



Who Needs Housing?

The Housing Strategy and Future of Council
Housing in Charnwood

Balanced Housing Markets

- To understand local housing markets it is important to look at all sectors as a whole rather than concentrating on “affordable housing.”
- Looking at all parts of the housing market and how people interact and move between tenures may provide opportunities to deal with local housing pressures that might otherwise be missed.
- There are opportunities to assist people to access and maintain accommodation in the Private Sector within the Borough.

Sustainable Communities

- In 2003 the ODPM published the Sustainable Communities Plan.
- Its aim is to achieve decent homes in decent surroundings across the country and so aims to tackle low demand and abandonment in the North whilst identifying growth areas in the South to tackle housing shortages.
- Because of this polarisation of emphasis and resources Charnwood will need to ensure it achieves the aims of the Sustainable Communities Plan without significant Government funds.

Affordable Housing

- In 2003 Charnwood undertook a Housing Needs Survey.
- This concluded the Borough needs to develop 660 new units of affordable housing per year.
- There are three main sources of affordable housing
 - social housing schemes funded by the Housing Corporation,
 - section 106 planning gain housing,
 - schemes funded through the Borough Council's enabling grant.
- The Council aims to ensure that the right type of affordable housing is provided in the right places to meet the needs of the Borough.

Decent Homes

- Decent homes standard was introduced by the Government in July 2000, to "ensure that all social housing meets set standards by 2010."
 - a home must meet the fitness standards of the Housing Act 1985,
 - be in a reasonable state of repair,
 - have reasonably modern facilities and services (kitchen and bathroom),
 - provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (which links to affordable warmth).
- Charnwood is currently undertaking a Housing Options Appraisal to satisfy Government Office it will be able to meet the standard within the timescale.

Affordable Warmth

- Fuel poverty is the ‘ inability of a household to afford adequate warmth’¹.
- It is due to the combined effect of low household income, inadequate and expensive forms of heating and poor insulation standards.
- Charnwood Borough Council is committed to the eradication of fuel poverty and the provision of Affordable Warmth for its residents, irrespective of tenure, by 2010.
- The Council aims to achieve this by
 - raising awareness and providing energy advice,
 - improving energy efficiency within Council owned homes,
 - encouraging and assisting where possible improvements within the Private Sector.

Homelessness

- The Borough Council has a duty to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within the Borough.
- The Council must continually work to reduce and prevent homelessness within the Borough and improve the services available to those who are homeless within the Borough.
- In July 2003 the Council produced a Homelessness Review and Strategy which set out the improvements that would be made.

Support and Sustainment

- For some people accessing appropriate accommodation is not enough.
- To enable them to continue to live in their home and engage with their community, they need extra assistance.
- There are a number of supported housing and floating tenancy support schemes available for residents within the Borough, many provided by the Supporting People regime.
- It is important that we ensure that these schemes continue to meet the needs of the Borough and its residents.

Healthy Homes

- Clear links exist between health and housing. Better housing leads to better health. This has the potential to produce significant benefits in the health of individuals and the wider community, and generate savings in public and private expenditure on health, housing and other social services.
- Improving the physical quality of housing can help to provide warm, safe and healthy homes, which not only prevents health problems, but also can help reduce deaths due to cold, damp and unsafe housing.

Community Safety

- To be happy with where they live, people need to feel safe within their homes, their neighbourhood and their wider community.
- There are a range of initiatives that the Council can undertake from dealing with perpetrators of crime to designing it out in areas considered problematic.

1. UK Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001. para.1.7