

TEES VALLEY

**SUB-REGIONAL HOUSING
STRATEGY**

ACTION PLAN

WORKING DRAFT

June 2007

TEES VALLEY SUB REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY (Overview)

The Strategy is structured around four key objectives, which mirror those set by the Regional Housing Board (RHB) in the Consultation Draft of the proposed revised Regional Housing Strategy (RHS). **The objectives are:**

- The rejuvenation of the housing stock;
- Ensuring the type and mix of new housing provides choice;
- Securing the improvement and maintenance of existing housing; and
- Addressing specific community and social needs.

Although prepared during 2006, the Strategy has been kept under constant review and has been updated to take account of changing circumstances. Government guidance in respect of housing, planning and climate change is reflected in the Strategy, so that there is alignment more closely with current policy and agendas.

Key Issues for the Future:

Housing Market Renewal

There remains significant housing market imbalance across the sub region. Much of the existing housing supply is no longer fit for purpose. There are high numbers of small, back of pavement terraced properties built to provide cheap housing close to industrial areas. These properties bring with them problems of repair and non-decency. There are insufficient owner-occupiers for the available homes and many are left empty by 'investor buyers' or let.

Private Sector Issues

There are significant issues in the private rented sector across the sub region, which need addressing. There are some excellent landlords who need encouraging, as the private rented sector is important in ensuring a well-balanced housing market.

Achieving Decent homes standards in private sector

To maximise the role and effectiveness of the private rented sector and improve housing conditions and management standards through a variety of means including accreditation.

Disabled Facilities Grants

To respond to continuing high demand for grants due to changing demographics and the nature of the existing housing stock.

Reducing fuel poverty and increasing SAP ratings

To ensure homes across the sub region which are built of solid wall construction receive necessary works to address issues of fuel poverty and low SAP ratings.

Increasing affordability issues

Across the sub region there is a high need for affordable housing (rented and shared/equity ownership) and strategies require ongoing development to meet this need.

Choice Based Lettings

It is planned to expand the current CBL pilot in Middlesbrough to the rest of the sub region.

TEES VALLEY SUB REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN

The key themes which have been developed through the strategy and translated into our costed action plan include:

- reducing the number of obsolete houses;
- building quality new homes that meet the aspirations of 21st century households;
- improving dwellings in the vicinity of housing market renewal initiatives;
- providing access to quality affordable homes;
- supporting vulnerable households;
- providing for specific sectors of the community;
- responding to the Respect Agenda;
- encouraging modern methods of construction;
- promoting sustainable energy solutions;
- including private landlords in planning and delivery;
- partnering with private developers.

The Plan reflects the need to respond to climate change and to promote efficient use of materials and resources, both in terms of house construction and in the contribution each dwelling makes towards reducing the demand for energy. Modern methods of construction will be encouraged, public resources being used as a lever to introduce methods which employ materials from renewable sources and micro-generation systems which provide heating and lighting without an unnecessary call on the National Grid or non-renewable sources.

A summary of each of the proposed projects is detailed overleaf.

PROJECT 1: HOUSING MARKET RENEWAL

Purpose of project

1. To tackle areas of low demand housing, replacing obsolete stock with a range of quality modern homes that provide variety and choice, and help create sustainable mixed income family-oriented neighbourhoods.
2. To provide housing that supports an expanding and diversified economy.
3. Complementary regeneration initiatives within or close to the identified areas of major housing market renewal intervention will provide supporting social and educational infrastructure required to sustain neighbourhoods and create local identity, while redefining the nature and character of neighbourhoods.
4. Housing redevelopment will help create a sense of space, integrating sensitively into the existing fabric but ensuring that contemporary design enhances the locality through attention to the 'place making' agenda.
5. New development and construction methods will aim to deliver energy efficiency, a limited demand on the environment and resources, and a minimal carbon footprint.

Description

Housing stakeholders in Tees Valley responded to the issue of low demand housing by establishing a partnership approach to tackling the problem, setting up Tees Valley Living (TVL) as the vehicle to prepare a strategy for intervention in failing markets and to lobby for resources at both the national and the regional level to enable appropriate action to be carried forward.

The Tees Valley Housing Market Renewal Strategy (TVHMRS) is based on firm evidence as to the nature and extent of the problem of market failure and a realistic assessment of the action needed to reverse decline and re-model critical areas of the urban fabric, by replacing obsolete houses with modern quality dwellings that appeal to both indigenous and in-migrating families, thereby creating the basis for sustainable communities.

Although the TV HMRS remains the guide to future intervention, it is subject to continual review to ensure its continued relevance to changing housing market conditions.

The Strategy is concerned with reversing declining markets, creating markets that will sustain communities without continuous intervention; and ensuring the necessary social and physical infrastructure is in place to support that sustainability.

The programme reflects these aims, supporting housing interventions in areas which are characterised by some of the poorest social, economic and environmental conditions, are in eminently sustainable urban locations and are subject to complementary initiatives relating to economic regeneration, health care, community development, educational achievement and environmental improvement.

The Strategy supports the gradual renewal approach of Hartlepool, Stockton and parts of North Middlesbrough, together with the more structural change associated with large scale projects in Inner Middlesbrough and South Bank.

Since the preparation of the TV HMRS, house prices throughout the sub-region have risen significantly. Although this is no less the case for property in the Areas of Major Intervention, the price of houses there remains considerably lower than the sub-regional average.

Evidence from the Land Registry suggests that there has been an increase in the turnover of dwellings in the Areas of Major Intervention. However, it does not appear that properties have been acquired for owner occupation or as family housing, but rather that acquisition has been motivated by speculation, purchasers either becoming involved in temporary letting situations or being prepared to keep property empty in the hope of realising a profit as house prices continue to rise. This process has increased low demand pressures rather than served to improve the market for housing in critical locations.

Housing market failure continues to trouble significant parts of Tees Valley. There is therefore a need to maintain the programme of intervention, to ensure that the surplus of unwanted and obsolete dwellings is reduced and to provide remaining neighbourhoods with sustainable options for the future.

The four Areas of Major Intervention identified in the TV HMRS will be the focus for continued action.

Strategic Fit

A key element in the Regional Housing Strategy is the need to rejuvenate the region's housing stock and modernising the offer overall. Regional Economic Strategy requires housing provision to be supportive of economic growth. The TV HMRS remains consistent with Government policy and guidance and with Regional policy.

Outcomes

The intention is to improve the range and quality of housing available in strategic locations within the sub-region and to enable the re-modelling of key parts of the urban area so that neighbourhoods develop offering the necessary conditions for the evolution of sustainable, inclusive and self-reliant communities.

Outputs

In the near future, in the order of 1500 dwellings are to be acquired for clearance across the sub-region. They will ultimately be replaced by 1500-1600 modern houses, designed and located to create a sense of place and to elevate the quality and interest of their immediate vicinity and surrounding neighbourhoods.

Funding/Costs

Funding requirements submitted by the four LAs with regard to the 3-year funding period total £47million, however this figure is likely to exceed the total monies available for the SHIP 3 period. Detailed discussions are ongoing with each individual LA to determine a realistic but deliverable final costed figure. We anticipate this will be in line with previous allocations (and for Stockton will be in the region of £11m over the 3-years).

At the previous SHIP 2 bidding round for HMR activity the four LA's agreed a percentage split as follows:

Middlesbrough	36.2%
Hartlepool	21.2%
Redcar and Cleveland	21.2%
Stockton	21.2%

The split reflects the scale of the challenge within each LA and as identified in the Tees valley Vitality and Viability Index that is regularly updated to reflect the changing market.

Following detailed discussions at the Heads of Housing Group the recommendation to each of the LA Cabinets would be to continue the previously agreed percentage split.

PROJECT 2: PRIVATE SECTOR RENEWAL

Purpose of the Project

To ensure that Local Authorities are appropriately funded to protect their 'core' and 'current' private sector renewal activity this includes:

- the provision of private sector financial assistance to vulnerable households
- bringing empty and nuisance properties back into use
- management of the private rented sector
- advice and support to private sector tenants
- promoting joint working with private sector landlords through forums etc.

Funding/costs

£15,272,917 over three years.

More detail to be added in here as the detailed package is still being developed.

PROJECT 3: TOWARDS HOME OWNERSHIP

Purpose of project

1. To provide a stepping stone into home ownership for those marginally above social rented income levels.
2. To offer a product that is most affordable in the early years with built in flexibility to allow the purchaser to increase or decrease their equity should their financial situation change.
3. The scheme will aim to employ a range of interventions appropriate to each case to bring empty dwellings back into use on an affordable basis.

Description

The scheme will offer a flexible and affordable shared equity option for eligible applicants who would otherwise be unable to afford to buy their own home. The scheme will recognise that household incomes may fluctuate over time. By minimising costs in the early years and enabling the purchaser to decrease their share to react to unforeseen changes in household finances the scheme will give first time buyers the confidence to move into homeownership.

In addition, the scheme will have the potential to offer units at affordable rents with the ability to take up the shared equity offer at some future date as the household circumstances change.¹ This is likely to apply in areas where there might be limited initial appetite for home ownership.

The greatest proportion of empty properties is within the central / core urban areas and therefore the scheme coverage is likely to dominate these areas. However, the main outcome is access to affordable homes. Whilst the scheme may overlap with neighbourhoods within the HMR intervention areas, it will not be targeting properties which are managed as part of the HMR intervention area.

Eligible applicants can purchase an equity share and staircase up to full ownership. Local Housing Assessments will indicate the target for entry level in each local authority area. An income assessment will be completed to determine what property and % of equity share an individual is eligible for. Clients will be targeted through regeneration area liaison, given the scheme's potential to assist decant, and Sub Regional CBL arrangements.

Purchasers can also staircase down from a higher equity share should their financial circumstances change, for example an older person requiring resources to maintain or improve their home. On disposal the scheme is given first option to purchase the equity.

In line with the First Time Buyer's Initiative no charges will be applied to the retained equity for the first 3 years. Charges will then be stepped up from 1% in year 4 to 3% in year 6.

¹ See "Ends and Means: The Future Roles of Social Housing in England" (John Hills) 2007

All capital receipts from the sale of the retained equity will be recycled within the scheme.

This funding will also be used to enable a proactive approach to enforcement to bring long-term empty properties back into use. The following interventions will be explored depending on the nature of the problem with initial, recoverable costs, being met from the scheme :

- a) Compulsory Purchase Powers (Single Property);
- b) Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs);
- c) Enforced Sales (registered and unregistered land or premises); and,
- d) Enforced Sales - Council Tax or other Debts.

Strategic fit

This scheme addresses a number of priorities for action at a national, regional and local level. It provides greater choice and opportunity to first time buyers, social tenants, key workers and people who rent privately, increases the proportion of Decent Homes in the private sector, tackles wasted resources by bring long term empty homes into use.

As long-term empty properties are often a focal point of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage, and can suggest an environment in which it is acceptable, tackling the issue can also contribute to delivering the Respect agenda.

Outcomes

The priority for the scheme will be to deliver an intermediate housing option. However, there will be a range of associated benefits. Whilst facilitating access to affordable home ownership the scheme will also address the issue of empty properties and Decent Homes (acquisition of private sector dwellings of poor condition and often poor location).

Recycling resources within the scheme is designed to increase its longevity, outputs and reduce requirement for public subsidy in subsequent SHIP rounds.

Reduction in reports of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage.

Improved quality of environment and increased well-being for neighbours.

Outputs

- 108 affordable units provided for eligible clients – other outcomes dependent on target client group, for example relocations from regeneration areas or moves into owner occupation, as opposed to social rented, providing choice/meeting preferences, and offering a cheaper alternative in the longer term to social housing.²
- 108 long-term empty properties re-occupied, including works to bring to Decent Homes Standard.

Funding/costs

£6,450,000 over 3 years.

² See “Ends and Means: The Future Roles of Social Housing in England” (John Hills) 2007

PROJECT 4: RESPECT AND REWARD SCHEME

Purpose of project

1. An holistic response to the related issues of poor housing conditions and housing management, crime and anti social behaviour.
2. Incentives to improve housing management standards, particularly in the private rented sector, reducing anti social behaviour through better managed tenancies.
3. To secure the commitment of homeowners to create sustainable communities.
4. Encourage greater participation of local communities.

Description

In pilot areas where there is physical investment to improve homes and the surrounding environment (external frontage and security improvements), private landlords will be required to demonstrate their commitment to tackling anti social behaviour by signing up to the Respect Quality Mark in Housing Management. RSLs in the area will be encouraged sign up to the Respect Standard for Housing Management. Homeowners will be expected to make a similar commitment to working together to tackle anti social behaviour through a Neighbourhood Agreement.

The intention is to build on the success of Selective Landlord Licensing areas and pilot a voluntary scheme for the private rented sector, the Respect Quality Mark in Housing Management. This will be broader than a standard traditional private landlord accreditation scheme incorporating housing conditions and housing management.

This activity will also build upon a range of services already provided, in parts of the Tees Valley, to landlords and tenants within the private rented sector to tackle anti social behaviour by private rented tenants, to encourage private landlords to adopt good management practices and to end the cycle of inappropriate re-housing of anti social tenants. These services comprise:

- a) reference checking potential tenants;
- b) pre tenancy counseling and tenancy sign up service including robust tenancy agreements;
- c) post tenancy visits for all new tenants;
- d) encourage private rented lettings and assisting landlords with identifying suitable tenants by promotion in localities and via sub regional CBL;
- e) regular landlord forums and training sessions;
- f) tackling initial neighbour nuisance and anti social behaviour, caused by private rented sector tenants;
- g) investigate complaints of environmental crime caused by private rented sector tenants;
- h) taking appropriate legal action against anti social individuals; and,
- i) provision of training, legal advice and support to private rented sector landlords in dealing with anti social tenants.

Member landlords will be encouraged to use the available expertise in dealing with anti-social tenants and not to enforce the tenancy agreement until the tenant has been given advice, support and the opportunity to cease behaving in an anti-social manner. Other measures to challenge perpetrators of anti social behaviour will include:

- a) Joint home visits with Enforcement Officer, landlord and Police;
- b) Acceptable Behaviour Contracts;
- c) Referrals to existing Families Projects or other supported tenancies;
- d) Parental Behaviour Contracts;
- e) Injunctions and ASBOs; and,
- f) Eviction, as a last resort when all other intervention measures have failed.

As an area that already includes two potential Selective Landlord Licensing (SLL) areas, the Tees Valley is well placed to develop, promote and evaluate a voluntary scheme backed by the commitment to expand SLL should that be required. The impact of this voluntary scheme will be compared with pilot SLL areas to inform best practice across the sub region.

As a voluntary scheme, it will be linked with a menu of facelift options that will complement regeneration initiatives and offer an incentive to initial participation in the scheme. This will include brick cleaning, painting and boundary wall treatment. The extent of works completed will be determined by an assessment of the individual dwelling. Private landlords who sign up to the voluntary Respect Quality Mark scheme will be rewarded with a package of security / facelift measures. The project will target areas prioritised for Decent Homes standard works to maximise outputs and impact.

Strategic Fit

11. This scheme addresses a number of priorities for action at a national, regional and local level. In addition to the obvious contribution to the Respect agenda, by improving standards in the private rented sector it can also make a contribution on a wider front by increasing housing options and providing a viable alternative to temporary accommodation for homeless households. Improved housing management standards in the private rented sector, better channels of communication with support and advice agencies, and alternatives to tenancy enforcement will also help to prevent homelessness.

Outcomes

Improved housing management standards resulting in reductions in complaints of anti social behaviour – 20% reduction in anti social behaviour on target regeneration areas.

Outputs

- 180 private landlords signed up to the voluntary scheme (Respect standard/accreditation scheme).
- 180 homeowners signed up to Neighbourhood Agreement.
- 350 Private rented sector properties advertised in localities and via sub regional CBL.
- 30 Private landlord forum/training sessions.

- 450 homes improved to deliver sustainable community outputs.

Funding/costs

Total cost will be £2,250,000 over 3 years.

PROJECT 5: ECO STREETS INITIATIVE

Purpose of project

1. To provide affordable warmth, reduce levels of Fuel Poverty, improve health, contribute towards reducing CO₂ emissions and the individual carbon footprint through a combination of measures, advice and education. Home energy use is responsible for 27% of the UK CO₂ emissions. Although new build housing is more energy efficient, it is the older housing stock and its occupiers that will benefit most from this scheme. Best practice suggests that projects should look to reduce the overall energy demand.
2. This will be achieved by improving energy efficiency and exploring the use of renewable energy sources in existing, vulnerable homes as well as transforming their appearance within retained older housing areas across the Tees Valley. This initiative will support and underpin wider housing market renewal strategies.
3. Renewable energy sources produce few or no greenhouse gases thus reducing CO₂ emissions. Under the EU Renewables Directive the UK has been set a target of generating 10% of its electricity demand from renewable sources by 2010.
4. A number of properties in a street will be bought up and will undergo transformation in terms of the installation of measures outlined below. One property across the Tees Valley (location to be determined) will be held as an open house and will be used as a drop in centre and general advice outlet for energy efficiency and grant information.
5. The properties will need to follow the sun path and primarily be southerly facing for maximum gain from the solar thermal heating system.

Description

Physical measures, including cavity wall and loft insulation, or external wall cladding where there is no cavity, will be coupled with the use of solar hot water heating systems, biomass or condensing boilers and a resident education initiative across the community.

The impact of the scheme in terms of CO₂ emissions savings will be measured, and the potential to link to training initiatives for local residents will be explored.

A Tees Valley-wide scheme will be able to reduce costs by bulk purchase, and by using local suppliers encourage sub regional investment and minimise transport carbon emissions. It will also increase the viability of recycling initiatives for old plumbing and roofing materials.

Strategic Fit

- Draft Climate Change Bill: Statutory targets for CO2 reductions in LA areas.
- Fuel Poverty Strategy: Aim to eliminate Fuel Poverty in all households by 2010
- The Energy White Paper: Every home adequately and affordably heated
- H.E.C.A. report: Reduction in CO2 emissions through improved energy efficiency.
- Public Health White Paper: Committed to tackling poor health and promoting healthier communities.
- UK Sustainable Development Strategy and Climate Change programme: recognise the need for improving energy efficiency.
- Decent Homes: The standard requires improvements to thermal comfort of dwellings.
- HHSRS: Addresses issues of cold, damp and mould in properties.

Outcomes

- CO2 emission per property reduced
- SAP rating of dwellings increased
- Number of dwellings with a SAP over 65

Outputs

- 792 properties across the Tees Valley to benefit.
- Units solar thermal heating panels fitted, units with external wall cladding, units with condensing boilers, number of thermostatic radiator valves fitted, number of units draught proofed.
- Residents benefiting from educational initiative.
- Residents benefiting from training initiatives.
- Number of residents visiting the eco house.

Funding/Costs

There is a need to review existing community and technology case studies in order to develop a budget for capital works and educational and training initiatives.

The potential to access match funding for this project is high as a number of organisations have already expressed an interest in involvement. Organisations such as the Energy Savings Trust, National Energy Action, Renew Tees Valley. Also the utility companies, the DTI low carbon buildings programme phase 2, EU Sun Cities Programme.

It is anticipated that additional funding / leverage of around 50% will be accessed for this project. Total costs will be £6,000,000 over 3 years.

PROJECT 6: SANCTUARY AT HOME SCHEME

Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project is to contribute to the development of a 'tenure neutral' sanctuary provision for those experiencing domestic violence in the Tees Valley. The scheme will ensure the provision of appropriate security measures for victims of domestic violence and harassment (including homophobic) to allow them to stay in their home, when it is safe to do so and when it is their preferred option. This project will complement our existing, established and valued refuge services.

Description

Sanctuary schemes are an innovative approach to homelessness prevention. They provide professionally installed security measures to allow those experiencing domestic violence to remain in their own accommodation - where it is safe for them to do so, where it is their choice and where the perpetrator no longer lives within the accommodation. Thereby providing safe and settled accommodation rather than victims being forced to move, disrupting education, employment and family networks.

LA Community Safety Teams/DV Co-ordinators (as is deemed appropriate in each LA) will provide the service working closely with Police Crime Prevention Officers who will decide on what measures should be used for each case.

While the provision of security measures will be tailored to accommodate the needs and circumstances of the individual involved, examples of home security include new window and five lever door locks, anti arson letterboxes, window grills and shutters, dust-till-dawn exterior lighting, door viewers/chains etc. The aim is to also provide a 'safe room' within the house – this involves the installation of a solid core fire door with smoke seals, installed in such a way as to open outwardly and cannot be kicked-in and can be securely locked.

In addition to the above, support will be provided as appropriate through the victims by various support agencies – this element of the project will be funded via the local authorities.

To ensure value for money and consistency of delivery the scheme will be procured on a Tees Valley wide basis.

The minimum criteria for contractors will be – CRB checks and domestic violence training for all staff involved in the delivery of the improvement measures.

- Prevention of homelessness - nationally domestic violence is a factor in one in eight of all new cases of homelessness accounting for around 13,000 homeless households nationally a year.
- Homeless prevention - in terms of preventing the incidence and trauma of homelessness.
- Creating sustainable communities by allowing those experiencing domestic violence to (where they choose) remain in their own homes.
- Providing safe and stable homes for children thereby directly contributing to the education achievement of children.
- Reducing Total Crime by 20%.
- BVPI 225 Domestic Violence target.

- Increasing/improving feelings of safety.

In the longer-term, the potential aims will be:

- To work with social landlords to ensure that properties that receive the full intervention are then entered onto a register, should the property become vacant at a future time it will be used to re-house victims of domestic violence (were appropriate). In the longer term linking into the sub-regional choice based lettings scheme.
- To seek a financial contribution from landlords – cycle and extend the monies available.

Outcomes

- Reduced levels of homelessness amongst those at risk of domestic violence.
- Increased cost savings for temporary accommodation providers and associated support services as a result of helping the beneficiary to stay in their own home.
- Reduced disruption to education, employment and family networks as a result of increased access to safe and more permanent accommodation.
- Improved integration of associated victim support services.

Outputs

Difficult to determine at this stage as scheme will be victim lead.

Funding/costs

Project costs are based upon current case numbers and the actual costs of work undertaken to date including the provision of a fully secure one room (approx. £2,500). However, in some instances all that may be required is increased security measures such as better door and window locks, dusk to dawn lighting and secure letterboxes, which would cost approximately £250.

Funding/costs

Total cost will be £1,200,000 over 3 years.

PROJECT 7: DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

Purpose of project

To provide assistance to residents that will help them to live independently in their own homes.

Description

Adaptations modify environments allowing residents to regain their independency. Offering DFGs (through the Housing Grants, construction and Regeneration Act 1996) enables individual solutions to be found to ensure independent living. Since 1990, Local Authorities have been under a statutory duty to provide grant aid to (eligible) disabled people for a range of adaptations (for eligible works) to their homes.

With an ageing and increasingly frail population in the Tees Valley, the need for DFGs is rising. Forthcoming Government Guidance will be followed in the Tees Valley and much additional funding is used, however the need for adaptations continues to exceed funding available. Provision of DFGs is critical to maintaining independence. The Tees Valley Authorities continue to work closely in implementing DFGs and will continue to seek procurement and other methods of increasing value for money and reduced costs whilst ensuring high standards.

Projected output figures may be subject to some change, in light of proposed changes to legislation which may affect outputs.

Outcomes

Increased numbers of residents with a disability who are able to live independently.

Improved access to appropriate accommodation for disabled residents which enables them to live independently.

Outputs

- 2823 residents regaining independency through adaptation of existing home or assistance to relocate to a new home when it is not possible or cost effective to adapt the existing dwelling.

Funding / costs

Total costs for 3 years will be £11,293,043 (based on 5% annual inflation).

PROJECT 8: MOVE, ADAPT AND RECYCLE SCHEME

Project Purpose

1. To assist homeowners, where a member of the household is disabled, to buy a more suitable home when it is not possible or cost effective to adapt their existing dwelling.
2. To offer an alternative means of meeting the needs of disabled residents.
3. To establish a sub-regional Disabled Housing Register.

Description

The Move, Adapt and Recycle Project will provide an innovative and alternative way of meeting the assessed housing needs of disabled persons in order to extend choice and make the best use of limited resources. In some circumstances, assisting homeowners to buy a more suitable replacement home can be more cost effective in the longer term than adapting the current property. Recipients of an award via the project will continue to be entitled to receive a DFG to fund adaptations to the new home if required.

The project will offer an incentive for the owner to buy a more suitable property and undertake adaptations at a reduced or equal cost that is more likely to meet their longer term needs. Individual case analysis will be undertaken to determine which would be the most cost-effective solution for the disabled resident.

As part of the assessment process for DFG, applicants are visited by an Occupational Therapist (OT) who determines whether they require adaptations to their home. The OT will inform the applicant that an award under the Move, Adapt and Recycle Project may be available as an alternative to a major adaptation, if the client wishes to remain a homeowner. The OT will determine whether the DFG applicant may be better served by moving to a more suitable property. If so, the applicant will be referred to the project officer.

The project officer will then liaise with the applicant and determine their eligibility for the scheme. If the application is to progress then the project officer will assist in helping to find a suitable alternative property. Contact will be made with estate agents to promote the scheme and encourage joint working so that the project officer and agents are familiar with the types of properties that could be of interest to potential eligible applicants. This will enable all options to be discussed with the applicant. The project officer will also consider alternative accommodation in the social housing sector via the Disabled Housing Register operated as part of the sub regional CBL Scheme.

If the rules governing the use of DFG resources are relaxed following the publication of the recommendations from the DFG consultation paper it may be appropriate to move towards the facilitation of loans. The Tees Valley has already developed appropriate loan packages and is well equipped to implement their delivery in this regard.

Strategic Fit

- **Disabled Facilities Grant Consultation:** The Government's proposals to improve programme delivery.

- **Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People:** Good practice guide for the delivery of adaptations.
- **Regulatory Reform Order 2002:** Provides authorities with the powers to consider alternatives to adaptations.
- **Our Health, Our Care, Our Say:** A new direction for community services from the Department of Health.

Outcomes

Increased efficiencies leading to cost savings for associated services and DFG provision.

Improved access to independent living for disabled residents.

Increased range of choice of housing type and tenure for the client group.

Outputs

- 150 disabled residents re-housed within the private sector.
- £375,000 of DFG resources saved.
- 300 disabled residents referred for re-housing in the social rented sector via the sub-regional CBL Disabled Housing Register.

Funding/costs

Total project costs for 3 years will be £3,000,000.

PROJECT 9: SAFE AND SECURE SCHEME (SASS)

Purpose of Project

To carry out small repairs and minor adaptations within eligible older and disabled people's own homes and their immediate external environment.

Description

To provide a community support service which focuses on allowing eligible older and disabled people to remain in their own homes by carrying out small repairs and adaptations.

To act as a preventative service, reducing the risk of accidents and potentially preventing admissions to hospital or residential care.

To carry out risk assessments to identify current risks and any further areas of need in addition to the works requested.

Strategic Fit

- **Disabled Facilities Grant Consultation** – The Government's proposals to improve programme delivery.
- **Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People** - Good practice guide for the delivery of adaptations.
- **Public Health White Paper** – committed to tackling poor health and promoting healthier communities.

Outcomes

Increased numbers of older and disabled residents able to remain in their own homes.

Reduced admissions to hospital or residential care.

Outputs

- 3405 minor adaptations undertaken between 2008 and 2011.
- 225 minor repairs undertaken between 2008 and 2011.
- Average of 1.5 hours service provided to each client (dependent upon nature of tasks undertaken).
- 3630 risk assessments completed.

Funding / costs

Total costs for 3 years will be £4,500,000.

PROJECT 10: ACCESS TO DECENT HOMES

Purpose of scheme

1. To assist residents to access the local housing market and tenure of their choice.
2. To widen the choice of tenure to the community.
3. The scheme will offer a number of incentives to assist residents to access decent homes by becoming owner-occupiers, social or private sector tenants.

Description

Many residents find themselves on the margin of home ownership and /or find their housing choice limited to one housing market. However, with some capital investment a proportion of such residents could access and sustain occupation of a wider range of alternate tenures.

Many first time buyers are unable to provide deposit and legal fees payments. This can mean that, whilst a commercial lender is able to provide a mortgage product that the buyer is able to sustain following occupation, owner occupation is out of their reach without initial capital investment.

The limited supply of social rented accommodation with the rationalisation of social housing provision, post stock transfer, has extended Housing Register waiting times. Many apply for social housing as they are unable to accumulate the initial outlay of capital costs, e.g. bond in advance of tenancy commencement making tenure in the private rented sector inaccessible.

Long-term owner-occupiers may wish to downsize to smaller properties, where properties are currently under-occupied. Relocation to smaller accommodation would free up larger properties that are in demand.

Barriers exist which limit choice between tenures for many households. In order to facilitate moves between tenures, the project includes an innovative choice-based approach, linked to the achievement of decent homes in the private sector, which will facilitate moves between different tenures. This will bridge the gap for vulnerable households who currently live in non-decent accommodation to facilitate their successful re-housing within decent housing regardless of tenure. This will be achieved through such initiatives as payment of rent in advance to landlords and financial assistance to cover significant differences in housing costs.

Outcomes

Improved access to affordable private sector housing.

Enhanced choice of tenure for the community.

Improved range of incentive packages that facilitate access to decent homes.

Outputs

- 60 first time buyers assisted to access housing market per annum.
- 50 bonds paid in advance to vulnerable residents.

- 35 tenure switch from owner-occupier to RSL per annum.

Funding / Costs

Total costs for 3 years will be £1,500,000.

PROJECT 11: THE RURAL HOUSING ENABLER

Project Purpose

1. To appoint a dedicated Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) for the Tees Valley Sub-Region to investigate, support and provide an “independent” interface between land owners, existing rural residents and the Tees Valley local authorities to increase the supply of appropriate development opportunities in rural locations.
2. Undertake appropriate land assembly works in rural locations to increase the supply of affordable housing in rural locations to serve local rural residents, counter outward migration, and, the loss of economically active local skilled labour.
3. To raise awareness of the housing accessibility difficulties faced by the extended families of rural residents seeking to remain in their rural environment.
4. To provide viable development opportunities for local land owners in association with active local private developers and Registered Social Landlords.
5. To increase the rate of supply and delivery of rural affordable units in a cost effective, value for money way within a rural community setting, in accordance with identified local housing need.

Description

Appointment of a dedicated Tees Valley Sub-Regional Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) to identify suitable sites, work with local communities, parish councils, land owners, private developers and Registered Social Landlords to provide an independent negotiating resource to increase the supply and delivery of rural affordable housing.

The RHE role will involve the identification of suitable pockets of land, secure agreement from rural land owners to a sale and capture the commitment of local rural communities to deliver new affordable housing. The appointment of a dedicated Tees Valley Rural Housing Enabler employed through an independent managing agent will not only bring objectivity and independence, (often crucial elements to land negotiations) but, could also attract an element of match funding from DEFRA.

The Rural Housing Enabler will seek development opportunities in rural areas by liaising and working closely with land agents / scouts in rural communities where there is identified priority local housing need. The RHE role will also seek to engage with the national network of RHEs, implement good practice models, benchmark against national targets and seek to achieve maximum value for money from new innovative approaches.

Outcomes

- Increase the number of rural housing units successfully delivered.
- Provide the basis for an ongoing rural programme.
- Increase the supply of affordable housing through planning gain in rural areas.
- Deliver affordable housing, which is of a high quality, in keeping with the surroundings and contributes to the sustainability of rural communities.
- Deliver pilot eco-homes projects in a rural setting recognising the remoteness from some utility services.
- Contributing to the fuel poverty agenda.

- Provide cost effective delivery of affordable housing in a rural environment through positive engagement with local land owners.
- Providing affordable and accessible homes exclusively for priority housing need customers who have a local connection with specific rural communities.
- Reduce the carbon footprint of local agricultural and traditional skilled industry workers by reducing their home to work travel time.
- Retention of local skilled economically active people who would otherwise have to migrate from the rural community due to the buoyancy of the local rural housing market.
- Contribute to the reduction of underused, obsolete or empty rural dwellings bringing them back into productive use.
- Reduce the incidence of rural homelessness.

Outputs

- Deliver 10 rural affordable housing units of mixed tenure across the Tees Valley Sub-Region by 2011.

Delivery

This is a Tees Valley Sub-Regional resource that will seek to deliver an increased supply of rural affordable housing units across the whole Tees Valley Sub-Region. The RHE role will be line managed by a managing agent who will be independent from the local authorities and have experience of the local rural environment and economy. It is anticipated that the lead Authority for the Sub-Region will be Darlington Borough Council on behalf of all Tees Valley Sub-regional LA partners.

Funding requirements / unit costs

The estimated cost of the RHE over the three-year term is £50k per annum with on costs. The application for funding also entails a capital funding bid to support the delivery of some rural affordable housing units in year 3 of the programme (2011) for the sum of £500k. The total cost of the bid is therefore, £650K for 2008-11.

Appendix B - ACTION PLAN COSTINGS

Total SHIP Funding Year 1												
Local Authority	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Project 7	Project 8	Project 9	Project 10	Project 11	Totals
	Housing Market Renewal	Private Sector Renewal (Core)*	Filling Empties	Respect and Reward Scheme	Eco Streets	Sanctuary at Home	Disabled Facilities Grants**	Move, Adapt and Recycle Scheme	Safe and Secure Scheme	Incentive Packages - Access to Decent Homes	Rural Housing Enabler***	
Darlington		657,300	430,000	150,000	400,000	80,000	477,750	200,000	300,000	100,000	43,333	2,838,383
Hartlepool		864,150	430,000	150,000	400,000	80,000	462,000	200,000	300,000	100,000	43,333	3,029,483
Middlesbrough		1,584,450	430,000	150,000	400,000	80,000	1,142,750	200,000	300,000	100,000	43,333	4,430,533
Redcar & Cleveland		909,300	430,000	150,000	400,000	80,000	658,000	200,000	300,000	100,000	43,333	3,270,633
Stockton		829,500	430,000	150,000	400,000	80,000	841,750	200,000	300,000	100,000	43,333	3,374,583
Total		4,844,700	2,150,000	750,000	2,000,000	400,000	3,582,250	1,000,000	1,500,000	500,000	216,665	16,943,615

Total SHIP Funding Year 2												
Local Authority	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Project 7	Project 8	Project 9	Project 10	Project 11	Totals
	Housing Market Renewal	Private Sector Renewal (Core)	Filling Empties	Respect and Reward Scheme	Eco Streets	Sanctuary at Home	Disabled Facilities Grants	Move, Adapt and Recycle Scheme	Safe and Secure Scheme	Incentive Packages - Access to Decent Homes	Rural Housing Enabler	
Darlington		690,165	442,900	154,500	412,000	82,400	501,638	206,000	309,000	103,000	44,633	2,946,236
Hartlepool		907,358	442,900	154,500	412,000	82,400	485,100	206,000	309,000	103,000	44,633	3,146,891
Middlesbrough		1,663,673	442,900	154,500	412,000	82,400	1,199,888	206,000	309,000	103,000	44,633	4,617,993
Redcar & Cleveland		954,765	442,900	154,500	412,000	82,400	690,900	206,000	309,000	103,000	44,633	3,400,098
Stockton		870,975	442,900	154,500	412,000	82,400	883,838	206,000	309,000	103,000	44,633	3,509,246
Total		5,086,935	2,214,500	772,500	2,060,000	412,000	3,761,363	1,030,000	1,545,000	515,000	223,165	17,620,463

Total SHIP Funding Year 3												
Local Authority	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Project 7	Project 8	Project 9	Project 10	Project 11	Totals
	Housing Market Renewal	Private Sector Renewal (Core)	Filling Empties	Respect and Reward Scheme	Eco Streets	Sanctuary at Home	Disabled Facilities Grants	Move, Adapt and Recycle Scheme	Safe and Secure Scheme	Incentive Packages - Access to Decent Homes	Rural Housing Enabler	
Darlington		724,673	456,187	159,135	424,360	84,872	526,719	212,180	318,270	106,090	45,972	3,058,459
Hartlepool		952,725	456,187	159,135	424,360	84,872	509,355	212,180	318,270	106,090	45,972	3,269,146
Middlesbrough		1,746,856	456,187	159,135	424,360	84,872	1,259,882	212,180	318,270	106,090	45,972	4,813,804
Redcar & Cleveland		1,002,503	456,187	159,135	424,360	84,872	725,445	212,180	318,270	106,090	45,972	3,535,014
Stockton		914,524	456,187	159,135	424,360	84,872	928,029	212,180	318,270	106,090	45,972	3,649,619
Total		5,341,282	2,280,935	795,675	2,121,800	424,360	3,949,431	1,060,900	1,591,350	530,450	229,860	18,326,042

Total SHIP Funding All 3 Years (2008-11)												
Local Authority	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4	Project 5	Project 6	Project 7	Project 8	Project 9	Project 10	Project 11	
	Housing Market Renewal	Private Sector Renewal (Core)	Filling Empties	Respect and Reward Scheme	Eco Streets	Sanctuary at Home	Disabled Facilities Grants	Move, Adapt and Recycle Scheme	Safe and Secure Scheme	Incentive Packages - Access to Decent Homes	Rural Housing Enabler	Totals
Darlington	0	2,072,138	1,329,087	463,635	1,236,360	247,272	1,506,107	618,180	927,270	309,090	133,938	8,843,077
Hartlepool	0	2,724,233	1,329,087	463,635	1,236,360	247,272	1,456,455	618,180	927,270	309,090	133,938	9,445,520
Middlesbrough	0	4,994,979	1,329,087	463,635	1,236,360	247,272	3,602,519	618,180	927,270	309,090	133,938	13,862,330
Redcar & Cleveland	0	2,866,568	1,329,087	463,635	1,236,360	247,272	2,074,345	618,180	927,270	309,090	133,938	10,205,745
Stockton	0	2,614,999	1,329,087	463,635	1,236,360	247,272	2,653,617	618,180	927,270	309,090	133,938	10,533,448
Total	0	15,272,917	6,645,435	2,318,175	6,181,800	1,236,360	11,293,043	3,090,900	4,636,350	1,545,450	669,690	52,890,120

***As stated within the narrative Action Plan detailed discussions are ongoing between the LAs and Tees Valley Living to determine the final costs of Project 1 'Housing Market Renewal'