is based on a very low sample size and therefore cannot be considered fully representative. Whereas terraced house prices have slowed down in England, prices have remained fairly stable in Oldham MBC and Oldham HMR. (please see appendix 9 for other graphs)

Graph 4



Housing Market Assessment (HMA)

In late 2004, Oldham MBC and Rochdale MBC commissioned consultants to conduct a HMA. This desktop review was designed to strengthen the Oldham and Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Partnership's understanding of the housing market in the intervention areas and its relationship to the wider sub-region. It has been designed to respond to specific recommendations of the Audit Commission Scrutiny Report (March 2004) and to inform the preparation of future intervention programmes. Its findings were important in reviewing the progress and developing intervention proposals for 2006/7 onwards, which was the basis of the scheme update in 2005.

The HMA identified nine sub-markets within the Oldham and Rochdale housing market area. In general, much of the demand in these markets is locally - generated rather than based on migration from other areas, a picture confirmed by the experience of local estate agents, especially in HMR areas. Four of these sub-markets were in the Oldham borough. These are:

- Inner Oldham
- Failsworth
- Saddleworth/ Lees
- Royton, Crompton and Shaw

In both the socially rented market and the owner occupied market, existing residents showed a definite preference for non pathfinder locations. The shortage of property in both tenures outside the pathfinder means this movement is not going to happen suddenly, but over time better off residents will move outside the pathfinder. This will lead to an increasingly polarised borough with poverty and deprivation concentrating in the pathfinder area.

Housing needs

In 2004 we commissioned a Housing Needs Survey update for Oldham using ODPM guidance and methodology. One of the key objectives was to produce an understanding of the amount, size, property type, tenure and location of new affordable housing requirements. We are working very closely with Rochdale Council, to ensure that there is a consistent approach to data collection and sharing. Key findings of the update included;

- Although there was a 'modest surplus' of affordable housing in the borough, these were often in the wrong locations or were smaller units unsuitable for families
- These problems will be exacerbated in the short-term by HMR demolition, and the specific income/ affordability issues and low overall property quality in these areas
- A target of 30% should be set for affordable homes within future housing developments to address the lack of availability of good quality affordable family homes

- Just over half of these should be of a tenure that is not socially rented, where the demand is for 2 and 4 bedroom homes

A summary of this can be found in the appendix 10.

Kwest Survey

A resident's survey about their homes and neighbourhoods was carried out in August 2005, predominantly in Housing Market Renewal Areas. From this, it was found that in both the socially rented and owner occupied markets, existing residents showed a definite preference for non-pathfinder locations.

Future housing markets

Demographic changes in Oldham, with a large number of younger people, predominantly from South Asian communities, and a growing population of older residents mean there will be changing needs in the medium term for Oldham's housing markets.

The number of households in Oldham is expected to increase from 85,210 in 2001 to around 95,300 by 2021, suggesting an annual growth of 325 – 375 households. Many of these households will be smaller units, due to declining household size, despite the larger families often seen in South Asian communities. These people are less likely to want the largest properties (though many would like to have a 'spare room' for visitors or an office/study). Many of these small households will be from younger or older age groups.

This demographic split can cause many problems as neighbours of varied age groups clash due to differing aspirations and lifestyles. Particularly in council housing there is demand for similar type properties (mainly flats) from both the younger and older age groups. Clear management and effective support are needed if these communities are to be cohesive.

Private Sector

For private sector housing renewal, we welcomed the Regulatory Reform Order issued by the Government in 2002 that brought new powers to provide loans, grants advice and other assistance for alterations and improvements to private sector housing. We have developed our approaches to ensure that we continue to direct assistance to the most vulnerable people living in the private sector and balance this by encouraging those with the ability to do so to fully accept their financial responsibilities for their properties.

We also acknowledged the contribution the private rented sector can make to address housing need. The Private Landlord's Forum has continued to develop and we continue our policy of giving assistance to those landlords who are members of the Accredited Lettings Scheme.

The private sector housing renewal policy is being currently revised and is central to the delivery of the Local Housing Partnership, Corporate and Housing Strategy objectives.

We will respond positively to recent research findings on condition and declining markets and will contribute to these by:

- Reducing the number of unfit houses
- Improving energy efficiency and safety
- Supporting neighbourhood regeneration and environmental sustainability

There is no statutory duty on the Council to provide grants (other than Disabled Facilities Grants) to deal with private sector housing problems but the responsibility for preparing and implementing plans to deal with unsatisfactory conditions remain and doing nothing is not a viable option for us.

Under the existing renewal policy resources and attention are directed to the worst housing and most vulnerable occupiers through a parallel policy of area renewal and needs based grants. Individual need has been identified through an initial means test, which examines personal circumstances in accessing home repairs assistance. This assessment foreshadowed the recent government changes by seeking to identify a range of financial options other than grant aid. The Council has developed a range of policies that improve housing conditions in the private sector under the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) and recent Housing Act 2004 legislation. They include:-

- Anchor Trust Agency, which delivers a range of services to help vulnerable people to maintain, repair and improve their homes.
- An equity release scheme (in partnership with West Pennine Housing Association) which helps people in necessitous circumstances to release money from the value of their homes to carry out improvements.
- A range of policies that support private landlords to manage their properties more effectively e.g. Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme.
- Policies for delivering our Housing Market Renewal Strategy
- Area renewal policies which apply all of the above on an area basis.
- Bringing empty homes back into use strategy

Under the Housing Act 2004, we are developing our enforcement policies to target private landlords and owners of Houses in Multiple Occupation whose properties are unfit. Mandatory licensing of 23 Houses in Multiple Occupation will be completed this year.

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

We recognise the potential significant contribution that registered social landlords make in developing and delivering our housing strategy. Oldham has number of large RSLs operating in the area, who contribute to the objectives of our strategy. Through the Oldham Housing Investment Partnership (OHIP), which involves chief executives of the RSL's, the ALMO and Head of Housing Strategy, we have established good partnership working standards. In 2004, Oldham received a substantial sum of just under £12 million Housing Corporation (HC) funding which has been delivered with our RSL's for new developments and refurbishment schemes.

We are also working closely with locally operating RSLs to establish an overall picture of how they meet their Decent Homes Standards. First indications are that either properties meet the standard or will be brought to the standard through planned maintenance and repair strategies. Through our performance management responsibilities we have established an RSL's performance group so that service delivery is consistent with our objectives.

In addition we have been successful in working with RSLs to achieve Eco Homes excellent standard in a number of units, with contributions from the Housing Market Renewal Fund Pathfinder.

This year we will produce our affordable housing policy and involve our partners in delivering this policy to assist in meeting the aspirations of those who want to become homeowners and have a comprehensive approach to meeting people's needs and housing aspirations.

Stock Condition

During 2006/7, FCHO will be updating our stock condition data using information from the decent homes work surveys and an on-going sample survey. This additional surveying work will be carried out as part of the council's comprehensive stock condition survey of all stock within the borough. The stock condition survey data will be fully integrated into our new SX3 integrated housing management and maintenance IT system that was implemented earlier this year.

FCHO' made a building cost model submission to the ODPM based on our own stock condition survey. This identified that £90million of investment was required to meet decent homes standards. £86.4million had been awarded to OMBC to meet this need. FCHO agreed a plan with the council as part of the annual management fee negotiations to bridge this £3.6million gap utilising a combination of revenue contributions to capital over 2005/06 and 2006/07 and seeking further efficiency gains and re-programming where required.

We strongly believe that having up to date stock condition data is an important factor when delivering our capital programme. Last year we commissioned a boroughwide private sector stock condition survey (see appendix 12 for summary), which has identified:

- 89,288 households in Oldham
- 75,547 in owner occupation (inclusive of RSL's)
- 29,911 vulnerable groups defined under DHS
- 5,893 unfit homes in the private sector

In 2002 the government extended the Decent Homes Standard to vulnerable people living in the private sector. The key target nationally is to increase the proportion of vulnerable households living in decent homes in the private sector to 65% by 2006 to 70% by 2010 and to 75% by 2020. Our house condition survey indicates that 29,911 of all vulnerable households in the private sector in 2005 lived in non-decent homes.

To deliver our these targets, we will make some adjustments to our Regulatory Reform Order policies to link improvement grants and loan products such as equity release to the

government's Warm Front grants to maximise the impact of public funding on the decent homes target. A fundamental part of the decency standard is how energy efficient a property is. The council has a range of policies to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon dioxide emissions and eliminate fuel poverty. This is something that has been included in our Local Area Agreement.

Improving our Home Ownership and Leaseholder Services

In 2004/05 a Home ownership services and Leaseholders Working Group was established. The group reviewed the delivery of Right to Buy services and the management of the growing leaseholder portfolio. It developed a Home Ownership services /Leaseholder Improvement Plan and ensured the establishment of a leaseholders forum. The Forum enabled leaseholders to join the FCHO sounding board, tenant inspection teams and local boards.

The working group produced and distributed a leaseholder's handbook and improved access and information to the services via both the OMBC/ FCHO website and developed a new section for the First for News (FCHO Tenants Newsletter).

A KWEST satisfaction survey of all leaseholders was completed in 2004/5, the results of which have further driven the improvement plan and led to the working group developing a SLA between the Council and FCHO, setting clear roles and responsibilities, service standards and performance targets against which to measure improvement for Right to Buy and Leasehold management services.

In 2006 the appointment of a Home ownership services co-ordinator was completed to ensure recent improvements are further developed and maintained.

In 2005/06, 287 FCHO tenants used the RTB legislation to purchase their current Council home. This is a significant number of new households accessing owner occupation using the, often generous, discounts available.

The popularity of the Right to Buy Scheme remains high in Oldham. Many council tenants use this as a means to enter into home ownership. Over 2000 council homes have been sold since 1993 under the Right to Buy, with over 1000 being sold since the ALMO was formed in 2002. These homes are mainly houses in the outer areas, such as Saddleworth, Chadderton, Failsworth, Shaw and Royton where the property market is particularly buoyant, and is seriously affecting current council housing applicants rehousing prospects, particularly for families.

Recently sales have also begun to increase in the inner areas, and of flats and maisonettes, predominantly by BME tenants.

| Council Right to Buy 2000 - 2006 | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| Year | Houses (by bedroom no.) | | | | Flats | Maisonettes | Bungalows | Total |
| | 0-2 | 3 | 4-6 | Total | | | | |
| 2005 - 06 | 93 | 138 | 10 | 241 | 45 | 10 | 1 | 297 |
| 2004 - 05 | 121 | 182 | 17 | 320 | 49 | 16 | 3 | 388 |
| 2003 - 04 | 172 | 244 | 14 | 435 | 34 | 5 | 1 | 475 |
| 2002 - 03 | 79 | 118 | 7 | 115 | 14 | 1 | 2 | 232 |
| 2001 - 02 | 70 | 129 | 8 | 207 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 223 |
| 2000 - 01 | 47 | 89 | 5 | 141 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 154 |

Table showing RTB sales over the last six years

HMR

We will undertake a 'Town Centre Living Feasibility Study' in the near future to help deliver the HMR aims of increasing the number of people living in Oldham town centre and building more aspirational properties there.

Already we are seeing that there is a demand for town centre living. The first town centre development of apartments has already been sold. Further developments are planned, which is encouraging.

To date the HMR Delivery Plans on Derker and Werneth have focused on acquisition and demolition of obsolete terraced housing and low demand social rented housing. It has been difficult to do this, particularly in the private sector, due to the shortage of houses for people to move into from the properties earmarked for demolition. The original priorities for HMR have now been re-evaluated as part of the Scheme Update (see appendix 11 for a summary) required by the Government and will focus on a build first – clear later strategy. This will involve a land assembly programme on sites previously occupied by commercial property and on sites on peripheral housing estates where there is land available and we need to diversify the existing stock. Modern, high quality, mixed tenure housing will be built on these sites, which will increase the housing options available to the existing residents who live in housing which has been identified as obsolete and requires demolition. In time, the vacated sites will then become available for demolition and redevelopment.

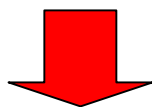
Local Area Agreement

Oldham's housing stock requires large-scale interventions to improve the quality of private and social housing, to satisfy the requirements of a modern housing market and to meet the demand for social housing. As part of a Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder from 2004-2019, Oldham has commenced a major programme of investment designed to regenerate and improve our priority housing areas. We will align Housing Market Renewal with the Local Area Agreement and to utilise the LAA to help address the significant housing issues in Oldham which lie outside the HMR Pathfinder area.

Chapter 2 Widening Choice and Improving Quality

Key objectives:

- Providing a range of homes to meet identified needs
- Making best use of existing stock
- Improving access to affordable homes
- Improving homes to meet modern standards
- Encouraging improved design



OUR PRIORTIES TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES

- Analyse and apply the findings of the HMA / HNS
- Develop an affordable housing policy
- Provide more appropriate new build housing to address needs / aspirations
- Convert existing low demand flats to family homes
- Bring empty homes back into use
- Make better use of private rented homes
- Ensure that allocations policies make best use of FCHO homes
- Develop a PFI bid to improve Clarkwell, Crossley and Primrose Bank estates
- Asset management planning for FCHO stock
- Improving private rented homes
- Improving owner occupied homes
- Encouraging improved design

Widening housing choice and improving housing quality are key building blocks of Oldham's housing strategy. We will monitor our actions through the performance management framework and report the results to the Oldham Housing Partnership.

Providing a range of homes to meet identified needs

Current position

OMBC acknowledged that it had neither collected nor made effective use of information about housing needs. In response, we commissioned a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) update to provide information about changing needs in Oldham. The Housing Market Assessment (HMA) confirmed that the demand for large homes will continue over the next 15 years to meet the needs of overcrowded families and community aspirations. This will

shortly be commissioning a full HNS and will build on the outcomes of the HMA. More detailed information about the HNS and HMA can be found in the Local Housing Markets section.

The development of the Oldham housing information system will help pinpoint more effectively the principal issues concerning housing choice and need. The research capability of the Housing Strategy and HMR core teams has been strengthened to allow better analysis of data and improved input into policy development / performance monitoring systems. Using this information in consultation with key stakeholders, we will better align investment with the needs of local communities.

New homes for rent

Housing Corporation investment is the principal means of providing new affordable homes for rent in Oldham to meet housing needs and widen housing choice. The recent HMA confirmed that there is an absolute lack of affordable good quality larger homes in Oldham. We need more large homes over the next 15 years to meet community aspirations and the needs of overcrowded families. The biggest part of the Housing Corporation investment in Oldham has been and will continue to be focused on meeting the needs of larger households requiring rented homes whose current choice of affordable good quality larger homes is restricted due to their extremely limited availability.

In addition, Housing Corporation investment has also helped to widen choice in higher cost / high demand areas, increase the availability and range of supported housing and renovating run down empty properties to bring them back into use. In 2004-5, we delivered 97% of our allocated programme - almost £4.9 million. In 2005-6 £xxx,xxx was invested. Around £xxx,xxx will be invested in 2006-7. From 2004-2005 onwards, over 90% of this funding has been focused in the HMR areas.

The building of new houses for rent does not match the loss of rented properties due to RTB – see table below.

| | Stock sold through RTB | New social housing units provided by NAHP |
|--------|------------------------|---|
| 2003/4 | 410 | 57 |
| 2004/5 | 388 | 62 |
| 2005/6 | 297 | 33 |

| NAHP funded developments 2004/2007 | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| No. of Units | Newbuild RSL rental properties | Conversions | For low cost sale or shared ownership | Supported units | Total |
| Completed 2004/5 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 18 | 41 |
| Planned 2005/6 | 62 | 20 | 14 | 8 | 104 |
| Planned 2006/7 | # | # | # | 6 | 6 |
| Total | 62 | 43 | 14 | 32 | 151 |

Improving land availability

We have set up a Land and Housing Issues group that consists of senior officers from Planning, Regeneration, HMR and Housing Strategy to discuss issues about land availability, as this is a key factor in developing affordable housing. The Land Housing Issues Group will be developing an Affordable Housing Policy during 2005. Oldham has recently carried out an Urban Capacity Study to pinpoint potential sites for development in the next 15 years. Identifying and making land available for development, including the re-designation of industrial land for housing use, is a key local measure for the success of the HMR pathfinder.

Associations received NAHP funding for 67 new homes for rent in 2004-6 in the first wave HMR areas. The great majority will have three or more bedrooms and all will be built to high design and environmental standards to provide accessible lifetime homes.

We are increasingly looking to RSLs to provide mixed tenure developments (as opposed to solely rented housing). They may do this alone or in partnership with developers. We want all homes to have the same external appearance, so that it is not possible to identify which are for rent and which are for sale.

New homes for sale

Many prospective purchasers in the borough encounter significant problems. Financial considerations mean that many buyers are restricted to small terraced houses in central Oldham, despite the fact that these homes do not meet their needs / aspirations. A wider choice of property types is available in the outer areas, but these are too expensive for many people. In addition, they do not allow easy access by members of Muslim communities to existing community facilities (mosques, shops, etc.) or support.

Since the market value for their existing property does not anywhere near meet the price of a new suitable replacement home in the area, the HMR initiative has also forced many owner-occupiers back into the rented market. This has led to particular demand for council housing. Although equity support products are being developed by HMR / Private Sector Renewal to enable residents to remain in their local area, some older residents cannot or do not want to take on another mortgage.

Low cost home ownership

Enabling sustainable owner-occupation is a major aim of the housing strategy. In the past, the valuation gap for larger homes (between the relatively high cost of construction and the somewhat lower house values in the inner areas of Oldham) has frustrated housing association efforts to provide larger homes for sale. In addition, shared ownership has not proved popular among South Asian households, who overall occupy some of the worst homes.

However, recent house price increases plus the availability of HMR funding have improved the viability of such developments. MMHG are currently building 4 four bedroom homes for outright sale with a further 4 for Homebuy at Selwyn Close in Coppice; all have been sold. The development also includes 10 large houses for rent. Contour used Recycled Capital Grant (RCGF) to develop six houses for rent and six flats for shared ownership in Uppermill. Houses for outright sale were built on the rest of the site.

MMHG will be building a mixed tenure development, including large houses for rent, supported accommodation, Homebuy and outright sale at Devon Street (Werneth). WPHA will be building large houses for rent and Homebuy at Suthers Street (Werneth) and are also investigating outright sale and Homebuy in the final phase of Harmony Street (Glodwick).

S106 agreements have been used to facilitate lower cost homes for sale. This provided 31 homes for sale at a discount to Oldham MBC nominees in 2002-2004. They were targeted at people who can afford the discounted price, but who are unable to pay the full market value (FMV). These homes have been sold under a resale covenant to protect the discounted FMV prices.

A further 58 low cost homes for sale using S106 agreements are planned during 2005-2006 in Royton, Shaw and Chadderton, giving discounts of 30% on FMV. Some of these are targeted at specific groups, such as people losing their homes under HMR.

Making the best use of existing stock

RSLs have recently been active in converting existing properties that were in poor condition or suffered from low demand and no longer met local housing needs. This has involved both lateral conversions of pairs of older terraced houses and also vertical conversions of two storey flats to create larger houses. As well as making best use of existing stock, these schemes have improved the appearance of their local areas. The finished product is attractive, good quality, popular and provides a greater choice for tenants.

This work will continue as other lower demand or poor quality homes suitable for conversion that meet our strategic priorities are identified.

The conversion of council homes is a key aim of the FCHO BME Housing Strategy. The policy is currently being reviewed and more homes will be converted if further suitable properties can be identified.

Private sector

Bringing empty homes back into use can produce both financial and non-financial benefits to the general public, owners and local neighbourhoods. In April 2006, council tax records showed that 1,746 privately owned properties had been vacant for more than 6 months. Oldham MBC is taking the lead in using its enforcement powers and resources to bring empty properties back into occupation to provide much needed homes.

BVPI 64 shows that the Council brought back into use or demolished 60 private sector vacant dwellings (including RSL properties) as a direct result of action by the local authority. This is primarily due to the level of demolition across Oldham. Steps are also in place via the fledgling Local Area Agreement (LAA) to increase the number of long-term empty homes brought back into use to 20 a year.

Property Exchange Project

In response to concerns expressed by local residents affected by demolition proposals, we propose a Property Exchange Scheme. The project, to be promoted as 'Property Xchange', will be made available to residents who are losing their homes as part of the HMR project in Derker and Werneth. An associated HMR funded project has been acquiring long term empty properties throughout the wider HMR area, in order to reduce the number of empty properties and to examine opportunities for bringing suitable properties back into use. The scheme will be self-funding from the first exchange, enabling further long-term empty homes to be purchased, marketed and exchanged.

Enforcement measures

We take every opportunity to engage owners of empty homes in positive dialogue to bring neglected properties back into use. However, we reserve the right to take enforcement action where necessary. This includes:

- Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)
- Enforced Sale Procedure
- Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)

These will bring properties back into use to help meet the needs for affordable housing from homeless households and those affected by clearance in HMR areas.

FCHO

In April 2005, around 3.6% of council properties were empty and awaiting letting, improvement or demolition, an improvement from 4.6% in April 2004. The number of

management voids has dropped by nearly two-thirds in this time. The ratio of empty homes to stock is now three times higher in the private than in the council sector. However, many properties have since been emptied or have had their lettings frozen to facilitate the PFI contract (179 homes) and HMR activity. In addition, this reduced level of empty homes available to let makes it harder to address homelessness and housing need. Please see appendix 4 on the performance of the ALMO since 2002 – 2005 and visit FCHO's website www.oldham.gov.uk/fcho_home.htm

Improving access to affordable homes

Private sector

We will work with private landlords to facilitate the provision of good quality private rented homes in Oldham through the Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LAS) and the Landlords' Forum, in particular to provide suitable housing for vulnerable or homeless households.

Many low-income households have difficulty acquiring the large deposits and up-front rent payment usually needed to take on a private sector rental property. The Tenancy Deposit Scheme is currently being updated to widen the criteria for eligibility. It will particularly target good quality properties registered with the LAS.

Social rented sector

Securing a social rented home has become more difficult for general needs applicants, due to the growth in homelessness and the HMR initiative. Demand is particularly high for family homes in all areas of Oldham, but these are the properties that are in shortest supply, due to the RTB. Younger people, a growing market in Oldham, also find their access restricted due to local lettings policies and the lack of appropriate support. Oldham Council has recently developed a Young People's Housing Strategy and is reviewing the allocations policy to address some of these issues.

In the late 1990s, Oldham witnessed a reduction in demand for some types of council properties on some estates. As a result, Instant Homes was established in 2000 to actively market homes. This was followed in 2003 by a pilot choice based letting (CBL) scheme for 30% of homes. The supply of council homes (due in the main to increased right to buy sales plus stock transfer of Fitton Hill to Villages in 2002) significantly reduced from 18,500 to just over 15,000 from 2001 to 2005.

In contrast, the number of RSL properties in Oldham has grown in recent years due to the transfer of Council stock and the building of additional homes; there are currently xxxx RSL homes. Most are accessed directly from RSL waiting lists, although 63 tenancies were obtained through nomination procedures in 2003/4.

Given recent increases in the number of people on the council waiting list, all parties must work together to ensure that best use is made of the homes that are available and that transfers of ownership do not lead to a reduction in housing choice for people who need affordable rented housing.

Over the past 12-18 months, the demand for social housing has dramatically increased, due to demographic and social changes, increased rate of household formation, rising house prices and changes in homeless legislation. As a result, the waiting list has increased from less than 5,000 applicants to nearly 8,000 applicants.

There has been also a sharp increase in homelessness presentations over the same period. Until recently, there were 450 priority homeless on the waiting list. However, since the start of 2006, measures introduced by the homelessness strategy have resulted in a sharp decrease in both presentations and numbers of priority homeless on the waiting list.

The previous OMBC allocation scheme largely reflected excess supply and not excess demand. In response to the changes outlined above, OMBC and FCHO agreed to complete a full review of the allocations scheme. We now have a simpler customer-led allocations scheme based on choice based lettings principles (Oldham Housing Options); 80% of lettings are made on the basis of needs based bids, with 20% of lets are based on date of application order only (open door lets).

FCHO have recently brought together their central allocations and homelessness teams, liaison, support and advice services into a one stop shop to create the Oldham Housing Options Centre. The service has been further improved with the implementation of the SX3 ICT system allocations module. Further SX3 improvements are planned in 2006, which will allow better customer access and improve nominations.

FCHO have a number of local letting policies; some of these include age restrictions as a way of preventing 'lifestyle' clashes. Both younger and older age groups often require similar properties (generally flats), so proactive management and effective support are needed to avoid conflict between age groups due to different aspirations and lifestyles and ensure that communities are cohesive. Concerns about possible problems have led to the introduction of local lettings policies. These have often restricted the supply of homes for young people, despite growing demand. FCHO and OMBC are now committed to reviewing these policies in consultation with residents.

OMBC has established a service level agreement with FCHO to ensure robust monitoring of rehousing outcomes, including lets by RSLs; this is to ensure that we do not discriminate against any groups. Lettings targets for BME and vulnerable groups have been set and are monitored. OMBC recognises the improvements FCHO has made in rehousing performance, but more needs to be done to reduce void turnover times. One approach to this is that FCHO will adopt the 'systems thinking' approach piloted by the Northern Housing Consortium.

OMBC have also been a leading player in the establishment of the Greater Manchester working party that led to a successful bid for the establishment of a pilot sub-regional CBL system. We will continue to actively support the development of this pilot.

Sustaining tenancies

We have improved our understanding of the range of support needs that vulnerable tenants may have. We have developed a range of specialist and generic floating support services, both to resettle households into their new tenancies / communities and to

sustain tenancies which are in danger of failing. These measures greatly increase the chances of vulnerable tenants sustaining their tenancies in the medium – longer term.

Improving housing quality to meet modern standards

ALMO – New freedoms and flexibilities

Freedoms and flexibilities present an opportunity to finance a new asset management plan over a long period for the council's stock.

Such a plan would enable: -

- FCHO to maintain the council's stock in decent condition over a long period by continuing to invest in elements of the housing stock as they become "non-decent" again
- Investment in improvements to the stock to meet new and higher standards
- Investment in neighbourhoods to ensure the sustainability of council homes into the future
- Investment in remodelling the stock to better meet the needs and meet the needs and aspirations of families and communities in the 21st century
- Building new homes to replace those lost through Right to Buy and regeneration schemes to meet the current high demand for rented stock

We are currently carrying out stock condition surveys and estate environmental audits in order to build up the likely asset management / investment plan requirements. Initial estimates to fund a 30-year plan will be available by summer 2006.

The financial models being developed as part of "freedoms and flexibilities" have a number of prerequisites:

- The council comes out of the HRA subsidy system
- Sufficient of the HRA debt is "written off" so that income to the account (essentially rents) is sufficient to fund the management and maintenance of the stock and the debt payments attributable to the new borrowing for the 30-year investment plan
- A tripartite agreement between the council, the ALMO and the government about how Right to Buy capital receipts are used
- A new management agreement to enable all of the above to take place and for the ALMO to have sufficient independence to manage its own financial affairs

If the loan fund were privatised, then this would require constitutional changes in the relationship between the council and the ALMO. The ALMO would have to become a non-controlled council company and would have to have a long-term contract to satisfy the lenders. With a private loan funds, access to the loan funds would not be rationed. If the loan fund comes from government grants/allocation, then there is likely to be a finite amount available at any one time and FCHO would have to compete with other ALMOs.

In order to reduce the risk of the Council's stock falling back into "non-decency" and to avoid an undue delay in dealing with the sustainability aspects of the asset management plan, early access to a new asset management fund clearly would be preferable.

The new build ideas and funding options are not necessarily related to freedoms and flexibilities and therefore we will pursue them independent of anything else. We will be looking to develop a similar approach taken by Hounslow Homes.

The Landlord Accreditation Scheme

The Council's Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LAS) has been developed in partnership with Salford Council. It was initially adopted in Derker and has been extended into other areas, such as the NDC area (Fitton Hill and Hathershaw), following the formal launch of the Private Sector Housing Unit in April 2005.

As part of our HMR Pathfinder, we work with Rochdale MBC to share knowledge and good practice from the LAS. We are engaged in the North West ACT Now Working Group, which meets quarterly to discuss private sector initiatives. In addition, the scheme is a member of Accreditation Network UK (ANUK) a national network for accreditation schemes working to the adopted code of standards used by Oldham MBC.

Using the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) to support owner-occupiers

The RRO requires the establishment, publication and ongoing review of a housing renewal policy linked to the strategic objectives and the key priorities within the housing strategy. The policy takes account of other corporate priorities established through the Oldham Partnership and includes health, crime, education and the environment.

This policy enables the council to spend capital resources on the key priorities identified to achieve shared outcomes, such as through the Housing Market Renewal Scheme Update and other mainstreamed private sector capital improvement programmes, to secure the regeneration and renewal of private sector stock within Oldham. The policy was adopted in October 2003 and is currently under review.

Oldham MBC welcomes the new freedoms and flexibilities provided by the RRO. Legislation enables local authorities to design and deliver more effective and innovative strategies, to develop schemes that address specific local needs and make better use of resources. The RRO will be a major tool in the delivery of sustainable homeownership options on a boroughwide basis, through the Affordable Housing Policy and as part of the HMR scheme update.

- We have developed an equity release product in 'Home Improve - Oldham', in partnership with Rochdale MBC and West Pennine Housing Association. This will allow owner occupiers with limited disposable income to maintain their home through the release of equity in their property.
- Using grants / equity release / loans to set our own limits and conditions for assistance enables Oldham to frame policies that account for both local circumstances and a person's ability to contribute. We will continue to develop, expand and monitor the effectiveness of the 'home improve' scheme
- We are also considering new forms of assistance, including the use of equity release products to fund adaptations in the present home or to facilitate moving to a more appropriate adapted property to promote independent living for disabled people

Encouraging improved design

Oldham MBC in Partnership with Rochdale MBC and the Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder, are developing Urban Design Guidance to improve the quality of the built environment in the two boroughs. The Guidance will consist of a general urban design document that defines 9 core principles, these being:

- Character - enhancing identity and sense of place;
- Safety and Inclusion - ensuring places are safe, secure and welcoming for all;
- Diversity - providing variety and choice;
- Ease of movement - ensuring places that are easy to get to and move through
- Legibility - ensuring places that can be easily understood;
- Adaptability - anticipating the need for change;
- Sustainability - minimize the impact on our environment;
- Good Streets and Spaces - creating places with attractive outdoor places;
- Good sustainable buildings - constructing environmentally friendly buildings.

Three further guides will be developed to outline approaches and good practice, these area:

- Residential Guide - from layout to detailed design;
- Public Realm Guide - addressing both new and existing streets; and
- Guide to the Design Process including consultation and early liaison with the planning authority and information on producing design statements.

The Urban Design Guidance will be adopted by the local planning authorities as statutory planning guidance, which will promote good design practice, and in particularly increase the quality of housing development within Oldham.

Chapter 3 Meeting vulnerable people's housing needs

Key Objectives:

- To support the provision of high quality housing and support services to vulnerable people
- Further develop and improve customer focus, involvement and choice in all services
- To prevent homelessness, to provide a range of appropriate temporary accommodation to meet the needs of households who do become homeless and improve access to homelessness services
- Work in partnership with other agencies to support victims of domestic violence, coercion or community exploitation
- Monitor this action through the Supporting People Action Plan, Homelessness Strategy and the Housing Strategy Performance Management Framework



OUR PRIORTIES TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES

- We will implement the aims and objectives of our Supported Accommodation Strategy and deliver improved services through our pioneering Sheltered PFI Project (PFI 2)
- We will prevent homelessness through targeted services such as the Mediation service, Pre-Tenancy Training, Tenancy Relations Service, Private Sector Leasing, Rent Deposit and Accredited Landlords Schemes.
- We will review our Temporary accommodation, including the Nightstop scheme, and we will make a bid for resources to support emergency direct access accommodation.
- We will continue to support the Oldham Family Crisis Group (OFCG) and develop further floating support and the Sanctuary Scheme
- We will deliver an improved adaptation service for people with disabilities across all tenure;
- We will carry out a needs assessment for Gypsies and Travellers;

Improving public access to information and services

New initiatives and changes in legislation have highlighted the need to improve means of access to information and services for all, but particularly vulnerable groups. Good quality information and advice about housing, care and support services is essential to assist people in making informed choices. The Project Manager (Homelessness) works with all agencies and the Homelessness Forum to ensure that the quality of advice and information and non-accommodation based services provided for vulnerable people are maintained and improved, as part of the prevention agenda.

In May 2005 all council housing access and support services were co – located at the First Choice Homes Oldham headquarters in Oldham town centre, nearby other organisations such as Housing Associations, the DWP and Employment Service, the Law Centre and Citizens Advice Bureau. This now provides a ‘One Stop Shop’ for housing advice and support and includes the Housing Options and Homelessness team, the Housing Support team, the Tenancy Support team, the Asylum team and Private Sector Tenancy Relations service.

Supporting People

Oldham is committed to delivering the Supporting People programme in a way that best meets the housing needs of vulnerable people in the Borough. A Supporting People Strategy has been developed and was published in August 2005. Supporting People funds housing related support services to 4822 households; 4414 accommodation based services and 408 floating support or outreach services.

Developed from the outcomes of the Review of Supported Housing, the approach adopted looks to support independence and promote choice for people in locations where they choose to live. It aims to put vulnerable people in control, with staff supporting them to achieve informed and responsible decisions.

Supporting People funds a wide range of services provided by Housing Associations, the voluntary sector as well as the local authority and First Choice Homes. The programme supports people with a wide range of differing housing related support needs including those with learning disabilities, mental health problems, people with physical and sensory disabilities, drug and alcohol problems, older people and the homeless. A Providers Forum meets quarterly where service and support providers can meet to share experience and knowledge across the sector.

The Supporting People Strategy will ensure that strategic priorities are met and that all services are monitored to ensure they attain good quality and value. A major aim of Supporting People is to ensure that support is offered to a wide range of vulnerable client groups. This includes homeless people, people who have committed, or are at risk of committing crime, women escaping domestic violence and vulnerable young people. For further details of the strategy please visit

www.oldham.gov.uk/supporting-people-5yr-strategy.pdf

The programme also places a particular emphasis on effective consultation and involvement of people who use supporting people services. A Service User Consultation and Involvement Strategy was developed between supporting people and homelessness services in July 2005 and work is continuing in implementation of the strategy’s action plan.

Review of Supported Accommodation

Oldham is committed to enabling a wide range of vulnerable people to maintain stable, independent and fulfilling lives within the community. This is achieved through the provision of housing and support schemes including: sheltered housing, supported housing and floating support. We aim to provide services that help people to maintain or

develop independence and support themselves. In order to deliver this Oldham has recently completed a Supported Accommodation Review, as a partnership between Housing, Social Services, Supporting People and other stakeholders. The key aims of the strategy are:

- To inform other related strategies such as the five year Supporting People Strategy and HMR,
- Develop a social inclusion framework and approach for vulnerable groups in Oldham,
- To provide information about need and demand across all the groups covered under Supporting People
- Deliver recommendations about the number and types of services needed in the future, as well as priorities for investments and shifts of resources.

Key issues included:

- Lack of both generic and specialist floating support services which may prevent the need for residentially based support.
- Oversupply of general sheltered elderly accommodation but lack of extra care provision, or support for elderly people with multiple needs
- Unsuitable or restrictive support provision for adults with special needs
- Lack of emergency homelessness accommodation, and provision for people with complex needs
- Barriers to owner occupation and private rental markets for people with support needs

Our vision for housing vulnerable people

Building on the development of the Supporting People and Supported Accommodation strategies:

- Older people will be enabled to remain at home for as long as possible with an evolving package of support. This will include the development of Extra Care housing for people suffering from dementia or other cognitive impairments, as an alternative to institutional care.
- Other vulnerable adults will be offered support so they can choose from the same range of housing options as the general community – private and socially rented homes or owner occupation throughout the borough.

Our primary aims are to promote independence, offer a range of support packages and choice.

Homelessness

Oldham has produced its second homelessness strategy for the period 2006- 2010, to reflect the changes to both homelessness issues across the borough and the services in place to address them. The key themes of the strategy reflect the Government emphasis on preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies, together with reducing the use of temporary accommodation. For further details of the strategy please visit

www.oldham.gov.uk/homlessness-strategy.pdf

The Local Area Agreement, Housing Block, includes targets set around reducing homelessness and improving homelessness services. The Housing Partnership will monitor these targets, including a stretch target to achieve a reduction in homelessness acceptances.

During 2004/5 1568 homelessness presentations were made from households who considered themselves to be homeless or threatened with homelessness, of whom 880 were accepted as homeless and in priority need. In 2005/6 the numbers accepted as homeless and in priority need reduced to 698 but numbers of homelessness related enquiries remained high. The main reasons for homelessness were loss of lodgings with parents, relationship breakdown, notice to quit a private sector tenancy, loss of lodgings with friends, domestic abuse, harassment and insecure lodgings. A homelessness prevention strategy was produced in September 05 in response to increasing use of Bed and Breakfast as emergency accommodation for homeless households. A range of preventative initiatives is now in place with more being developed and these have achieved success in addressing the main causes of homelessness.

There has been an increase in the emphasis on housing advice services which prevent homelessness, and during 2005/6 430 households had their homelessness prevented as a result of housing advice and support services provided by a range of agencies including voluntary sector generic and specialist services, and a range of statutory sector services including advice for private sector landlord and tenants.

A review is underway to improve the range and quality of temporary accommodation for homelessness households, as we work towards achieving the target to halve numbers of households in temporary accommodation by 2010. The need for specialist short-term temporary accommodation for single people and couples with complex and multiple needs has been identified and is being addressed. Improved support planning at existing temporary accommodation has helped to reduce repeat homelessness in the Borough.

The homelessness strategy recognises the contribution that can be made by private sector housing in broadening the housing options available to households threatened with homelessness. A re-launched rent deposit scheme, a proposed private sector leasing scheme and an expanded scheme for landlord accreditation will also assist to improve the accessibility and quality of the private rented sector.

A recently established working group is investigating and making recommendations on the issues of hidden homeless households and rough sleeping. A further Rough Sleepers Count is planned for July 06, following a count in December 04 where no rough sleepers were found. It is known that households do sleep rough in Oldham, usually on a short-term basis and not all of these people wish to contact statutory agencies for assistance. The numbers of hidden homeless are difficult to quantify but around 300 households approached voluntary sector advice agencies during 2005/6, who may be hidden from statutory homelessness services.

The Homelessness Strategy supports and reflects the aims of the Domestic Abuse Strategy, produced in 2006 and supports the aim to maintain and broaden the range of services and support available for those who experience domestic abuse. The strategy highlights the importance of the sanctuary scheme, which enables households to remain

in their own home with a package of security measures and the high demand for resettlement and outreach support services. It also recommends research into the issues of coercion by abuse into forced marriage and the needs of young single women fleeing abuse from family members. This strategy supports the continued multi agency approach to identifying and addressing issues of domestic abuse across the Borough.

Much has been achieved to encourage service user involvement in the shaping of homelessness services, following the development of the Service User Consultation and Involvement Strategy in July 05. Service users have had a range of opportunities to get involved including speak out events and consultation on service changes, strategic reviews and users experience of homelessness. We aim to continue to develop creative approaches to consulting need to reach groups and encourage participation in regional groups to share good practice. Around 30 homelessness service users responded to a survey on the key objectives of the Homelessness Strategy 2006-2010.

A key aim of the Homelessness Strategy is to ensure that homelessness services are accessible by all members of the different communities within Oldham and develop further services that are culturally sensitive and meet the needs of diverse groups. The needs of gypsies and travellers are addressed in the Housing Act 2004 and this is reflected in Oldham's multi agency approach to improving the range of services and promotes understanding of the culture and needs of these communities.

The strategy further highlights the need for further research into the issues of homelessness amongst young people of BME origin and further analysis of the changing housing and support needs of a number of vulnerable groups including those with a history of offending, those with substance misuse dependency and young people including those leaving local authority care, teenage parents and 16 and 17 year olds.

Young people

We know that young people are experiencing difficulties accessing good quality accommodation. These problems have been addressed in the Young People's Housing Needs Strategy (www.oldham.gov.uk) and through the change in approach to Housing Choice in Oldham.

In addition:

- There will need to be further work to develop support for these young people with complex support needs who, although they may be relatively small in numbers, demand intensive support. In autumn 2005 West Pennine Housing Association completed 8 self-contained flats for young people with high support needs, developed in partnership with Oldham's Social Services and with support services delivered by the De Paul Trust.
- Threshold Housing Project manages a supported housing project for teenage parents. Oldham's pioneering multi agency work in this field contributes to the range of services that seek to prevent teenage pregnancy and support teenage parents. The needs of teenage parents are monitored on a multi agency basis via the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics for 2004 were reported in February 06. The statistics for Oldham represent a recent slight increase in the number of conceptions for under 18s, but an overall 8.8% reduction from 1998 - 2004.

- FCHO will continue to facilitate supported lodgings for young people, where they live with a family in the borough who support them in developing the skills and confidence they need to live independently. This scheme is part of a range of services designed to meet the needs of young people leaving local authority care.
- We have developed a pre – tenancy training scheme for young people setting up home for the first time and others who need guidance in establishing and sustaining a tenancy. This will be piloted in the summer of 2006.
- We are running a further mediation service for young people who are threatened with homelessness during 2006/7, building on the evaluation of our pilot mediation service in 2005.

Independence for older people

Oldham is currently reviewing the housing and support services available for older people in the Borough together with analysis on current and future needs for support and housing services. This work will inform the Older People's Housing Strategy which is due to be completed in 2007.

Under the Private Finance Initiative contract 1453 units of high quality sheltered housing will be produced as schemes are re-modelled or rebuilt to provide up to date facilities and services, these plans include provision of 317 extra care bedspaces across 8 different locations in the Borough. FCHO are currently reviewing the long term viability of the sheltered housing stock which remains under their management together with joint work with Social Services to look at the future development of the 'Helpline' Community Alarm Service (CAS), which they manage on behalf of the Council. There are plans to find alternative uses for less popular older people's housing and provide more flexible housing support services to other schemes. Some properties will find housing management and support services combined in a new style service which should be better able to respond to future needs.

The Older People's Housing Strategy also considers the future accommodation and support needs of people choosing to live in either in Housing Association housing, together with the needs of those in privately rented or owner occupied housing. The PFI contract has presented opportunities to improve the provision of owner-occupied retirement properties, with access to support facilities, for sale in the Borough. Two schemes are planned in the Saddleworth area, where new build units for sale will be linked to new or improved rented sheltered homes. A sub group of the Older People's Housing Strategy is specifically looking into the needs of older people of BME origin.

Learning disabilities

The Learning Disabilities Service Housing Strategy established a need for appropriate self - contained accommodation for service users with learning disabilities. New supported housing is being built on the site of a former Social Services hostel, which was demolished when it no longer met care standards. Service users with learning disabilities and their families have been consulted about the new development, which includes;

- Two blocks of 6 self contained flats, including ground floor flats adapted for physically disabled people,

- A bungalow providing supported living, and
- A respite care facility.

West Pennine HA are acting as Project Manager for this development which includes funding from Housing Association Grant and the Health Authority.

Two further projects are planned which include provision of both self contained and shared housing for people with learning disabilities of differing ages in Chadderton and Failsworth.

Further properties are being developed by SELHAL to meet the need for less institutionalised homes for service users with learning disabilities. Proposals include the latest SMART technology to assist in promoting and maintaining dignity and independence.

Effective delivery of property adaptations

Oldham will continue to focus on improving the delivery of adaptations work for people with impaired mobility or other problems, to help them become or remain independent in their own home. During 2004-2005, £877,000 was spent providing adaptations to 337 council properties, while a further £754,000 was invested in 125 non - council properties, through Disabled Facilities Grants. Typical works included;

- Fitting of grab handles at entrances, stairs or in bathrooms
- Provision of level access showers
- Installation of stair lifts or through floor lifts
- Building of extensions to provide downstairs bedroom or sanitary facilities

An Adaptations Review has been carried out in partnership with the Primary Care Trust and voluntary sector partners. Social Services, Regeneration and Chief Executive's Departments. One of the key aims of this was to identify adapted properties in the borough and build a register so that better use can be made of previously adapted homes, particularly council and housing association properties, to encourage a better match between person and property, shortening waiting times for adaptations or rehousing. New procedures will be developed to improve communication so the process from assessment to delivery is made more effective and transparent.

Delivering affordable warmth

A warm home is vital to everyone, but in particular to many of the most vulnerable groups. To address this an Affordable Warmth Strategy was launched in 2004. One of the main priorities is dealing with fuel poverty and increasing the amount of disposable income that people have. Through access to Warm Front and other types of grants, and Decent Homes work, we are confident that significant impacts will be made for the people of the borough. For more details of this strategy see Section 4 – Investment to Provide Excellent Housing and visit www.oldham.gov.uk/affordable-warmth-strategy-web.pdf

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Asylum seekers are currently housed in a range of NASS properties, both provided by private landlords and FCHO. In May 06, 136 were temporarily accommodated in FCHO housing, and 208 were temporarily accommodated in housing by private sector providers. This picture will be changing as previous dispersal contracts are replaced by the new contracts. Since July 04, FCHO have supported many households, who are new to the country, as part of their specialist support and resettlement service. FCHO are currently seeking to expand this service through a bid for funding for an Emerging Communities Co-ordinator who will encourage involvement and promote self help amongst emerging communities.

There is currently no specialist housing provision for refugees who have been given leave to remain, other than short-term support for people housed by FCHO. An Asylum Seeker and Refugee Strategy was finalised in November 05 which provides more detailed information of the current and future needs of these new communities within Oldham.

Gypsies and Travellers

Gypsies and Travellers are acknowledged as one of the most excluded communities in society, suffering restricted access to many vital services. There is currently no council provision for the travelling community within Oldham. The Housing Act 2004 and the new Planning Circular requires all Local Authorities to carry out a needs assessment, identify sites, provide provisions and develop a strategy.

We are developing a strategy for Gypsies and Travellers during 2006. We have already had dialogue with the Gypsy Council and hope to develop further partnership working. Oldham is also key member of the Greater Manchester Gypsies and Travellers Group and will work with others to carry out an accommodations needs assessment.

Equality Impact Assessment

Following the Equality impact assessments undertaken of both the 2003/5 and 2006/10 Homelessness Strategies there is a clear understanding of the impact of these strategies on vulnerable households. Some of the key findings of those assessments include the need to work towards the following:

- Develop new temporary accommodation provision and adapt existing where appropriate to positively address the needs of homeless people with disabilities or complex or multiple needs;
- Develop additional provision of accommodation and support for people experiencing domestic violence, particularly for those for whom current refuge provision is not suitable/available, including people in same sex relationships, male victims and young single women;
- To continue to support and develop a wide range of resettlement and outreach services, including those provided by Oldham Family Crisis and the Sanctuary scheme co-ordinated by the Community Safety Unit

- Through the Supporting People Programme, ensure that there is a diversity and choice of housing and floating support to meet the needs of hard to reach groups
- Maximise the benefits of the PFI Sheltered Housing Scheme to provide good access for disabled people to ensure “homes for life”

Chapter 4 Investment to provide excellent retained housing and improved neighbourhoods –

Key Objectives:-

- Bring all council homes to Decent Homes Standard by 2007 and 70% of vulnerable households in the private sector by 2010
- Raise standards in the private sector
- Assist RSL sector to provide more affordable homes
- Better management of assets
- Intervening to support the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Programme
- Use Private Finance Initiative schemes to improve existing housing and build quality affordable homes
- Achieve the investment targets within our LAA
- Promote environmental sustainability and improve energy efficiency across all tenures



OUR PRIORTIES TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES

- We will continue to implement our decent homes programme for the council stock and develop our standards in the private sector
- In implementing our Private Sector Renewal Strategy, we will seek to introduce policy to raise standards
- We will work with all housing providers to ensure that effective processes are in place to ensure investment is targeted at the priorities identified by this strategy
- We will review our asset management plan
- We will deliver the outcomes and outputs that have been set by the HMR Pathfinder for the early and future intervention areas;
- We will deliver on the PFI2 scheme for sheltered housing and ensure our PFI4 outline business case is successful
- We will align / pool our resources through the LAA to achieve maximum benefit
- We will continue to invest in energy efficiency measures for council housing and work with our partners to deliver affordable warmth for the private sector

Decent Homes Standard

The government set a ten - year target to address the backlog of repairs within the public sector, as part of its overall housing strategy. The aim, through the Decent Homes programme is to bring all social sector properties up to decency standards by 2010 and 70% of properties with vulnerable households within the private sector.

The main monitored elements of the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) are that a property should:

- Meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing;
- Be in a reasonable state of repair;
- Have reasonably modern facilities and services (not be lacking three or more components);
- Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

First Choice Homes Oldham

FCHO play a major role in the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives and in meeting its statutory obligations. A Performance Management Framework is in place to help manage the relationship between the Council and FCHO, as well as Service Level Agreements that set out; what is to be delivered, how this is done, and the cost of these services. FCHO has made considerable progress as over 75% of properties have now been made decent.

As of April 2006, we invested over £30 Million, which meant that 6,673 homes had been made Decent. This included items such as new kitchens, bathrooms, central heating, structural works and others. We hope to invest a similar amount in 2006/07.

Registered Social Landlords (RSL's)

All RSL's working together through OHIP will ensure that they provide decent homes by 2010. A majority of their properties currently meet these standards However there is much work to do in some areas particularly on formerly Council owned transfer estates such as Villages Housing Association in Fitton Hill.

Private Sector

In 2004 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM – now renamed DCLG Department for Communities and Local Government) published targets for improvements to DHS in this sector. This aims to deliver these standards to 70% of vulnerable households in the sector by 2010. This is a great opportunity for Oldham when viewed in parallel with HMR investment and the Council's mainstream programme detailed in the Private Sector Renewal Policy. We will use the outcome of the boroughwide stock condition survey to develop our investment strategy.

Improving the Private Rented Sector

A healthy PRS is crucial to a thriving housing market in Oldham and can play a vital role in helping us to meet housing needs. The government's mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and selective private rented sector licensing in low demand areas are welcome. We consider it essential that PRS licensing should include property condition as well as management.

The Council is keen to use the new enforcement powers to regulate the PRS where poor management of private rented homes has negatively impacted on the surrounding

environment and community. We will continue to work with private landlords who operate within Oldham to improve the maintenance and management of their properties, using the processes outlined below, to develop a higher quality private rented sector in the borough.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

The council is currently considering the adoption of an HMO registration scheme to deal with 129 eligible properties borough wide where a property has two or more occupants in an HMO.

These properties consist of mainly bed sitting accommodation, usually provided in smaller two bedroom terraced properties, that are predominately used by NASS agencies to supply accommodation for asylum seekers or to childless households in private rented accommodation. 27 are classed as '3 - storey HMO's' deemed to be 'high risk' from of fire and therefore are required to be Mandatory Licensed by the authority.

Housing Corporation Investment

We have been working with our OHIP partners, developers and will continue to do so in developing the strategy to deliver our HC investment to increase the number of affordable homes. Around £XX will be invested in 2006-07. Please see early chapter on housing quality and choice.

Better Asset Management

We firmly believe the role of property in the drive to improve services underlines the need for excellence in asset management. Successful asset management will embrace a corporate and strategic approach and its benefits will include:

- the enhanced satisfaction of service users from improved service performance;
- improved health, safety, accessibility and environmental performance;
- an optimal return on the investment portfolio through the efficient stewardship of assets;
- the ability to demonstrate best value for money within a constrained funding regime;
- improved risk management, corporate governance and corporate image;

The Council is responsible for a number of both Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing General Fund assets such as approximately 14,000 homes, 89 Shops on Council Housing Estates, many garages, tenants halls and numerous of pieces of land.

Our Housing Asset Management Plan mirrors the key objectives of this Housing Strategy and reflects the objectives laid out in the Oldham MBC Corporate Plan. It also considers objectives contained within the North West Regional Housing Strategy and the Oldham Community Strategy, and takes account of other factors such as Housing Market Renewal and the Local Housing Partnership. Central to our objectives is value for money and effective use of resources.

We established a Housing Property Review group in June 2004 that feeds property issues into the Corporate Asset Management Group. The HPRG provides a forum for formulating

and guiding strategic direction in respect of Housing's non-operational asset management Issues.

We were the first service to implement an Asset Management Service Level Agreement, which clarifies the responsibility of our partners in delivering the housing asset management plans. Currently we are revising our policy and processes in dealing with issues such as appropriations and land enquiries from the public. We hope to have this completed by end of June this year and will be sharing this with staff of FCHO, other colleagues of the Council and Elected Members. Currently we are commissioning a shops stock condition survey, which will help us identify the level of investment needed for them to continue to deliver essential services to our communities.

The future of Council Housing following the expiry of the ALMO contract

Our agreement with FCHO to manage and improve the Council's housing stock comes to an end in March 2007. Since the setting up of the ALMO significant improvements have been made in the management, maintenance and improvement of the housing stock. We are committed to ensuring that these improvements are sustained. With this in mind we are already looking ahead to the future and, on the back of the document produced by the National Federation of ALMO's – The Future of Council Housing - and others and the awaited consultation document from the ODPM have agreed to extend this agreement for another three years. A project Team has been established to review the current Management Agreement and to consider freedoms and flexibilities.

Housing Market Renewal Funding

Building on the success of achieving our targets for the first two years of HMR strategy delivery, we will be closely working with the HMR Core Team to deliver our £67.5 million funding between 2006-08 across Oldham and Rochdale, with over half being spent in Oldham. From the HMA findings, we will be concentrating on our earlier intervention areas of Derker and Werneth but also Inner Oldham, which is a major area of physical change immediately to the south and east of the town centre where superb new neighbourhoods will be created.

Private Finance Initiative 2

The quality of our sheltered schemes remains an issue and significant expenditure is required to ensure that quality is improved. We have now successfully procured a Sheltered Housing Improvement Project, which is being funded through a Private Finance Initiative worth £130 Million. The project comprises of 1,616 sheltered and warden supported properties which will reduce to around 1450 after works. We are working with our preferred partner in Housing 21 to carry out extensive improvements over the next five years.

Private Finance Initiative 4

The council has submitted an Expression of Interest for Round 4 PFI Resources, which will take in estates at Primrose Bank, Clarkwell and Crossley. We intend this investment to support and sustain the strong multi ethnic communities living in these neighbourhoods by providing more suitable, attractive accommodation within these popular locations.

This Expression of Interest is yet another example of our diverse approach to meeting investment needs, delivering Decent Homes and improving the quality of life for our residents. A key part of the PFI proposals is the link to HMR and the best use of resources. If the bid is successful we are envisaging around £130 million of investment. We are currently developing the Outline Business Case (OBC) for this scheme to be presented to DCLG in October 2006.

Bringing empty homes back into use

The current estimate for properties of all tenures, which have been vacant for more than 6 months (Council Tax December 2004), is 2468, which represents around 2.5% of the total housing stock. Many of these vacant properties are flats or terraced properties. The revised Empty Homes Strategy, which follows Empty Homes Agency guidelines, was re-launched in 2001.

This uses council tax records to monitor empty homes and signal where intervention is needed. The number of private sector empty homes brought back into use is a Best Value National Performance Indicator (BVPI 64). These targets were not met during 2004/5, partially due to HMR activity. However we have now gained approval to purchase further empty properties for demolition or refurbishment.

At the end of December 2004, 2978 properties were vacant in the Oldham HMR area, a vacancy rate of 7%, while the borough average is just under 5% - although this was affected by initial HMR activities as numbers have grown since the beginning of the year. The new management orders will provide access to further housing stock to help meet homelessness need and access to affordable housing for families affected by housing clearance schemes in HMR action areas.

We have been congratulated by the Empty Homes Agency on our approach and performance on empty homes. We consider bringing empty homes back into use as a key priority, exemplified by its inclusion in our Local Area Agreement.

In April 2005 around 3.6% of council properties were empty; either awaiting letting, improvement or demolition, an improvement from 4.6% in April 2004. Several initiatives have been developed by FCHO in the last few years to improve performance and this has been very successful – the number of management voids has dropped by nearly two - thirds over the year – so that now the ratio of empty homes to stock levels is three times higher in the private sector than in council homes.

We have:

- Developed an initial standard assessment procedure to aid the prioritisation of action against properties empty for more than 6 months and assesses the best course of action to bring the property back into use.
- Established relationships with Council Tax, Valuers and the Land Registry to use a range of new electronic methods for locating owners and reporting empty properties via the website.

Several voluntary measures are available to bring private sector empty properties back into use. This includes contacting owners via members of the community and local action groups, establishing ownership and writing to the owners to establish their intended use of the property in the future. We will work with property owners, including 'buy to let' investors, to ensure houses are seen as homes (or potential homes) not just as property assets.

We also proactively target and promote our role to developers, RSL's and other housing providers to secure the re-occupation of vacant properties through voluntary methods rather than using our enforcement powers.

The council will continue to use other enforcement powers where necessary to bring empty properties back in to use such as compulsory acquisition under Part II of the 1985 Housing Act and the potential use of an enforced sales procedure, which is currently under development, to provide a further means of dealing with problematic empty dwellings.

Local Area Agreement

Our Local Housing Partnership will utilise the LAA to continue to drive a strategic, targeted and evidenced based approach to resource deployment and service improvement.

Funding streams to be aligned or pooled within the Housing block include First Choice Homes Second Round ALMO Funding, Fitton Hill Transfer of housing stock to Villages Housing Association, Hollins/ Limeside Transfer of Housing Stock to Portico Housing Association, Homelessness (ODPM) Grant, Housing Corporation funding, Housing Market Renewal (Funding shared with Rochdale), Warm Front Funding, Disabled Facilities Grant, Energy Efficiency Commitment, Housing Revenue Account (Major Repairs Allowance), Round 4 PFI Project, Sheltered PFI Project and Private Sector Housing Programme.

These include some substantial amounts of funding e.g.:

- Fitton Hill Housing Stock Transfer £25 million (04-09);
- Hollins / Limeside Transfer £13 million (03-07);

Levels of funding for the Housing block amount to over £210 million for 2006/07 and over £120 million for 2007 to 2009. We are seeking to align most of these funding streams and locally pool the private sector housing programme and warm front funding. (Please see full Housing Block information in the Appendix 4)

FCHO sustainability appraisal to improve quality and choice

The Council and FCHO continue to appraise stock options for sustainability and a special FCHO Board meeting was held in January 2005 to discuss this. Recommendations included:

- Developing further options for the remaining non – PFI sheltered properties, including focused de-designation of sheltered stock to general needs or other special needs use, or limited demolition.
- Further investigation of options to redevelop the site of low rise flats on Sholver, which have been traditionally hard to let, high turnover properties with multiple management problems. This could include a mixture of refurbishment, re-designation of use with improved management and support, or demolition to be replaced in partnership with a private developer.
- Consideration of the sustainability of several other estates and dispersed acquired properties.
- All these options will be further discussed, with key input from the Council, residents and where relevant, Tenant Management Organisations.

Further investment is being implemented in Holts Estate to deliver neighbourhood renewal initiatives.

Tackling Fuel Poverty

Vulnerable people are also prone to suffer from fuel poverty. Our Affordable Warmth Strategy has vision of eradicating fuel poverty amongst vulnerable households by 2010. Good progress has been made through our multi-agency steering group that has been meeting since December 2006. In 2005-06 over 2,000 households received £1.5Million worth of Warm Front Grants. Further details of this strategy are available in the full document.

Ensuring homes across the borough are “Warm, safe and dry” has been a long - term theme of Oldham’s Housing Strategy while “Providing a reasonable degree of thermal comfort” is one of the key aims of the DHS. The introduction of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) includes “cold, damp and mould growth” indicators and will allow us to target action where this could impact on the health of occupants.

Oldham has many older properties, which often have solid walls, poor insulation standards and low Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) ratings. SAP ratings in some private sector properties are particularly low. These properties are home to some of the most deprived people in the borough and this has led to fuel poverty. Fuel poverty has multiple detrimental affects on the people living in these properties, leading to ill health, premature death, and educational disadvantage and reduced quality of life.

The Energy Efficiency Commitment 2005 – 2008 requires energy suppliers to fund energy efficiency measures for vulnerable households to deliver fuel cost savings. We will continue to work with Scottish Power to meet this aim, in partnership with the North Manchester Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (NMEEAC), using Oldham’s AWARM

referral mechanism to ensure improvements are targeted at households suffering from fuel poverty.

Central to the HMR 'Design Code' currently being developed for the HMR Project Update is the provision of energy efficient 'eco – homes' in all tenures across the pathfinder. We will ensure that 90% of all new homes built under HMR will meet 'excellent' eco – homes ratings while the remaining 10% will be 'very good', exceeding government targets and lifting the benchmark for good design standards.

FCHO improving energy efficiency

FCHO work with Switch 2 Energy Solutions (group heating contracts) and partners Emcor – Drake and Scull and Apollo Heating to deliver heating maintenance and improvement works in council homes. We aim to deliver improved service to supply reliable quality heating to our tenants and to deal with problems efficiently. While working with Emcor – Drake and Scull, the quality and customer satisfaction with the annual servicing and reactive maintenance service improved and we intend to build on this with our new partner Apollo Heating with aims of 98% reactive jobs delivered on time and 90% customer satisfaction with heating repairs by 2005/6.

FCHO has targeted heating and insulation improvements on the council homes with some of the lowest SAP ratings to eradicate fuel poverty. By April 2005 FCHO properties had a SAP rating of 68.06, an improvement from 56.53 in 2003/4. This places FCHO properties in the top quarter of English local authorities for energy efficiency. We aim for a SAP rating of 71 by 2007/8.

Investment in new software has enabled FCHO to monitor the use of energy by district and group heating schemes as part of the Energy Strategy. This allows FCHO to take measures to improve insulation and reduce energy usage – FCHO aim to make efficiency savings of 10 - 15% by upgrading these properties.

FCHO have also developed a new scheme called 'Voids Solution', where tenants are referred for fuel supply by Scottish Power, if requested when they sign the agreement for their new home. This helps to avoid confusion for tenants and gives them access to lower tariffs offered by Scottish Power.

- This scheme was piloted in Oldham West from June 2004 and the roll out to the whole borough will be completed in July 2005. By April 2005 182 tenants had been nominated and 85 had signed up with Scottish Power.
- All FCHO properties used by Asylum Seekers have also been signed up to this scheme, and meters have been improved to allow better monitoring of energy costs by this vulnerable group.
- The nomination scheme has also been extended to existing FCHO customers and has been promoted in the tenant's newsletter and at local housing offices.

The nomination scheme has brought over £4,000 in additional income to FCHO, which will be invested in further energy saving opportunities.

Energy efficiency in the private sector

Oldham council has improved energy efficiency in private sector housing by:

- Developing HMO registration and landlord inspection schemes, and supporting landlord and private tenant forums where energy advice can be targeted.
- Through the Affordable Warmth Strategy, we ensured that our residents receive information about Warm Front Grants and advice via the NMEEAC.

Capital Strategy

Our Capital Strategy sets out the overarching framework against which future capital plans of the Council should be drawn. It puts the strategy into the context of the Golden Thread and Oldham Business Planning Process. The main theme of the strategy is that all expenditure decisions should be assessed against ability to deliver the Council's Vision, Themes and Priorities which are set out in Departmental Service Improvement Plans. Further information on the Capital Strategy is available at www.oldham.gov.uk

The table below provides details of the actual investment programme for 2004/05 –06 and estimated programmes for 2006/09. The priorities for investment in housing are:-

- Meeting targets for decent homes in our Council stock and private sector
- Supporting the delivery of our Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder strategy
- Area based intervention
- Maintaining the delivery of Disabled Adaptations
- Carrying out environmental improvements

The exact allocations for the estimated years depend on the outcome of the Single Capital Pot allocations made by Government Offices North West and DCLG. The scheme update for the Oldham & Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder has recently been approved for £67.5m funding over 2006-08 for both Boroughs which will include an estimated £17m invested in Werneth /Freehold and £16m in Derker.

Further resources may be available following the review of the future of the ALMO and the outcome of the Government's consultation on the options for future financing of housing. Services delivered by the Housing Strategy are revenue funded through the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

| | <u>2004/05</u> | <u>2005/06</u> | <u>2006/07</u> | <u>2007/08</u> | <u>2008/09</u> |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | <u>£000's</u> <u>Actual</u> | <u>£000's</u> <u>Actual</u> | <u>£000's</u> <u>Projected</u> | <u>£000's</u> <u>Projected</u> | <u>£000's</u> <u>Projected</u> |
| <u>RESOURCES</u> | | | | | |
| <u>HRA (Public Sector)</u> | | | | | |
| ALMO SCA's | 17,755 | 25,200 | 25,200 | | |
| Major Repairs Reserve | 12,007 | 5,825 | 8,253 | 7,033 | 6,765 |
| HMR Fund | 696 | 424 | 112 | | |
| Housing Improvement Programme | 1,000 | 1,769 | 1,767 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| RCCO | 443 | 841 | 1,413 | | |
| Homelessness Directive | 10 | | | | |
| Owner Occupier | 10 | | | | |
| NRF | | 68 | | | |
| SRB | | 15 | 300 | | |
| Prudential Borrowing | | 837 | | | |
| Council Resources | | 24 | 85 | | |
| Total (HRA) | 31,921 | 35,003 | 37,130 | 8,033 | 7,765 |
| <u>Hsg Strategy (Private Sector)</u> | | | | | |
| SCE | 3,067 | 0 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 3,000 |
| SCG (DFG) | 418 | 418 | 418 | 418 | 418 |
| Housing Market Renewal | 6,300 | 15,030 | 11,542 | 10,323 | 0 |
| NDC | 34 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other income | 9 | 975 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Capital Receipts / Corporate Capital Pot | 1,210 | 2925 | 278 | 278 | 248 |
| Total (Hsg Strategy) | 11,038 | 19,389 | 15,238 | 14,019 | 3,696 |
| Grand Total Resources | 42,959 | 54,392 | 52,368 | 22,052 | 11461 |
| <u>EXPENDITURE – Public Sector</u> | | | | | |
| Decent Standard | 25,733 | 29,362 | 30,966 | 7,083 | 6,815 |
| General Schemes | | 1,494 | 1,798 | 350 | 350 |
| Environmental Improvements | 3,098 | 2,832 | 3,654 | | |
| DPA | 942 | 890 | 600 | 600 | 600 |
| Capitalised Salaries | | | | | |
| Other misc. works | 1,227 | | | | |
| HMRF | 921 | 425 | 112 | | |
| Total | 31,921 | 35,003 | 37,130 | 8,033 | 7,765 |
| <u>EXPENDITURE – Private Sector</u> | | | | | |
| <u>Non HMRF / NDC Lead Schemes</u> | | | | | |
| DFG's | 936 | 858 | 696 | 700 | 700 |
| Renovation Grants | 58 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Clearance | 154 | 486 | 151 | 0 | 0 |
| Group Repair | 2,855 | 2,496 | 2,357 | 2,996 | 2,996 |
| Other Misc. | 299 | 487 | 492 | | |
| HMR/NDC Lead Schemes | | | | | |
| HMRF | 6,702 | 15,021 | 11,542 | 10,323 | 0 |
| NDC | 34 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 11,038 | 19,389 | 15,238 | 14,019 | 3,696 |

Chapter 5 Community Cohesion and delivering sustainable communities

Key Objectives:

- Create sustainable mix communities
- Work with communities to minimise negative effects on Community Cohesion associated with Housing Market Renewal programme and maximise benefits.
- Ensure that accessible advice, support and appropriate information for the needs of diverse communities are provided.
- Ensure the needs of a diverse range of groups are addressed through research
- All sections of the community are able to be involved in decision making through mechanisms that are appropriate to them.



OUR PRIORTIES TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES

- We will work with our partners to implement the recommendations of the Cohesion review.
- We will support the delivery of HMR community cohesion and FCHO equality targets to ensure the impacts of regeneration initiatives are minimised for local people and local communities.
- We will deliver the market restructuring necessary to ensure that new housing is complemented by improved local facilities and services and by developing people's skills and knowledge.
- We will work with all our partners to tackle all hate crime and other antisocial behaviour and improve support for vulnerable households, so that everyone can feel confident in their neighbourhood.
- We will work with all our partners to improve consultation and involvement opportunities, and related capacity building, for all community members
- We will complete Equality Impact Assessments on all significant Strategies.

Community Cohesion

The whole of this strategy is founded on these principles of community cohesion and sustainable communities. However, this chapter will detail further measures to support and deliver community cohesion in order to meet the diverse needs of Oldham's citizens and help to build integrated and mixed communities. We acknowledge the recent review of the Community cohesion in Oldham, "Challenging Local Communities to Change Oldham" by the Institute of Community Cohesion and will identify solutions with partners in tackling some of the issues raised. This housing strategy chimes with the conclusions

and recommendations of the Cohesion Review and will be integral to delivery on the challenges set.

Oldham has made significant progress over the last few years in addressing the social and economic challenges facing our borough. This has been further complimented by Professor Ted Cantle's review which highlighted that **“few cities, towns or districts in other parts of the country have done as much as Oldham in seeking to build community cohesion. In short Oldham has every right to be proud of its record to date.”**

Though race equality and race relations are of central importance, community cohesion in Oldham is about much more than ethnicity, religion or culture, and involves inclusion strategies for other groups.

- For instance, there is also friction in some communities between the younger and older residents, whose values and needs do not always correspond, and where little work has been done to develop shared understanding.
- Similarly disabled people, people with other support needs and people with chaotic lifestyles can find themselves excluded from many aspects of community life due to a lack of access, understanding and prejudice.
- Other minority groups, such as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or trans people (LGBT), including those from BME backgrounds, can find themselves discriminated against for multiple reasons with very little support, help or advice available and limited legal protection. Recent research found that two thirds of LGBT people had experienced homophobic abuse.

The Oldham Housing Strategy will play its part in delivering the Community Strategy by ensuring that building community cohesion and sustainable communities is a key priority. Further, it will ensure to meet the Councils objective of regenerating the Borough in a way that achieves greater Community Cohesion.

The housing strategy will ensure that the housing needs of all communities are addressed and on the creation of healthy housing markets. We aim to increase residential integration by encouraging tolerance and understanding of diversity and challenging prejudice wherever it is found. This will be achieved by:

- Identifying ways to build capacity in communities
- Recognising and valuing the diverse communities within Oldham and building on civic pride
- Empowering communities by involving them in regeneration and service improvement
- Undertaking Equality Impact Assessments, using the corporate model, on all major strategies developed by us or our partners, to ensure the affects of policies on diverse groups are identified, and if necessary addressed

Working to increase residential integration

The main aim of the HMR pathfinder is to restructure housing markets, including promoting the development of more sustainable mixed communities. As such HMR is a

key mechanism for tackling ethnic residential segregation and encouraging community cohesion in Oldham, particularly in the private sector neighbourhoods.

With the notable exception of AKSA HA (where well over half the tenants are from BME backgrounds), there has historically been an under-representation of BME households across the social rented sector. A number of measures to address this have been developed by local housing organisations. These have focused on better marketing (e.g. providing more information on rehousing options available in different areas) and providing support to those who decide to move into a 'non-traditional' area.

Although BME tenants of FCHO aspire to move to other areas if there were homes of the right size and quality, tenants were worried about facing harassment, not being accepted or not feeling safe in the area and being away from cultural facilities. It is hoped that our new Choice Based Lettings scheme will facilitate BME applicants to move to a wider range of areas across Oldham. The tenancy support staff will have a major role to play in ensuring BME customers fully understand this scheme and use it effectively.

The Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder has placed an emphasis on a '**Neighbourhood Solutions**' approach to tackling the antisocial and criminal behaviour that so often blights the potential of communities and local housing markets, by improving the appearance of neighbourhoods and addressing the fear of crime.

Significant work is already underway in first wave areas to improve the community environment. As well as delivering improvement work such as reclaiming abandoned open space for community use, providing sports facilities or traffic calming schemes, HMR is involving members of the community - through community groups and volunteering - to actively manage and maintain the environment.

FCHO are working to develop ethnically mixed resident's groups in areas where there are diverse communities living side by side. They hope to build links and better understanding between communities through joint activities and working together for the needs of their neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods where a Tenants' and Residents' group is being developed include; Vale Drive, Featherstall Road and Howard Street in West Oldham and Clarkwell and Glodwick. FCHO aim to develop more T&R groups during 2005/6.

The DAWN arts project covers Derker and Freehold. It uses community arts initiatives to foster community involvement as part of the HMR process. The project also works with the HMR design team as another way of engaging local residents, giving them a voice and developing their skills. The project was set up with HMR funding and is now hoping to draw in external funding in order to expand its activities.

Limehurst Village Trust works closely with Surestart and other agencies to holistically regenerate the local area by providing skills training, advice and job opportunities for local people. The FCHO Capital Programme Partnership has also recruited 30 young people through its training and employment initiative, to work in various construction trades on schemes across the borough. This has led to work and/or training for 22 people from the Oldham borough, including 4 of BME heritage, giving local people access to improved job opportunities within a booming industry that is suffering from skills shortages both locally and nationwide.

HMR delivering sustainable communities

HMR activity, designed to reverse decline and reinvigorate local housing markets, is underway in the first wave neighbourhoods of Derker and Werneth / Freehold. The proposed physical regeneration framework will be closely linked with initiatives to help to build sustainable communities.

The Strategic Framework for other HMR intervention areas was published in March 2005. Achieving community cohesion and sustainable communities was a key strategic objective of the document and these needs have been identified for each area.

The HMR scheme update will set several key measures for monitoring the development of community cohesion in the pathfinder areas. These include;

- Over 80% of residents in the Pathfinder area to feel satisfied that theirs is an area where people of different backgrounds can live happily together.
- New developments will usually be occupied by people from a range of income and ethnic groups
- Surveys indicate that less than 10% of people are constrained in their choice of housing by fear of harassment

Lessons learnt from the primary intervention areas are being applied to the other neighbourhoods. In particular it was found that residents and stakeholders were not meaningfully involved at an early enough stage in the scheme. This left some residents feeling excluded and lacking in trust with the council. HMR will ensure all stakeholders are consulted for the second wave to build community ownership of the proposals.

- During the development of the Physical Regeneration Framework (PRF) there was consultation with a range of stakeholder partners. The PRF will set out the key priorities for both the communities' and authority's regeneration proposals and Housing Strategy priorities.
- The second phase of the PRF development used the strategic 'blueprint of key areas' to encourage further discussion by the community on the proposed priorities and areas of opportunity, rather than presenting detailed plans. This will enable the community to become more involved in the development of plans for their area and as the process moves on gain a better understanding of the issues and problems. This involvement will help residents to further influence the development of more detailed plans, right down to local street level.

We will use this as a basis for further consultation with all parts of the affected communities. The PRF and other consultation informed the development of the HMR. HMR has established a Communication and Engagement Group to develop standards to ensure consistency and good practice in all HMR consultation.

FCHO BME Strategy

There have been significant improvements in BME satisfaction with FCHO services since the initial survey in 2003. The Status Survey undertaken in 2005 found that BME tenants were more likely to be satisfied with their neighbourhood, and with opportunities for participation in management and decision making, than non - BME tenants - an improvement from the previous study. However BME tenants were less likely to be satisfied with their actual home and we are continuing to take action to address this.

Effectively tackling Hate Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

At the end of 2004 OMBC, in partnership with the CSU, FCHO and most OHIP members, published the new Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Policy and Procedures to meet the requirements of the ASB Act 2003.

- These new documents, also available as a summary leaflet, will improve access to information and advice about ASB problems and the monitoring of ASB cases and their outcomes.
- This policy underlines the joint approach of The Council, FCHO and other OHIP members, and the Greater Manchester Police to tackle antisocial behaviour and other crime in Oldham as part of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).

FCHO has also reviewed its approach to and procedures for dealing with hate crime and racial harassment, with Tenancy Support Officers or Community Safety Officers providing support and assistance to victims. This review has improved the partnership working of the agencies involved to prevent criminal or ASB by supporting vulnerable households who may become involved in antisocial activities, as well as effectively dealing with ASB that occurs using all the support and legal options available. Central to this is improved communication and intelligence sharing between partnership agencies and with residents.

OHIP partners and other agencies are also involved in the Community Cohesion for Real initiative. The project organises an annual seminar and joint training, e bulletins are produced on a regular basis and cohesion champions have been identified in the partner organisations. The findings from these seminar workshops have helped to develop the improved partnership approach to ASB.

Respect Agenda

We acknowledge the Governments Respect action plan. We are working through Oldham Partnership and partners in OHIP, to integrate this agenda into our work. As part of this, we will develop projects designed to educate communities about the impact of the Respect Agenda.

Involving Communities

Oldham Council has acknowledged that consulting with; listening to and working with all communities is the key to achieving sustainable communities and community cohesion. We have used a range of techniques to give a wide selection of stakeholders the opportunity to put forward their views.

We have organised focus groups with key agency stakeholders, liaised with the Community Empowerment Network, the Housing and Neighbourhoods Panel, the Citizens Panel and staff / service users from a wide range of departments and organisations. This process has helped us to involve residents, the voluntary, statutory, community, and faith sectors. Similarly, the FCHO Community Partners Forum reaches out to over 100 organisations and provides a consultation forum for its strategies and policies.

Community engagement is a key objective of HMR and is essential if a sustainable community is to be developed. We will continue to consult with or involve a wide range of stakeholders in the development and monitoring of strategies to tackle community cohesion issues. Much of the research currently being undertaken in the borough will further inform our understanding of and guide our approach to community cohesion and sustainability issues. For instance, current Housing Market Assessment recommendations have highlighted the need for further investigation into how perception and aspiration have affected local housing markets.

Research has shown that residents greatly value effective communication from public bodies. We will ensure that this document is available on the OMBC website www.oldham.gov.uk, hard copies will be available in full and summary form from council offices and other agencies, and translations or other accessible formats will be provided on request.

Improved data collection and analysis

The First Choice Homes Oldham BME Strategy and Action Plan drives the collection of BME housing statistics on a quarterly basis into the Performance Management Framework. This is complemented by similar information provided by OHIP member RSLs and lets us monitor performance to BME residents.

The new HMR socio-economic and opinion survey has been commissioned specifically to provide more representative feedback from South Asian households, to better inform the scheme update. Later research currently being planned will investigate the key drivers for the movement of BME communities into other 'non traditional' areas.

Many other research projects will be or are being undertaken to inform future service development or monitoring as part of, for example, The Supported Accommodation Strategy, The Homelessness Strategy, The Young People's Housing Needs Strategy and The Supporting People Strategy. These will expand our understanding of the needs and aspirations of these vulnerable groups, as well as encouraging people to get involved with the services they use.

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)

We will ensure that all our sub-strategies such as homelessness and young persons have all been assessed through the councils EIA methods.

Chapter 6 Delivering the Strategy

Oldham MBC recognise that the Housing Strategy needs to be ambitious and forward looking to make a significant impact on the provision of new affordable housing, improving the quality of existing homes and to achieve social inclusion and regeneration for all our residents. However in order to turn this into a reality, the proposals must be realistic and based on sound financial planning. Please see LAA resource action plan in appendix X.

Performance Management

We already have a robust Performance Management Framework in place to monitor the activities of FCHO and this something we will mirror for this strategy. Targets are set for its performance across a range of housing activities. The performance against these targets is measured by use of Performance Indicators (PI's). Some of these PI's are set nationally (all Local Authorities are required to report on these) whilst others are set voluntarily by the Council.

Housing Strategy Performance Management Framework

Monitoring will be carried out on a regular basis and will include:

Annually

Report annually to the Cabinet.

Half Yearly

OMBC will be required to report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee bi-annually using the Housing Strategy Action Plan as a means to assess progress and performance. It will also be reported at the Local Housing Partnership.

Quarterly

Housing Strategy Development Team will monitor the performance.

Monthly

Issues of concern will be raised at the monthly meeting of the Housing Strategy Team.

Other

The Housing Strategy is not only a responsibility of the Council through the agreed framework; it has direct accountability to its tenants, residents, other customers and their representatives for the quality of service it delivers. The Housing Strategy will be reviewed with all key stakeholders, through various ways, one of which will be an Annual Housing Strategy Conference. See Appendix 2 for diagram.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Housing Strategy Action Plan (see separate document)

APPENDIX 2

Performance Management Process

Who and Frequency

**Executive Management Group
Cabinet (Annual Review / ad-hoc)**

- Annual
- Approve Housing Strategy
- Review Performance against Action Plan
- Contribution to corporate priorities
- Set objectives for Housing Strategy

What and How

An action plan will be agreed if performance falls below the agreed standard.

**Overview & Scrutiny Panel
(6 Monthly)**

- Action Plan will be the basis to measure performance
- Reviews performance and monitors Action Plan
- Add value and enrich the process
- Identify broader issues that can be included in Action Plan
- Keep overview and scrutinise role of OMBC and its effectiveness in fulfilling a strategic housing and enabling role

**Performance Round table
(Quarterly)**

- Monitor HS Action Plan
- Develop plans to address issues
- Manage Performance
- Identify solutions and resource implications for Fit for Purpose

Housing Strategy Development Team

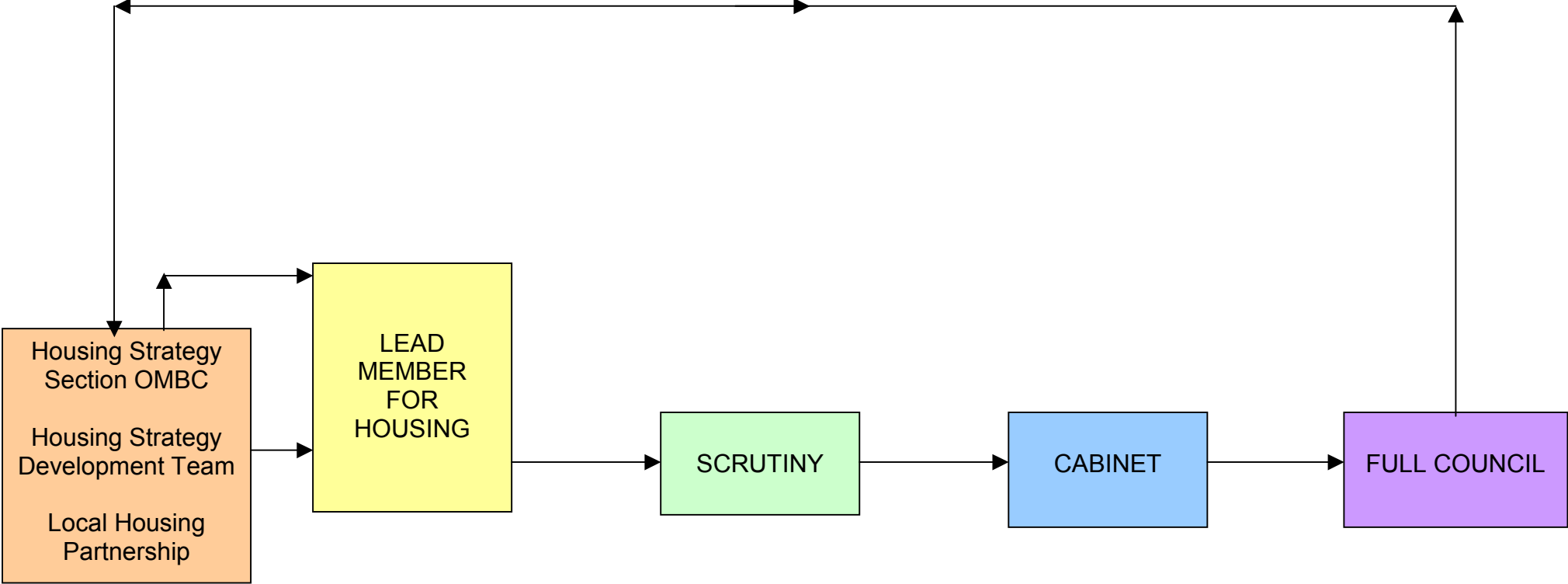
- Identify and link into National / Regional / sub regional issues that have a bearing on outcomes and performance
Monitor Action Plans and plan Improvement from Action Plans

Housing Strategy Management Team (monthly)

Management Information
Business Objectives and business plans
Comparative information
Internal management arrangement with teams

An action plan will be agreed if performance falls below the agreed standard.

Housing Strategy Monitoring



APPENDIX 3

Reference List

- The future population and number of households in Oldham and Rochdale Boroughs interim report – population, household and social change (CCSR University of Manchester April 2005)
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004
- Housing Market Assessment (GVA Grimley) March 2005
- Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity – Five Year Plan (ODPM) January 2005
- Forward Together Strategy Oldham MBC
- Shelter Study ‘Crowded House’ 2004
- Oldham’s Community Strategy – Planning for sustainable communities 2005-2020
- Housing Market Renewal Household MORI Survey 2003
- Housing Investment Programme 2005
- Leaseholders Survey (KWEST Research) March 2005
- Oldham Housing Market Demand and Needs Study (Fordham Research) July 2004
- Oldham MBC Anti-social Behaviour Policy and Procedures Dec 2004
- Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Guidance ODPM 2005/06
- HECA Progress Report 2004/05
- Oldham Homelessness Strategy 2004-2006-07-26
- Affordable Warmth for All, A strategy for Oldham 2004-2010
- Young People’s Housing Strategy 2005-210
- Boroughwide Stock Condition Survey 2005
- Review of Community Cohesion in Oldham – Final Report, Institute of Community Cohesion 2006
- “Increasing life opportunities for all” Oldham Local Area Agreement 2006-2009
- Housing Departmental Asset Management Plan 2005

APPENDIX 4**2002 - 2005****Three Year performance for First Choice Homes Oldham**


| | | | |
|---|--------|---------|---------|
| a) All Council Tenants | 31% | 53.2% | 53.2% |
| b) BME Council Tenants | 35.25% | 50% | 61% |
| c) Non-BME Council Tenants | 30.01% | 54% | 52% |
| BVPI 183: The average length of stay in the following accommodation of households including dependent children or a pregnant woman for whom the local authority duty has come to an end | | | |
| a) Bed and Breakfast | 0 | 0.3 wks | 0.47 wk |
| b) Hostel | 0 | 0 | 4.97 wk |
| BVPI 184: The Decent Homes Standard Reported as: | | | |
| The proportion of local authority owned homes, which were non-decent at 1st April | 57.23% | 56.8% | 48.2% |
| The percentage change in the above between 1st April 2003 and 31st March | 0.2% | 12.19% | 22.63% |

| | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | 2004/05 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| BVPI 63: Energy Efficiency (SAP reating) | 55.23 | 56.53 | 68.06 |
| Former BVPI 72: % of urgent repairs completed on time | 70% | 77% | 96% |
| Former BVPI 73: Average time to complete non urgent repairs | 66 days | 17 days | 15.5 days |
| BVPI 185: % of repairs appointments made | 6% | 11% | 65.2% |
| LPIREP3a: Overall satisfaction with repairs service | 89% | 90% | 91% |
| Former BVPI 68: Average void relet times | 74 days | 65 days | 49.9 days |
| LPIALL3a: empty management voids | 2.9% (510) | 2.4% (396) | 0.9% (139) |
| BVPI 66a: Rent Collection | 96.7% | 97.95% | 98.01% |
| BVPI 74: Satisfaction of Council Tenants with the overall service provided by their landlord. Reported as follows: | | | |
| a) All Council Tenants | 57.9% | 68.3% | 75% |
| b) BME Council Tenants | 57.29% | 50% | 71% |
| c) Non BME Council Tenants | 58.14% | 69% | 76% |
| BVPI 75: Satisfaction of Council Tenants with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing service provided by their landlord. Reported as follows: | | | |

Performance Compared to other ALMOs

| Indicator | Description | Quartile Placing Actual 05/06 | Quartile Placing 1 st Qtr 06/07 |
|-----------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| BVPI 63 | Energy Efficiency – SAP | Top | Top |
| BVPI 66a | Rent Collected | Second | Second |
| BVPI 74a | Tenant Satisfaction with Service – Overall | Second | Second |
| BVPI 74b | Tenant Satisfaction with Service – BME | Third | Third |
| BVPI 74c | Tenant Satisfaction with Service –Non BME | Second | Second |
| BVPI 75a | Tenant Satisfaction – Participation - Overall | Third | Third |
| BVPI 184a | % Of stock that is Non Decent | Top | Top |
| BVPI 184b | % Change in decency | Top | Top |
| Former BVPI 72 | % Of urgent repairs completed within target | Second | Second |
| Former BVPI 73 | Avg time to complete non urgent repairs | Second | Second |
| Former BVPI 185 | Repairs Appointments kept as a % of all appointable jobs | Second | Second |

* Quartile placings are calculated using 2004/05 year end comparison information unless specified

Key  Indicator is upper quartile, or climbing

APPENDIX 5

OLDHAM LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS 2006 –09 HOUSING BLOCK

| BLOCK: HOUSING | | CHANGE THEORY: Meeting the needs in all neighbourhoods/ communities to provide affordable and decent homes and give support to those who need it | | | |
|---|--|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| OUTCOMES | | | | | |
| <p>A. To bring all properties up to a decency standard by 2010</p> <p>B. To improve services and prevent Homelessness</p> <p>C. To empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services</p> | | | | | |
| OUTCOMES | INDICATORS (* indicates stretch target) | PERFORMANCE BASELINE | TARGETS | | |
| | | | 2006/7 | 2007/8 | 2008/9 |
| <p>A – TO BRING ALL PROPERTIES UP TO A DECENCY STANDARD BY 2010</p> <p>All social housing is made decent and that at least 70% of properties in the private sector where there are vulnerable households are made decent by 2010</p> | <p>The total number of private sector properties in the borough which were non-decent at the beginning of the year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of these private sector homes that are occupied by vulnerable households | <p>35,252¹</p> <p>60%¹</p> | <p>-</p> <p>55%</p> | <p>-</p> <p>45%</p> | <p>-</p> <p>35%</p> |

¹ Source: Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Stock Condition, 2005. Percentage figures for the baseline and targets have been derived from the total number of private sector properties that were non-decent.

| OUTCOMES | INDICATORS (* indicates stretch target) | PERFORMANCE BASELINE | TARGETS | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | 2006/7 | 2007/8 | 2008/9 |
| | Meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of Local Authority homes which were non – decent at the beginning of the year | 48.2% ² | 19.5% ³ | 13% ³ | 0 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of RSL properties which were non – decent at the beginning of the year | 15.85% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy efficiency – the average Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of local authority owned dwellings | 68.06% ⁴ | 71% ⁵ | 72% ⁶ | 73% ⁶ |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSL dwelling's SAP rating | 71.35 | Data monitoring from April 2006 | Data monitoring from April 2006 | Data monitoring from April 2006 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector Housing SAP rating | 59.11 ⁵ | 62% | 65% | 66% | |

² 2004 / 2005 current performance

³ Taken from Oldham Corporate Plan 2005 – 08

⁴ 2004/05 current performance

⁵ Average Public Sector Housing Standard Assessment Procedure Rating, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Stock Condition, 2005

⁶ Taken from Oldham Corporate Plan 2005 – 08

| OUTCOMES | INDICATORS (* indicates stretch target) | PERFORMANCE BASELINE | TARGETS | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| | | | 2006/7 | 2007/8 | 2008/9 |
| | Bringing empty homes into use The number of private sector dwellings that are returned into occupation | 6 ⁷ | 20 | 25 | 25 |
| B - TO IMPROVE SERVICES AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS | Level of homelessness. * Reduce levels of homelessness acceptances | 880 | 830 (800) | 780 (700) | 700 (550) |
| | | <i>Stretch Target: 4)</i> | <i>Reduce the total number of homelessness acceptances from 2,310 to 2,050 (a reduction of 260 acceptances over the three years of the LAA)</i> | | |
| | Increase numbers of cases where Housing Advice prevents homelessness | 79 ⁸ | 370 | 450 | 490 |
| | Reduce numbers of households placed in B&B | 165 (2004/05) | 90 | 60 | 50 |
| | Reduce the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010 | 39 (2004/05) | 30 | 25 | 22 |
| | Increase the overall provision and effectiveness of Local Authority services to help those who have experienced Domestic Violence and prevent further DV. | 7/11 ⁹ | 9/11 | 10/11 | 11/11 |

⁷ Figure up to 2nd quarter 2006/06

⁸ Figure for 1st quarter 2005/6

⁹ BVPI 225 (Actions Against Domestic Violence) outlines 11 key milestones that Local Authorities need to achieve

| FUNDING STREAMS | AMOUNT | | | |
|---|--------|--|--|--|
| | 2005/6 | 2006/7 | 2007/8 | 2008/9 |
| ALIGNED | - | | | |
| Disabled Facilities Grant | - | £418,000 | £418,000 | £418,000 |
| First Choice Homes 2 nd round ALMO funding | - | £25,200,000 | - | - |
| Fitton Hill transfer of Housing Stock to Villages Housing Association | - | £25,000,000 (2004 – 09) | - | - |
| Hollins / Limeside transfer of Housing Stock to Portico Housing Association | - | £13,000,000 (2003 – 07) | - | - |
| Homelessness (ODPM) grant | - | £50,000 | £50,000 | - |
| Housing Corporation Approval Development Programme | - | £5,000,000 | £5,000,000 | - |
| Housing Market Renewal (Funding shared with Rochdale) | - | £67,500,000 (2006 – 08) | - | - |
| Housing Revenue Account – Major Repairs Allowance | - | £7,200,000 | £7,000,000 | £6,800,000 |
| Round 4 PFI Project | - | - | - | £100,000,000 ¹² |
| Sheltered PFI Project | - | £132,000,000 ¹² | - | - |
| Supporting People Funding | - | £7,900,000 | £7,900,000 | £7,900,000 |
| Energy Efficiency Commitment | - | Dependent on Grant support received per year | Dependent on Grant support received per year | Dependent on Grant support received per year |
| Total | - | £283,268,000 | £20,368,000 | £115,118,000 |
| POOLED | | | | |
| Warm Front funding | - | Awaiting Funding | Awaiting Funding | Awaiting Funding |
| Private Sector Housing Programme | - | £2,000,000 | £2,000,000 | - |
| Total | - | £2,000,000 | £2,000,000 | - |

¹² Over 30 years. Most of the investment will occur in the first 5 years of the project.

LOCAL EFFICIENCIES PROPOSED

Prevention of homelessness will lead to a more efficient service for customers and reduce the burden on other services. This will result in direct savings.

FREEDOM & FLEXIBILITIES SOUGHT

Currently under negotiation

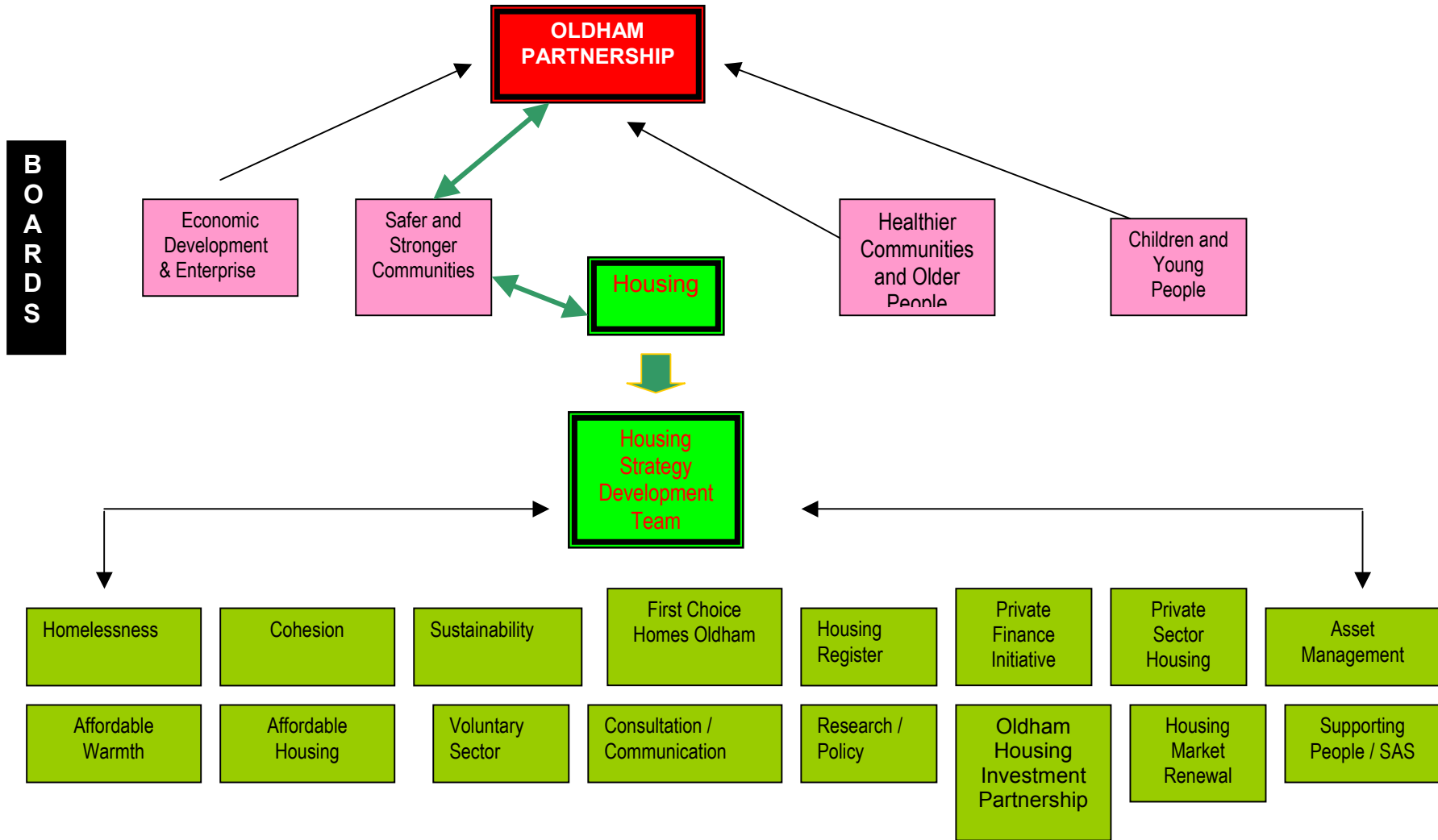
- The flexibility to invest HMR funding in ways which are most effective in strengthening the market. Not just 'bricks and mortar' investment but carrying out 'Strategic Programmes' work and the implication that the types of activity to be funded under these new programmes are eligible for funding through HMRF.

Awaiting national policy development

- The future of the ALMO post 2007, when the Management Agreement ends, may result in greater freedoms and flexibilities around the use of the HRA. The ability to use the HRA and assets to borrow against would allow monies to be used to finance improvements in the Council's stock and moreover allow us to achieve Decent Neighbourhoods. (Subject to ODPM consultation document)
- National Affordable Housing Programme. The flexibility to be offered an allocation of resources from the NAHP rather than having a bidding round through RSL's in the traditional way. These resources to be directed accordingly to best meet the council's strategic housing objectives. The advantage of this is that we would not be 'scheme bound' and that we could link things more closely with the HMR programme, maximise the benefits from preferred developers consortia, and most importantly, strengthen the housing market more effectively.

APPENDIX 6

DIAGRAM TO SHOW LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP LINKAGES WITH HOUSING STRATEGY



APPENDIX 7

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

| Term Used | What it means |
|----------------|--|
| BME | Black and Minority Ethnic |
| DCLG | Department of Communities and Local Government |
| DHS | Decent Homes Standard – The decency standard is assessed through 4 main categories which are; current statutory minimum standard for housing, reasonable state of repair, reasonably modern facilities & services and reasonable degree of thermal comfort. |
| GONW | Government Office North West |
| HMA | Housing Market Assessment – this is a survey which assesses the housing needs and aspirations within Oldham and analyse other markets. |
| HMO | Houses in multiple occupation |
| HMR | Housing Market Renewal |
| LSP | Local Strategic Partnership |
| RHB | Regional Housing Board |
| RHS | Regional Housing Strategy |
| SAP | Standard Assessment Procedure |
| S106 Agreement | This agreement is used by the local authority when planning applications are submitted to build residential or commercial property on brownfield or Greenfield land. The agreement allows local authorities to negotiate with the developer on how many affordable houses can be built if residential, or to help the authority build something else, such as for e.g. a new bus station |
| SOA | Super Output Area – this is a geographical area that fits within a Ward. The government has used this level of monitoring data in the Index of Deprivation 2004. |
| | |

APPENDIX 8

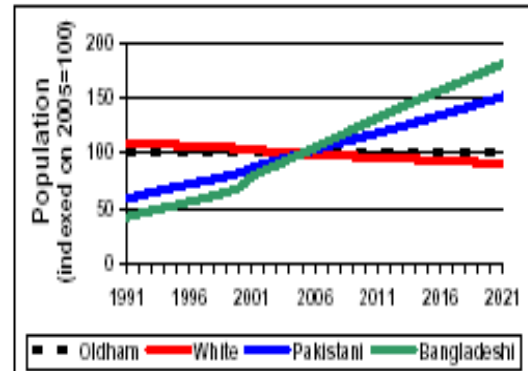
Population change in the Oldham Borough

Population change in Oldham Borough Estimated and forecast 1991-2021

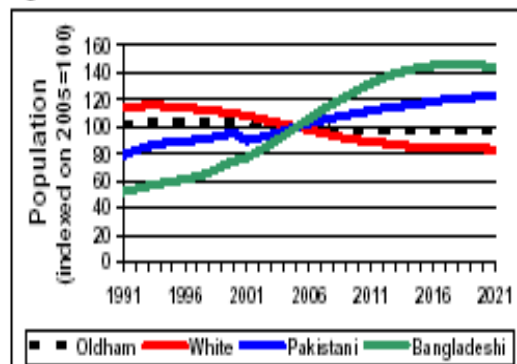
The charts show the total of all ethnic groups in Oldham Borough, and the White, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups. In each case the charts show the trend over time relative to the population in 2005.

A discontinuity at 2001 reflects the use of the 2001 Census. Estimates for the late 1990s are not as precise as those for 2001.

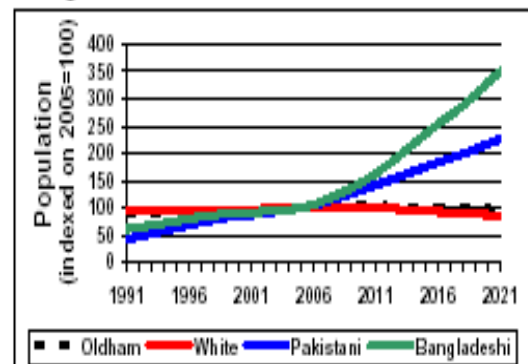
Total all ages



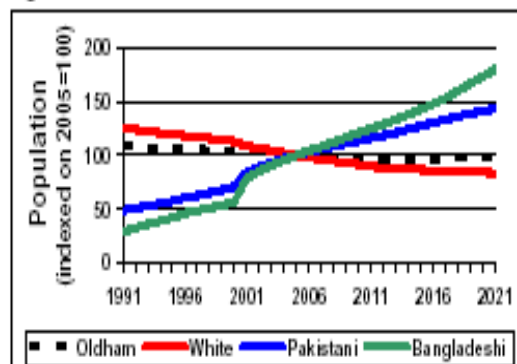
Age 0-15



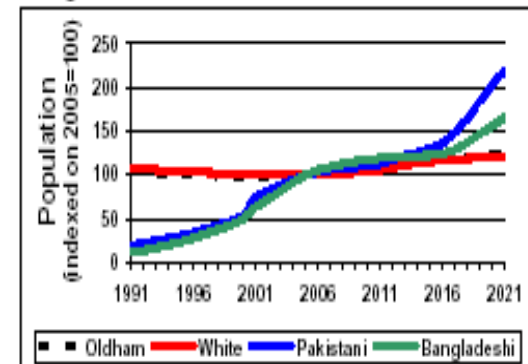
Age 40-64



Age 16-39



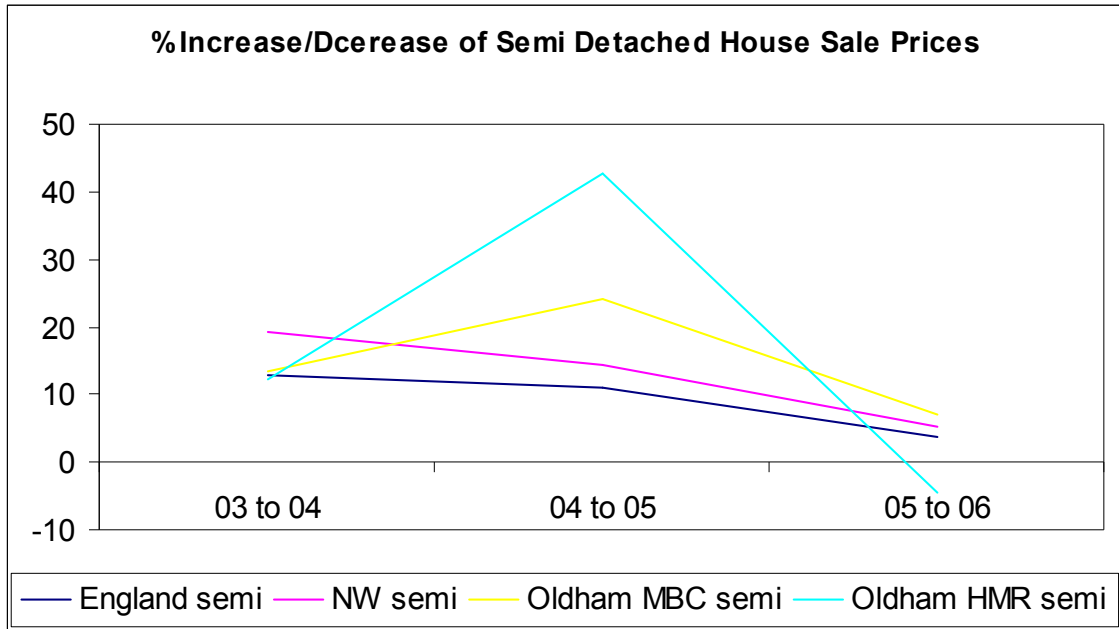
Age 65+



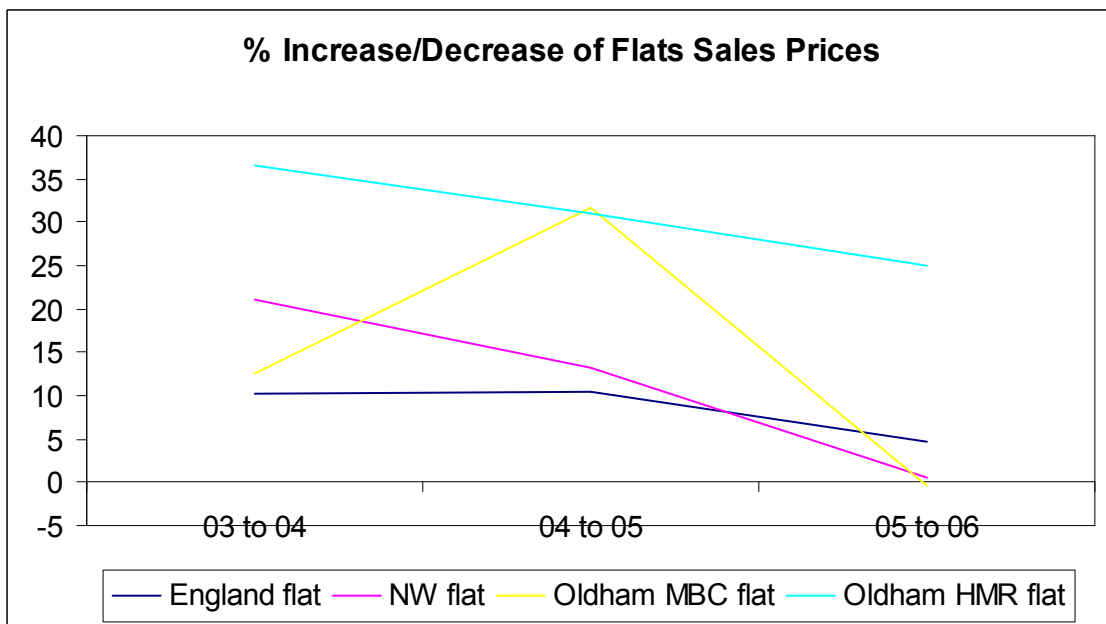
APPENDIX 9

Housing Markets

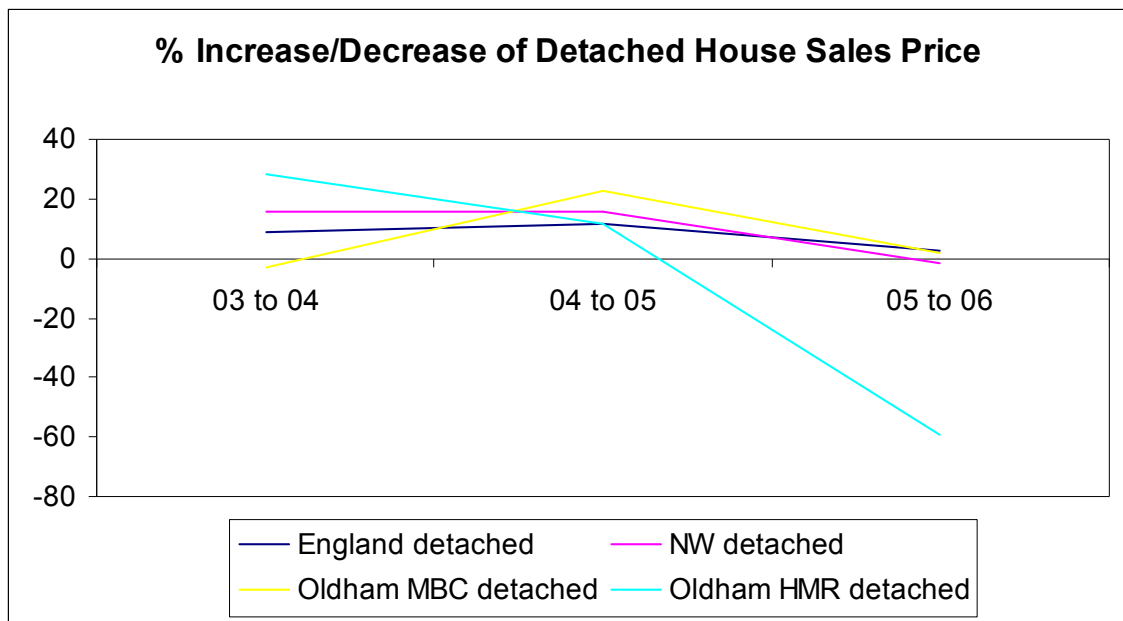
Graph 1



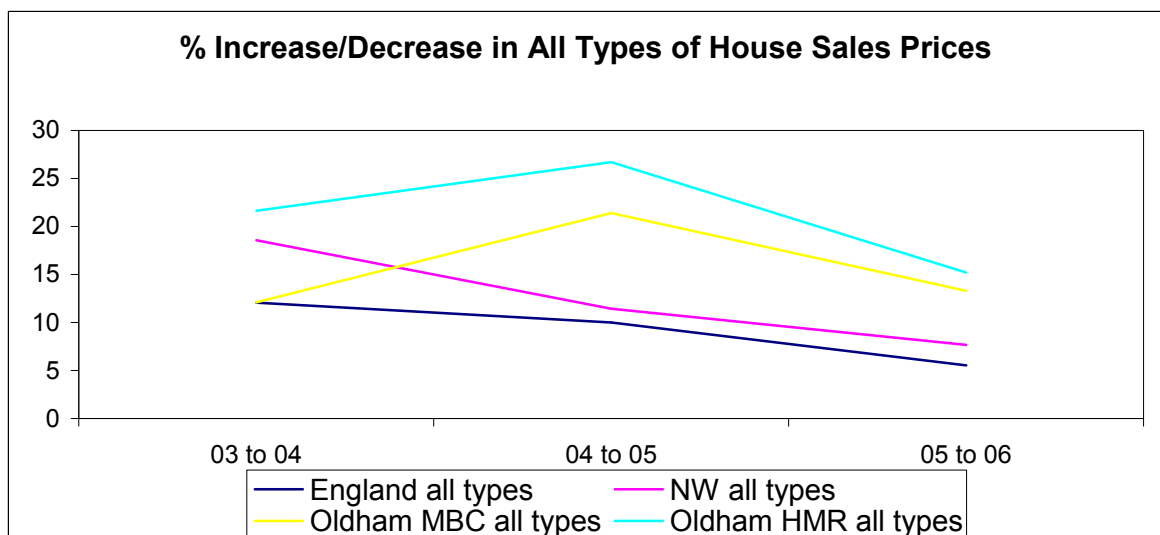
Graph 2



Graph 3



Graph 4



The following is a full breakdown of percentage increase and decreases of all housing types in all areas

Tb 1

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| England | % -/+ | % -/+ | % -/+ |
| | 03 to 04 | 04 to 05 | 05 to 06 |
| England all types | 12 | 10 | 6 |
| England detached | 9 | 11 | 2 |
| England flat | 10 | 10 | 5 |
| England semi | 13 | 11 | 4 |
| England terrace | 14 | 11 | 8 |
| | | | |
| North West | % -/+ | % -/+ | % -/+ |
| | 03 to 04 | 04 to 05 | 05 to 06 |
| NW all types | 19 | 11 | 8 |
| NW detached | 16 | 16 | -1 |
| NW flat | 21 | 13 | 1 |
| NW semi | 19 | 15 | 5 |
| NW terrace | 21 | 15 | 13 |
| | | | |
| Oldham MBC | % -/+ | % -/+ | % -/+ |
| | 03 to 04 | 04 to 05 | 05 to 06 |
| Oldham MBC all types | 12 | 21 | 13 |
| Oldham MBC detached | -3 | 23 | 2 |
| Oldham MBC flat | 12 | 32 | 0 |
| Oldham MBC semi | 14 | 24 | 7 |
| Oldham MBC terrace | 20 | 22 | 18 |
| | | | |
| Oldham HMR | % -/+ | % -/+ | % -/+ |
| | 03 to 04 | 04 to 05 | 05 to 06 |
| Oldham HMR all types | 22 | 27 | 15 |
| Oldham HMR detached | 28 | 11 | -59 |
| Oldham HMR flat | 37 | 31 | 25 |
| Oldham HMR semi | 12 | 43 | -5 |
| Oldham HMR terrace | 22 | 24 | 21 |

APPENDIX 10

Housing Needs Survey Summary

Fordham Research has produced this report as an update to the 1999 housing needs survey conducted on behalf of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. The main purpose of the update was to revise estimates of the need for affordable housing as new information has become available. The main changes made were:

1. A rebasing of base figures to take account of information from the 2001 Census and also H.I.P. data
2. To take account of changes in the housing market (i.e. changes in prices/rents)
3. To take account of changes in the supply of affordable housing
4. To take account of methodological changes that have been made by *Fordham Research* since publication of the original report

In addition, the opportunity was taken to look in detail at certain aspects of analysis which have become more prominent in recent housing needs surveys, this includes:

1. A more detailed look at the potential role of 'intermediate' housing to meet housing needs (intermediate housing being defined as housing with a cost somewhere between social rents and the market)
2. A 'Balancing Housing Markets' exercise which looks at demands and affordability across all tenures (i.e. not just affordable housing)

Main changes

Since 1999 it is estimated that the number of households in the Borough has remained roughly constant (currently estimated to be 88,500). However, the social rented sector appears to have shrunk from 26.8% of households down to 25.0%. Notably, the private rented sector has grown slightly.

There has been significant change in the local housing market since 1999. A survey of local estate and lettings agents suggested that in the time since the original survey was carried out purchase prices have increased significantly. Private rents have however, remained at a similar level to that found in 1999.

The updating of information about household incomes suggests an increase over time of around 22%. It is estimated that the average weekly net household income (including non-housing benefits) currently stands at around £318 – there are significant differences between different tenure groups.

Basic Needs Assessment model

One of the main purposes of the update was to re-analyse the results in terms of the 'Basic Needs Assessment model' (BNAM). This model was set out by

ODPM in July 2000 as part of the document '*Local Housing Needs Assessment: A guide to good practice*' and '*all local authorities should try to follow [the model] so far as is practical*'. The 2003 update has therefore followed this model.

Overall, the results of the update suggest a modest surplus of affordable housing in the Borough. It is estimated that there is currently a surplus of 131 units of affordable housing per annum, when taking into account the proposed demolition of 520 social rented properties as part of the Housing Market Renewal programme for Derker and Werneth. This figure however masks some significant shortages by both property size and sub-area. Overall, the study suggests a shortage of larger affordable accommodation. These shortages may be exacerbated in future if the current high levels of Right-to-buy sales continue, in particular for larger properties.

Balancing housing markets

Having looked at affordable requirements through the BNAM the survey moved on to look at housing requirements across all tenures. This exercise was based on future housing aspirations and expectations (as well as affordability) and therefore differed from the BNAM (which looked mainly at past trends). As the analysis covers all types of accommodation it has generically been titled 'Balancing housing markets'.

The 'demand' based method suggested that there is an on-going demand for affordable housing in the Borough. As with the BNAM the shortfall in terms of demand is for larger accommodation. The analysis also suggested a significant shortage of owner-occupied accommodation and a surplus in the private rented sector.

Implications for affordable housing and future development

The main analysis of the need for affordable housing (using the BNAM) suggests that currently there is a surplus of affordable housing in the Borough. However, this fact masks significant shortages by sub-area and notably property size. Additionally, when looking at the demand for affordable housing it is clear that there is an on-going demand for this type of accommodation. It is therefore suggested that a target figure of 30% is used as a guide for the level of affordable housing, which should be sought, on future housing developments. This modest target, whilst not justified in terms of the BNAM overall is certainly justified in terms of particular shortages shown and also household's demands. Having a proportion of affordable housing on housing developments will also meet government aims to create 'mixed and balanced' communities.

Additionally, survey data suggests that of all additional affordable housing around 17.7% should be of tenures other than social rented.

Housing Market Renewal areas

As part of this study information about two Housing Market Renewal areas (HMRs) was considered. The two HMRs were Derker and Werneth/Freehold. Data available for the two HMR areas suggested that these areas are distinct from other parts of the Borough. Land Registry data suggests that in general property prices in the two HMRs are low and have not been rising as quickly as in the rest of Oldham. Census data also suggests that the wards in which these HMRs are tend to be more deprived and have some distinctive characteristics such as large rented sectors (both private and social), high unemployment and low car or van ownership. Households in the Werneth HMR tend to show a slightly worse situation than in Derker, including a lack of central heating and high levels of overcrowding. Finally, survey data, whilst based on small sample sizes suggests that households in the HMRs have low incomes and worse problems with regard to the state of repair of properties. There was also some evidence of demand for housing in these areas.

HMR activities have also started to underpin the house values in Derker and Werneth/Freehold because the Council, through its agents, has started to buy up properties ahead of their proposed demolition. A total of 813 privately owned properties have been targeted for potential purchase, which has arrested the downturn in house prices in those areas.

The plans for Derker and Werneth/Freehold HMR include proposals for the demolition of 1,333 properties over the next 2 to 5 years. It is intended that these properties will be replaced by a similar number of new properties providing a mix of property types, sizes and tenures but there will be a time lag between demolition and replacement. These proposals will have a major impact on the availability of socially rented accommodation because of the need to rehouse the affected households and the proposed demolition of 520 social rented properties.

Conclusions

There have been significant changes in the housing market in Oldham since *Fordham Research* first carried out a housing needs survey in 1999. The most notable is that prices appear to have increased significantly whilst private rents have remained roughly constant. Following the strict Basic Needs Assessment model suggested by ODPM it is estimated that overall there is a surplus of affordable housing in the Borough (although shortages in some sub-areas and for some property sizes).

A demand based analysis suggests that there is an on-going demand for affordable housing in the area and it is suggested that to meet the shortage of larger accommodation, the on-going demand for housing and to help create 'mixed and balanced' communities the Council should seek to secure around 30% of all new housing development as affordable housing. Around 80% of new affordable housing should be in the form of social rented housing.

APPENDIX 11

HMR Scheme Update – Summary

Our overall aim remains as stated in our first Prospectus:

To deliver a transformation in the housing markets in our area, that will create sustainable communities and promote community cohesion.

We have made excellent progress in starting to deliver this transformation. We exceeded our first year targets by acquiring 150 homes, refurbishing 82 homes and clearing 165 outdated properties. On the supply side, we have begun to tackle our housing supply problems and dysfunctional housing market. This is characterised by:

- Too many poor quality terraced houses, particularly in Oldham.
- Large single tenure estates with concentrations of voids and inappropriate house types.
- Range of existing houses of a size and type that does not fit existing requirements never mind meet future demand. On the demand side we have reviewed our population and household assumptions and we are now predicting higher potential household growth. This means that we need to build the right sort of accommodation in the right areas for our burgeoning young population. If we don't, we will lose our young talented people at an even faster rate than now.

We are different from most Housing Market Renewal areas in that we don't have large-scale abandonment and vast tracks of vacant land. This means we have to work more with existing residents (rather than owners of vacant property) in order to adapt their properties; or relocate them. We also need to work harder to assemble sites particularly in our inner areas and these will be both former residential and commercial sites.

In order to provide for choice, quality and affordability, our long-term strategy is therefore to:

- Focus our activity in those areas and corridors that address both the greatest housing dysfunction and support regeneration and economic objectives the Borough Masterplans.
- Create development opportunities by assembling sites in inner areas and on peripheral social estates in advance of major clearance.
- Build new houses to suit modern needs and accommodate household growth.
- Demolish outdated terraced stock.

Our business plan for the next two years presented in this Scheme Update builds on our commitments in our first wave neighbourhoods and continues to transform these areas whilst preparing for further assembly and development to achieve the long term strategy.

The essence of our long-term plan is that investment now in housing market renewal will create the conditions where the market will operate efficiently into the future. We think we can achieve this at relatively low risk because we have the background of an overall increase in demand. Our long-term plan will support the economic restructuring of Oldham and Rochdale. There will be move away from low value-added sectors towards higher value added and growth sectors located more appropriately for the economic challenges of the 21st Century. We will help to radically improve the connectivity to Manchester City Centre.

We will also provide high quality residential locations that will be attractive to employers.

In this way, we will contribute to the growth creation agenda set out in the Northern Way and help to transform the contribution that Oldham and Rochdale make to the regional and subregional economy.

APPENDIX 12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OMBC Decent Homes, Decent Neighbourhoods - Executive Summary & Recommendations

Strategic Overview

Introduction

Why a house stock condition survey is needed

The Housing Act 1985 (as amended) places a general statutory duty for a Council from time to time to undertake a review of the housing conditions in its local area.

Under section 605 the duty to survey housing conditions is required to help the Council make informed decisions about how it intends to address the conditions found and to develop appropriate strategy and policy responses as to how it aims to address these conditions.

Government guidance provided for in ODPM guidance - Volumes 1,2 and 3 Housing Stock Condition Surveys provides the advice to local authorities and organisations wishing to undertake a house stock condition survey in their area. Oldham Council and Michael Dyson Associates have had regard to this guidance as part of the survey.

New Housing Act Provisions

The introduction of the Housing Act 2004 (The Act) transfers to this general duty under the 1985 Act to Part I, Chapter 1, Section 3 of the 2004 Act.

Section 3(1) of the Act states:

“A local housing authority must keep the housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may not need to be taken by them under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2).

This section plays a vital role in setting the Council's strategic response to achieving outcomes and outputs at a local level through the delivery of the Housing strategy and has strong links to section 4 of the Act in achieving improvement in housing conditions and the local housing market.

The Survey

Oldham MBC, Regeneration Department along with its Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO) commissioned the survey in 2005 to undertake a random sample survey of the housing stock consisting of;

- Owner occupied
- FCHO

A full internal and external inspection of randomly sampled dwellings (2%) of Oldham's housing stock was surveyed to identify housing conditions along with a household questionnaire to determine household characteristics.

The main focus of the survey included;

- Decent Homes Standard
- Indicative Comparison against Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) of the top 5 Hazards
- Energy performance survey
- Costs to repair, replace or improve to current standards –
- Household Survey

The Survey reporting structure included data and information on the above into;

- Area Committee Levels
- Electoral Ward
- Housing Market Renewal Neighbourhoods (HMR)

The National Survey Context

The Oldham survey takes account of national research through the English House Condition Survey (EHCS) and uses reporting elements of the national survey reflected in the local survey for example; Age property banding.

The reasons for this were to;

- a) Enable the local data to be compared with national datasets
- b) To ensure that the reporting style reflected national research outputs and outcomes
- c) Assist performance management arrangements for the future

The survey design in this format assisted the council's understanding of how it fits into the national picture and what needs to be done at a local level to achieve national outputs and outcomes.

National Context

The Government has set out its strategy for Housing in its Sustainable Communities plan. These include;

- Sustainable Communities: Homes For All

- Sustainable Communities: People, Places & Prosperity
- Building for the Future

The two partner strategies; Homes for All and People, Places and Prosperity are designed to support the delivery of housing priorities and the sustainable communities agenda over the next 5 years. Through the Building for the Future – a national action plan sets out the key mechanisms to achieve the aims of both partner strategies.

The partner strategies and action plan are supported by other government supporting strategies such as;

- Better Regulation
- Localism
- Health & Social Care - *'Every Child Matters'*
- *'Everybody's Business'*

Figure 1 below shows how Oldham Council's House Stock Condition Survey meets the needs of the national, regional and sub-regional agenda.

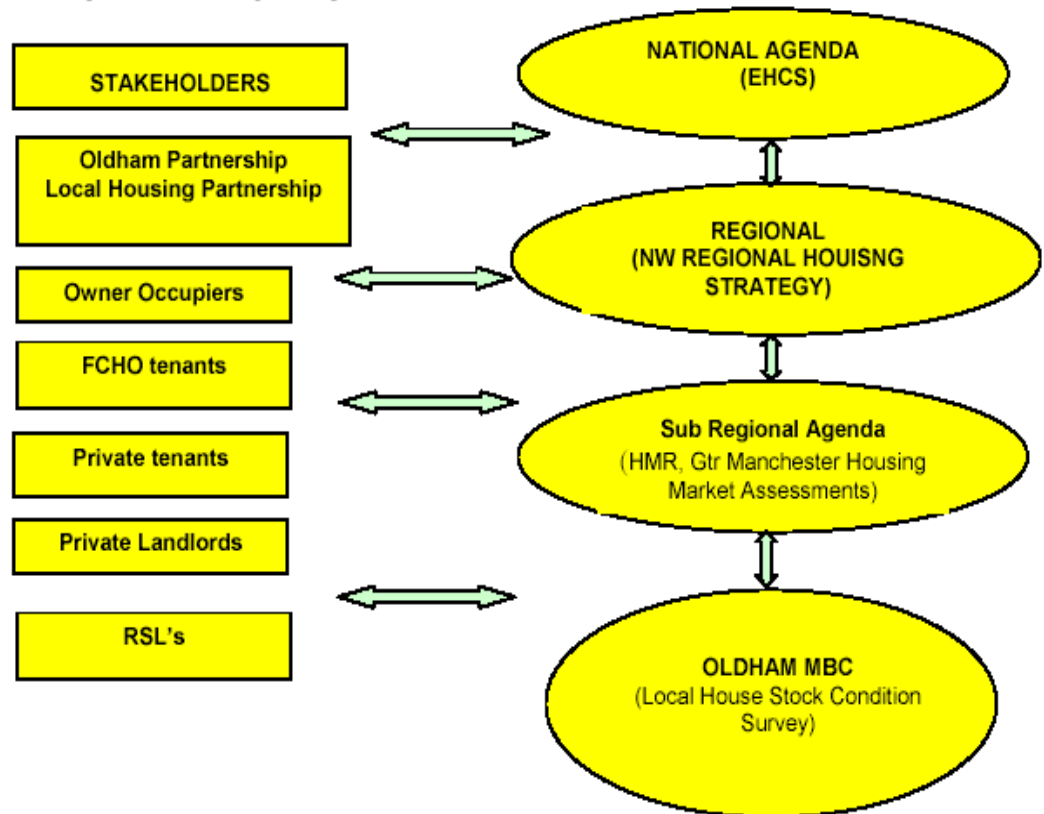


Figure 2 below shows the Local Stock Condition Survey Links to key Strategy & Policy areas.

Executive Summary & Recommendations

In this report, there are a number of key Strategic & Policy areas Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council and its partners need to consider in light of the survey results and pending Housing Act 2004 provisions;

Recommendations for Oldham MBC

- Review of the authority's Private Sector Housing Strategy & Policy to respond to the findings of this study and to align with the Housing Strategy and other supporting corporate strategies. i.e. Crime & Community Safety, Health & Social Care.
- Consider the impact on the private sector housing strategy & policy in achieving the Decent Homes Standard on vulnerable clients occupying properties in the private rented and private sector in achieving the 70% target set by Government.
- To use the information from the survey to help support the target setting included in the Local Area Agreement.
- Consider the impact of the Housing Act 2004 provisions in applying the Housing Health & Safety Rating System and the authorities intended scope in responding to those conditions found as part of the survey. i.e. Enforcement policy and Housing Strategy.
- Review future Capital investment programmes to respond to the findings of the survey and align with other investment strategies such as HMR Scheme Update, FCHO Business Plan, OHIP & other operating RSL Business Plans
- Review the Council's Affordable Warmth Strategy Action plan to include the key findings of the study in helping to achieve Fuel Poverty targets and Decent Homes Standards.
- Review the socio-economic survey results to help inform wider research and information collection and use the information to support future policy initiatives.
- Commission the project team to plan and develop the Housing Information System to performance monitor all housing activity within the Borough. Establish an annual programme of housing condition surveying to monitor progress.
- Undertake further house condition inspections in the owner occupied, private rented sectors to establish a higher percentage of stock survey in response to Government Guidance on Housing Market Assessments.
- Publicise the survey findings and the council's intended policy responses as a result.
- "Gateways to Oldham" - PFI 4 project. Consider the impact of the HHSRS on the survey project development work.

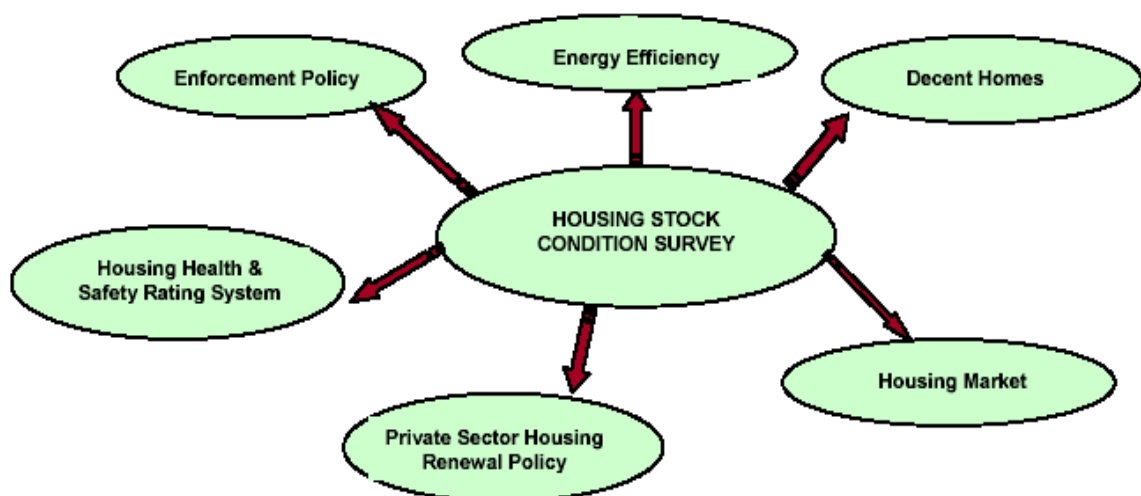
Recommendations for First Choice Homes Oldham

- Review the Business Plan in particular the Asset Management plan to ensure investment plans take account of the findings of this study.
- Review the Decent Homes Improvement programme against the failures in FCHO stock to ensure compliance with the current target for audit purposes.
- Consider the Impact of the HHSRS Category 1& 2 Hazards in FCHO stock as a result of this survey, in particular the training of and competency of staff to undertake and apply the new assessment procedure, impact on existing and pending PFI bids.
- Additional Data requirements for the following:
 - Post survey evaluation is underway with the following issues identified as requiring further action:
 - There are two dwelling archetypes that would benefit from some additional surveys,
 - A number of estates have not had any surveys carried out on them, and,
 - The Audit Commission requires FCHO to increase its sample size to a minimum of 10%, which should address the two issues above.

Recommendations for Oldham Housing Investment Partnership (OHIP) and other Registered Social Landlords

Consider the Impact of the HHSRS Category 1& 2 Hazards in FCHO stock as a result of this survey, in particular the training of and competency of staff to undertake and apply the new assessment procedure, impact on existing Business Plans.

Figure 2. Diagram to show Housing Stock Condition Survey & Links with other Strategy & Policy Areas



Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC) in conjunction with First Choice Homes (FCHO) employed Michael Dyson Associates Limited (MDA) to carry out a stock survey of the private and public sector properties in the Borough and this report summarises those findings.

This report will examine the condition of dwellings within the Borough and the key areas that require future investment; and the impact on other housing policy areas together with the facilitation of current and future management and investment in Council housing stock. This latter point is of particular importance as under the new Regulatory Reform Order Local Authorities will now be responsible for deciding what sources of funding to use and what schemes to set up in order to address private sector housing issues.

The total stock number at the time of the survey was 89,288; 75,547 of these (84.7%) were privately owned properties, 13,431 Nr (15.0%) were FCHO public sector properties, with the remainder being made up of HMO (Houses in Multiple Occupation).

The survey was carried out on 1,785 Nr dwellings within the Borough, the total private sector component being 870 Nr dwellings the FCHO being 910 Nr.

After cloning the results the level of unfitness amounted to 6,835 properties, or 7.66% of the total stock. The total number of properties failing the Decent Homes Standard was 29,911, which equates to 33.50%.

The total numbers failing the Decent Homes Standard for the private stock FCHO are 23,271 Nr and 6,640 Nr, or 30.8% and 50.2% respectively.

Within the stock the level of vulnerability derived from the Socio-economic Survey is 0.2%.

The average energy results for the stock are as follows; Sap Rating – 56.58, NHER Rating – 6.48, BEPI – 90.71, Co2 emissions 4.63 tons, running costs £414.51 and Energy Use 73.14kj.

Total Project Area

The stock is made up of the following components:

Table 1

| Tenure Type | Total Number | Properties |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Private Sector | 75,547 | 84.7% |
| FCHO | 13,431 | 15.0% |
| HMO | 310 | 0.3% |
| Void Properties | - | - |
| Total | 89,288 | 100% |

The sample survey was based upon a combination of Council Tax Bandings and HRA archetypes for the Private Stock and FCHO respectively.

The number of surveys achieved was as follows:-

It should be noted that where properties had no Council Tax Band available or insufficient information for archotyping these have been excluded from the exercise (138 Nr and 195 Nr properties respectively).

Table 2 Private Sector Properties

| Banding | Total Per Band | Surveyed Per Band | % Surveyed |
|---------|----------------|-------------------|------------|
| A | 35023 | 223 | 0.64% |
| B | 14679 | 169 | 1.15% |
| C | 14403 | 156 | 1.08% |
| D | 6052 | 79 | 1.31% |
| E | 3004 | 90 | 3.00% |
| F | 1358 | 85 | 6.26% |
| G | 823 | 59 | 7.17% |
| H | 67 | 9 | 13.43% |
| Totals | 75409 | 870 | 1.15% |

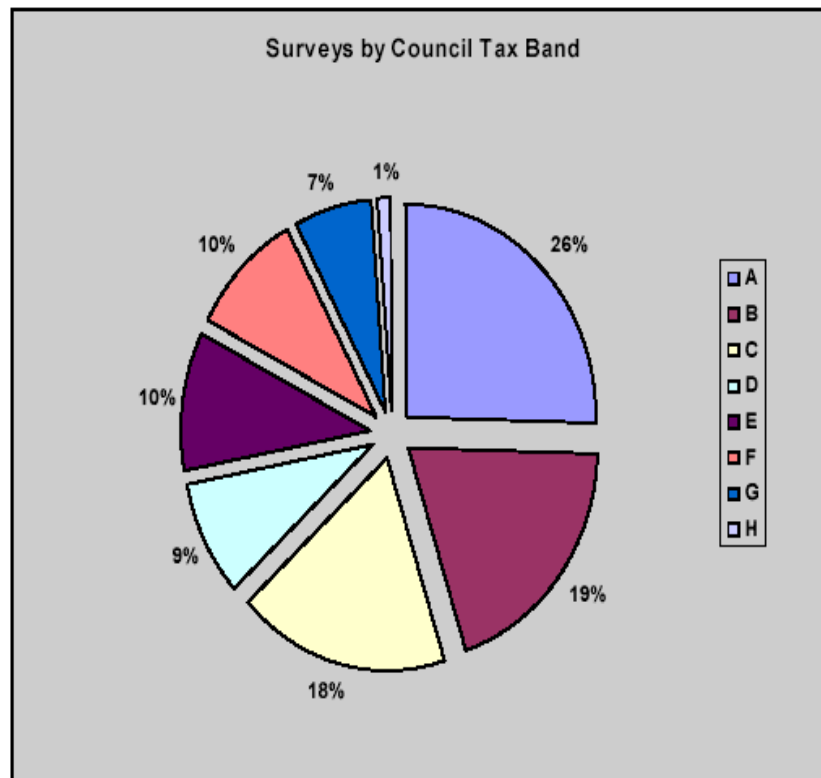
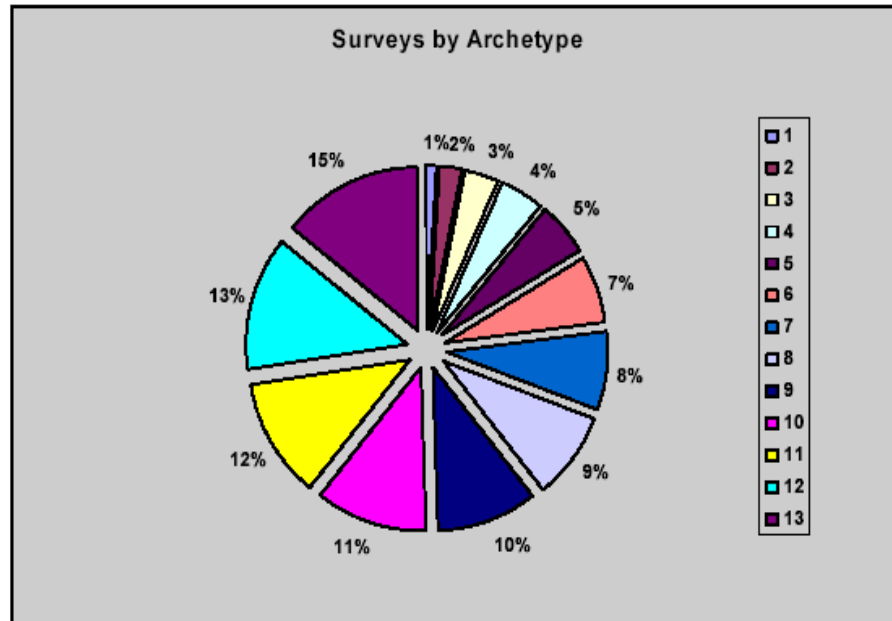


Table 3 FCHO Properties

| Archetype | Total Number Per Band | Surveyed | % Surveyed |
|-----------|-----------------------|----------|------------|
| 1 | 166 | 52 | 31.33% |
| 2 | 631 | 59 | 9.35% |
| 3 | 1264 | 82 | 6.49% |
| 4 | 8 | 5 | 62.50% |
| 5 | 1567 | 106 | 6.76% |
| 6 | 859 | 88 | 10.24% |
| 7 | 809 | 88 | 10.88% |
| 8 | 1106 | 81 | 7.32% |
| 9 | 22 | 12 | 54.55% |
| 10 | 2758 | 100 | 3.63% |
| 11 | 2936 | 72 | 2.45% |
| 12 | 678 | 88 | 12.98% |
| 13 | 432 | 77 | 17.82% |
| | 13236 | 910 | 6.88% |



The tenure profile of the stock by Borough, Ward, HMR Neighbourhood and Area are shown on the following three tables together with the results of the assessment against the Decent Homes Standard:-

Table 4: All Stock by Borough & Ward

| Ward | Nr Properties | % Properties | Number of Properties by Tenure | | | | | | Decent Home Failure | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------|---------------|-------|------------|------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | | | Private Sector | | FCHO | | HMO | | Part A | Part B | Part C | Part D | |
| Alexandra | 4,643 | 5.2% | 2,857 | 61.5% | 1,750 | 37.7% | 36 | 0.8% | 405 | 8.7% | 607 | 435 | 1,157 |
| Chadderton Central | 4,266 | 4.8% | 3,578 | 83.9% | 685 | 16.1% | 3 | 0.1% | 124 | 2.9% | 311 | 235 | 675 |
| Chadderton North | 4,697 | 5.3% | 4,198 | 89.4% | 499 | 10.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 380 | 8.1% | 568 | 395 | 492 |
| Chadderton South | 4,717 | 5.3% | 3,973 | 84.2% | 733 | 15.5% | 11 | 0.2% | 500 | 10.6% | 352 | 209 | 785 |
| Coldhurst | 4,435 | 5.0% | 2,781 | 62.7% | 1,646 | 37.1% | 8 | 0.2% | 401 | 9.0% | 452 | 189 | 1,966 |
| Crompton | 4,592 | 5.1% | 4,193 | 91.3% | 398 | 8.7% | 1 | 0.0% | 289 | 6.3% | 163 | 708 | 737 |
| Failsworth East | 4,598 | 5.1% | 4,186 | 91.0% | 390 | 8.5% | 22 | 0.5% | 671 | 14.6% | 548 | 507 | 673 |
| Failsworth West | 4,605 | 5.2% | 4,099 | 89.0% | 497 | 10.8% | 9 | 0.2% | 531 | 11.5% | 371 | 540 | 606 |
| Hollinwood | 3,332 | 3.7% | 2,944 | 88.4% | 374 | 11.2% | 14 | 0.4% | 474 | 14.2% | 392 | 239 | 786 |
| Medlock Vale | 3,943 | 4.4% | 3,535 | 89.7% | 385 | 9.8% | 23 | 0.6% | 235 | 6.0% | 337 | 214 | 708 |
| Royton North | 4,418 | 4.9% | 3,803 | 86.1% | 608 | 13.8% | 7 | 0.2% | 259 | 5.9% | 183 | 448 | 416 |
| Royton South | 4,619 | 5.2% | 4,382 | 94.9% | 232 | 5.0% | 5 | 0.1% | 682 | 14.3% | 261 | 428 | 906 |
| Saddleworth North | 4,070 | 4.6% | 3,855 | 94.7% | 209 | 5.1% | 6 | 0.1% | 237 | 5.8% | 268 | 251 | 114 |
| Saddleworth South | 4,170 | 4.7% | 3,992 | 95.7% | 175 | 4.2% | 3 | 0.1% | 85 | 2.0% | 199 | 278 | 205 |
| Saddleworth West | 4,838 | 5.4% | 4,642 | 95.9% | 192 | 4.0% | 4 | 0.1% | 311 | 6.4% | 371 | 358 | 677 |
| Shaw | 4,622 | 5.2% | 4,045 | 87.5% | 575 | 12.4% | 2 | 0.0% | 87 | 1.9% | 129 | 124 | 455 |
| St. James | 5,281 | 5.9% | 3,851 | 72.9% | 1,393 | 26.4% | 37 | 0.7% | 220 | 4.2% | 632 | 244 | 765 |
| St. Mary's | 4,296 | 4.8% | 3,289 | 76.6% | 979 | 22.8% | 28 | 0.7% | 296 | 6.9% | 411 | 362 | 979 |
| Waterhead | 5,283 | 5.9% | 4,227 | 80.0% | 1,014 | 19.2% | 42 | 0.8% | 437 | 8.3% | 655 | 225 | 1,403 |
| Werneth | 3,863 | 4.3% | 3,117 | 80.7% | 697 | 18.0% | 49 | 1.3% | 231 | 6.0% | 422 | 186 | 983 |
| Totals | 89,288 | 100.0% | 75,547 | | 13,431 | | 310 | | 6,835 | 7.7% | 7,630 | 6,571 | 15,489 |

Table 6: All Stock by Area

| Area | Nr Properties | % Properties | Number of Properties by Tenure | | | | | | Decent Homes Failures | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------|--------------|-------|------------|------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | | Private Stock | | FCHO | | HMO | | Part A | % Unfit | Part B | Part C | Part D |
| Chadderton | 13680 | 15.3% | 11749 | 85.9% | 1917 | 14.0% | 14 | 0.1% | 1004 | 7.3% | 1229 | 839 | 1932 |
| East Oldham | 14860 | 16.6% | 11367 | 76.5% | 3386 | 22.8% | 107 | 0.7% | 953 | 6.4% | 1698 | 831 | 3147 |
| Failsworth & Hollinwood | 12535 | 14.0% | 11229 | 89.6% | 1261 | 10.1% | 45 | 0.4% | 1676 | 13.4% | 1311 | 1286 | 2067 |
| Saddleworth & Lees | 13078 | 14.6% | 12489 | 95.5% | 576 | 4.4% | 13 | 0.1% | 633 | 4.8% | 838 | 885 | 996 |
| Shaw & Royton | 18251 | 20.4% | 16423 | 90.0% | 1813 | 9.9% | 15 | 0.1% | 1297 | 7.1% | 736 | 1708 | 2513 |
| West Oldham | 16884 | 18.9% | 12290 | 72.8% | 4478 | 26.5% | 116 | 0.7% | 1272 | 7.5% | 1818 | 1024 | 4834 |
| Totals | 89288 | 100.0% | 75547 | | 13431 | | 310 | | 6835 | 7.7% | 7630 | 6571 | 15489 |

A wide variety of issues relating to the condition of the dwellings arose from the survey and are reflected within the report. However the following tables summarise the key findings from the survey by the two main tenure types.

Table 7

| Issue | FCHO | Private Stock | All Stock |
|------------------------------|-------|---------------|-----------|
| Dwellings by % of stock | 15.0% | 84.7% | - |
| Unfit | 942 | 5,893 | 6,835 |
| Substantial Disrepair | 1,166 | 6,464 | 7,630 |
| Not Decent | 6,640 | 23,271 | 29,911 |
| Decent | 6,791 | 52,276 | 59,067 |
| Serious Hazards (Category 1) | 64 | 2,206 | 2,270 |
| Serious Hazards (Category 2) | 3,811 | 22,057 | 25,868 |
| In Fuel Poverty | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Average SAP | 62.09 | 59.11 | 56.58 |

This table is useful for giving an indicator of the key characteristics but does not highlight where problems are most concentrated. To achieve this the relationships between different measures needs to be considered.

The number of dwellings classified as “not decent” is a useful measure for examining a variety of problems that may exist within a dwelling. This measure was introduced by the ODPM for use by Local Authorities and RSL’s both of whom are obliged to make their dwellings “decent” under the guidance by 2010. However within the private sector the only obligation at present is for Local Authorities to ensure that 70% of dwellings occupied by a vulnerable resident are “decent” by 2010.

There are a number of factors determining decency:

- is the dwelling fit for human habitation
- is it in a reasonable state of repair
- does it have adequate modern facilities
- does it provide thermal comfort to its occupiers (for a definition see Appendix Z main report)

The following table illustrates failures against these criteria:-

Table 8

| Tenure | Part A | Part B | Part C | Part D | Total Incidences of Failure | Fail Standard |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| FCHO | 942 | 1166 | 1337 | 4003 | 7448 | 6640 |
| Private Stock | 5893 | 6464 | 5234 | 11486 | 29077 | 23271 |
| Total | 6835 | 7630 | 6571 | 15489 | 36543 | 29911 |

Note: The sums of incidences of failure against the Standard exceeds the numbers of properties failing the Standard overall as a result of both the effects of Part C of the Standard (which requires two or more failures in any one property) and multiple failures within properties generally.

Please refer to Appendix H for Decent Homes Standard Definitions

The main body of this report examines in greater detail both the dwelling and social characteristics associated with non-decency together with indicative costs of remedying these problems for different tenure types.

The total cost to make all dwellings decent within the Borough (ie: the 2,911 Nr currently failing the Standard) would amount to some **£38,528,447**. This equates to an average of **£432** per dwelling in relation to the whole stock of 89,288 Nr. As a comparator with EHCS. However the average figure per failing property would actually be **£1,288**.

The following table reiterates the headline findings of the Survey and compares them with the available results of the English House Condition Survey 2001 and the previous private sector stock condition survey commissioned by OMBC in 1995.

Table 9

| | OMBC 2005 | OMBC 1995 | EHCS |
|---|--------------|-----------|--------|
| Nr of Properties Unfit (Part A Decent Homes) | 6835 | | N/A |
| % of Properties Unfit | 7.66% | 12.70% | 4.00% |
| Cost to remedy unfitness | £7,746,307 | | N/A |
| Average cost per unfit property | £1,133 | £7,958 | N/A |
| Nr of Properties in disrepair (Part B Decent Homes) | 7630 | | N/A |
| % of Properties in disrepair | 8.55% | 27.00% | 9.00% |
| Cost to remedy disrepair | £15,624,025 | | N/A |
| Average cost per dwelling in disrepair | £2,047 | £2,748 | N/A |
| Decent Homes Part C (modernity & facilities) failures | 6571 | | N/A |
| % Part C failures | 7.36% | | 2.00% |
| Costs of remedying Part C failures | £10,525,865 | | N/A |
| Decent Homes Part D (thermal comfort) failures | 15489 | | N/A |
| % Part D failures | 17.35% | | 26.00% |
| Cost of remedying Part D failures | £4,632,250 | | N/A |
| Nr properties failing Decent Homes standard | 29911 | | N/A |
| % of Properties failing Decent Homes standard | 33.50% | | 32.00% |
| Total Cost to remedy Decent Homes failures | £38,528,447 | | N/A |
| Average Cost per Property to remedy Decent Homes failures | £432 | | £7,200 |
| Average per failed property | £1,288 | | N/A |
| Average SAP rating | 57 | 31 | 51 |
| Nr of Category 1 HHSRS hazards | 2270 | | N/A |
| Backlog repair costs | £81,756,718 | | N/A |
| Average per dwelling | £915 | | £1,740 |
| Combined Decent Homes and backlog repair costs | £120,285,165 | | N/A |
| Average per dwelling | £1,347 | | N/A |
| Nr of households cloned as in fuel poverty | 4 | | N/A |
| Nr of households cloned as vulnerable | 160 | | N/A |

Housing Summit 2005 Delegate List

| Name | Organisation |
|---------------------|--|
| Abdul Jabbar | Rochdale MBC |
| Abdul Malik Ahad | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Adam Hackett | Oldham MBC |
| Alan Caddick | Housing Strategy Team, Oldham MBC |
| Alastair Bishop | Government Office North West |
| Alex Morrish | Limehurst Village Trust |
| Alistair Courtney | Greater Manchester Best Practice Unit |
| Allan Ramsey | West Pennine Housing Association |
| Angela Clarke | Bullock Construction |
| Angwen Vickers | Homelessness Development Worker, Oldham MBC |
| Anna Charlton | Housing Market Renewal - OMBC |
| Anne Simmonite | Housing Strategy Team, Oldham MBC |
| Anne-Marie McGinn | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Barry Frederick | Kier Support Services |
| Bernie McConnell | Villages Housing Association |
| Bev McCann | Community Links |
| Bob Nesbitt | Bullock Construction |
| Bridget Milburn | Greater Manchester Energy Efficiency Advice Centre |
| Bruce Penhale | Oldham MBC |
| Bryan Elliott | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Carol Bibby | Supporting People Team, Oldham MBC |
| Carol Hopkins | Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce |
| Carol Middleton | Maple Projects Ltd |
| Catherine Swift | New Deal for Communities, Oldham MBC |
| Chris Andrews | Oldham MBC |
| Christine Goulden | Primrose Bank Tenants & Residents Association |
| Claire Gleeson | Keyring Living Support network |
| Claire King | Northern Counties Housing Association |
| Claire Nangle | Gleeson Regeneration |
| Claire Taylor | Refuge and Asylum Seekers ASIU |
| Claire Thompson | Housing Strategy Team Oldham MBC |
| Clive Newton | Emanuel Whittaker Ltd |
| Cllr B Dawson | Oldham MBC |
| Cllr D Fletcher | Oldham MBC |
| Cllr J Stanton | Oldham MBC |
| Cllr Lynne Thompson | Oldham MBC |
| Cllr M Masud | Oldham MBC |
| Cllr Peter Dean | Oldham MBC |
| Colin Greenwood | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Craig Boath | Kier Support Services |
| Craig Warren | Northern Counties Housing Association |
| Darran Hamilton | English Churches Housing Group |
| David Baggley | Tricon Rochdale |
| David Bates | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| David Bazell | NCH Oldham Families Project |
| David Black | First Choice Homes Oldham Board Member |

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|-------------------|---|
| David Cummins | Manchester Methodist Housing Group |
| David Davies | Government Office North West |
| David Harding | Keepmoat |
| David Wells | FCHO |
| Dawn Hoskins | Housing Market Renewal - OMBC |
| Dean Aggett | Housing Market Renewal - OMBC |
| Debbie Emmitt | Leigh Homes |
| Diane Chatterley | Keyring Living Support network |
| Elaine Belton | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Elma Plant | Threshold Housing Project |
| Faisal Butt | Rochdale MBC |
| Fiona Billington | MD Associates Ltd |
| Fran Rabbich | Housing Strategy Team Oldham MBC |
| Gordon Roscoe | New Deal for Communities, Oldham MBC |
| Helen James | North British Housing Association |
| Helen Livermore | The Housing Corporation |
| Helen O'Doherty | Keepmoat |
| Hugh Broadbent | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Ian Fletcher | Keepmoat |
| Ian Leech | Keepmoat |
| Isobel Adams | |
| Jackie Fieldhouse | AKSA Housing Association |
| Jahangir Mohammed | Rochdale Borough Economic Partnership |
| James McMillan | Manchester Methodist Housing Group |
| Janet Stirzaker | Gleeson Regeneration |
| Jean Bradley | First Choice Homes Oldham Board Member |
| Jenny Taylor | OFCG |
| Jessica Hodnett | Housing Market Renewal - OMBC |
| Jo Cavanagh | Oldham MBC |
| Jo Mills | Housing Strategy Team, Oldham MBC |
| John Cockerham | Northern Counties Housing Association |
| John Hammond | Keepmoat |
| John Newbury | Mouchel Parkman |
| John Norris | Community Safety Unit |
| Jonathan Sibbles | Oldham MBC Social Services, Learning Disability Service |
| Julie Appleton | West Pennine Housing Association |
| Karen Armitage | Leigh Homes Ltd |
| Kaye Mahoney | Housing Market Renewal - Oldham MBC |
| Ken Ivatt | Oldham MBC |
| Kevin Clarke | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Len Harris | Strategic Planning Oldham MBC |
| Lesley Boston | |
| Lila Wilson | Oldham Area Civic Society |
| Lynda Megram | Supporting People Team Oldham MBC |
| Louise Hadfield | West Pennine Housing Association |
| Mary Beaumont | Tenants and Residents Association Stockfield Mount |
| Mick Woodburn | North British Housing |
| Marcus Connor | Bury MBC |
| Margaret McDonagh | Manchester Methodist Housing Group |
| Maria Williams | UPTURN |

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| Mark Glynn | Housing Market Renewal |
| Mark Hart | Bolton Metro |
| Martin Firth | |
| Mary Murphy | Oldham MBC |
| Mary Whitehead | Housing Strategy Team, Oldham MBC |
| Mary Wood | Bury MBC |
| Michael Meacher | Member of Parliament Oldham West & Royton |
| Michele Carr | Oldham MBC |
| Michelle Hyland | English Churches Housing Group |
| Mike Johnson | Holts Estates Management Board |
| Mike Simpson | Manchester & Salford Market Renewal |
| Miranda DeBlasio | Threshold Housing Project |
| Mohammed Ahmed | |
| Mohammed Miah | Oldham MBC Regeneration Department |
| Mohammed Mustafa | Salford City Council |
| Moira Blood | Oldham Housing Investment Partnership |
| Nasir Hussain | Oldham Housing Investment Partnership |
| Neil Bryant | Tenant Representative |
| Nick Ireland | GVA Grimley |
| Nick Wright | Groundwork Trust |
| Nigel Graham | Northern Counties Housing Association |
| Pat Furlong | Black Minority & Ethnic Network |
| Patricia Hamilton | |
| Paul Hill | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Paul Longshaw | Salford City Council |
| Paul Mardell | Anchor Staying Put Staying Put |
| Paul Wrigley | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Pete O'Brien | Tameside MBC |
| Peter Davies | Northern Counties Housing Association |
| Phil Woolas | Member of Parliament Oldham East and Saddleworth |
| Philip Stott | First Choice Homes Oldham Board Member |
| Philip Whitehead | Bellway Homes Ltd |
| Rachel Mills | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Richard Hershman | Groundwork Oldham & Rochdale |
| Ronnie Smith | Barker Street Tenants & Residents Association |
| Russell Dennis | Salford City Council |
| Ruth Leatherbarrow | Oldham Area Civic Society |
| Sajjad Hussain | AKSA Housing Association |
| Sakinder Mehmood | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Sarah Bevan | Villages Housing Association |
| Sarah Smalley | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Sayful Alam | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Sean Cook | Oldham Social Services Department |
| Severine Cochard | Groundwork Oldham & Rochdale |
| Shabir Pandor | Housing Strategy Team Oldham MBC |
| Shahla Zandi | Salford City Council |
| Shaukat Ali | Rochdale MBC |
| Shirish Singapori | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Simon Bacon | Schofields |
| Simon Robinson | Oldham MBC |
| Siobhan McKenna | Brook Advisory Service |

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|-----------------|--|
| Stephen Potter | Manchester Methodist Housing Group |
| Steve James | Oldham Independent Housing Aid Centre |
| Steve Jordan | Bolton Metro |
| Steve Yorke | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Sue Dearden | Housing Market Renewal - OMBC |
| Sue Ingham | Shover TMA |
| Susan Chadwick | West Pennine Housing Association |
| Sue Stott | Northern Counties Housing Association |
| Sue Ward | Villages Housing Association |
| Tereska Slupski | Salford City Council |
| Tim Barwood | Greater Manchester Energy Efficiency Advice Centre |
| Tim English | Housing Strategy Team, Oldham MBC |
| Tim Wray | Keepmoat |
| Tracy Heyes | West Pennine Housing Association |
| Ustar Miah | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| Vince Sexton | First Choice Homes Oldham |
| W A Stevenson | Bellway Homes Ltd |
| Yasin Khan | Rochdale Borough Economic Partnership |
| Zahid Amin | Housing Strategy Team, Oldham MBC |
| Zaiem Khan | Oldham MBC |
| Sue Ingham | Shover TMA |
| Simon Bacon | Schofields |

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For further information on the following sub-strategies mentioned in this document, then please contact:-

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| ➤ Affordable Warmth Strategy | Zahid Amin |
| ➤ Young Persons Housing Strategy | Tim English |
| ➤ Homelessness Strategy | Anne Simmonite |
| ➤ Private Landlords & Enforcement | Joanne Cavanagh |

This document may, where appropriate, be made available in a range of alternative formats, including Braille, audio and large print and also different languages on request. To request a copy, please contact the following:

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