Lancashire Housing Strategy, Policies and Priorities 2010
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Lancashire Housing Strategy, Policies and Priorities

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Lancashire Housing Strategy has been prepared by the Lancashire Strategic Housing Partnership to set out housing policies and priorities for the sub region; and to establish stronger delivery and governance arrangements at the Lancashire level. It does so as part of a framework of housing strategies which address housing issues and deliver actions regionally, sub regionally and locally.

1.2 In line with the MAAs and the remit of the HCA Single Conversation and Local Investment Plan processes the Lancashire Housing Strategy integrates with economic development, regeneration, transport and spatial priorities. These priorities as a whole are being used to make the case for Lancashire and its places through the development of the Lancashire Sub Regional Integrated Strategy and in the development of the first incarnation of the Regional Strategy RS2010. Making the case for Lancashire will remain relevant in any post RS2010 arrangements. The Lancashire Housing Strategy also cross cuts other key policy areas including health, the support of vulnerable people and the climate change agenda. Establishing housing priorities on the basis of their integration with other strategic policy areas should enable cross cutting investment which will add value and help deliver key development and community needs.

2.0 Purpose and Approach of the Strategy

2.1 The strategy works across the key themes of strategic development, housing delivery and community leadership to set out an approach to housing in the Lancashire sub region which will:

- Meet the housing needs of all communities across Lancashire.
- Support the delivery of the sub region's MAAs, HCA Single Conversations and Local Investment Plans
- Support the overall development strategy of the Lancashire Single Integrated Strategy and the sub region's input into post RS2010 arrangements.
- Support the delivery of Community Strategy priorities and LAA outcomes.

3.0 Policy Context and the Role of Housing

3.1 Research and current policy on housing and the delivery of economic development and regeneration recognises the interdependence of housing and economic growth. It is considered that the right housing offer can support economic growth. Conversely weaknesses in housing markets and the housing offer can act as a drag on growth potential and wider economic and social inclusion. As a consequence housing is now being more closely integrated with economic development, regeneration and place shaping. This rationale is reflected through the establishment of the Homes and Communities Agency and forms the basis of the Current Regional Housing Strategy published in January 2009. Whilst the Regional Housing Strategy 2009 may now be superseded by new arrangements under the new
Government, it is likely that the expectation will remain that sub regions, groupings of local authorities and individual local authorities will address at their respective scales the 3 strategic objectives of:

- Achieving the right quantity of housing
- Continuing to raise the quality of the existing housing stock
- Connecting people to the improved housing offer

3.2 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) are engaging with local authorities on all aspects of housing and regeneration through the Single Conversation process. This covers the totality of housing and regeneration priorities in a local area with a strong focus on interconnectedness. Through this "conversation" agreement is to be reached on the contents of the Local Investment Plan. In the Lancashire sub region 3 Single Conversations and 3 Local Investment Plans are being taken forward on the basis of the Multi Area Agreements for Pennine Lancashire, the Fylde Coast and the submitted MAA for Mid Lancashire. The core of the Local Investment Plans deal with housing and regeneration issues, but these must be considered within the wider context of the area covering the economy, education, skills, the environment, climate change, transport and health. In this way the most effective investment packages can be identified.

3.3 Local Strategic Partnerships through their Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements recognise the wider importance of housing not only in terms of the economy but as a key contributor to health and well being, addressing climate change, community safety and the environment. Housing cross cuts key priorities and outcomes to support social inclusion, community engagement and community cohesion. Affordable housing has been identified as an indicator within the Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen LAAs, and is being specifically addressed as a "big ticket issue" as part of the Lancashire LAA. Big ticket issues have been identified by the Lancashire Partnership as relating to those indicators which must be prioritised as they will have the greatest impact in terms of the achievement of overall priorities and outcomes and significant implications for communities if not achieved. The other "big ticket issues" address the economy, climate change and health inequalities and therefore also have links with strategic housing

3.4 Local Authorities and partners in Lancashire are proactively taking forward these policy agendas and rationale. Work is taking place at the spatial levels most able to achieve the greatest outcomes.

3.5 At a sub regional level and based on MAAs, priorities for sustainable economic growth, housing, transport and connectivity are being identified through the Lancashire Sub Regional Integrated Strategy (SRIS). This work is informed by sub area priorities for Pennine Lancashire, Fylde Coast and Mid Lancashire but also considers issues that cross the boundaries of these footprints at varying levels.

3.6 Sub area housing strategies for Pennine Lancashire, Fylde Coast and Mid Lancashire (currently being developed) identify issues actions and priorities for housing across each area. These priorities are worked through the sub regional housing strategy and into the SRIS and at the same time provide a framework for actions at individual local authority level. The delivery plans for
these area strategies will form a key delivery mechanism for agreed sub regional housing priorities.

3.7 Work at each spatial level and through each delivery mechanism needs to be mutually supportive. The cross cutting nature of housing and its relationship with a range of strategies on varying issues at a number of spatial levels mean that it will be important to get the sequencing and relationships between each strategic intervention right.

3.8 Based upon the rationale and policy context set out above the following strategic vision and aims have been identified.

4.0 Vision

To contribute to the creation of sustainable communities and high quality places and to help realise Lancashire's sustainable growth potential

5.0 Aims

- Shape Lancashire's housing markets to support sustainable economic growth by attracting and retaining high value workers
- To ensure that through the provision of high quality housing and residential environments all places in Lancashire are supported to be the best that they can and provide the highest possible quality of life.
- Ensure Lancashire's housing markets are balanced and sustainable providing sufficient amounts of the right types and quality of housing including affordable housing to meet housing and wider community needs
- Supporting regeneration to improve the quality of housing and places so we have mixed, inclusive and vibrant communities.
- To meet the housing need of vulnerable people through overall housing provision and through a strategic approach to supported housing needs.
6.0 Policy Drivers

1. Sustainable Housing Growth

Sub Regional Policy 1

Working sub regionally to support and take forward housing growth which will:

- Meet local housing needs
- Support sustainable economic growth and regeneration
- Maintain and enhance environmental quality and capacity and contribute to carbon reduction measures

Sub Regional Policy 2

Planning and housing policies at an MAA and local authority level will ensure that the quality and mix of housing types and sizes contributes to the maintenance and creation of high quality sustainable communities and places.

6.1 Despite the current recession and the issues this presents, the long term priority for housing continues to focus on the need to ensure that everyone has access to a decent and affordable home. CLG growth indications and economic development based projections are higher than the housing figures to 2021 set out in the former Regional Spatial Strategy. CLG's updated household projections March 2009 covering the period 2006-2031 confirm that the need for additional housing continues to grow despite economic difficulties. In seeking to set the strategic direction for housing growth in Lancashire the strategy must give a steer regarding the key issues for Lancashire which will influence the housing numbers and the spatial distributions needed over time.

6.2 Lancashire Housing Market Assessments and Projections for Housing Growth

6.3 The context for housing strategy is set by the overall dynamics of housing demand and supply. Projected housing demand and planned supply in Lancashire was considered through the regional SHMA work undertaken by ECOTEC. These drew together 2008 household projections from CLG, and some NWDA regional employment based household projections developed by Experian.

6.4 The regional SHMA work identified the characteristics of each market area along with anticipated levels of future housing requirement and levels of affordable housing need
6.5 Projections for areas within the sub region are set out in Table 1 below. For each projection growth is made up of natural increase and net migration. Across the North West, including Lancashire housing need and housing markets are currently largely driven by demographics rather than the economy.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blackburn/Hyndburn</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>714</td>
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<td>Burnley/Pendle</td>
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<td>Central Lancashire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lancaster</td>
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<td>810</td>
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<td>Rossendale</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4378</td>
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6.6 RSS targets and all 3 projections set out the need for significantly more housing over the next 21 years or so. The latest (2009) projections from CLG take into account some of the impacts of the recession. Even allowing for the recession the projections still continue to anticipate increasing levels of household growth particularly in Lancaster, Central Lancashire, Fylde Coast and Blackburn/Hyndburn housing market areas. The economic projections anticipate a smaller overall increase in housing above RSS levels than the CLG household growth figures, but focus this growth on the Central Lancashire Housing Market Area and to a lesser extent the Blackburn/Hyndburn, Burnley/Pendle and Fylde Coast areas. The economic model was developed by Experian and apportioned to Housing Market areas by Ecotec. The projection is based on patterns and levels of employment in 2006 and has not therefore attempted to forecast spatial changes.

6.7 With regard to housing growth the Review of Strategic Housing Market Assessments in Lancashire 2008 considers the housing market areas across Lancashire including linkages with Manchester, Merseyside and Cumbria. It identifies the key strategic issues within the sub region as responding to demographic change particularly the need to meet the needs of an aging population, supporting economic growth, and providing affordable housing.

6.8 Levels of Increase

Meeting Demographic Needs
6.9 The need to increase overall supply to meet demographic change particularly that relating to an ageing population is relevant in all areas but particularly in Lancaster and the Fylde Coast. This should be tailored through local housing delivery mechanisms to meet the needs of each Housing Market Area. The capacity of the sub region as a whole and individual Housing Market Areas to sustainably accommodate further projected levels of growth needs to be considered. Growth levels need to be assessed alongside assessments on environmental and infrastructure capacity, economic and connectivity potential. This will then lead to the consideration of the degree to which this growth can or should be directed to areas of economic growth to sustainably support that growth.

Meeting Economic Need

6.10 The Lancashire sub region is made up of relatively distinct economic functional and housing market areas with extensive links to neighbouring towns and conurbations both within and outside the sub region. However, these areas are thematically and sectorally linked and there is evidence of an increasing need for economic functionality and interdependency between the areas. Through the MAAs and the SRIS it is intended that these areas should become better integrated and economically mutually supportive both between themselves and with neighbouring city regions.

6.11 The economic growth potential of the sub region increasingly depends upon these areas responding to each other favourably and in a sustainable manner, reflecting a common acceptance of each others economic strengths, challenges and opportunities. A key element of this is to ensure that sub regional infrastructure including housing is capable of supporting challenging economic growth ambitions by ensuring the housing offer and enhanced housing choice are capable of fulfilling the needs of existing residents and attracting skilled people to the area. Interventions in the housing market should be aligned with economic priorities, and balanced with environmental priorities to allow resulting benefits to be maximised.

6.12 Quality of housing and quality of place are fundamental to housing growth successfully supporting both economic growth and community needs. Sustainability and the environment are integral parts of the growth agenda because these are recognised as key components in relocation decisions and attracting new business into the area. While some of Lancashire's current housing markets need to improve their housing offer in order to support the economy there are also some places of exceptional quality that are attractive to the market. It is necessary to employ a balanced approach to ensure that currently attractive areas do not develop beyond their capacity to the point whereby their quality and attractiveness are lost.

6.13 The ability to deliver Housing Growth

6.14 While the underlying growing demand for housing remains, the financial crisis and recession are currently having a profound effect on the housing market. Consultants ECOTEC have concluded in their Final Draft Report on the Central Lancashire and Blackpool Growth Point Impact Study (March 2010) that sub regionally housing growth, strategic land supply and development
programmes are all likely to slip by a number of years. This will make the delivery of strategic housing land supply extremely challenging.

6.15 More specifically housing supply levels envisaged by the Growth Point between now and 2017 are unlikely to be achieved, while the annual levels of growth suggested by the previous RSS targets in Mid Lancashire are unlikely to be achieved until after 2013. At the same time new approaches will be required to sustain market progression in Pennine Lancashire.

The issues this raises will need to be factored into growth proposals in a number of ways:

- The balance to be struck between growth through new build and growth through regeneration and the role of the private rented sector
- The timing and phasing of strategic housing sites
- The need to take forward sub regional strategic housing sites as part of a package of economic development, investment and infrastructure proposals to maximise resources, build developer confidence and ensure the best chance of delivery

6.16 Sub Regional Priorities for the Delivery of Sustainable Housing Growth

6.17 Under the arrangements for the Regional Strategy, work was taking place regionally to enable options for housing growth to be set. Whilst the Regional Strategy will no longer progress on a statutory basis as previously envisaged, the evidence gathered will still provide useful background data for sub regions in considering their own growth needs and priorities. It will be important for sub regions to understand and articulate their housing growth needs and to ensure that housing underpins wider growth priorities through the implementation of the MAAs and the progress of the SRIS.

- Working cooperatively to provide a more competitive housing offer

6.18 The key aspiration of the three MAAs is to drive forward sustainable economic growth. The economic growth potential of the sub region increasingly depends upon sub areas working in an integrated way to build links and support each others economic strengths, challenges and opportunities. This will underpin a more competitive platform in relation to neighbouring conurbations. It is essential that this integrated approach extends to and is supported by key infrastructure provision including housing. A sustainable and integrated sub regional housing market offer needs to be pursued which will both fulfil the needs of existing residents and attract people to the area.

- Building Confidence to Attract Private Investment

6.19 As public resources are significantly reduced over the coming months and years the ability to secure private sector investment and support for growth and regeneration will be crucial. The ability to work in an integrated way across local authorities and with key partners including the HCA will be
important. In this way confidence can be built to develop innovative solutions with a level of certainty and security which will attract private sector finance and investment.

- **Linking strategic housing growth areas with strategic areas for economic growth**

6.20 Prioritising strategic locations for housing growth in line with strategic economic development priorities including strategic employment sites and transport growth hubs will enable local authorities, Government and its agencies and other partners to maximise their support and investment and to make the best use of scarce resources. This in turn will provide a basis for attracting and enabling development in a climate of severe investment challenges.

- **Spatial Priorities for Inclusion in Identification of Strategic Housing Sites**

6.21 In establishing a set of sub regional strategic housing locations and sites, it is important to consider those areas already identified through area housing strategies and other strategic documents and schemes as being of sub regional significance. These are:

  o Central Lancashire and Blackpool Growth Point.
  o Other Mid Lancashire Strategic Priorities.
  o Pennine Lancashire Market Progression Model and Transformation agenda.

6.22 **Central Lancashire and Blackpool Growth Point**

6.23 The original objective of the Growth Point was to deliver 21,200 homes by 2016/17 representing an accelerated provision within RSS targets of 5,000 homes between 2008/09 and 2016/17. Of this, the aim was that 4,000 – 5,000 homes would be affordable, built to high standards and integrated within mixed tenure developments. Capital and revenue funding was made available to support the growth plans together with the opportunity to bid for further funding through the Growth Point and Community Infrastructure Fund. The successful bid did not change the overall RSS housing provision requirements up to 2021 but was designed to bring a greater proportion of new housing forward for construction during the earlier years of RSS up to 2017.

6.24 Current economic conditions mean that the original timings for the levels of housing supply envisaged for the growth point up to 2017 are now unlikely to be met. The programme of development for the Growth Point is subject to review in line with updated land availability and market/ viability data.

6.25 Whilst Growth Point objectives are unlikely to be realised in the short term the rationale remains a key priority within a wider set of sub regional priority areas for sustainable housing growth. It provides an important opportunity to help secure funding for housing related infrastructure and enabling initiatives in a climate of reduced resources which will help to deliver sub regional housing growth aspirations as a whole. At the same time the growth will be managed as part of the sub regional housing offer to ensure that oversupply does not
occur in this area which would be detrimental and unsustainable to Central Lancashire, Pennine Lancashire and the sub region as a whole.

6.26 Other Mid Lancashire Strategic Priorities

6.27 Lancaster District has its own relatively distinct economic footprint and largely self-contained housing market. However, as recognised in the Mid Lancashire MAA, it does play a wider role in the south Cumbria area, particularly around Morecambe Bay. This role is likely to grow as the area's cultural and heritage assets are developed and as a result of initiatives such as the "Energy Coast", a £2bn programme aimed at establishing the NW coast as a major national hub for low carbon and renewable energy production. This will inevitably increase demand for housing in areas that are environmentally sensitive.

6.28 In terms of housing, the first priority should be to meet internal needs wherever possible, especially when the housing market is depressed. However, the district's developing role as a hub will require a thorough examination of how housing needs in the wider Morecambe Bay area can best be met in the future. This will be led through the MAA process which is seeking to take forward discussions on housing market linkages between Lancaster and South Lakes/South Cumbria. It will be examined in detail at a local level through forthcoming local development framework documents. Lancaster District is well positioned to accommodate growth in a sustainable way through the LDF policy of "urban concentration" and the identification of key previously developed sites through its recently completed Brownfield Strategy.

6.29 West Lancashire is defined as part of the Liverpool City Region and the Mid Lancashire MAA. The relationships between Merseyside and Lancashire in relation to housing growth priorities must be considered. Mechanisms to fully understand these cross boundary relationships and how they can be fully integrated into housing growth scenarios are being developed through the Mid Lancashire MAA. At the same time integration with economic growth opportunities locally and as a part of wider sub regional aspirations is critical.

6.30 Housing Growth Through the Pennine Lancashire Transformation Agenda

6.31 The Pennine Lancashire Housing Strategy promotes housing growth, economic competitiveness and inclusion to achieve a balanced housing market. A transformation agenda has been set which will manage housing priorities through a market progression model. The model focuses on the twin objectives of securing housing and neighbourhood regeneration alongside housing growth. Over a 20 year period housing priorities will move through stabilisation/early renewal (2008-14); renewal/early transformation (2015-21) and transformation (2022-28). As with the Growth Point economic conditions mean that the trajectory and progression of this model need realignment as part of a sub regional approach to housing growth. The objective for Pennine Lancashire will be to both anchor growth locally while at the same time connecting with wider opportunity. This will include early prioritisation of strategic sites which link to competitive economic growth aspirations within Pennine Lancashire and Mid Lancashire and beyond to the Manchester and Leeds City Regions.
2: Affordable Housing

Sub Regional Policy 3
To work in partnership on a sub regional and sub area basis to deliver sufficient amounts of affordable housing across the sub region through new housing developments the effective use of existing and empty homes including the strategic development of the private rented sector and an integrated approach to providing rural housing

6.32 One of the principle drivers for increasing housing numbers is the pressing need to deliver an appropriate supply of affordable housing. Meeting affordable housing needs across the Lancashire sub region is a major issue and must be recognised as a key sub regional priority.

6.33 In the few years leading up to the current credit crunch and recession, there was a major increase in house prices across Lancashire. The main impact of these rises has been to precipitate a crisis of affordability on a much wider scale than previously experienced. The picture varies across the sub region. There are particular affordability issues associated with rural and coastal areas as well as pressure on areas associated with commuting to key employment centres. Areas such as Wyre, Ribble Valley and Fylde are amongst the least affordable in the north of England. In contrast parts of Pennine Lancashire have some of the most affordable housing. However even here the issue of low wages means that even where property prices are low they are still high relative to local wages and consequently remain out of reach of many local residents.

6.34 In addressing Lancashire’s affordable housing needs, priorities need to be identified in relation to:

- the levels and location of affordable housing required as part of sustainable housing growth and the provision of new homes to ensure the development and maintenance of mixed tenure, sustainable communities.
- Levels and locations of affordable housing required to support local housing needs. This will include addressing issues of housing quality.
- The degree to which need can be met by a more strategic approach to supplying high quality homes through the Private Rented Sector
- The creation of mixed tenure sustainable communities
- The approach needed to meet affordable housing needs in rural areas
- The integration of affordable housing with wider issues such as the use of existing stock, linkages with improvements in incomes, economic development etc.

Affordable Housing within the Local Area Agreements
Affordable housing is recognised as a key issue within the Lancashire LAA and the Blackburn with Darwen LAA.

The urgency of affordable housing provision within the Lancashire LAA has led to its identification as a “big ticket issue”. The big ticket issue process is seeking to identify priority actions which will make the most difference in resolving issues and meeting targets. The process to date has recognised that the extent to which affordable housing can be delivered will be determined by the degree to which authorities can work sub regionally and across sub areas particularly with regard to crucial relationships with GONW and HCA.

Early work on the big ticket issue has identified the following as key priorities to take forward. These will be refined, reconsidered, added to etc as the process continues.

- Strengthen collaboration between key partners in Lancashire, and with regional and national agencies to ensure sites are secured, vacant properties are utilised and all available resources are used to encourage the delivery of additional affordable homes. Efforts will focus on securing the commitment of political leaders and senior officers in local government and on influencing the HCA on allocations given directly to developers and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).
- Engage partner agencies and developers in making available houses that are built but are not available for rent, in reactivation of stalled sites and in utilisation of empty housing stock. ‘Purchase and repair’ schemes will be explored as means of converting empty stock into affordable rental property.
- Secure the longer-term supply of affordable housing by increasing ‘gap-funding’ for RSLs and developers through the development of a flexible, centrally-managed, equity loan scheme; the appointment of Rural Housing Enablers to bring forward rural affordable housing schemes; and identification and securing of publicly-owned sites for future affordable housing.

Role of the Private Rented Sector

Market commentaries suggest that the private rented sector is growing in importance as a source of supply to meet affordable housing needs and provide a flexible tenure choice. It is important that the sector grows and develops to help meet the housing challenge and that it is able to respond effectively to changing demand. The level of investment directed by individuals and institutions into the private rented sector will strongly influence both the volume and quality of supply. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the extent to which a more strategic approach to the private rented sector can be taken across the sub region. This will include examining ways to attract a more institutional approach to provision. Building investor confidence in both new build and the regeneration of exiting properties is critical as the balance between risk and returns is key.

At the same time measures to mitigate poor conditions and poor management standards in the existing private rented sector are essential especially in those neighbourhoods with high concentrations of such properties and more generally to assist the most vulnerable households. Issues of condition and
decency, energy efficiency, management standards and wider neighbourhood impacts will all be important and are considered in the following section on regeneration.

3: Regeneration

Sub Regional Policy 4

To ensure that the sub regional housing stock is brought up to a high standard of quality including where appropriate through demolition and new build; and that the structure, type, mix and balance of the housing offer is able to contribute to the overall quality of life and health of residents in Lancashire. This will be achieved through a priority focus on attracting investment to the Housing Market Renewal Area, interventions in inner Blackpool and other key regeneration priorities across the sub region.

6.40 The regeneration of existing housing stock will play a critical role in effectively increasing supply within the Lancashire sub region and creating high quality places to support community and economic needs. A central strand of sub regional housing policy must be to pursue quality, growth and community needs through an integrated approach to providing new homes whilst regenerating and replacing poor quality existing stock. Policies to provide new homes must be complemented by strategies to replace or bring back into effective use large areas of poor quality and unfit housing. It must be recognised that within these areas it is often not just the quality of individual houses that is the issue but the overall structure of the housing offer, the mix of homes available and their ability to meet sustainable community needs. An element of demolition and new build may be required in order to diversify the housing offer.

6.41 The Lancashire sub region has many neighbourhoods that experience serious deprivation. The condition of a significant proportion of the sub regional housing stock is poorer than for the region as a whole. Many of the worst housing conditions are in the private rented sector and require a strong strategic response. Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Burnley, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle and Preston all have an above average number of neighbourhoods experiencing serious multiple deprivation. Within the Housing Market Renewal Area of Pennine Lancashire and the inner areas of Blackpool the problems go beyond the state of repair of the housing stock. The structure and balance of the housing together with the overall offer of the neighbourhoods needs to be changed more radically.

6.42 Housing Market Renewal and the Pennine Lancashire Market Progression Model

6.43 The structural weaknesses of the local economy and housing market within parts of Pennine Lancashire are significant. The area has high levels of owner occupation but the stock suffers from high levels of disrepair and unfitness. The stock is significantly older than national and regional averages and 49.6% is terraced property compared to 31% for the NW Region and 26% for
England. Vacancies are 2.5 times greater and house prices £100,000 lower than the national average (2007 figures) The Housing Market Renewal programme has been addressing market failure across these areas since 2003/04 and the programme is now in a critical development phase in the process of restructuring the housing market. The initial ground work having been done, there is now the drive, through market renewal as aligned with the Pennine Lancashire Market Progression Model, to realise significant regeneration within neighbourhoods. However as funding for future programmes is likely to reduce and become more uncertain there will be a need to re-package programmes and demonstrate added value through linkages to wider investment and opportunities.

6.44 The role of Housing Market Renewal as linked to the wider regeneration and sub regional investment is a key sub regional priority in terms of raising the overall quality of Lancashire's housing offer.

6.45 The Blackpool Intervention Programme

6.46 Inner Blackpool suffers from an intense concentration of very poor quality private sector housing which undermines the character and sustainability of local neighbourhoods. This arises from at least 3,000 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and ongoing conversions from tourist accommodation being concentrated in the inner area neighbourhoods. In inner Blackpool 42% of residential properties are in the private rented sector. Blackpool and the Fylde Coast authorities have prioritised the need to address this through taking far reaching action to:

- prevent the transition of more failing guest houses to this use,
- reduce the number of existing poor quality private rented properties and
- help facilitate the creation of new sustainable residential communities.

6.47 The Blackpool Intervention Programme is seeking significant funding from HCA to deliver the transformation of the housing offer in inner Blackpool. It is recognised that as resources are increasingly scarce an increasingly innovative approach will be needed to add value to any investment. This will include exploring options for attracting and supporting private sector investment and encouraging increased levels of investment into the private rented sector by individuals and institutions.

6.48 Market Weakness in East Preston, Skelmersdale, Morecambe and Fleetwood

6.49 East Preston, Skelmersdale, the resort core of Morecambe and Fleetwood are also affected by market weakness, but on a smaller scale. The issues in each are different and will need to be tackled in different ways through their respective area housing strategies. Again the key to securing investment will increasingly depend on mechanisms to draw in investors and private developers

- In Inner East Preston there is high deprivation and a concentration of poor quality mainly older terraced housing. This is both the most deprived part of the City and a key gateway
• Skelmersdale town centre regeneration and the Master Plan for this is a key priority for the Mid Lancashire Housing Strategy. This is a former new town suffering from issues of poor quality and image. It is made up of badly laid out social housing and is home to a highly deprived community. The layout of the town means that the plans include the redevelopment of significant amounts of poor quality social housing and the development of new housing.

• In Lancaster there has been and remains a long term priority to focus on the West End of Morecambe. This area has been very badly affected by the decline of Morecambe as a traditional seaside resort and has a large number of former hotels and Boarding Houses that are frequently now in multiple occupation. There is a very high concentration of poverty and social needs. These are being tackled by a programme of transformational change in the west End that complements economic initiatives and the emergence of a new leisure offer in Morecambe.

• A Fleetwood Master Plan has recently been completed, and will be complemented by the development of a comprehensive approach to regeneration focused on the historic centre of the town. This will provide the context for both physical investment and work with individuals to improve services and provide them with opportunities for training and work.

6.50 Raising Quality Across the Sub Region

6.51 Improving the state of repair of poor quality housing wherever it arises across the sub region is an important overall housing priority. Housing quality is a key cross cutting theme which can make a fundamental difference to communities by helping to address issues relating to health, sustainability, the needs of vulnerable groups, the environment and community safety and cohesion.

6.52 Addressing these issues will be increasingly challenging as public resources reduce. Prioritising key actions, working collaboratively and developing new delivery mechanisms will be crucial. This will involve a particular focus on delivering energy efficiency, care and repair services and private landlords enforcement, licensing and accreditation. Drawing in investment through partnership working, taking a more strategic approach to the role of the private rented sector and through exploring mechanisms such as public sector equity loan schemes will form the cornerstone of achieving significant progress.

4: People

Sub Regional Policy 5

To provide housing and support services for older people which will:
 a) provide a greater range of flexible support services.
b) Provide more specialised accommodation for the increasing numbers of frail older people including extra care housing
Sub Regional Policy 6

To provide coordinated housing and support services for individuals and families with long term care and support needs.

Sub Regional Policy 7

To provide coordinated housing and support services for
a) socially excluded groups including People who are homeless, offenders, women at risk of domestic violence, people with substance misuse issues, refugees, people with mental health problems, gypsies and travellers, Black and Ethnic Minority Groups and newly emerging communities
b) Socially excluded and vulnerable young people, including homeless 16/17 year olds, teenage parents, care offenders, young people with complex health needs and young offenders

6.53 Current national and regional policy emphasises the importance of ensuring that the housing offer, both from new build and through regenerating existing neighbourhoods meets the needs of all in the community. Area housing strategies and individual authorities must provide an appropriate mix of housing type and tenure to develop and maintain mixed and sustainable communities. Within this overall housing provision, the adoption of high standards of design and quality, the adoption of Lifetime Homes Standards and the Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 and above will help to ensure that homes across Lancashire are accessible to, and meet the needs of the widest range of people.

6.54 The specific needs of different groups of people must be met; particularly Gypsies and Travellers, Black and Minority Ethnic communities, Asylum seekers and overseas economic migrants. These will be met by ensuring that we deliver accommodation that meets each group's particular needs, foster positive relationships between different communities and plan services to enable access by all.

6.55 In addition to this there is a need to provide tailored housing support and specialist housing to meet the needs of those with care and support needs. In order to achieve this there needs to be an integrated approach to taking forward the key priorities of a number of strategic policy documents as they cross cut with the housing agenda. These include the Regional Supported Housing Strategy, the Regional Homelessness Strategy, the Future of Adult Social Care in Lancashire, Children and Young People’s Plan, Child Poverty Strategy and associated policies and similar policies in the 2 unitary authorities.

6.56 An increasing population of older people together with a changing agenda to provide more personalised services means that the Lancashire sub region as
a whole needs to develop a clear way forward to meet the housing support needs of older people and those with disabilities. Strategic work initiated by Lancashire County Council's Supporting People Team together with similar approaches in Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen will determine how this can best be taken forward in relation to older people.

6.57 With regard to people with disabilities, it is essential that there is a clear process agreed between all agencies for mapping the future housing and support needs of people with learning disabilities and physical disabilities in order to ensure that plans can be put in place to develop a range of housing options including assured tenancies, shared and full ownership, specialist housing and housing support.

6.58 With regard to the support needs of other groups, we need to recognise that the quality and stability of housing has a significant impact on poverty and especially on child poverty. In order to break this cycle there is a need to intervene at the start of the cycle by meeting the needs of children and young people, including young offenders, teenage parents, those leaving care, those with disabilities, unaccompanied asylum seekers, and vulnerable families. Many initiatives have been undertaken in the sub region to do more to prevent homelessness among young people, families and adults. The threat of homelessness is often symptomatic of wider problems, and effective work to prevent homelessness reaches out to people at the right time and offers holistic support linked in to other public services – for example, employment training, social services, health and police. This work will continue to develop robust and pro-active housing options services across the sub-region.

6.59 There is a pressing need for a coordinated approach to addressing the specialist housing and support needs of groups of people who are at risk of social exclusion for which there is currently under provision. These groups include for example people who are homeless; have substance misuse issues; offenders and people with mental health problems, women at risk of domestic violence. Meeting their support needs will help to address priorities around community safety and regeneration more effectively.
### 7. Summary of Strategic Sub Regional Policies and Priorities

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<tr>
<th>Policy Driver</th>
<th>Sub Regional Policy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable Housing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Policy 1:</strong> Working sub regionally to support and take forward housing growth which will:</td>
<td>Establish arrangements between the 3 MAA footprints to ensure an integrated approach to housing growth and regeneration</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Meet local housing needs</td>
<td>Maximise available funding for Central Lancashire/Blackpool Growth Point infrastructure (MAA).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Support sustainable economic growth and regeneration</td>
<td>Explore housing market linkages between Lancaster and South Lakes/South Cumbria.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Maintain and enhance environmental quality and capacity and contribute to carbon reduction measures</td>
<td>Explore labour market and housing market linkages and issues between West Lancashire and the Merseyside City Region (MAA)</td>
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<td><strong>Affordable</strong></td>
<td><strong>Policy 3:</strong></td>
<td>Adoption of Lifetime Homes Standards</td>
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<td>Delivery of Code for Sustainable Homes.</td>
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<td>Delivery of low carbon dwellings including the possibilities of attracting investment for the retrofitting of properties</td>
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<td>Ensuring that the strategic sub regional housing areas and sites offer a balanced and phased range of opportunities to prevent overdevelopment and support regeneration</td>
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<td>Strengthen collaboration between key partners in Lancashire, and with regional and national agencies to ensure sites are secured, vacant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>To work in partnership on a sub regional and sub area basis to deliver sufficient amounts of affordable housing across the sub region through new housing developments the effective use of existing and empty homes including the strategic development of the private rented sector and an integrated approach to providing rural housing</td>
<td>Properties are utilised and all available resources are used to encourage the delivery of additional affordable homes. Efforts will focus on securing the commitment of political leaders and senior officers in local government and on influencing the HCA on allocations given directly to developers and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). Engage partner agencies and developers in making available houses that are built but are not available for rent, in reactivation of stalled sites and in utilisation of empty housing stock. ‘Purchase and repair’ schemes will be explored as a means of converting empty stock into affordable rental property. Secure the longer-term supply of affordable housing by increasing ‘gap-funding’ for RSLs and developers through the development of a flexible, centrally-managed, equity loan scheme; the appointment of Rural Housing Enablers to bring forward rural affordable housing schemes; and identification and securing of publicly-owned sites for future affordable housing. Exploring the possibilities for taking a more strategic approach to providing affordable homes through the Private Rented Sector. This will include attracting more institutional investors and supporting individual investors to provide a higher quality offer. Explore the possibility of public sector investment in affordable housing including in rural communities (MAA)</td>
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| Regeneration  | **Policy 4:**  
To ensure that the sub regional housing stock is brought up to a high standard of quality including where appropriate through demolition and new build; and that the structure, type, mix and balance of the housing offer is able  to contribute to the overall quality of life and health of residents in Lancashire. This will be achieved through a priority focus on the Housing Market Renewal Area, interventions in inner Blackpool and other key regeneration priorities across the sub region. | Examining innovative ways of attracting investment to support the regeneration priorities of :  
Pennine Lancashire Housing Market Renewal and Market Progression Model.  
East Preston, Skelmersdale and Fleetwood  
The Blackpool Intervention Programme, Selective licensing of the private rented sector (MAA).  
Review how housing benefit levels are set (MAA)  
Sub regional heat and energy saving strategy including consideration of investment for retrofitting. |
|               | **Policy 5:**  
To provide housing and support services for older people which will:  
a) provide a greater range of flexible support services. | Complete the review of specialist housing and housing support services which will deliver a clear strategic framework for the future planning, commissioning and provision of specialist housing and housing support services for older people |
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<td>b) provide more specialised accommodation for the increasing numbers of frail older people including extra care housing</td>
<td>Policy 6: To provide coordinated housing and support services for people with care and support needs.</td>
<td>Determine future housing and support needs of people with learning disabilities and physical disabilities in order to inform future service planning including submission of bids for funding.</td>
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<td>Policy 7: To provide coordinated housing and support services for:</td>
<td>Develop specific housing pathways for people with long term support needs to access a range of housing options, including assured tenancy, shared and full ownership.</td>
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<td>a) socially excluded groups including people who are homeless, offenders, women at risk of domestic violence, people with substance misuse issues, refugees, people with mental health problems and gypsies and travellers.</td>
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<td>b) socially excluded and vulnerable young people, including; homeless 16/17 year olds, teenage parents, care leavers, young people with complex health needs and young offenders</td>
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<td>Explore labour market and housing market linkages and issues between West Lancashire and the Merseyside City Region (MAA).</td>
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<td>Take forward plans of the 3 Supporting People Commissioning Bodies: Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen.</td>
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<td>Complete the development of Lancashire commissioning plans.</td>
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<td>Re-procure all services in line with the Lancashire commissioning plans prior to the expiry of contracts in July 2011</td>
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<td>Development of a Lancashire Youth Homelessness Strategy addressing the accommodation needs of vulnerable young people</td>
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<td>Implementation of Blackburn with Darwen Young People’s Housing Strategy.</td>
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<td>Authorities addressing the needs of homeless 16/17 year olds</td>
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<td>The development of a joint Lancashire approach to better meet the accommodation needs of care leavers</td>
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