



Housing Strategy for Merton

Part 1: Executive Summary & Background

www.merton.gov.uk 2004-2007

Housing Strategy for Merton

CONTENTS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

1. Foreword by the Cabinet Member for Housing	1
2. Executive Summary	3
3. Background to the Strategy	5
3.1 Introduction	5
3.2 Taking account of national and regional priorities	5
3.3 Regional and sub-regional working from 2003	6
3.4 The Council's wider community objectives	9
3.5 Partnership and inter-agency working	12
4. Appendices	
Appendix 1. Glossary of Terms	19
Appendix 2. Contacts	25
Appendix 3. Membership of Housing Strategy Teams	30
Appendix 4. Consultation with Partners and Stakeholders	33
Appendix 5. Related Strategic Plans of the Council	36

NOTE:

This book is the first of three publications that sets out the London Borough of Merton's Housing Strategy for 2004-07

The three publications are:

Part 1: Executive Summary and Background

Part 2: Strategic Options and Priorities

Part 3: Past Performance and Future Targets

Housing Strategy for Merton

1. Foreword

BY COUNCILLOR STEVE AUSTIN, CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING

I am delighted to introduce Merton's Housing Strategy 2004-2007. The Council produces a number of plans for the Housing Service in the borough, including the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for Council housing, the Homelessness Strategy, and the Housing Service Plan (to obtain copies of these see Appendix 2). They are all important in their own right and contribute to the provision and development of housing services in this borough.

The Housing Strategy sets out our statement for the overall vision and direction of our housing services and investment over the next three years. It is concerned with all types of housing in the borough and paints a picture of local housing conditions, housing needs and the investment that we can bring into housing in Merton. The strategy is a working document and we have set out a clear plan of action to improve housing and housing services in the borough.

I work as a local councillor helping to make Merton a great place to live, work and learn and I am privileged to lead the Housing Service as a cabinet member of the Council. We have a track record of success in this borough that we can build on. Through strong and successful partnerships, we have enabled new and affordable housing, sustained performance in responding to homelessness, minimised the use of bed and breakfast and built successful partnerships within the borough. We need to build on these in the future.

Housing is now high on the political agenda. Rising house prices and the difficulties people have in getting suitable accommodation,

particularly in London, are frequently making newspaper headlines. In Merton, our partners have made it clear that they think our priorities should be providing more homes, increasing housing choice for people, improving conditions in all types of housing, developing communities, and working in harmony with our partner organisations to achieve success.

Homelessness can still blight the lives of people and hinder the development of children. Increasing the supply of housing and providing choices for people who have no home are at the top of our housing priorities.

As well as having responsibility for the wider housing market, this Council is also a landlord to approximately 6,800 tenants and 2,500 leaseholders. We have a clear responsibility to give people the high quality services they deserve. We also have an obligation to realise our potential as a landlord to contribute to community development and neighbourhood renewal.

In Merton we welcome the increased emphasis from central government on housing and the role of housing within successful communities. The vision of national housing policy in the "*Communities Plan*," published by the Government in 2003, sets out a challenging agenda for us as a local authority.

I recognise that working across boundaries, with other organisations with a stake in housing, is more important than ever. I am particularly pleased that Merton works so closely with the other 6 London boroughs in the southwest region of London to form an effective partnership to improve housing in the capital. I will ensure that this continues and develops.

Housing Strategy for Merton

Our Housing Strategy Conference in March 2003 was titled “Moving Forward in Partnership”. This recognises that the success of our Housing Strategy depends on the active involvement of individuals and organisations inside and outside the borough. I want to place on record my thanks to all those who contributed to our strategy. This includes tenants and residents, voluntary organisations, Housing Associations and the Housing Corporation, private landlords, housing developers, businesses, local and central government officers, councillors and Members of Parliament who all work and campaign for better housing in this borough.

I know that many people share my commitment to improve housing and develop communities. Housing is a big factor in the success of people in the borough and the promotion of healthy communities. I hope that through this strategy we can unite to promote the case for more good quality housing in Merton.

Finally, we always welcome feedback and comments. There is a list of contact officers at the end of the document. The strategy will be available on the council’s website at:
www.merton.gov.uk/housingpolicy



**Councillor Steve Austin,
Cabinet Member for Housing**

2. Executive Summary

The Council's vision is "*Merton – a great place to live, work and learn*". This Housing Strategy plays an important role in meeting that vision with housing being recognised for its crucial impact on place, community and people.

The strategy is wide ranging. It addresses issues across all types of housing in the borough. It reflects the Council's wider agenda for services to people in the borough. It also addresses the policies of central government, noting an increasing emphasis on the role of housing at local, regional and national levels.

The strategy is not just a description of housing needs and the investment required to address them, but is a blueprint for action and change.

The Council own the strategy, but it has been developed through wide ranging consultation and involvement of our residents and other key stakeholders. They will continue to play a crucial, ongoing role, delivering and reviewing the strategy.

Five priorities are driving forward Merton's Housing Strategy:

Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing. This will be achieved through efficient use of existing affordable housing, development of new affordable housing through Housing Associations, engaging private sector landlords and working with private developers and planners to achieve new affordable housing through planning gain.

Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness are important priorities for us and a response to meeting local needs as well as meeting national and regional

priorities. Its starting point is to prevent homelessness arising in the first place by helping people to continue living in their existing accommodation. This is primarily by assessing the need for housing with appropriate levels of support and ensuring that it is available. It involves joint working with the Supporting People Programme. It is also an objective of the strategy that we try to prevent homelessness through early intervention. This means gaining a better understanding of the causes of homelessness, early identification of vulnerable people and developing better joint working arrangements.

If homelessness cannot be prevented then we will also work to ensure that the standard of temporary accommodation is appropriate. We will reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, improve the quality of our temporary accommodation and make wider use of private sector housing. The review of the Supporting People Strategy will be closely linked to this process.

This strategic priority will be moved forward by the development of an effective, evidenced based strategy that minimises homelessness in the longer term.

Improving Housing Conditions across all tenures is an important priority for the Council. The Council is on target for its own housing to meet the standards set by government for 'Decent Homes'. In the private sector the Council is committed to improving housing conditions in a number of ways including assistance to people through private sector, renovation grants and working with private sector landlords to improve tenancy management and housing conditions. In addition, the Council will influence the promotion of sustainable housing, through energy efficient and environmentally friendly homes.

Housing Strategy for Merton

Housing has a pivotal role in **Developing Sustainable Communities** and neighbourhood renewal in the borough. The Council's Housing Service will be investing strongly in tenant participation and community development and will more than double the staffing resources in this area from April 2004. Corporately, progress in neighbourhood renewal is a key aim with a focus on the most deprived wards in the borough. The Council will build on the success of the regeneration of the Phipps Bridge area and the ongoing development of new housing and community enterprises in Pollards Hill being led by Moat Housing Group and Pollards Hill Housing Association.

Delivering through Effective Partnerships picks up the themes and actions from our Housing Strategy Conference in March 2003, 'Moving Forward in Partnership', which focused on partnership arrangements as a key driver for successful outcomes in the housing agenda. There was a special focus on:

- Homelessness prevention and the use of public, private and voluntary sector partnerships.
- The engagement of private sector landlords in housing solutions.
- Getting the views of communities about the future of social housing in their local areas.

Our notion of partnership cuts across much of our work in the Housing Service and increasingly includes working with the other 6 boroughs in the southwest region of London. Equally, our engagement with the voluntary sector is founded on principles of partnership and we recognise that the opportunities for innovation are increased by effective partnerships.

To recap, our 5 priorities in the housing strategy are:

Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing
Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness
Improving Housing Conditions
Developing Sustainable Communities
Delivering through Effective Partnerships

These over-arching strategic priorities reflect the priorities within our Housing Service Plan and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for Council housing. There is also strong resonance and compatibility between our priorities and those of the South West London Housing Strategy and the London Housing Strategy – we refer to these later in this document.

3. Background to the Strategy

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2001, Merton Council published a full set of housing plans for the years 2002 - 2005. These plans described local housing needs and outlined our proposals to address them. We reported progress and updated these plans in our Housing Strategy Update of 2002.

In February 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published the *Communities Plan*, Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future. This has resulted in significant changes in the way that we deal with local housing strategies and resources.

The Government Office for London is now working with boroughs towards establishing housing strategies that are 'fit-for-purpose'. Once boroughs have achieved this, it will not be necessary for us to submit housing strategies to the Government every year. This will free resources that we can use for implementation, monitoring and review.

In 2002, we took a significant step by offering our tenants the opportunity to transfer to a new registered social landlord (RSL). By a narrow margin, tenants voted to keep the Council as their landlord.

With these developments in mind, we have decided to write a new housing strategy for 2004-2007. It takes account of the changing national and regional housing framework as well as our own strategic priorities and commitments.

3.2 TAKING ACCOUNT OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PRIORITIES

National policies set the basis for our strategy. The Communities Plan placed housing in the centre of a much wider government agenda of regeneration and renewal.

The Communities Plan

The Communities Plan represents a strong commitment by central government to build communities that are sustainable. It links the future development of housing with regeneration of towns and cities, economic growth, transport and planning, all of which are essential to the building of sustainable communities. The plan has had a major impact, not just on the content of our strategy, but also on its development and delivery.

• Regional housing strategies

The plan sets out the requirement for a regional framework for the allocation of resources and the development of regional housing priorities. In total, the plan established seven regional housing boards, including the London Housing Board, with a target to publish the first round of regional housing strategies by July 2003.

• Affordable housing

Challenging targets have been set to increase the provision of housing in London and the South East. The Government wants to accelerate the supply of affordable housing within the overall £22 billion of resources that was identified in the comprehensive spending review of 2002. This is to be achieved by:

- Developing regional 'growth' areas.
- Promoting high density housing schemes.
- Ensuring that the size and type of new housing is better matched to needs.
- Reform of the planning system to speed up delivery of new homes.

(Strategic Priority 1 – Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing).

Housing Strategy for Merton

- **Better places for people to live**

The Communities Plan encourages the link between housing and regeneration. It makes proposals concerning crime reduction, anti-social behaviour and a range of other environmental issues (*Strategic Priorities 3 and 4 – Improving Housing Conditions and Developing Communities*).

- **Decent homes**

The plan has re-emphasised the Government's commitment to meet national standards for social housing. Clear targets have been set for social landlords to deliver 'Decent Homes'. These include a one-third reduction in non-decent homes by April 2004 and elimination of all non-decent homes by 2010.

We have advised government that we will meet their requirements on 'Decent Homes' within the existing investment framework for Council housing. Our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for council housing includes more detail in chapter 4, 'The Business Environment for Housing in Merton'.

(*Strategic Priority 3 – Improving Housing Conditions*).

- **Investment option appraisals**

Local authorities are required to complete an investment option appraisal by July 2005. This means we have to look at all possible ways of raising money to invest in improving the standard of Council housing in the borough. We have ambitious plans to work with residents to examine stock options, with tenants at the centre of the process. This is set out in more detail in our Housing Revenue Account Business plan for Council Housing. (*Strategic Priority 3 – Improving Housing Conditions*).

Low-Cost Home-Ownership Task Force Report 2003

The findings of the task force support an increase in low cost home-ownership. It suggests that products and processes are simplified in order to widen access and recognises the assistance it can be to key workers. The report also identifies how difficult it is for many people, especially from ethnic minorities, to access and afford low-cost home-ownership, particularly in London and the South, and recognises the financial risks of home ownership for people on low-incomes.

Housing Bill 2003

The bill impacts on private sector housing by introducing a new house condition rating system. It also introduces a mandatory licensing scheme for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Additional responsibilities are being placed on social landlords to tackle anti-social behaviour and this legislation gives them increased powers in this area.

3.3 REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL WORKING FROM 2003

The Communities Plan sets out a requirement for new regional housing boards, with Merton as a London borough being part of the area covered by the London Housing Board. This board is responsible for delivering policies in a London-wide context as set out in the Communities Plan. The Board published its first London Housing Strategy, *Homes and Communities in London* in July 2003.

Regional Housing Boards advise government ministers on sharing out a new single pot of housing resources to meet regional priorities. This new pot of capital finance includes the Approved Development Programme of the Housing Corporation and the allocations made by

Housing Strategy for Merton

Government through the local authority housing investment programme (HIP). The Greater London Authority's (GLA) draft London Plan sets out a development strategy aimed at supporting the economic growth, social cohesion and environmental sustainability of London as a major world city. There are four housing priorities within the GLA Plan:

1. 23,000 new affordable homes to be built in London each year up to 2016 in order to meet housing need. A report of the Examination in Public (EIP) of the draft plan recommended that the London target be increased to 30,000. A housing capacity study carried out in 1999 indicates that Merton can deliver a total of 8,610 new homes during that period, or 430 a year, but there are some concerns about meeting these targets.
2. Providing the most affordable homes possible, with 50% of all new housing to be affordable, made up of 35% social rented and 15% key worker or intermediate housing.
3. Improvement of the quality of housing in London and the promotion of sustainable buildings.
4. The creation of balanced and mixed communities that are socially inclusive.

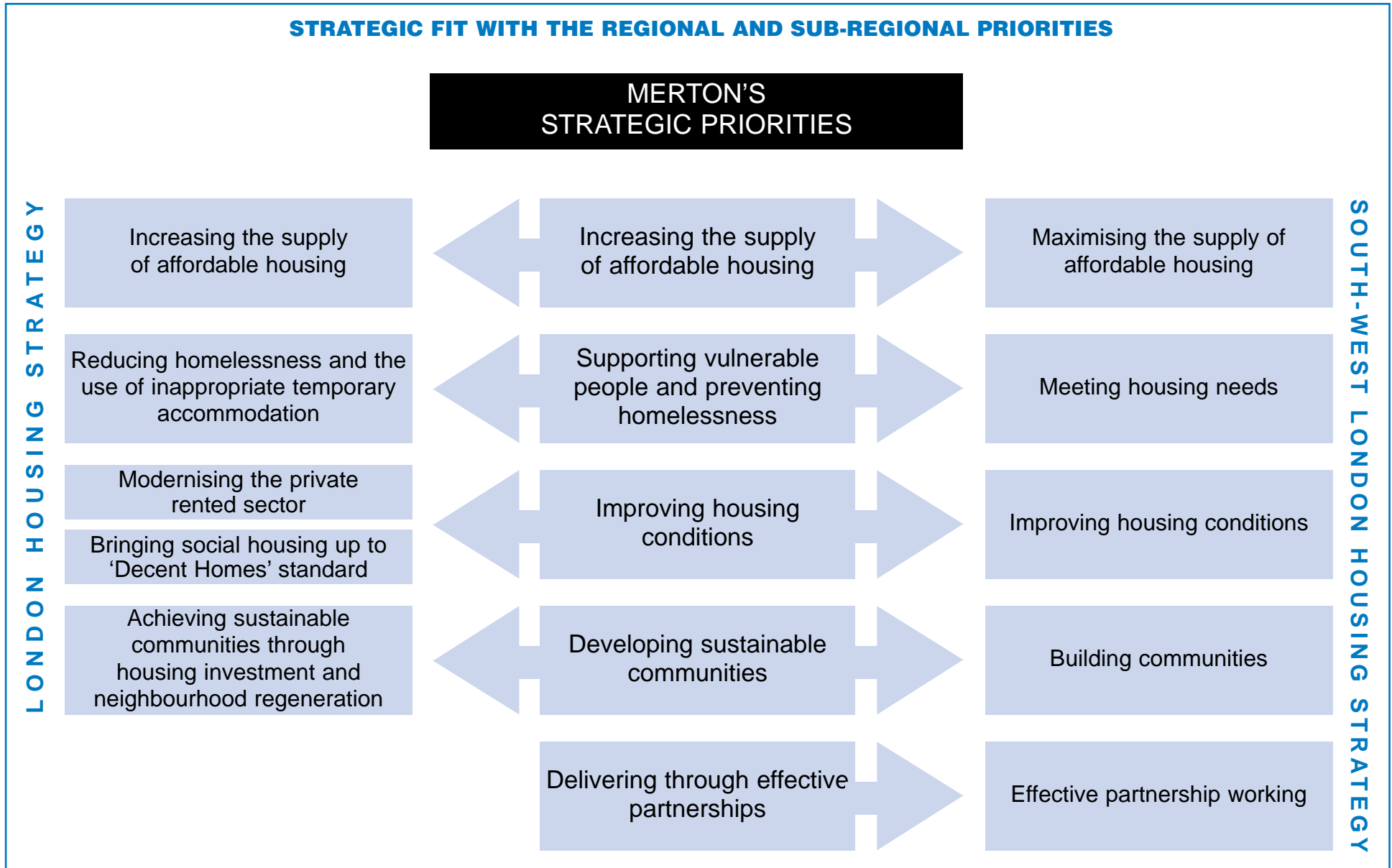
In response to the Communities Plan, London boroughs are grouped into five housing sub-regions. The seven London boroughs in the southwest of London: Merton, Croydon, Kingston, Lambeth, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth have formed the South West London Housing Partnership as a vehicle for joint working. It has published its own Sub-Regional Housing Strategy. See Appendix 2 for contact details.

The five strategic priorities of Merton's Housing Strategy have been formed by the Housing Service Plan that we published in March 2003. However, our links with the South West London Regional Housing Strategy and the London Housing Strategy are clear and our priorities link our work in Merton with our partner boroughs and place it in a London context.

The table overleaf illustrates the strategic fit of the Merton priorities in this housing strategy into the wider London regional and sub-regional agenda that is now being established.

Housing Strategy for Merton

STRATEGIC FIT WITH THE REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL PRIORITIES



Housing Strategy for Merton

3.4 THE COUNCIL'S WIDER COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

Our new Housing Strategy has its foundations within the Council's Business Plan. The Council's vision, which guides all its work, is:

'Merton – a great place to live, work and learn'

This vision is underpinned by six strategic objectives:

Education Merton – achievement of standards in excellence in our schools, inclusive access to learning, the arts and sport.

Safe, Clean and Green Merton – a safe and clean environment in our streets and open spaces to improve sustainability and provide a high quality of life for residents.

Caring Merton – support for vulnerable children that equals the standards of the best and support for vulnerable adults that meets their needs while maximising their independence.

Thriving Merton – regeneration of town centres, housing and neighbourhoods to provide an attractive environment in which to live, visit and work.

Equalities Merton – full and equal access to learning, employment services and cultural life and the celebration of diversity.

Effective Merton – delivery of a corporate improvement programme in line with the corporate health principles of best value and best practice, working in partnership, communication and inclusion, and supporting and developing our staff.

Our ambition is to be an excellent Council by 2006 and the Corporate Business Plan, adopted in autumn 2003, sets out a three-year programme to achieve this. The Housing Service has a key role to play in the delivery of this programme, particularly within the strategic objective of Thriving Merton. The Corporate Business Plan lists 4 priorities for action under Thriving Merton:

- Achieve sustainable regeneration in our most deprived neighbourhoods.
- Improve the quality and diversity of Merton's town centres.
- Improve transport systems and reduce reliance on the private car.
- Improve the quality of the borough's housing stock and increase the supply of affordable housing.

Three of those priorities, and other objectives of the Business Plan e.g. Equalities Merton – *addressing poverty and social exclusion*, have direct links to this housing strategy.

Within the Council's Business Plan, key targets for the Housing Service relate to:

- Progress on 'Decent Homes'.
- Homelessness and reductions in the use of bed & breakfast accommodation.
- New homes being developed in the borough through planning gain and the enabling role.

Housing Strategy for Merton

The full text of the Council's Business Plan can be read on the Council's web site or through the contact officer detailed in Appendix 2.

Our strategic planning framework shows how we will improve to become an excellent Council. The Business Plan is designed to inform residents, councillors, staff, partners and those who work in the borough of the ambitions of the Council and Strategic Priorities that it will focus on over the next three years. These priorities have been informed by:

- What residents have been saying to the Council in a variety of ways but especially through surveys (the Council conducts an annual survey of residents as well as other service and snapshot surveys), elected councillors and complaints.
- The priorities of the Community Plan – the top twenty priorities identified by residents to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of people in Merton.
- The service and organisational areas highlighted for improvement in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of the local authority.
- National priorities – for example in the context of housing – the national priority to improve services to homeless people including ending the use of bed & breakfast accommodation for homeless families with children.

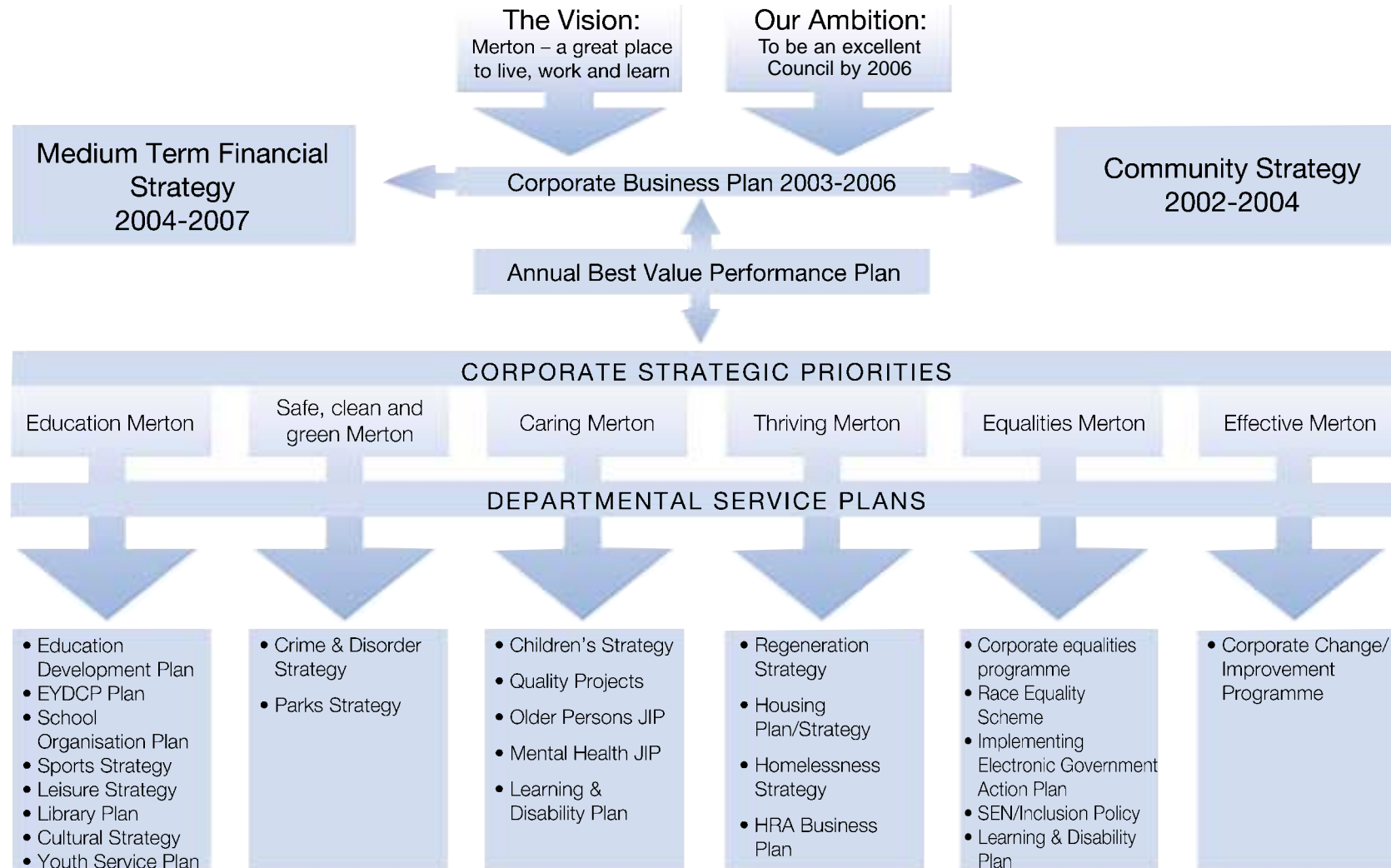
Throughout all of its business, the Council produces a range of plans and strategies, many of which inter-link. The next chart demonstrates the strategic framework of the council showing the range of services and plans contributing to the overall vision of the Council.

The Corporate Decision-Making Process

Merton has adopted a 'leader and cabinet model' of decision-making with eight possible executive decision-making bodies. How the decision is made depends on its nature. Some decisions are 'key decisions' because they are significant in terms of breaking new ground or in financial terms. 'Key decisions' will be significant in terms of the effects they can have on communities and groups of service users or the Council's budget. These 'key decisions' are published in the Council's Forward Plan. This is a public document and sets out who is making the decision and when. Where a decision appears in the Forward Plan, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission may request to see a report so that they can scrutinise the proposal before the decision is made.

Housing Strategy for Merton

MERTON'S PLANNING FRAMEWORK: HOW WE WILL DELIVER



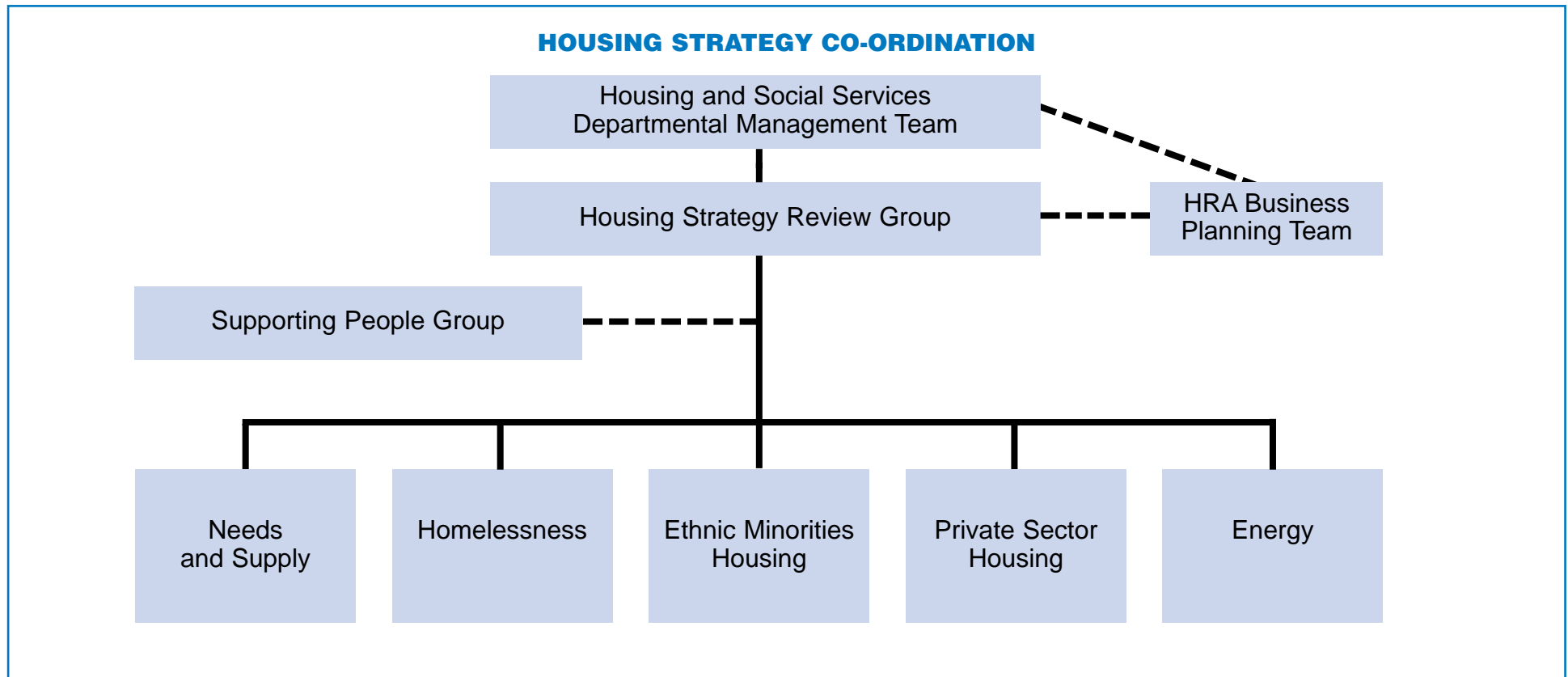
Housing Strategy for Merton

3.5 PARTNERSHIP AND INTER-AGENCY WORKING

We cannot deliver our strategic priorities and address sub-regional and national priorities alone. Many of our existing achievements have resulted from existing successful partnerships, bringing together the public, other boroughs, Housing Associations, private and voluntary sectors. For instance:

- We work with Housing Association partners to achieve the best value for money in providing affordable housing in the borough. We also worked jointly to review the Council's surplus land and property. The review has resulted in a number of bids being submitted to the Housing Corporation.
- We have worked in partnership with local landlords on a rent deposit scheme to help over 100 households secure private rented accommodation.
- An inter-agency strategy team led on the development of Merton's Homelessness Strategy which was launched in September 2003. The inter-agency Homelessness Forum also contributed to the strategy through consultation.
- The Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy was developed and led by the inter-agency Ethnic Minorities Strategy Team. This involved local community organisations and partner housing associations.
- The Housing Service is a key member of Merton Partnership Against Crime (MPAC) that developed Merton's Crime and Disorder Strategy 2002-2005. The Housing Service is also a core partner in 'Safe & Sound', the group responsible for implementing the strategy.
- The Housing Service is a major contributor to the funding of the neighbourhood warden scheme and also supports the scheme through the multi-agency steering group and local support panels.
- Merton has been an active member of the South West London Housing Partnership which has encouraged closer working relationships with other South West London boroughs across a wide range of activities.

Housing Strategy for Merton



Seeking views on strategy direction

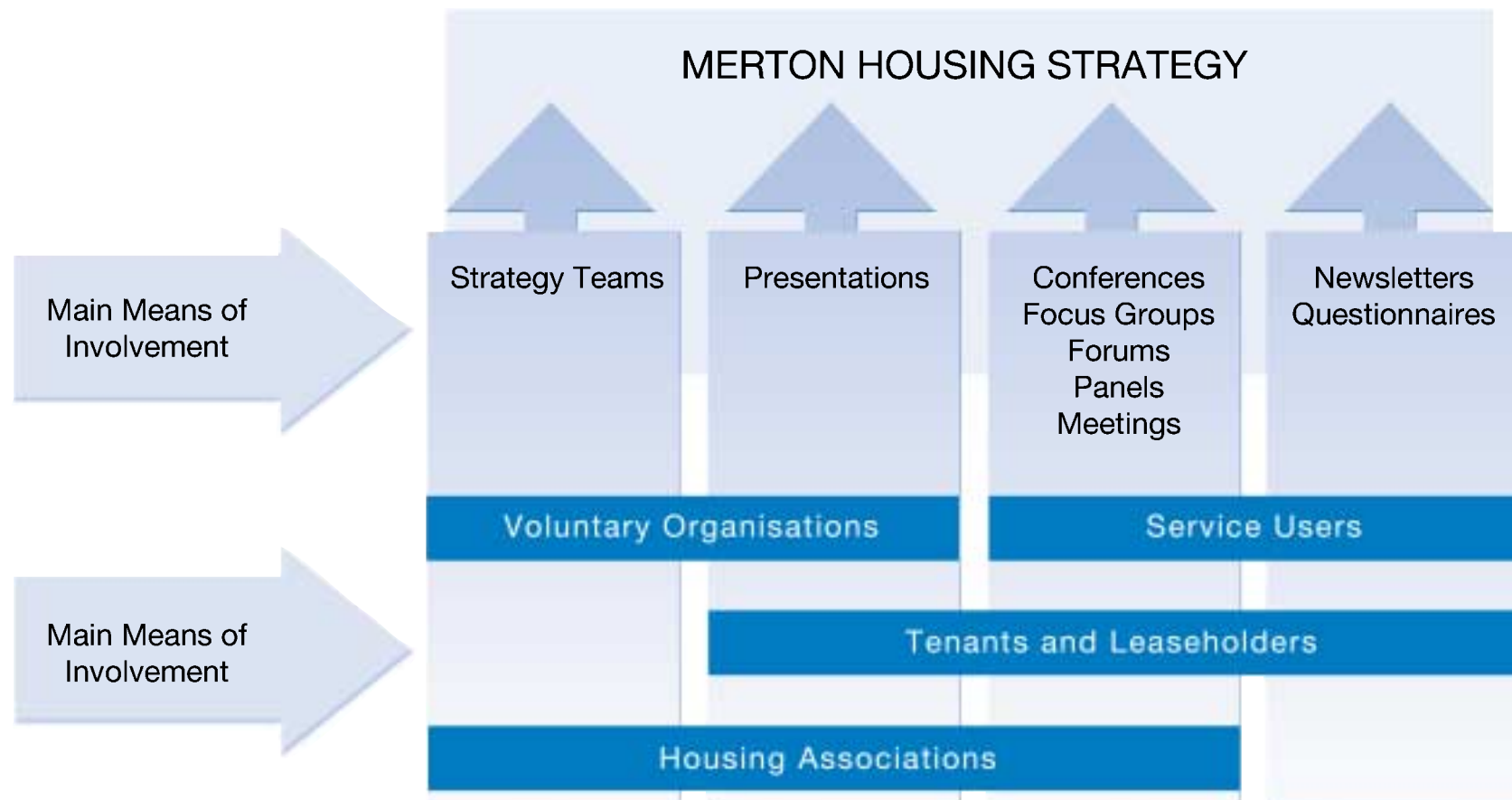
The development, monitoring and review of the Housing Strategy is co-ordinated through a Housing Strategy Review Group (HSRG), that works with staff and stakeholders, oversees a number of strategy teams, and reports to the senior management team of the Housing and Social Services Department. This is illustrated above.

Involvement of Stakeholders

Our strategy is developed in partnership with external partners and stakeholders. We have used a range of methods throughout the year to involve stakeholders, partners and users of the Housing Service. These are summarised in the following diagram.

Housing Strategy for Merton

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING



Housing Strategy for Merton

Strategy Teams

As of July 2003, one-third of the strategy teams membership were external partners. The membership of each strategy team is described in Appendix 3.

These teams are an effective way of involving stakeholders and partners and key areas of the strategy are driven by them. For example, the need to reduce fuel poverty in all tenures in a co-ordinated way, with the commitment of the voluntary sector, Housing Associations, community groups and other Council services, was identified as a major issue by the Energy Strategy Team.

The Energy Strategy Team co-ordinated a fuel poverty seminar in June 2003, which was attended by over 25 different groups. Presentations at the seminar highlighted the numbers of cold-related deaths in Merton and the problems of contacting hard to reach households to advise them of measures to improve heating in their homes. Feedback from this seminar further strengthened the need to address fuel poverty and this is a key objective of Strategic Priority 3: Improving Housing Conditions. The Energy Strategy Team is now driving Merton's first fully comprehensive Fuel Poverty Strategy that is due to be completed by March 2005.

The Homelessness Strategy Team not only drove Merton's Homelessness Strategy, but also took a lead on the production of 'Homelessness in Merton; A Review of Needs and Services', which contained a range of data which has influenced the strategy. Another key area where the group has influenced the development of the strategy is around user involvement and consultation. An objective of Strategic Priority 2: Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness, is to improve consultation with customers, and former

customers of the Housing Service and also to involve potentially homeless households more in homelessness prevention. Specifically, we will encourage homeless people to play an active role in pursuing their own housing solutions with the help of advice and information.

Conferences and Presentations

Nearly 100 delegates attended our Housing Conference 'Moving Forward in Partnership' and feedback was received from the plenary sessions, workshops and feedback forms. A newsletter, circulated to over 200 stakeholders, explained key issues from the conference and gave the opportunity to comment on the draft strategic priorities.

A major theme of the conference was developing partnerships with the private sector to meet housing needs. A presentation was given on this issue by the Small Landlords Association and this was followed by a workshop. A number of barriers were identified relating to working effectively with private landlords, these included lack of advice, assistance, information, incentives and support to private landlords. An objective of Strategic Priority 1: Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing addresses many of these issues and measures being taken include the re-launching of Merton's Landlords Forum, which will provide a range of advice and assistance to private landlords. The Rent Deposit Scheme will also be extended to provide incentives and support to private landlords accommodating homeless households and those in acute housing need.

Housing Strategy for Merton

Panels

The Council's Life Chances Overview and Scrutiny Panel debated the strategy in June and again in November 2003 before being approved by a meeting of the Council in February 2004. The Cabinet Member for Housing has been fully involved in discussion and development of the strategy, with regular briefings, as it has progressed.

Councillors also debated key issues and priorities in the Housing Strategy in June 2003.

Forums and meetings

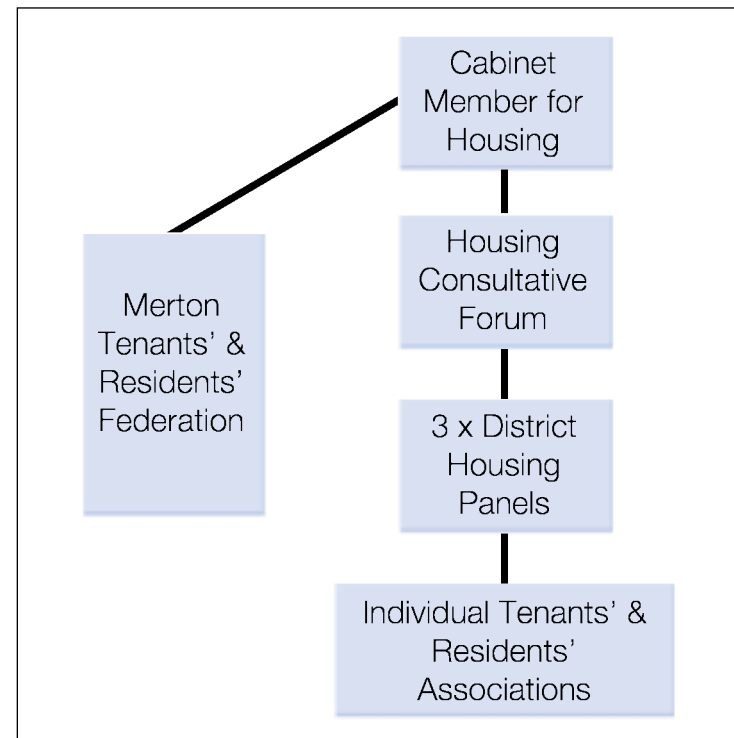
Merton's Homelessness Forum has met regularly since May 2002. It has over 100 members, representing a range of organisations providing services to homeless and potentially homeless people. The forum acts as a key consultation mechanism for developing and implementing the Homelessness Strategy.

Consultation with the Homelessness Forum and Merton's Young Single Homelessness Forum have identified the lack of provision for single non-priority homeless people, particularly young people needing to move on from temporary supported housing. To address this we will develop an assisted tenancy scheme with Threshold Housing and Advice for non-priority single homeless people.

A major issue for Housing, and for the Housing Management Service in particular, is to make sure that front-line housing staff and residents are kept up to date about corporate issues and are able to contribute fully to discussions. Our new Staff Consultative Forum, weekly staff newsletter 'Spread the Word' and the frequent direct contact by the Cabinet Member with front-line staff and with tenants is evidence of our commitment.

Our tenants and leaseholders are central to the delivery of the Housing Service and we have involved them in the development of this strategy on an ongoing basis. Tenants' and Residents' Associations are made up of both tenants and leaseholders, who work together for the benefit of all the residents on their estates, regardless of tenure. This also means that both tenants and leaseholders are represented at District Housing Panels and at the Housing Consultative Forum.

RESIDENT CONSULTATION STRUCTURE



Housing Strategy for Merton

A key area where involvement of leaseholders has driven the strategy is 'Decent Homes'. Awareness of the issue has been raised through our formal resident consultation structure, through presentations, articles in newsletters and local meetings. This major consultation exercise ended with the borough wide Housing Consultative Forum endorsing the proposal for an implementation plan to address non-decency in May 2003.

Tenants have also informed us through the Forum of their wish that their homes not only meet but exceed the 'Decent Homes' standard. A local meeting with residents on the St Helier Estate, where most of our non-decent homes are, identified their preference for new windows to be installed before central heating. Strategic Priority 3: Improving Housing Conditions not only sets out how we will meet the 'Decent Homes' standard, but also how we will meet the aspirations of our tenants towards their homes, through consultation at neighbourhood level about stock options.

The stock options process will enable tenants to have more input and choice in securing additional investment in their homes.

Focus Groups

Our Young Persons Focus Group, held in April 2003, identified that young people often find it difficult to access the Housing Service and information about housing.

A focus group of ethnic elders held to inform the Black and Ethnic Minorities Housing Strategy Team identified the need to inform ethnic minority communities about housing options, as many ethnic elders did not have a clear idea about housing services available.

A review of the Housing Advice Service in Merton is an objective of our Strategic Priority 2: Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness.

The review will ensure advice is tailored to meet customers' needs and will also include an awareness campaign to inform them on a range of housing issues.

Newsletters and Questionnaires

A newsletter, circulated to over 200 stakeholders, explained key issues from the conference and gave recipients the opportunity to comment on the draft strategic priorities. A questionnaire was circulated to all providers of housing services in the borough in order to complete the homelessness review. Organisations were not only asked to provide details of services provided but also about needs and gaps in services.

Full details of all the partners and stakeholders who have been involved in our strategy can be found in Appendices 3 and 4.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Glossary of Terms

Term	Initials	Meaning
Affordable Housing		Housing which is below market prices (rental and low cost home ownership).
Local Agenda 21	LA21	Plan to promote environmental sustainability.
Anti Social Behaviour	ASB	Behaviour by people that affects others within the community. ASB is wide ranging and can include graffiti, playing music loudly and harassment.
Approved Development Programme	ADP	The process whereby the Government allocates money to Housing Associations, through the Housing Corporation, for building new homes.
Assets		Items which have a relatively high value and are usually long lasting e.g. property.
Basic Credit Approval	BCA	The amount of money the Government allows the local authority to borrow for spending on capital projects.
Bed and Breakfast	B&B	Temporary accommodation, with shared facilities, provided for homeless people while their homeless applications are assessed or they are waiting for permanent housing.
Best Value	BV	A process by which council services are reviewed and plans made to continually improve them. Residents play a key role in the process.
Cabinet		The body which makes the key decisions in the Council. It is chaired by the Leader of the Council and has 9 other Council members who each have responsibility for a key area e.g. education or housing.
Capital		Money spent on an asset (see above) to maintain it or extend its life.
Commission for Racial Equality	CRE	Government funded body to promote racial equality.
Community Plan		Long term plan identifying resident priorities for action in their communities. Also aims to promote economic, social and environmental well being of the community.
Community Housing Taskforce		A body established to help local authorities, tenants and Housing Associations through the process of stock transfer and to guide them through the option appraisal process.

Housing Strategy for Merton

Term	Initials	Meaning
Comprehensive Performance Assessment	CPA	The assessment helps Councils improve their local services for their community. It looks at how good services are and how well the Council is run and rates authorities as excellent, good, fair, weak or poor. After the review the Council agrees an action plan to improve or maintain performance.
Decent Homes		A Government standard for all social housing to ensure that it is structurally sound, has modern facilities and is energy efficient.
Department of Trade and Industry	DTI	Department which works with businesses, employees and consumers.
Disabled Facilities Grant	DFG	Grants to adapt properties occupied by disabled people.
District Housing Panel	DHP	Consists of a representative of Merton Tenants and Residents Federation, two representatives from each Tenants Association in the District, two majority councillors and 1 opposition councillor and officers if necessary. The panels monitor housing services.
Draft London Plan		The London Mayor's plan for development in the capital.
Drugs and Alcohol Action Team	DAAT	Strategy partnership responsible for delivering the Government's 10-year strategy 'Tackling Drugs Together to Build a Better Britain'.
Early Years Development & Childcare Implementation Plan	EYDCP	Describes planned actions of the Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership in relationship to pre-school children and the provision of childcare places.
Fuel Poverty		Households which spend more than 10 percent of their household income on trying to keep their homes adequately heated, are suffering from fuel poverty.
Geographic Information System	GIS	Computer system for storing, mapping and manipulating geographical information.
Health Improvement and Modernisation Programme	HIMP	Supports health improvement and funds projects which promote health and well-being in the community.
Home Energy Conservation Act	HECA	The act requires local authorities to publish a report on progress made in meeting targets to improve the energy efficiency of residential properties and on future plans.

Housing Strategy for Merton

Term	Initials	Meaning
House in Multiple Occupation	HMO	Properties occupied by a number of people who are not part of the same household. They can include bedsits, shared houses and flats, boarding houses and hostels.
Housing Consultative Forum	HCF	Forum where residents associations representatives are consulted with and informed about housing matters in the borough.
Housing Corporation	HC	The body that funds and regulates Housing Associations. This includes funding for building new properties.
Housing General Fund	HGF	Income and expenditure for Council services which are not to do with Council housing are recorded in the authority's General Fund. General Fund expenditure is met from charges for services, specific grants, Council Tax, non domestic rates and other government grants. Housing services which affect the wider community, such as advice to private tenants and housing benefit are paid for from the General Fund.
Housing Health and Safety Rating System	HHSRS	A scheme proposed in the Housing Bill that will replace the current Fitness Standard. It will be based on a risk assessment of a variety of factors and their impact on the most vulnerable occupier.
Housing Needs Index	HNI	A national index which identifies housing need in different areas.
Housing Revenue Account	HRA	This is an income and expenditure account for Council housing. Income is made up from rents and housing subsidy and expenditure is for housing management and maintenance.
Housing Strategy Review Group	HSRG	A multi departmental group of officers who contribute, direct and monitor the Housing Strategy.
Insecurity Points		Points given to those on the new starters sub register whose present accommodation is insecure and will shortly be coming to an end.
Intermediate Housing Need		Affects those who find market rents and purchase prices unaffordable but are unlikely to be allocated social housing due to a low level of housing need. This would include keyworkers.
Joint Investment Plan	JIP	Programme agreed by local authorities, health bodies and other partner agencies to improve support to specific groups of people.
Keyworker		Any worker, defined by the authority as being essential to the delivery of services in the borough.
Local Authority Social Housing Grant	LASHG	Money channelled through Local Authorities to fund Housing Association development. (It was abolished in March 2003).

Housing Strategy for Merton

Term	Initials	Meaning
Local Strategic Partnership	LSP	Consists of representatives from the public, private and voluntary sector. It is designed to develop and pursue a vision for neighbourhood renewal and improve the delivery of local services through better planning.
London Alliance with the West and North	LAWN	Scheme to help people in Council and Housing Association properties move to social housing in other parts of the country (mainly the North) where there are more properties available.
London Housing Board	LHB	A board consisting of representatives from the Government Office for London, Greater London Authority, Housing Corporation, Association of Local Government, London Development Agency and English Partnerships that is responsible for developing a London Housing Strategy.
London Housing	LH	Provides expert advice and analysis on social housing issues in London.
Major Repairs Allowance	MRA	A subsidy from Government for major repairs to Council housing.
Merton Young Single Homelessness Forum	MYSHF	Partnership between Housing Associations, voluntary organisations and the local authority to address single homelessness.
Merton Housing Association Group	MERHAG	A group of social landlords who meet with the local authority to discuss issues of common interest and concern.
Merton Partnership Against Crime	MPAC	A partnership between the Council, Police, Health Authority and other agencies which work together to reduce crime in the borough.
Merton Tenant and Residents Federation	MTRF	An umbrella group for all the tenant & resident associations concerned with Council housing in Merton.
Movers sub register		A list of Council and Housing Associations who require a move to other accommodation for various reasons.
Neighbourhood Renewal		A strategy to tackle problems of deprivation in the borough. It is based on a partnership approach and addressing a wide range of issues.
New starters sub register		A list of all people who are waiting for Council accommodation.
Office for the Deputy Prime Minister	ODPM	Government Department which deals with housing, neighbourhood renewal and planning amongst other things.
Private Sector Leasing Scheme	PSL	Scheme where private landlords lease properties to the Council or a Housing Association to house those most in need.

Housing Strategy for Merton

Term	Initials	Meaning
Registered Social Landlord	RSL	Housing providers who are registered with the Housing Corporation. The organisations are not for profit, often known as Housing Associations.
Scrutiny Panel		The Panel that consists of councillors, provides a check on Cabinet decisions by looking at areas of work where decisions are due to be made. Panel meetings are open to members of the public and views, concerns and recommendations are passed on to the Cabinet.
Section 106 agreement	S106	Agreements where a developer may be required to provide new social housing as part of larger development.
Sheltered Housing		Housing specifically designed and allocated to elderly people which also includes various forms of support.
Social Housing		Affordable housing provided by Housing Associations, the Council and other housing providers for rent.
South West London Housing Strategy		A strategy developed by the 7 south west London authorities in response to the London Housing Strategy.
Special Educational Policy	SEN	Sets out how the Local Educational Authority will manage special needs in Merton.
Supplementary Credit Approval	SCA	An approval from Government for an authority to borrow money for a particular capital project.
Supporting People	SP	The Supporting People programme is designed to fund support services which help improve people's lives and maintain independence within their own homes.
Stakeholders		Those who will be affected or have an interest in a particular issue or policy.
Standard Assessment Procedure	SAP	A method of rating the energy efficiency of a home. It is calculated taking account of thermal insulation, efficiency of heating system and ventilation in a property. A property can be rated from 1-100, the higher the number the better the standard.
Stock Options Appraisal		This involves looking at the advantages and disadvantages of different options for owning and managing the Council's stock. It takes account of funding, stock condition and the housing needs and aspirations of tenants.

Housing Strategy for Merton

Term	Initials	Meaning
Tenant and Resident Association	TRA	An association of tenants and residents who meet in an area to address issues of common concern and influence the services they receive and the communities in which they live.
Unitary Development Plan	UDP	This sets out the Council's plan for using land. Planning applications are considered against this plan.
Zero Budget approach		Looking at services from a starting point of zero budget and working out how much money would be required to provide the service.

Appendix 2

Contacts

If you have any comments or questions about this strategy, please do not hesitate to contact:

Housing Strategy and Development Team
Housing and Social Services Department
5th Floor, Civic Centre
London Borough of Merton
London Road
Morden
Surrey
SM4 5DX

By e-mailing: strategy&development@merton.gov.uk
or by 'phoning: 020 8545 3685

Housing Strategy for Merton

Appendix 2

Contacts (continued)

Document	Contact	Telephone & Email
Allocations Policy	Steve Langley Housing Needs Manager Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3712 steve.langley@merton.gov.uk
Allocations Strategy (annual)	Michael Furnival-Adams Principal Housing Strategy Officer Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 4155 michael.furnival-adams@merton.gov.uk
Asset Management and Capital Plan	Tony Skillbeck Property Liaison Manager Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 4167 tony.skilbeck@merton.gov.uk
Best Value Performance Plan	Diane Bailey Head of Policy and Scrutiny Chief Executives London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3963 diane.bailey@merton.gov.uk
Children's Services Plan	David Wright Children's Strategy & Development Manager Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3710 david.wright@merton.gov.uk
Community Plan	Rob Moran Head of Regeneration Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 4152 rob.moran@merton.gov.uk

Housing Strategy for Merton

Document	Contact	Telephone & Email
Sustainable Communities Plan	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	www.odpm.gov.uk
Crime and Disorder Strategy	Steve Brennan MPAC Manager Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3240 steve.brennan@merton.gov.uk
Economic Development Strategy	Nick Smart Principal Environmental Planner Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3064 nick.smart@merton.gov.uk
Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy	Angela Chu Principal Housing Policy Officer Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3619 angela.chu@merton.gov.uk
Health Improvement Programme	Jatinder Bhuhi Health Partnership Officer Chief Executives London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3440 jatinder.bhuhi@merton.gov.uk
HECA Progress Report	Annette Acik Principal Environmental Health Officer Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3029 annette.acik@merton.gov.uk
Homelessness Strategy	Michael Furnival-Adams Principal Housing Strategy Officer Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 4155 michael.furnival-adams@merton.gov.uk
Housing Needs Survey and Update	Michael Furnival-Adams Principal Housing Strategy Officer Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 4155 michael.furnival-adams@merton.gov.uk

Housing Strategy for Merton

Document	Contact	Telephone & Email
Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Keith Marshall Housing Stock Manager Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3722 keith.marshall@merton.gov.uk
Learning Disabilities Housing Strategy	Julie Phillips Planning Commissioning Officer, Housing & Social Services, London Borough Of Merton	020 8545 3967 julie.phillips@merton.gov.uk
Local Agenda 21 Action Plan	Adrian Hewitt Principal Environmental Officer Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3457 adrian.hewitt@merton.gov.uk
London Housing Strategy	Government Office for London	020 7217 3328 www.go-london.gov.uk/housing/index.asp
Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy	Joanna Switalska Regeneration Manager Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3233 joanna.switalska@merton.gov.uk
Private Sector Housing Strategy	Michael Furnival-Adams Principal Housing Strategy Officer Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 4155 michael.furnival-adams@merton.gov.uk
Race Equality Action Plan	Monica Wambu Equalities Policy Officer Chief Executives London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3864 monica.wambu@merton.gov.uk

Housing Strategy for Merton

Document	Contact	Telephone & Email
South West London Housing Strategy	Michael Furnival-Adams Principal Housing Strategy Officer Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 4155 michael.furnival-adams@merton.gov.uk
Supporting People Strategy	Eileen Nutting Supporting People Manager Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3841 eileen.nutting@merton.gov.uk
Tenant Participation Compact	Lesley Smith Tenant Participation Manager Housing & Social Services London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3618 lesley.smith@merton.gov.uk
Unitary Development Plan	Steve Cardis Principal Planner Environment & Regeneration London Borough of Merton	020 8545 3060 steve.cardis@merton.gov.uk

Housing Strategy for Merton

Appendix 3

Membership of Housing Strategy Teams

Membership	Organisation/Department
Energy strategy team	
Annette Acik Emma Adams Richard Ainsley Elizabeth Back Steve Cardis Rory Doyle John Gallagher Cecily Herdman (Chair) Adrian Hewitt Dawn Jackson Gloria Kelly Kenneth Mould Symon Sterne	Environmental Health (Environment & Regeneration) London Borough of Merton EAGA Partnership Plans & Projects (Environment & Regeneration) London Borough of Merton Housing Stock (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Plans & Projects (Environment & Regeneration) London Borough of Merton Environmental Health (Environmental & Regeneration) London Borough of Merton Wandle Housing Association Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Business & Environment Partnerships (Environment & Regeneration) London Borough of Merton Care and Repair Merton MASCOT Social Work (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Creative Environmental Networks
Ethnic minority housing strategy team	
Salim Ahmed Frank Anthi Jackie Ashenden Trish Bissett Robert Bowler Kathy Bucknill Glen Burnell Daniel Butler Angela Chu (Chair) Pauline Graham Aline Gulamhussein	Millat Asian Housing Association Merton Race Equality Partnership London & Quadrant Housing Group Children's Strategy Team (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Equalities (Chief Executives) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Tenant Participation (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy and Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy and Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Threshold Housing and Support Wimbledon Foyer, YMCA

Housing Strategy for Merton

Membership	Organisation/Department
Ethnic minority housing strategy team (continued)	
Bert Hyde	Christian Care
Mr Islam	Millat Housing Association
M A Karim	Bengali Association of Merton
Charles Khazee	South London African Women's Organisation
K Kuhan	Tamil Community Housing Association
Kay Messam	Wandle Housing Association
Reena Mukherji	Presentation Housing Association
Eileen Nutting	Supporting People (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton
Mr Nirmalan	South London Tamil Welfare Group
Catherine Nolan	Asylum Welcome
Deen Olugunna	Merton Race Equality Partnership
Motiur Rahman	Asian Forum of Merton
Sabitri Ray	Ethnic Minority Centre
A Sandiford	West Indian Family & Friends Association
S Stanislaus	South London Tamil Welfare Group
Robert Thompson	Battersea Churches Housing Trust
Monica Wambu	Equalities (Chief Executives) London Borough of Merton
Homelessness strategy team	
Trish Bissett	Children's Strategy Team (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton
Paul Coke	16+ Team Social Services (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton
Craig Chalmers	Mental Health Trust
Cecily Herdman	Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton
David Jobbins	Primary Care Trust
Steve Langley	Housing Needs (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing
Jane Nottage	Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton
Graham Slater (Chair)	Threshold Housing Advice
John Threadgold	Shelter
Janet Yerbury	Opportunities & Inclusion (Education, Leisure & Libraries) London Borough of Merton

Housing Strategy for Merton

Membership	Organisation/Department
Housing strategy review group	
Ken Almeida Mike Barrett Kathy Bucknill (Chair) Angela Chu Richard Cullip Michael Furnival-Adams Cecily Herdman Eileen Nutting Paul Ryrie John Sykes Amanda Brown	Housing Finance (Corporate Resources) London Borough of Merton Environmental Health (Environment & Regeneration) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Central (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Supporting People (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Services (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Information Systems and Support (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Needs (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton
Needs and supply strategy team	
Christopher Boyo Carol Lovelock Kay Messam Valerie Mowah Ernest Obumsele Eleanor Ward (Chair)	Threshold Housing and Support Housing Needs (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Citizens Advice Bureau Wandle Housing Association Research & Commissioning (Chief Executives) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton
Private sector strategy team	
Mike Barrett Fiona Davies Michael Furnival-Adams (Chair) Dawn Jackson Ray O'Shea John Threadgold Adam Smith	Environmental Health (Environmental Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Needs (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Care and Repair Merton Housing Advice (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton Shelter Housing Strategy & Development (Housing & Social Services) London Borough of Merton

Appendix 4

Consultation with Partners and Stakeholders

Our strategy was developed in consultation with a wide number of partners and stakeholders, including our housing conference and strategy team meetings and also a range of other mechanisms:

- District Housing Panel
- Domestic Violence Forum
- Ethnic Elders Focus Group
- Housing Conference
- Housing Consultative Forum
- Homelessness Forum
- Merton Housing Association Group
- Merton Young Single Homelessness Forum
- Stock Options Focus Group
- Young Persons Focus Group

Councillors and Members of Parliament

Councillor Andy Coles
Councillor Mary Dunn
Councillor Mike Tilcock
Councillor Sheila Knight
Councillor Steve Austin
Councillor Andrew Shellhorn
Mayor of Merton, Edith Macauley
Siobhain McDonagh
Member of Parliament Mitcham & Morden, Roger Casale

Housing Associations

Ability Housing Association
Anchor Housing
Ashley Homes
Beaver Housing Society
Bourne Housing Society
Central & Cecil Housing Trust
Croydon Churches Housing Association
Croydon Peoples Housing Association
Ekaya Housing Association
English Churches Housing

Housing Strategy for Merton

Family Housing Association
Grenfell Housing Association
Haig Homes
Hanover Housing Association
Harding Housing Association
Horizon Housing Group
Hyde Housing Association
Kingston Churches Housing Association
London & Quadrant Housing Trust
Millat Asian Housing Association
Moat Housing Group
Notting Hill Housing Group
Orbit Housing Association
Pollards Hill Housing Association
Presentation Social Investment Agency
Riverhaven Ltd
Sanctuary Housing Association
Shaftesbury Housing Association
Solon Wandsworth Housing Association Ltd
St Christopher's Fellowship
St Pancras & Humanist Housing Association
Strutton Housing Association
Threshold Housing and Advice
Threshold Housing and Support
Tower Housing Association
Wandle Housing Association
Wilberforce Housing Association
Wimbledon YMCA

London Borough of Merton

Access Opportunities & Inclusion (Education, Leisure & Libraries)
Children's Services (Housing & Social Services)

Children's Strategy Team (Housing & Social Services)
Drug & Alcohol Action Team (Chief Executives)
Environmental Health (Environment & Regeneration)
Estate Management (Housing & Social Services)
Field Work (Housing & Social Services)
Housing Benefits (Financial Services)
Housing Maintenance (Housing & Social Services)
Housing Needs (Housing & Social Services)
Housing Stock (Housing & Social Services)
Housing Support (Housing & Social Services)
Learning Disabilities (Social Services/PCT)
Legal Services (Corporate Resources)
Older People's Planning & Commissioning (Housing & Social Services)
Social Inclusion (Education, Leisure & Libraries)
Social Services 16+ (Housing & Social Services)
Supporting People (Housing & Social Services)
Plans & Projects (Environment & Regeneration)
Policy Equalities (Chief Executives)
Supporting People (Housing & Social Services)
Temporary Accommodation (Housing & Social Services)
Youth Offending (Chief Executives)

Other boroughs

London Borough of Croydon
London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Kingston
London Borough of Lambeth
London Borough of Richmond
London Borough of Sutton
London Borough of Wandsworth

Housing Strategy for Merton

Other groups and organisations

African Community Involvement Association
Mr Akodu, Private Landlord
Asian Elderly Forum
Association of Local Government
Asylum Welcome
Bangladeshi Association of Merton
Bengali Women's Association Merton
Care and Repair Merton
Christian Care
Citizens Advice Bureau
Connexions
Government Office for London
Faith in Action
Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness
Malcolm, Judd and Partners Solicitors
MASCOT
Mencap
Mental Health Trust
Merton African Organisation
Merton Mind
Merton Action for Single Homeless
Merton Oasis
Merton Racial Equality Partnership
Merton Refuge Ltd
Merton Tenants & Residents Federation
Merton United Charities
Merton Voluntary Service Council
Merton Volunteer Bureau
Merton Youth Awareness Project
Merton Youth Offending Team
Merton Youth Service

Metropolitan Police
Office of Deputy Prime Minister
Positive Network
Shelter
Small Landlords Association
South London African Women's Organisation
South London Tamil Welfare Group
South West London Probation Service
Springfield Hospital
Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust
Tamil Community Housing Association
Thames Reach Bondway
UNISON

Housing Strategy for Merton

Appendix 5

Related Strategic Plans of the Council

<p><i>Merton's Community Plan</i></p>	<p>This includes two priority issues within which housing has a key role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The introduction of programmes to reduce fuel poverty for those in public housing from 35% to 10%. ● To promote the development of communities and a sense of neighbourhood. <p>The Housing Service is actively involved in the development of the corporate Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. We are also committed to eliminating fuel poverty in Council homes by 2010. <i>(Strategic Priorities 3 and 4: Improving Housing Conditions and Developing Sustainable Communities).</i></p>
<p><i>Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002/05</i></p>	<p>This has clear implications for housing in the area of community safety. <i>(Strategic Priority 4: Developing Sustainable Communities).</i></p>
<p><i>Supporting People Strategy</i></p>	<p>The Housing Service has a central role in the provision of appropriate accommodation with support. Our Housing Strategy sets targets to maximise housing and support options and choice for homeless households. <i>(Strategic Priority 2: Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness).</i></p>
<p><i>Children's Services Plan</i></p>	<p>The provision and retention of accommodation is a key issue for looked after children and families with support needs. <i>(Strategic Priorities 1 and 2: Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing and Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness).</i></p>
<p><i>LA21 Action Plan</i></p>	<p>This plan encompasses the Council's commitments to energy, protection of the environment and the development of sustainability across the services of the Council and in the borough. In writing the Housing Strategy we note the lead promoted by government and the Housing Corporation in promoting an environmental agenda and the concept of sustainability in housing development. Our Housing Strategy has also adopted sustainability targets from the Energy Bill (2003) to ensure that 10% of energy sources come from renewable sources by 2010. <i>(Strategic Priorities 3 and 4: Improving Housing Conditions and Developing Sustainable Communities).</i></p>

Housing Strategy for Merton

<p>Unitary Development Plan (UDP)</p>	<p>The plan contains policies for housing provision and the supply of affordable housing in the borough in the context of overall development. Key features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage the re-use and re-cycling of urban land to provide housing development. ● Support for improvement of housing. ● Requirements for provision of affordable housing within new housing developments. ● Encouragement for new dwellings to be built to Lifetime Homes Standards. ● Objectives for housing development for people with physical disabilities. ● Objectives for suitable accommodation for homeless people. ● Promotion of sustainable housing development. <p><i>(Strategic Priorities 1, 2, 3 and 4 all support the UDP objectives: Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing, Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness, Improving Housing Conditions, and Developing Sustainable Communities).</i></p>
<p>Local Strategic Partnership</p>	<p>The partnership seeks to develop multi-agency working to address community regeneration and to attract funding. In supporting neighbourhood renewal, our Housing Strategy encourages multi-agency working to tackle social exclusion and community safety.</p> <p><i>(Strategic Priority 4: Developing Sustainable Communities).</i></p>
<p>Economic Development Strategy</p>	<p>This reflects the role of housing markets in the economic well-being of the borough and the sub-region. We are committed to improving access to affordable housing (Strategic Objective 1), investing in the borough's housing stock to improve housing conditions (Strategic Priority 3), and developing sustainable communities (Strategic Priority 4) all of which contributes to a healthy local economy.</p>
<p>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2003</p>	<p>A separate business plan for Council housing in Merton is being published in summer 2004. That plan sets out short, medium and long term projections for Council housing as a social business but also focuses on the performance of the Council as a landlord. A major aim of the plan is to examine the best way to get more money for Council housing as well as looking at value for money with the service at the moment. This Housing Strategy has been drafted in tandem with the Council housing plan and reflects the directions that the Council can take as the largest landlord in the borough.</p> <p><i>(Strategic Priorities: all 5 apply).</i></p>

Housing Strategy for Merton

<p>Homelessness Strategy 2003-2008</p>	<p>A multi-agency plan for addressing homelessness in the borough was completed and published in July 2003. Its focus is on early intervention and prevention of homelessness and seeks to meet the housing and support needs of the homeless. Our Housing Strategy incorporates the priorities and targets of the Homelessness Strategy. <i>(Strategic Priority 2: Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness).</i></p>
<p>Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy</p>	<p>An Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy has been developed in 2003 through strong partnerships with local community organisations. Its aim is to improve the responsiveness and sensitivity of housing provision for ethnic minority communities in the borough. This aim is incorporated in all of our housing plans this year e.g. to ensure that the needs of ethnic minority households who are homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless are addressed, or that the needs of ethnic minority communities are considered within the development of new affordable housing, or in Council housing to prove that the Council as the largest landlord in the borough has services sensitive to ethnic minority residents and records action of service delivery within a fair and accessible system that is transparent in the way the services are delivered to all parts of the community. <i>(Strategic Priorities 1, 2, 4 and 5: Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing, Supporting Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness, Developing Sustainable Communities, and Delivering through Effective Partnerships).</i></p>
<p>Capital Strategy & Asset Management Plan</p>	<p>Plans for capital spending and asset management for the whole Council which have been set to reflect the overriding priorities of the Council and the Housing Service. The financial resources underpinning this Housing Strategy have been developed through the corporate capital and asset management approach where corporate resources form part of the decision-making process. <i>(See Resources – Chapter 5 for more information).</i></p>
<p>Risk Management Action Plan</p>	<p>A Risk Management Working Group has undertaken an audit of housing services identifying the relative level of risk in all areas of the Housing Service and this forms part of the Council's overall position to risk and planning to target the highest levels of risk.</p>

Housing Strategy for Merton

If you would like more information in your own language, please contact us at the address shown in the box below.

Albanian Nese deshironi me shume informacion ne gjuhen tuaj, ju lutemi te na kontaktoni ne adresen e dhene ne kutine me poshte.

Arabic إذا أردت معلومات إضافية بلغتك الأصلية الرجاء الاتصال بنا في العنوان المدون ضمن الإطار أدناه.

Bengali যদি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় লেখা আরও তথ্য চান তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন, তলার বক্সে আমাদের ঠিকানা রয়েছে।

Chinese 如果你需要用中文印成的資料，請按低端方格內提供的地址與我們聯系。

Farsi اگر مایل به اطلاعات بیشتر به زبان خود هستید، لطفاً با ما از طریق آدرس زیر تماس بگیرید.

French Pour tout renseignement complémentaire dans votre propre langue, veuillez nous contacter à l'adresse figurant dans l'encadré du bas.

Gujarati જો તમને તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં વધારે માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને નીચે અંતમાં આપેલા ખાનામાં દર્શાવેલા સરનામે અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

Punjabi ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਠਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Somali Hadii aad u baahan tahay faahfaahin intaa kabadan oo ku soobsan afkaaka hooyo ama Af Somali fadlan lana soo xiira cinwaanka hoos ku qoran.

Spanish Si usted desea más información en su propia lengua, por favor contáctenos en la dirección al pie del formato.

Tamil உங்கள் மொழியில் மேலதிக தகவலைப் பெற விரும்பினால், அடியிலுள்ள பெட்டிக் குள் தரப்பட்டுள்ள விலாசத்தில் எம்முடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்.

Urdu اگر آپ اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے اس پتہ پر رابطہ قائم کریں جو کہ نیچے کے بکس میں درج ہے۔

You can also get this information in large print, in Braille and on tape.

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