

Annexe A - CONSULTATION ON THE HOUSING RENEWAL STRATEGY 2003

1. During April and May 2003 the council employed a Consultant Environmental Health and Housing Officer to undertake a review of the current services that were offered by the council and suggestions for improvements that could be included in the new Housing Renewal Policy.
2. In total 34 people were interviewed and details are set out at the end of this Annexe.
3. The Council has identified some key services that could be developed, and some that could be improved by alteration of current working practises. Details on issues to be taken forward have been included in the Action Plan set out at **Annexe B.**

JRT WILLIAMS & ASSOCIATES

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CONSULTATIONS

Isle of Wight Council Housing Renewal Strategy

Isle of Wight Council Members

Cllr Ian Stephens
Cllr Roger Mazillius

Officers from the Housing Department

Mr. Ian Hookey	Senior Housing Grants and Enforcement Officer
Ms Nicola Barrett	Housing Support Officer
Mr. Alan Barnes	Housing Grants and Enforcement Officer
Mr. Keith Fryer	Housing Grants and Enforcement Officer
Mr. Peter Griffiths	Housing Initiatives Officer
Ms Norah Gorlick	Housing Support Officer
Mr. Bernard McHugh	Housing Officer
Mr. Peter Millward	Housing Officer
Ms Dena Sullivan	Housing Support Officer

Isle of Wight Council Employees

Ms Heidi Marshall	Principal Policy Officer, Corporate Policy and Communications
Ms Margaret Kirkman	Senior Solicitor, Legal Services
Ms Maggie Convery	Joint Manager, Occupational Therapy
Mr. James Lowe	Acting Head of Adult Services, Social Services
Mr. Barrie Monks	Environmental Health Manager, Environmental Health
Mr. Gareth Hughes	Financial Services Manager, Corporate Finance
Niki Haytack	Crime and Disorder Manager, Crime and Disorder

Island Housing Associations

Mr. Jim Iles	Chief Executive, South Wight Housing Association
Mr. John Collinge	Chief Executive, Medina Housing Association
Mr. Bill Gordon	Property Services Manager, South Wight Housing Association
Ms Lynne Meach	Housing Manager, South Wight Housing Association
Ms Amy Priest	Housing Officer, South Wight Housing Association

Other Statutory Bodies

Mr. Steve White	Fire Officer, IoW Fire Service
Ms Elaine Garrett	Public Health Partnership Manager, Isle of Wight Primary Care Trust

Other Agencies

Mr. Roger Staker	Acting Chief Executive, Rural Community Council
Ms Sara Ellis	Rural Community Council
Mr. Matt Thatcher	Manager, Independent Housing Advice Centre
Ms Ety McInley	People Off The Streets (POTS)
Capt. Paul Hollyfield	Regional Officer Salvation Army

Other consultation

Mr. J. Franco	Landlord and Developer
Mr. Ken Rivers	Chief Executive, Isle of Wight Credit Union Ltd
Mrs. Val Ottway	Secretary, Isle of Wight Credit Union Ltd
Mr. Bob Taplin	Treasurer, Isle of Wight Credit Union Ltd

STRATEGIC ISSUES

The consultant was asked to analyse the interviews undertaken to find key strategic issues that needed to be considered by the Council when undertaking a review of the service. In response to this request the following issues have been considered relevant in the delivery of this service and future revisions of the Strategy and associated policies:

1. PROACTIVE USE OF HOUSING POWERS

- 1.1 The Council should proactively seek, identify and inspect dwellings where occupants are most exposed to health and safety (including fire and crime) risks. Priority to be given to:
 - unfit dwellings (including those in owner-occupation);
 - houses in multiple occupations (of all types as listed by CIEH);
 - other privately let dwellings where tenants may feel in danger of losing their home should they initiate complaints.
- 1.2 The Council should enforce remedial action without delay using all legislative powers at the Council's disposal should owners fail to comply voluntarily with the law's requirements. Further in the public interest and where the law allows, to recover costs where Statutory action is taken in serving notices or carrying out works in default.

2. REVIEW AND IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY

- 2.1 The Council should undertake regular training for officers in enforcement techniques and court procedures so that consistency of service is maintained,
- 2.2 The Council should actively look at introducing new computer technology to increase administrative efficiency and service delivery
- 2.3 The Council should look at its own internal approaches to running the service and makes decisions on Best Value principles that maximise staff efficiency,
- 2.4 The Council should actively engage with partner organisations and external advisors to maximise the services offered to Island residents and,
- 2.5 The Council should look at external providers assisting with the delivery of certain services, e.g, works in default.

3. GRANTS AND LOANS

- 3.1 The Council should use the revised legislative framework in such a way as to honour the Council's mandatory obligations to those with disabilities in the most cost effective way.
- 3.2 The Council should include in the new Strategy a limited discretionary grant scheme to meet needs not catered for by partner agency loan schemes and other financial and technical services which will be promoted by the Council.

4. ENABLING, PROGRESS CHASING AND SELF ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The Council should regularly review actions taken by key players in the housing field to establish progress and shortfalls and providing advice and encouragement where needed.
- 4.2 The Council should increase its performance monitoring at all levels taking any necessary action to ensure service priorities e.g. to the very vulnerable, remain focused. Exposing both processes to occasional but regular objective scrutiny by an external body to provide cross-checks.

5. KEEPING THE STRATEGY RELEVANT

- 5.1 The Council should engage with educational and marketing opportunities, which will contribute to the economy and minimise what may be costly demands on health care services.
- 5.2 The Council will need to ensure that the Strategy will be regularly reviewed to see if it is sufficiently fine-tuned and resourced to meet need. Results of cost benefit analysis will need to be made known to those responsible for keeping this and other Council strategies relevant to the six corporate objectives.