

# SOUTH RIBBLE HOUSING FRAMEWORK

November 2017



# SOUTH RIBBLE HOUSING FRAMEWORK 2017-20

## FOREWORD



### **Councillor Cliff Hughes Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing**

**As the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing, I am delighted to present this updated Housing Framework for South Ribble. We have recently experienced a period of significant policy development at local level. The Council has ambitious growth plans that are reflected in the local plan and delivering an increased, diverse housing offer is essential to that ambitions. Through the City Deal a number of important sites have been brought forward to deliver housing. The Central Lancashire authorities have continued their discussions on how they can better work together, and as such a Housing Work Stream has been developed**

**In addition, there has been national policy changes which have included the publication of the Housing and Planning Act in May 2016, and the recently published Housing White Paper in February of this year.**

**Given the above changes, the Council felt it appropriate to review the current Housing Framework to ensure it is up to date, effective and responsive to the housing and wider opportunities and challenges that are presented.**

**Many actions identified in the Framework approved in 2016 have been achieved through focussing resources. Some of the key achievements are identified below:**

- The production and implementation of an Affordable Housing Commuted Sums policy.
- An affordable home ownership campaign to support purchasers through the process of buying an affordable home.
- A review of the Empty Properties Policy,
- The introduction of “A Place to Live” scheme which helps people to reoccupy empty properties.
- Progress on a number of key sites including Altcar Lane, Croston Road, and The Maltings to deliver new homes.

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## OVERVIEW OF HOUSING FRAMEWORK 2017-20: ACTION

<b>PRIORITY 1: Delivery of a range of quality new homes</b>	<b>PRIORITY 2: Ensure that sustainable communities are at the heart of the growth of housing.</b>	<b>PRIORITY 3: Support the inclusion and health and wellbeing of residents.</b>	<b>PRIORITY 3: Maintaining, and where possible improving, the quality of existing homes.</b>
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring forward the South Ribble Local Plan housing sites.</li> <li>• Work with partners on new methods of bringing forward a variety of new homes supporting housebuilding across South Ribble.</li> <li>• Determine the role of housing development, including market for sale, affordable and private rented sector in the Council's Investment Strategy.</li> <li>• Explore how the Council could develop housing units.</li> <li>• Implement a policy to support home ownership in the borough, including the management of a register of interest and promotion of schemes</li> <li>• Implement a policy for using commuted sums for affordable housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure sites that are developed create appropriate community benefits or pay s106 to enhance existing offers.</li> <li>• Working with partners we will be developing the creation of Health, Leisure and Well-being Campuses will provide for life-long health and well-being according to need across the Borough's communities</li> <li>• Continue to support economic growth to bring inward investment into the Borough recognising strengths and promoting opportunities.</li> <li>• Use of the Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should secure employment growth and skills development linked with local</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and introduce a policy to support the development of Housing for Older and Vulnerable People.</li> <li>• Continue to deliver an effective and efficient Disabled Facilities grant service</li> <li>• Work with health partners to seek additional funding opportunities for home improvements and adaptations to meet increasing demand.</li> <li>• Undertake a survey of all existing older person's accommodation as part of the Housing Condition Survey</li> <li>• Explore the options to deliver more 1 bedroom accommodation in the Borough</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the grant programme to reduce the number of non-Decent Homes in the borough.</li> <li>• Continue the Empty Homes campaign to support the reoccupation of properties.</li> <li>• Maintain a database of empty properties.</li> <li>• Update Housing Stock Condition Survey.</li> <li>• Produce and implement an action plan (which includes the use of the Enforcement Policy) to tackle improvements to housing stock.</li> <li>• Look for funding to support energy efficiency and carbon reduction projects for private homeowners.</li> <li>• Complete Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA report).</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support a Registered Provider Developer Partnership.</li><li>• Maintain an updated evidence base for the Housing Framework.</li><li>• Review the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.</li><li>• Actively participate in the Lancashire Housing Work Stream.</li></ul>	<p>communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that available housing reflects need and ambition is aspirational and continues to be located where it best serves sustainable approach to living and working in South Ribble.</li></ul>		
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## **1. AIM OF THE HOUSING FRAMEWORK**

The Council will introduce and implement policies to help ensure a diverse range of high quality homes are provided across South Ribble that meet the needs and aspirations of both current and future residents. These homes are essential to support the growth ambitions of the Council and the Central Lancashire City Deal programme. The priorities and actions identified within the Housing Framework will focus Council and partner resources on the housing growth desired and ensure that developments create and enhance healthy, sustainable and prosperous communities across the whole Borough.

This Housing Framework has been produced in light of the Council's growth agenda, City Deal and current housing policy. Particularly focus is on ensuring the delivery of quality new homes across the Borough; supporting the aspirations of local residents through home ownership opportunities; tackling empty homes; and enabling older and vulnerable people to live independently through the offer of suitable accommodation.

### **The Priorities**

The priorities to drive action and policy of the Council are:

- 1. Delivery of a range of quality new homes to meet the requirements of existing and new residents.**
- 2. Ensure that sustainable communities are at the heart of the growth of housing.**
- 3. Support the inclusion and health and wellbeing of residents through the provision of supported and adapted accommodation.**
- 4. Maintaining and, where possible, improving the quality of existing homes.**

## 2. HOUSING FRAMEWORK PRIORITIES

### PRIORITY 1: DELIVERY OF A RANGE OF QUALITY NEW HOMES

The Council has identified a supply of housing land for the period of the Local Plan to 2026/27. The Local Plan states these sites, if developed, will generate around 6,500 units over the period. This is underpinned by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which will influence the mix of housing development that is brought forward. This document has been developed by consultants based upon current and projected need across the Central Lancashire Housing Market Area.

#### Completions

The below table shows the number of completions over the last 5 years.

**Table 1: Number of new dwellings, 2010-17**

Year	New Dwellings	Affordable Properties
April 2010 – March 2011	221	11
April 2011 – March 2012	170	11
April 2012 – March 2013	168	40
April 2013 – March 2014	346	48
April 2014 – March 2015	486	97
April 2015 – March 2016	371	150
April 2016 – March 2017	187	25

The demands of the local plan to deliver c600 units per annum is extremely challenging. Actions identified within this Framework will need to be implemented to achieve this ambition. The Council was one of the first in the country to have its Local Plan approved in July 2015. The approved Plan gives developers information on sites and confidence to move forward to deliver. City deal and its infrastructure first approach is unlocking further economic and housing opportunities. Promotion and delivery of the economic opportunities will help deliver Housing numbers. The SHMA

indicated that there is a strong demand for market housing in South Ribble and a demand particularly for 3 bedroomed houses. The challenges ahead are to ensure that other types and tenures are delivered consistently by developers to meet current and future housing need.

## **Supporting Delivery**

Ambitious growth targets have been set. To deliver on these housing numbers it is essential that the Council focus its own resources on helping to bring forward sites. It will proactively work to promote the Borough as a growth area focusing on the economic opportunities such as Cuerden, Lancashire Business Park and key housing sites. Additional economic growth will act as a catalyst for housing development and is part of the SHMA work.

The Local Plan is based upon a Central Lancashire footprint. Therefore the Council will continue to work alongside both Preston City Council and Chorley Council to support housing delivery. Central Government also has delivery of new homes as a main priority. A number of key measures have been implemented during the past 12 months to support housebuilding, many of which have come through the recently published Housing White Paper. There has also been a number of financial measures to support housing delivery announced including: Starter Homes Fund, Accelerated Construction, Housing Infrastructure Fund and Home Building Fund. The Council will lead in bringing forward appropriate funding streams to enable sites to be delivered. It will continue to work with Homes and Communities Agency and other strategic partners to enable key sites.

## **Investment Strategy**

The Council is also considering options available to build and develop housing. It is developing an Investment Strategy. This Strategy will look at options for developing its own land holdings commercially and as potential housing sites as well as delivering 21<sup>st</sup> century community infrastructure. Some resources have been allocated in the Council Medium Term Financial Strategy for investing directly in new assets. Housing may be a potential avenue.

However, the Council is also exploring how it could potentially develop housing in its own right. Some smaller sites could deliver 1-2 bedroom homes that meet specific need identified in the SHMA.

## **Balancing the offer**

For the economic regeneration of South Ribble to remain buoyant and for communities to remain sustainable, there is a need for a balanced housing market. This balanced housing market will be reflected in the homes being built. This mix

will include family homes, starter homes, affordable homes, executive homes, bungalows, apartments and self-build. The offer also needs to meet the changing needs of the existing population, young and old as well as new residents that the economic growth will attract. It will not be solely numbers which govern the Housing Framework and resulting policies, but also **quality and mix to meet need**. The Council supports the delivery of this different mix of homes, where it can, through planning policy

## Strategic Housing Market Assessment

The SHMA has now been completed and supported by comprehensive data and analysis. It identifies the future need for housing in the Borough based upon economic and population growth projections. It confirms that the housing growth numbers within the Central Core Strategy is still fit for purpose and hence the targets set out in the Local Plan to 2026-27 need to be sought.

However, it also makes further projections on the proportions of new homes by type and tenure. 70% of all new housing will need to be built for market sale. The report suggests that the proportions of market housing by type should be:

	<i>1 Bed</i>	<i>2 Bed</i>	<i>3 Bed</i>	<i>4+ Bed</i>
<i>Market Housing</i>	3%	32%	52%	13%

10% of development should be targeted at affordable home ownership. The suggested type proportions are:

	<i>1 Bed</i>	<i>2 Bed</i>	<i>3 Bed</i>	<i>4+ Bed</i>
<i>Low-cost Home Ownership</i>	12%	42%	38%	8%

It is proposed that the Council should seek 20% of all new development as affordable rent. The proportions to type are identified below.

	<i>1 Bed</i>	<i>2 Bed</i>	<i>3 Bed</i>	<i>4+ Bed</i>
<i>Affordable Housing (rented)</i>	45%	28%	25%	2%

This work identifies that there is a requirement, particularly in the affordable rent arena, for 1 bed housing. This does reflect that South Ribble does not have a large proportion of apartments and flats.

It is essential that the right mix of housing is developed. This evidence will help all Council officers in dealing with potential developers and new opportunities that arise to achieve the housing required for South Ribble.

## **Home Ownership**

The Council is committed to supporting the aspirations of residents to own their own homes. A dedicated webpage has been developed offering advice to residents on affordable home ownership products, links to developments, and the ability to register interest for upcoming schemes.

A number of measures and packages have been created to assist home ownership which include:

- Help to Buy and Help to Buy ISA
- Starter Homes
- Shared Ownership
- Rent to Buy

Officers will continue to promote these opportunities and work with developers to deliver such schemes.

Emerging Government policy outlined in the Housing White Paper states that it expects 10% of all new housing across the country to be “affordable home ownership” typology.

### ***Starter Homes***

South Ribble Borough Council supports the development of Starter Homes, and will bring forward sites on which they will be developed.

This new home ownership product is a key element of the Housing and Planning Act to support home ownership. Starter Homes will enable first time buyers aged between 23 and 40 years to purchase a newly built home with a minimum of a 20% discount. Developers will be able to include Starter Homes as part of their affordable housing contribution on new build sites.

Three sites in South Ribble have been identified and schemes developed at:

- The Maltings, Penwortham
- Altcar Lane, Leyland
- Duddle Lane, Walton-le-Dale

### ***Shared Ownership***

There are already a number of shared ownership schemes across the borough, and the Council will continue to support further development.

Shared ownership schemes allow for a percentage share of a property to be purchased, with the remaining unsold share remaining with a housing association (or similar). This enables those on lower incomes and with smaller deposits to

purchase their own home. Rent is paid on the unsold shares to the housing association. Occupiers can purchase more shares of the property, up to 100%. This is known as staircasing. The Government has committed £4 billion to support the development of shared ownership homes in the Spending Review.

## **Social and Affordable Rent**

Social and affordable rented properties account for just over 10% of the housing stock in the borough. The SHMA has identified the need to develop more affordable units and housing association previously have developed some of this provision. Whilst some incentives (£1.4bn) have been announced in Autumn 2016, rent cap and reduction policies have reduced their appetite to deliver. This is unlikely to change until clarity of rent policy post 2020 is established. It is therefore essential that the Council work with developers to deliver an offer within a scheme.

The Council has created a policy and procedure to spend commuted sums for affordable housing on delivery of units. Implementation of this package of measures will see new affordable homes delivered meeting needs of targeted groups.

Further work will be required to look at how the requirement for 1 bed properties is delivered.

All of the registered providers in the borough participate in Select Move (the choice based letting system for Central Lancashire) and allocate the majority of their properties via this shared register. Since January 2016 more flexibility has been introduced to the scheme and up to 25% of properties can now be advertised via other platforms.

### **THE COUNCIL WILL**

- Bring forward the South Ribble Local Plan housing sites.
- Work with partners to on new methods of bringing forward a variety of new homes supporting housebuilding across South Ribble.
- Determine the role of housing development, including market for sale, affordable and private rented sector in the Council's Investment Strategy.
- Explore how the Council could develop housing units.
- Implement a policy to support home ownership in the borough, including the management of a register of interest and promotion of schemes
- Implement a policy for using commuted sums for affordable housing.
- Support a Registered Provider Developer Partnership.
- Maintain an updated evidence base for the Housing Framework.
- Review the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.
- Actively participate in the Lancashire Housing Work Stream.

## **PRIORITY 2: Ensure that sustainable communities are at the heart of the growth of housing.**

The Council has great growth ambitions in both economic and housing terms as outlined in the Local Plan and in its City Deal partnership. The first priority identifies how the Council will work to secure the housing numbers over the next 3 years. It is crucial, however, that this growth develops new sustainable communities. Moreover it is important that growth helps make existing communities more sustainable. This section outlines some of the actions that will be taken to deliver this.

### **Developer Contributions**

Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) has been introduced by the Council on development. However, this has been “pooled” as part of the Central Lancashire City Deal programme. This decision ensures targeted Government that new major infrastructure such as roads is delivered across the area. However, the Local Plan identifies some larger developments sites. It is important that, through the planning process, the developer creates appropriate community facilities within their construction programme or appropriate section 106 agreements are put in place so the Council can fund delivery.

### **Health, Leisure and Wellbeing**

The Council has embarked upon a review of health and leisure provision within the Borough with the aim of developing a comprehensive approach to meeting the aspirations and needs of the current and emerging population. Work has started with South Ribble Partnership colleagues. Some external funding from One Public Estate is helping support this project. The outcomes will deliver the right offers for the growing, economically vibrant South Ribble.

### **Strategic Asset Review**

This work will help identify leisure land and open space that needs enhancing to improve place. It will also identify opportunity sites that can deliver new housing and feed into the Investment Strategy. It may also help deliver some funding streams to assist the further development of South Ribble as a place to live.

### **Economic Growth and Investment**

The Local Plan and City Deal have identified areas for economic development and investment. It is crucial that the Borough is promoted in the wider Region and nationally as a place to invest. A diverse housing offer couple with outstanding public real and leisure offer is essential. This promotion work will continue and develop to

attract more employment. Increased economic activity will help drive sustainable communities. It will also attract commercial leisure operators into South Ribble towns that will enhance the diverse offer.

### **Aspirational Needs**

Further work is required to understand the gaps in the leisure and retail offer in South Ribble. The Council will then look at how marketing can be targeted to attract those businesses to the Borough. Again the delivery of more homes and increased economic activity is essential to deliver on this.

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL**

- Ensure sites that are developed create appropriate community benefits or pay s106 to enhance existing offers.
- Working with partners we will be developing the creation of Health, Leisure and Well-being Campuses will provide for life-long health and well-being according to need across the Borough's communities
- Continue to support economic growth to bring inward investment into the Borough recognising strengths and promoting opportunities.
- Use of the Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should secure employment growth and skills development linked with local communities.
- Ensure that available housing reflects need and ambition is aspirational and continues to be located where it best serves sustainable approach to living and working in South Ribble.

## **PRIORITY 3: SUPPORT THE INCLUSION AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF RESIDENTS**

### **Housing for Older and Vulnerable People**

South Ribble has an ageing population and the Council's ambitions are to have a wide range of homes to meet needs and aspirations. The Council will bring forward policies to drive the building of a range of homes including bungalows, lifetime homes and adapted homes through to purpose built extra care provision. There are 38 sheltered housing schemes in the Borough. Currently, there are no purpose built extra care housing schemes.

It is important that residents continue to play an active role in their communities as they age and become infirmed. The Council will engage with commissioners and providers such as the Preston, Chorley and South Ribble Clinical Commissioning Group and Lancashire County Council, to help ensure that all partners recognise that high quality, safe and secure homes for older and/or vulnerable people are essential if people are to live well in South Ribble. The wider benefits in keeping people healthy and out of the care system are recognised and supported. The Council will strive to deliver greater funding to support residents to remain in their own home.

New housing development is fundamental to the Council's growth ambitions. It will seek to influence new housing development, through the introduction of a policy which will promote housing which meets the new optional housing standards.

In recent years the use of technology has grown to help people remain safe and secure in their homes. Across Lancashire commissioners have introduced Telecare, a form of distant medical support, to help people remain independent in their homes. The policy will seek to take advantage of opportunities, wherever possible, to look at further funding from commissioners to extend this and make use of future technologies. This will ensure that full benefits are seen by residents while keeping people out of hospital longer.

It is a priority to develop a policy on Housing for Older and Vulnerable people.

### **Disabled Facilities**

The Council delivers a Disabled Facilities Grant service. This scheme provides funding that enables adaptation works to be carried out on homes of people (both children and adults) with needs to remain within their own homes. The Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2012 identified that 2410 homes across the Borough had adaptation. However, it identified that there is still a significant need and, taking account of the demographics, the need is likely to grow.

Funding is provided as part of the Better Care Fund (passported via Lancashire County Council). Resources are targeted to providing Disabled Facilities grants and is playing an important role in enabling individuals to live safely in their homes.

Additionally it has reduced levels of delayed hospital discharges. New procedures have driven improvements including reduced waiting lists, more choice and satisfaction rates are excellent.

### **Groups requiring specialist accommodation**

The Council ensures there is a variety of accommodation to meet the housing needs of certain groups such as households fleeing domestic abuse and adults with learning difficulties. The existing accommodation and future need will be reviewed when necessary, in consultation with Commissioners.

Appropriate, affordable accommodation for single people is a specific need within South Ribble identified in the SHMA. Work will continue to examine how this need can be addressed.

At the time of writing this Framework, the Council had just undertaken its Gypsy and Traveller Assessment and is reviewing the implications for the Borough.

### **Homelessness**

This is addressed in the statutory Homelessness Prevention Review and Strategy which has been most recently reviewed in March 2017. This has taken into account the Welfare Reform measures stated above, and the anticipated duties to be placed on the Council from the Homelessness Reduction Bill.

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL**

- Develop and introduce a policy to support the development of Housing for Older and Vulnerable People.
- Continue to deliver an effective and efficient Disabled Facilities grant service
- Work with health partners to seek additional funding opportunities for home improvements and adaptations to meet increasing demand.
- Undertake a survey of all existing older person's accommodation as part of the Housing Condition Survey
- Explore the options to deliver more 1 bedroom accommodation in the Borough
- Review the options for developing an extra care scheme.

## **PRIORITY 4: MAINTAINING AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EXISTING HOMES**

Ensuring the housing stock of South Ribble is of good quality is essential in promoting health and wellbeing, safety and sustainability. Legislation sets standards, and the Council has existing Empty Properties and Private Sector policies and actions to improve stock and provide warm, safe homes.

### **Decent Homes Standard**

A comprehensive Private Sector Housing Condition Survey was undertaken within the Borough in 2012. It demonstrated that the existing housing stock in South Ribble is better than the national average in meeting the national Decent Homes Standard. Nationally 78% of housing stock meets the Decent Homes Standard (English Housing Survey, 2012). For South Ribble the figure is 80.2%. The criteria for the standard is set in legislation. Homes not meeting the Decent Homes Standard do so for varied reasons including energy efficiency, trip hazards and ventilation.

### **Private Sector Stock**

Homes in the private sector are divided into owner occupied and private rented. The majority of homes across South Ribble are owner occupied. Most of the homes in this sector are well maintained and to a high standard. The Council's existing policies help home owners maintain their homes to high standards.

However, as identified in SHMA, many home owners are on low incomes. The Condition Survey also identified that many of these homes did not meet the decent homes standard and some had Category 1 failings. The Council has identified this need and created a Decent Homes Grants Programme to support home owners address non-decency within their homes. This programme is funded for 3 years and is already making an impact.

The level of private rented sector properties in South Ribble is considerably lower than the national and county average, the Council will monitor both the growth and quality of the sector, to ensure the sector remains sustainable. Private sector housing plays an important role within local communities by providing accessible and flexible accommodation for economically active residents. It can also support the reduction of homelessness, now local authorities can discharge their duty by placing households in private sector accommodation.

Private rented sector properties are more likely to be non-decent than other tenures in South Ribble. This reflects the national picture as identified in the English

Housing Survey. Further work on this area is required and will be addressed in a targeted update of the Housing Condition survey. Further work will be undertaken to establish a Landlords Forum that will help target improvements in this sector.

The Council has an Enforcement Policy, and it will continue to use legislative powers to help ensure homes meet the Decent Homes Standard, taking enforcement action where home owners or private landlords refuse to engage with the Council and address non-decent housing.

As well as using its statutory powers, the Council will run a campaign to improve the standards across the private rented sector. It will seek to engage with landlords to educate them about their duties, and offer guidance and support where it can. It will also seek to engage with tenants, so they are more aware of their rights, and can highlight issues where the landlord is not fully undertaking their duties.

### **Empty Homes**

At the time of writing this strategy, there are 354 long term empty homes, which accounts for approximately 0.73% of total housing stock. 100% of these properties have been fully inspected and each has a case file. In the last 6 months every empty property contact has been approached to establish the reason the homes are empty. The Council will continue to implement its Empty Homes policy (which was approved in June 2013) to ensure current stock is fully used and communities remain vibrant.

The Empty Properties Policy was reviewed in 2017, together with A Place to Live. This is a partnership project between the Council and Methodist Action. Recoverable grants are provided to the owners of empty properties to make necessary improvements. The properties are then leased to Methodist Action who rent the properties to applicants on the Council's Waiting List at no more than the Local Housing Allowance.

The grants programme is delivering results. More affordable homes are being added to the stock and targeted at key areas. For example new flats have been created at a scheme in Leyland.

### **Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth**

The Council has an excellent record in securing funding for energy efficiency initiatives. It has a duty to report to Government on energy efficiency standards every two years. The most recent report was in 2017.

The activities the Council and its partners undertook resulted in a 1.71% reduction in residential carbon emissions, which was higher than the target of 1.66% set.

The Council's focus on reducing fuel poverty and carbon emissions to vulnerable households will remain (e.g. the Winter Warm campaign.)

ECO2 Amendment Order allows local authorities to help households living in fuel poverty, or living on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home, by matching them with energy suppliers using the new 'flexible eligibility' mechanism. Local authorities, through their social, housing and health responsibilities, are well placed to identify households in fuel poverty, or vulnerable, including those householders that are elderly and those with a health condition that can be exacerbated by living in a cold home. ECO2t will make a series of changes to the current arrangements.

The Council will review its policies and seek funding opportunities to ensure it remains in the forefront of energy efficiency.

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL**

- Maintain the grant programme to reduce the number of non-Decent Homes in the borough.
- Continue the Empty Homes campaign to support the reoccupation of properties.
- Maintain a database of empty properties.
- Update Housing Stock Condition Survey.
- Produce and implement an action plan (which includes the use of the Enforcement Policy) to tackle improvements to housing stock.
- Look for funding to support energy efficiency and carbon reduction projects for private homeowners.
- Complete Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA report).