

**WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL HOUSING  
STRATEGY 2005**

**DELIVERING A HOUSING VISION FOR THE WEST  
MIDLANDS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY:  
PATHWAYS OF CHOICE**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

June 2005

## Purpose of the Strategy

The Purpose of the Regional Housing Strategy is to:

- apply the principles of urban and rural renaissance
- secure mixed and balanced communities
- unite the efforts of public and private sectors
- provide a coherent platform for local housing needs and market assessments
- give leadership by example and encouragement in Housing, Planning and Economic Development working together
- provide a core unifying tool for Regional and sub-regional housing research

In addition the Regional Housing Strategy seeks to be socially, environmentally and technologically engaged, and legislatively up to date.

## Core Aims

The core aims of the Strategy are consistent with and supportive of the vision of the WMRSS issued in June 2004:

“The overall vision of the West Midlands is one of an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable Region which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together, are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life for future generations.” WMRSS paragraph 2.2

Thus the Strategy aims to:

- Create mixed, balanced and inclusive communities
- Assist in the delivery of the WMRSS policies of Urban and Rural renaissance
- Influence the future development of new housing provision to facilitate and enhance the

economic development of the Region

- Address the variety of needs across a range of specific sectors of housing circumstances
- Work toward the success of the two ODPM sponsored Housing Market Renewal Area Pathfinders in Birmingham/Sandwell and North Staffordshire/Stoke and the Regionally identified housing restructuring areas of East Birmingham/North Solihull and North Black Country/South Telford
- See that Government’s Decent Homes standards are met in the municipal, social sectors, and for those in vulnerable circumstances in the private sector
- Achieve social and other affordable housing
- Achieve sustainable access to minimise environmental resource consumption and traffic and improve the quality of the environment

The evidence based policies developed to achieve these aims are on pages 10 – 28 of this executive summary.

## The Key Issues, the Main Goals

The Regional Housing Strategy owns for itself the challenging aims set by its counterpart Strategy, the Regional Spatial Strategy, together with the regeneration policies contained in the Regional Economic Strategy. Publication of this strategy is a key event in driving further into the Region’s investment processes, both public and private, the framework of understanding and policy required to achieve urban and rural renaissance.

## The Regional Context

Although close to UK average figures in some areas the Region has a larger dependent population and an economy skewed towards manufacturing and low value added employment. Unemployment is higher and earnings lower than the UK average.

Macro trends towards smaller households, an ageing population and a consolidation of the services economy lie beyond the power of fundamental change for any individual region. However, the Strategy identifies as a key issue the materialisation of these trends in new housing investment, economic activity and improved life chances across the diverse communities of the West Midlands.

## The West Midlands Region: Four Housing Market Areas

Building on extensive analysis of the way the housing market operates, and the distinctive features of sub-regional Housing Market Areas, a robust understanding of the Region's housing markets has been developed based on data including..:

- Migration data (2001 Census)
- Travel to work statistics (2001 Census)
- House prices and affordability (Her Majesty's Land Registry, 2003)
- Second Homes (Census 2001)
- Indicators to develop a classification of different types of neighbourhoods each of which share different characteristics including: dwelling type, socio-economic characteristics, tenure, social class, concealed households and sharing (2001 Census)
- Continuous Recording data on RSL lettings (CORE, Housing Corporation, 2003)

ped.

Illustration of the most important findings of the above analysis is available in:

- Table 1: *Local Authorities in Housing Market Areas* (page 6)
- Table 2 : *Net Intra and Inter Regional Migration by Housing Market Area* (page 6)
- Table 3: *Household Forecasts in West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy* (page 6)
- Table 4: *Average House Price to Income Ratios* (page 7)
- Table 5: *Affordable and Social Housing Requirements by Housing Market Area* (page 7)

Based on this substantial research and analysis, empirical evidence and after wide consultation, the Strategy identified four Housing Market Areas have been identified: **Central, North, South and West.**

## People and Communities

The Strategy considers the specific needs and requirements of some of those who have distinctive housing issues warranting separate attention. These are:

- Black and minority ethnic groups
- People who are homeless or at risk
- Those requiring Supporting People assistance
- People with disabilities
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Gypsies and other travellers

The Strategy draws upon separately available reports prepared for the Regional Housing Partnership and its member bodies for each of these groups, bringing together a variety of evidence and including results from original quantitative and important qualitative research.

Illustrations of homelessness presentations, location of asylum seekers and numbers and distribution of gypsy caravans are available in **Tables 6 and 7** and **Figure 1** on pages 7 and 8.

## Decent Homes

The Strategy promotes the meeting of Decent Homes Standards through the achievement of design excellence, energy efficiency and the reduction of fuel poverty and approaches the promotion of environmentally sustainable homes through improvements to existing housing stock and better design and construction of new homes.

The Government's definition of a Decent Home is one that:

- Meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing (dwellings below this standard are unfit)
- Is in a reasonable state of repair
- Has reasonably modern facilities and services
- Provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

Within this context all social housing (owned by Local Authorities and Housing Associations) should meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2011.

## Affordable Housing

The provision of affordable housing is essential to meeting the diverse needs of sustainable communities, and affordability is a significant problem across the Region. The Strategy identifies co-ordinated action by local authorities, developers, housing associations, English Partnerships, Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders, Rural Pathfinders and other stakeholders as vital to achieving affordability.

## Sustainable Communities

The Regional Housing Strategy aims to create a flourishing, diverse and stable Regional economy which, through the provision of 'pathways of housing choice' enables people to live near their work and other activities in pleasant affordable

homes within sustainable communities with healthy and pleasant local environments and minimum resource consumption.

The main thrust of the Strategy is for housing strategists to work with the private sector, Registered Social Landlords and planning authorities to deliver the new range and types of housing which the market left to itself has been unable or uninformed enough to deliver.

## Priorities, Implementation, Review, Investment and Monitoring

The Regional Housing Strategy identifies key priorities, methods of implementation, monitoring methods, and gives an overview of the approach to investment processes. The latter approach is particularly complex given the range of resources that come into play, a resource inventory that changes over time and the need to match appropriate resources mixes to issues as they change in priority over the life of the Strategy.

Funds are not available to address everything immediately, and some actions must precede others to achieve a better housing market operation in the longer term future. **Figure 2** (page 9) illustrates changes in investment priorities over the life of the Strategy.

## Working in Partnership

Joint working will be critical to the successful delivery of decent, affordable, sustainable housing for the people of the West Midlands. The Strategy proposes and presents the development of Partnership working through:

- Preparing for the merger of the Regional Housing Board and the Regional Planning Body

- Developing partnership arrangements with the four Housing Market Areas
- Themed Working Groups
- The relationship between sub-regions in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and the Regional Housing Strategy
- The role of the County Planning Authorities in framing and delivering Regional Housing Strategy
- Private Sector Housebuilders
- The development of Regional Housing Allocation Strategies every two years to prioritise those schemes which delivery this Strategy
- Joint local housing market assessments in support of both the planning process and (joint) Local Housing Strategy
- Closer work between Planning and Housing authorities and with private and RSL sector partners to maximise the relevant supply of affordable housing, indeed whatever type of housing required to deliver choices which until now have been missing or inadequate

## Next Steps

Finally, a series of next steps are identified including:

- The development of Partnership working to address priorities on a joint basis between authorities on a Housing Market basis

**Table 1 Local Housing Authorities by Sub-Regional HMA**

Central	North	South	West
Birmingham	East Staffordshire	Bromsgrove	Bridgnorth
Cannock	Newcastle-Under-Lyme	Malvern Hills	Herefordshire
Coventry	Stafford	Redditch	North Shropshire
Dudley	Staffordshire Moorlands	Stratford on	Oswestry
Lichfield	Stoke	Avon	Shrewsbury
North Warwickshire		Warwick	South Shropshire
Nuneaton		Worcester	
Rugby		Wychavon	
Sandwell		Wyre Forest	
Solihull			
South Staffs			
Tamworth			
Telford & the Wrekin			
Walsall			
Wolverhampton			

**Table 2 Net intra- and inter-regional migration by HMA**

Origin	Destination			
	Central	North	South	West
Elsewhere within WM Region	-5,773	+904	+4,326	+543
Outside the WM Region, but within the UK	-6,079	-49	-1,460	+1,165
<b>Net UK migration</b>	<b>-11,852</b>	<b>+855</b>	<b>+2,866</b>	<b>+1,708</b>
International Migration	+15,728	+2,082	+4,499	+1,831
<b>Overall Net Migration Total, excluding international moves from the UK</b>	<b>+3,876</b>	<b>+2,937</b>	<b>+7,365</b>	<b>+3,539</b>

Source: 2001 Census Special Migration Statistics.

**Table 3 Household forecasts in the WMRSS in comparison to current migration trends**

HMAs	WMRSS/Policy CF3 (Net)					Share of growth 2001-21	
	2001-2006 hholds	2006-2011 hholds	2007-2016 hholds	2016-2021 Hholds	Total hholds	WMRSS projections %	Current migration trends %
Central	38048	39359	39581	39581	156569	63.0	51.2
North	6457	5791	3614	3614	19476	7.8	5.6
South	14120	10279	7980	7980	40359	16.2	24.9
West	10150	7750	7150	7150	32200	13.0	18.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>68775</b>	<b>63179</b>	<b>58325</b>	<b>58325</b>	<b>248604</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4 Average House Price to Income Ratios by HMA (2003)**

HMA	Multiplier: (Average price: income ratio)	New households unable to purchase on market at 4.25 income	New households unable to purchase on market at 3.5 income
<b>Central</b>	6.9	52.8	62.4
<b>North</b>	5.9	42.5	50.0
<b>South</b>	9.0	62.2	73.9
<b>West</b>	8.8	57.5	68.2

Source: CURS analysis of CACI Paycheck, Land Registry, and Survey of English Housing data.

**Table 5 Affordable and Social Housing Requirement by HMA 2001-21**

	2006/08	2006-11	2011-21	2001-21	% share 2001- 21
<i>Affordable (including Social rented housing)</i>					
Central	8874	22184	15163	45584	58.5
North	812	2031	131	3053	3.9
South	2246	5617	5145	16686	21.4
West	1530	3826	4698	12598	16.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13464</b>	<b>33659</b>	<b>25137</b>	<b>77921</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Of which Social Housing</b>					
Central	6020	15048	10330	30711	66.0
North	612	1528	78	2196	4.7
South	1132	2830	2622	8434	18.1
West	634	1583	1933	5206	11.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8396</b>	<b>20989</b>	<b>14963</b>	<b>46547</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 6 Homelessness Presentations and Priority Acceptances 2001-2003 for the West Midlands**

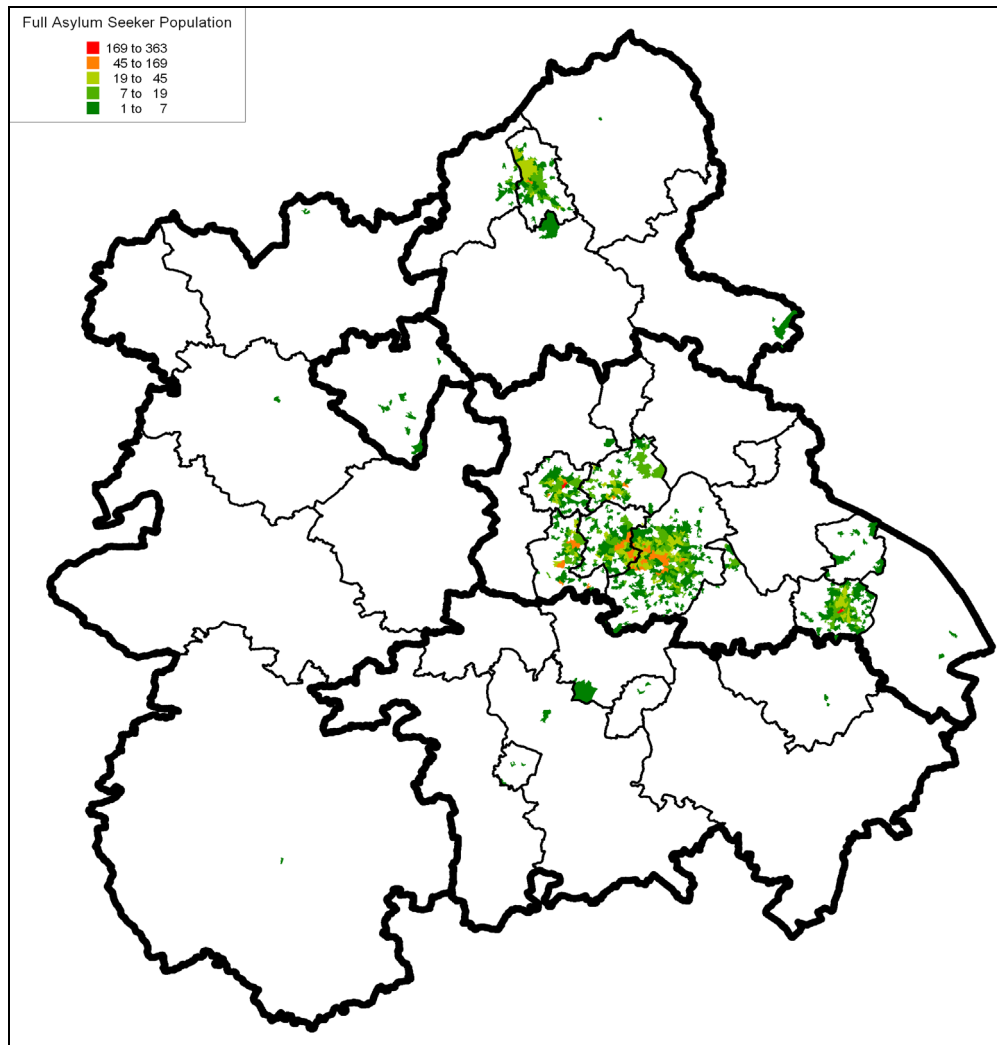
Year	2001	2002	2003
All Presentations	24968	24359	25336
Priority Need Acceptances	14166	14454	15321

**Table 7 Number and Distribution of Gypsy Caravans 2004**

	All sites		Unauthorised sites		Council sites		Private sites	
	Jan	July	Jan	July	Jan	July	Jan	July
North	195	184	34	21	100	93	61	70
Central	595	621	145	147	204	243	247	231
West	289	288	168	93	110	116	11	79
South	387	512	66	157	224	231	97	124
<b>Region</b>	<b>1,466</b>	<b>1,605</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>504</b>

Source: ODPM Gypsy Caravan Counts

**Figure 1** Locations of asylum seekers across the West Midlands, 2004 (CURS, 2005)



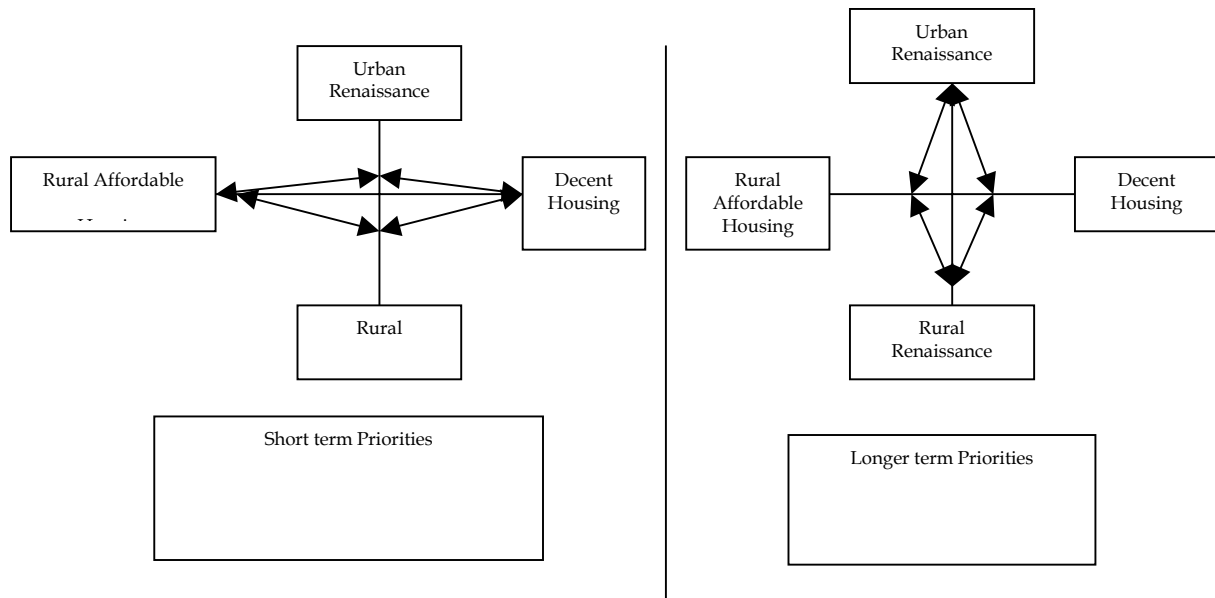
Digitised maps ©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. ODPM Licence Number: 100018986. 2005.

### **Estimating the size of the refugee population**

There are significant gaps in the data regarding the number of refugees both across the UK and in the West Midlands Region. One of the challenges for monitoring refugees is the recording of refugee status and move-on address when an asylum seeker receives the right to remain. Based on available data the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS) at the University of Birmingham estimates that at the end of 2004 there were a total of 44,260 refugees in the West Midlands and that this figure will increase to 69,865 by the end of 2007.



**Figure 2 Diagram to illustrate the change in investment priorities over the life of the Regional Housing Strategy**



In the above diagram the left hand reflects the balance of financial allocation in the short run. The right hand side represents the longer term balance of investment.

The policy and investment priorities are set out on the opposite ends of the poles or axes. On the horizontal axis these are the immediate balance of choice facing the RHB between spend on affordable housing (which can be styled as the bottom up Regional priority issue) and Decent Homes (which can be styled as the Government's and RHB's priority). On the vertical axis the longer term areas of spend are set as Urban and Rural Renaissance. Here too choices need to be made. The result is such that, in the short run the immediate pressures must be addressed hence the arrows pulled out to their fuller extent on this axis. Once these are substantially, but never totally, addressed then the pull on spend can move out on the vertical axis to address the real long term change that will deliver the sustainable Region for the future, as in the right side of the diagram.

Figure 2 depicts the change in investment emphasis over time on the part of the RHB assuming the initial investment in rural affordable housing and towards delivering decent homes especially in the public sector by 2010 will have fundamentally addressed those issues. That should then allow a switch of emphasis over to increasing the rate of investment into the key long-term priorities Urban and rural renaissance. Addressing immediate rural affordability problems is but one aspect of developing sustainable rural communities and the main centres of population in the rural areas.

## Regional Housing Strategy 2005: Policy Extract

Number	Policy
2.1	Working with and through its four Housing Market Areas, the RHB will develop improved information on the changing mix of households and their housing aspirations to inform future housing and spatial strategies at the regional and local level.
2.2	Private house builders are encouraged to provide a wide range of dwellings in all types of location, and which offer different styles of living for smaller and single person households subject to 2.3 below.
2.3	Where market intelligence identifies the pathways of choice for the diversity of BME communities and their individual communities particular patterns of search in residential markets then the private housebuilders should positively aim to understand the housing size, type, design, function and required orientation of new housing so that appropriate new build provision can be made.
2.4	The full range of affordable housing options should be available to single person and other small households as well as for families and other larger households.
2.5	Public, RSLs and private providers, including private house builders are encouraged to provide sheltered and extra care accommodation and other types of housing suitable for older people, and to respond positively to the cultural traditions and requirements of elders from ethnic minorities. To make such schemes financially viable, LPAs will need to identify suitable sites within their Local Development Frameworks.
2.6	Social landlords are encouraged to develop products and incentives which encourage older people occupying family homes for rent to move to smaller accommodation which meets their needs.
2.7	Financial institutions across the range from banks to social enterprises are encouraged to offer imaginative schemes to allow those who wish to do so to mobilise capital tied up in their home. Local authorities are encouraged to develop a role in working with funding institutions to help develop suitable products.
2.8	Local authorities and business should continue to develop quality assured services to assist older people to maintain the fabric of their homes in the private sector. Demonstration projects should explore ways of offering a wider service and benchmark with other authorities in order to spread best practice in meeting the needs of older households.
2.9	Schemes to identify and assist vulnerable older households in fuel poverty should be vigorously pursued by local authorities and RSLs.
2.10	The RHB will seek to work with adjoining Regions in finding ways to stem destabilising pressures of retirement migration into the housing markets of the West Midlands.
2.11	In fulfilling the strategic objective of pathways of future housing choice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing pathways need to be developed that re-invigorate declining centres experiencing de-industrialisation processes and re-establish them as focal point for housing, retail and employment and that</li> <li>• the need of householders to access work is recognised, including the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>needs of low income workers;</li> <li>stock adaptation matching the changing role of centres;</li> <li>sustainable housing choices based on commuting distances that support regeneration, particularly of the Major Urban Areas coinciding with the Regeneration Zones and High Technology Corridors (see WMES and WMRSS for definitions and policies).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

2.12	<p>The role of the home as a location where work tasks will be undertaken will be supported and social landlords are therefore expected to operate policy and practical measures which are consistent with this, especially to have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sympathetic stock management policies in the social sector; and</li> <li>• Design policies that account for the needs of home workers e.g. broadband connectivity.</li> </ul> <p>Where planning consent is required this should not be unreasonably withheld.</p>
2.13	<p>Consistent with the West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy, the RHB expects priority access to social and affordable housing to be given to people on low incomes who either have been, or who are at risk of being, displaced from their local community due to the pressures of migration or economic change as these impact upon the housing choices available to them.</p>
2.14	<p>The trend towards home based working will be monitored and the implications for housing markets tracked to inform policy on encouraging, directing or reinforcing economic growth where this is in sustainable community locations.</p>
3.1	<p>In order to ensure development serves local needs the RHB will expect to see full cooperative and detailed integration of the LHAs housing development policy and planning policy utilising all measures the regulatory regime permits to secure the balanced housing market outcomes required by this Strategy.</p>
3.2	<p>The RHB will monitor, as part of the joint monitoring of WMRSS/RHS (policy 3.16) and report upon the extent of use of the following powers in securing local housing for local people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of more social and other affordable housing</li> <li>• Sites to be identified where a high proportion (up to 100%) can be allocated for affordable housing</li> <li>• Use of site acquisition, voluntarily or compulsorily to bring forward schemes where the LA as vendor can stipulate the housing mix in favour of affordable housing</li> <li>• Use of local occupancy clauses</li> <li>• Use of 'in perpetuity' clauses to keep affordable housing in that use</li> </ul> <p>Encouraging a programme of smaller '2 bedroomed' property with the permitted development rights to extend removed. (The regional and local evidence to support this policy must be clear and robust and meet the requirements of paragraphs 87-88 of DoE Circular 11/95 'The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions').</p>
3.3	<p>Where insufficient housing land supply remains in the planning system to meet affordable housing needs via negotiated standard proportions though Section 106<sup>1</sup> policy, meeting local housing needs must be seen to be the priority use of housing land resources and delivered in Local Development Frameworks and development control decisions. This may mean specifically allocating site for affordable housing and certainly not relying on the Sec 106 style of thresholds and percentages negotiation.</p>
3.4	<p>If insufficient land exists to meet identified social and affordable housing need and it is unreasonable to decide such need can reasonably be met elsewhere in the Housing Market area, consideration should be given to the need to allocate additional land in the LDF process specifically and solely to address this inadequacy.</p>
3.5	<p>Local Housing Authorities are strongly encouraged to work with their Local Planning Authorities to identify the best mix of tenures and property types for all types of social and other affordable housing including starter homes for sale. These requirements are expected to be clearly conveyed to developers through site briefs, public land sales particulars and local development plan policy and</p>

	followed through in the development control process where Section 106 agreements are to be negotiated. The RHB will monitor these processes on an annual basis as part of the joint monitoring.
<b>3.6</b>	In view of the changes to the concept and measurement of housing 'unfitness' in the Housing Act 2004 the newly approved hazard rating system will need to be built into Regional measures of housing stress. The RHB will work with partner LHAs and other stakeholders to develop contemporary measures of housing stress, which it is hoped will be informed by future research as outlined in Chapter 10.
<b>3.7</b>	The RHB will support the Shared commissioning of revised household projections at HMA level and below to take into account latest headship and household formation rates published by ODPM in summer 2005. This will be shared by the regional planning and housing sectors working together.
<b>3.8</b>	The RHB will fund the update and sub-regional updates based on the new ONS data. The latter will be subject to joint working being agreed between local authorities in the new HMAs as defined here in the RHS 2005.
<b>3.9</b>	A revision -in whole or part - to the RHS 2005 will be supported in the light of these projections and the outcome of WMRSS Partial Review or any adopted significant technical work undertaken towards the WMRSS Partial Review.
<b>3.10</b>	At sub-regional level affordability monitoring to be carried out by consortia of LHAs commissioning jointly local housing need studies and integrated housing strategies. Each sub regional housing market area should have regionally consistent approaches to dealing with migration and any risks of double counting.
<b>3.11</b>	The strategy in the North Central part of the Central Housing Market Area should be to deliver sustainable social housing provision meeting local need and to restrict the expansion of owner-occupation that would attract households out of the conurbation. Intermediate housing such as LCHO should be delivered sensitively by regulating the staircasing of shared ownership and implementing equity sharing or other shared - covenant arrangements that help in retaining a pathway into owner occupation for lower-income households. This will need to be monitored and reviewed to ensure the long term creation and maintenance of mixed and balanced communities.
<b>3.12</b>	Given the established commuting and migration patterns between the conurbation and the adjoining settlements to the north and north east of the MUA conurbation, affordable market housing is required to take pressure off these destination areas. Emphasis should therefore be placed on developing pathways of choice and investment in LCHO and other intermediate tenures within designated renewal areas within the conurbation. Some provision of housing for lower income households within the Central HMA where it extends into the South Staffordshire and North Warwickshire authorities should also be made, enabling residents originating from these areas to remain within their communities.
<b>3.13</b>	The RHB encourages the East Birmingham-North Solihull Area of Housing Market Restructuring to continue to identify its full range of housing and regeneration requirements and to build on best practice and experience of intermediate housing provision, especially for BME communities where relevant.
<b>3.14</b>	Coventry as an MUA (within the central HMA) is set for growth under the Regional Spatial Strategy and the RHS therefore needs to enhance its role in meeting strategic housing needs and supply requirements and in turn, to the wider success of housing and economic activity in the West Midlands as a whole and especially the eastern part of the central HMA.
<b>3.15</b>	The RHB supports the range of regeneration programmes and especially the Black Country Study as phase 1 of the WMRSS Partial Review by the RPB in

	securing deep rooted change in the housing offer available in the Black Country.
3.16	The RHB expects to see all other regeneration initiatives in the Black Country operate strategically in support of the WMRSS Review.
3.17	The RHB will wish to consider the merits of supporting the major housing market restructuring programmes of change alongside the funding commitments to these from Central, and local government sectors and the private sector. In addition, strategy coherence will need to be demonstrable in support of implementation programmes as will evidenced, positive indicators of scheme delivery within required timescales.
3.18	It is important that both the Pathfinder areas in the Region, when carrying out their housing development and interventions, ensure that they consider adjacency issues and fully understand the impact they may have on other areas to ensure they do not undermine already weak or vulnerable areas.
3.19	Individual major schemes presented to the Housing Corporation for funding approval will need to be compatible with the long term proposals of the sub-regional Black Country study.
3.20	The RHB recognises the need for the Black Country Study to develop policies and proposals which attract higher paid professional and managerial households especially by the provision of executive homes at appropriate, lower densities.
3.21	The RHB will require the WMRSS / RHS joint monitoring indicators to track, monitor and analyse outputs and outcomes especially within the Major Urban Areas from the various regeneration initiatives and that timely feedback is provided either if these are not as anticipated or there are unforeseen unfavourable adjacency effects on adjoining areas.
3.22	Areas that have relatively low levels of homelessness, affordability problems and lack diversity of private sector investment should be stimulated to provide increased pathways of choice to lower income households who move as a result of restructuring other parts of the Black Country.
3.23	The urban areas of Worcester, Warwick and Stratford should be the focal point for social housing investment in the short-term. Those parts of Solihull that are in the South Housing Market Area and meet WMRSS criteria may also be the location for the development of additional affordable housing.
3.24	The strategic housing policy for that part of the Central HMA which functionally operates in north Redditch and Bromsgrove is founded upon the strategic aim that housing development should achieve good pathways of choice into the future. However the starting point for both Districts is different. In Redditch there is a need to improve the stock and mix of housing on offer in its older areas of predominantly social housing. Overall a rebalance of tenure should be achieved which redresses the higher representation of social housing in this area and improves its least attractive neighbourhoods as a priority.
3.25	In Bromsgrove the adjoining housing areas to the north in South West Birmingham are predominantly social housing, set to undergo a process of rebalancing and improvement of the range of choices available. It is important therefore that in future Bromsgrove achieves a balanced continuity with the conurbation housing markets by sustaining that range of housing choices throughout its own housing market.
3.26	Further to the changes introduced by the Housing Act 2004 to the operation of Right to Buy scheme, the RHB encourages the Rural Housing Network of the West Midlands Regional Housing Partnership to alert its Local Housing Authority members to consider whether they should request that their area be designated by ODPM as 'rural', as Stratford as done. Local authorities wishing to do this should discuss with the RHB and the West Midlands RHP any anticipated budgetary implications as well as identifying the long term

	cumulative nature of any market effects which the RHS and WMRSS should account for.
3.27	In general the principles of sustainability will lead the majority of development to focus on Shrewsbury and Hereford, the larger market towns and larger rural settlements”.
3.28	The RHB considers that the strategic housing policy for that part of Bridgnorth which lies functionally within the Central HMA should be one of complimenting the housing offer in Telford and not adding unnecessary quantities of affordable housing. Rather than expand housing supply, restraint in developing and maintaining a balanced market for local needs is needed consistent with the RSS policy. It is considered that there is sufficient social housing in Telford and additional development in Bridgnorth must not cause destabilisation of Telford’s housing market.
3.29	In areas where large-scale clearance and re-provisioning of stock is proposed the mix of housing provided must create balanced and mixed communities with pathways of housing choice and raised levels of housing satisfaction with post intervention outcomes.
3.30	The process should be managed to ensure there is a smoothness of intervention to minimise stress and disruption, and a phased and targeted rehousing strategy that is agreed with the local community, planning, the RHB / Housing Corporation, RSLs and other partners.
3.31	The RHB wishes to see the impact of new housing development fully evaluated so that the consequences in the local and sub regional housing markets are managed for their adjacency effects elsewhere in the MUA particularly as the Pathfinder restructuring of the housing stock impacts within the sub region.
3.32	Wherever in the Region rehousing, clearance, redevelopment or refurbishment takes place the RHB expect to see trained people employed, sensitive to community needs on rehousing through to site clearance, and rehousing coordinators to make relocating into new or existing development happen efficiently.
3.33	In addition to other criteria for the use of ADP/ NAHP as set out in this RHS and the accompanying up to date Regional Allocation Strategy, the RHB may approve the allocation of ADP /NAHP to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• area based housing regeneration strategies,</li> <li>• housing renewal interventions</li> <li>• housing schemes in mixed use regeneration strategies, and</li> <li>• areas of housing action in adopted LDDs</li> <li>• government initiated , implemented or managed areas of housing intervention,</li> </ul> provided these comply with the strategic objectives of achieving mixed and balanced communities, and redress deficiencies in local housing choices.
3.34	In the short run the RHB will increase in the ADP support for new affordable housing in the rural areas of the region, particularly in the south and west HMAs, as justified in the RHS and set out in the Allocations Strategy.
3.35	The RHB will seek the RPBs guidance on the places where the requirements for new affordable housing are to be located in the most <u>sustainable</u> locations, and seek the RPBs guidance as to how LHAS and LPAs are to evaluate such locations, but avoiding simple prescriptions for them such as settlements size or only the presence of ‘key services’.
3.36	The RHB will work with the RPB, through the WMRSS, to pay specific attention to how to provide pathways of housing choice which reflect the functional roles of settlements in networks in <i>rural</i> areas. The RHB will wish to see to how strengthening pathways of choice can deliver wider social and economic benefits.
3.37	The RHB acknowledges the importance of up-to-date local housing needs

	assessments for the evidence base for joint, and local District Housing Strategies and LDFs.
<b>3.38</b>	The RHB supports the concept of a region-wide standardised approach to local housing needs assessments and will wish to see any further ODPM guidance on this subject used within the Regional and sub regional policy framework as presented in this RHS.
<b>3.39</b>	The RHB acknowledges the excellent work done in the West Midlands by Rural Housing Enablers to deliver good quality well located affordable housing. The RHB will positively review the Rural Housing Enabler programme and encourage its extension within the Region.
<b>3.40</b>	The RHB will support the RPB to ensure these rural housing issues are reviewed as appropriate in the WMRSS at the Partial Review.
<b>3.41</b>	In general, the principles of sustainability will lead to the majority of housing development in rural areas being focused on market towns and larger rural settlements (in line with WMRSS policy principles). In some circumstances, it will also be appropriate to consider meeting identified local housing needs in smaller settlements provided this can be shown to contribute directly towards regenerating the rural economy or to sustaining a local community by meeting proven local housing needs and where the impact on the environment and the landscape is acceptable.
<b>4.1</b>	In the context of new development, major regeneration and restructuring initiatives the RHB expects all involved in strategic development (Local Housing Strategies and other associated planning and strategy development), to establish and address the needs and aspirations of all the communities affected.
<b>4.2</b>	The RHB will wish to see explored in more depth the views, experiences and competing demands on housing resources in the inner cities from new and established communities where these are competing for the same accommodation. The Policy intention is to create the positive conditions for extending the areas of residential search for those households who currently live in those more concentrated communities, and to ensure sufficient appropriate homes and services are available to new migrants and asylum seekers / refugees as they become established and enter the mainstream housing market.
<b>4.3</b>	The RHB will wish join with other Regional partners (e.g. West Midlands BME Housing Network, AWM, RPB) to see inclusive work, involving the community and with the private sector, planning, housing and BME housing organisations, on specific proposals to achieve Urban Renaissance so that the detailed and particular housing aspirations of each ethnic group resident in the MUAs is addressed. This work will need to achieve more than one off 'pilots' and 'flagship' schemes, but be comprehensive and radical to accommodate all in these communities where new homes are needed and to maximise the opportunities that are being created.
<b>4.4</b>	The RHB will wish to see LHAs and LPAs together actively creating and promoting policy related to the BME communities as follows: - Increasing pathways of housing choice i.e.: extending choice of tenure and dwelling type within areas that BME communities have traditionally exercised search patterns and supporting BME communities in making choices beyond these established areas of housing settlement - Addressing harassment and securing safety - Meeting the needs of diverse and fragmented communities
<b>4.5</b>	The RHB will work with the Regional Planning Body and LPAs to ensure the application of Urban Renaissance strategy does not lead to gentrification at the expense of the BME communities in the MUAs.
<b>4.6</b>	The Regional Housing Partnership, on behalf of the RHB, will seek the advice of the BME Housing Network and the Regional Housing Partnership on the issue

	of tools available to remove discriminatory barriers to housing choice.
4.7	The RHB will seek to ensure the housing requirements, and in the context of long term change, aspirations of BME communities, in both MUAs and outside the MUAs, are being addressed, by the local housing strategies, working with planning, the private sector and BME stakeholders.
4.8	The RHB supports the principle of capital investment in social rented general needs housing to improve access to permanent, secure affordable housing areas where there is a supply gap in order that local authorities can meet Government targets to reduce by half the number of households in insecure accommodation by 2010.
4.9	The RHB supports the principle of capital investment in supported housing for the Supporting People programme, being linked to meeting homelessness needs, ensuring both catch up and forward investment in accommodation and support services to tackle and prevent homelessness.
4.10	The RHB will support efforts of the LHAs working together to improve the use of existing data in monitoring and Strategy development. Similarly efforts to extend the quality and type of data collected will be supported.
4.11	The Regional Housing Board supports the approach to addressing homelessness as set out in the Regional Homelessness Strategy, and in particular: 1. In order to ensure a better linkage between homelessness intelligence on areas of priority and capital funding programmes, the RHB will have regard to the level of priority homeless acceptances and the supply of social housing lettings in assessing the requirement for capital investment from 2006 onwards. 2. Capital investment in supported housing: a) In the short term for improvement, remodelling or reprovision of supported accommodation for vulnerable people including those homeless or at risk b) In the medium term ,subject to a better link up between revenue and capital through a coordinated approach with Supporting People Commissioners, schemes may be supported that meet 'homelessness needs gaps', in particular those that support prevention initiatives
4.12	In all areas of clearance the RHB expects to see care taken to address the specific housing needs of; *vulnerable and socially excluded groups, *the development of housing pathways for diverse groups including young people, and * those who will need short and longer term support subject to resources.
4.13	The RHB will require partners drawing on its funds in any housing market redevelopment, clearance, or other disruptive, interventionist activity, to demonstrate the highest standards of community and individual sensitivity in their treatment of residents, and especially those who are vulnerable, elderly, disabled, with mental health problems or where there are language or other communication difficulties.
4.14	The RHB will expect the cooperation of LHAs and LPAs in sharing information which demonstrates compliance with this and associated policies especially at times when funding is being sought either in principle for the range of a programme or for specific schemes. The RHB may seek the assistance of the RHP in reviewing service delivery on these matters.
4.15	The RHB encourages the principle of a Cross-Sector Strategy Homelessness Implementation Group reporting to the Regional Housing Partnership and working in partnership with the Regional Implementation Group (Supporting People) to champion the Regional Homelessness Strategy.
4.16	The RHB will encourage this Homelessness Implementation Group advising, through the RHP, on policy, resource issues, to promote good practice and cross sectoral working, monitoring and review.



4.17	<p>The RHB encourages the setting up of sub-regional partnerships (based on existing networks) to coordinate activities and pool budgets for a wide range of cross-sector and cross-authority work on homelessness prevention and support including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*building strategic capacity</li> <li>*joint training programmes</li> <li>*common needs analysis and resource priorities</li> <li>*provision of specialist prevention and support services to meet the needs of several authorities</li> <li>*Access to health care and health promotion</li> <li>*Employment and training for people who are homeless</li> <li>*Drug treatment after care and accommodation</li> <li>*Education on homeless prevention and access to education for temporary accommodation residents</li> <li>*Crime reduction and homelessness prevention</li> </ul> <p>This will need to be agreed with all the authorities and agencies who wish to be involved.</p>
4.18	<p>The RHB supports the improvement in data collection as referred to in the Regional Homelessness Strategy</p>
4.19	<p>The RHB urges that the issues identified in the Health Impact Assessment and the research undertaken by Shelter, should be progressed as a priority by the Regional Implementation Group (Homelessness) with all the agencies and organisations who contribute to these issues.</p>
4.20	<p>Where RHB funds are used the RHB will require its partners engaged in any housing market redevelopment , clearance , or other disruptive interventionist activity, to demonstrate the highest standards of community and individual sensitivity in their treatment of residents, and especially those who are vulnerable, elderly, disabled or with mental health problems.</p>
4.21	<p>The RHB recognises that there may be additional, priority support needs attached to the implementation of such schemes and programmes within areas of market intervention, which it will endeavour to meet, or where relevant encourage other funding agencies to meet according to remit and responsibility.</p>
4.22	<p>The RHB requires an assessment of the support needs of people living in areas scheduled for renewal that may include hostel provision or supported housing schemes. The results relevant to the phase or stage of the redevelopment process from these assessments should accompany programme, phases or parts of programme submission or scheme proposals to demonstrate clear linkage between housing needs, (and preferences), and programme or scheme details when submitted for approval or for funding.</p>
4.23	<p>The RHB encourages close working relationships to be formed between the HMA housing market area partnerships and the Supporting People structures within the Region to enable greater access to services in the Region, maximise the use of resources, share good practice and gain consistency.</p>
4.24	<p>The RHB requires the delivery of services across the West Midlands Region undertaken in a coherent, interrelated, planned, rational manner, which immediately addresses any uneven distribution of services given the current disposition has a negative effect on the movement of people between rural and urban areas, and cities and surrounding towns.</p>
4.25	<p>The RHB has accepted the West Midlands Supporting People Strategy 2005 and will have regard to that Strategy in addition to the priorities set out under Supporting People in this RHS for the development of services, development of understanding needs, service provision and addressing any gaps, service development and funding priorities.</p>
4.26	<p>The RHB requires Rural Supporting People authorities to work in partnership with surrounding authorities to obtain a clear understanding of the numbers of</p>

	people moving to access services elsewhere and the reasons why, and to consider suitable policy responses, including the provision of local services nearer their homes.
4.27	The RHB strongly supports the efforts of the RPB and LPAs to deliver mixed and balanced communities, which in the face of a need to provide accommodation for any Supporting People need category will expect to see good practice in community participation and mediation being used to facilitate scheme acceptance and where necessary be robust in asserting the delivery of these schemes in the communities where they are needed.
4.28	The RHB will expect proposals for Supporting People capital schemes to be well supported by sufficiently detailed option appraisals for the Housing Corporation to be able to evaluate the alternatives and demonstrate that appropriate investments are being made, including on the grounds of value for money.
4.29	The RHB will support the Housing Corporation in making capital grant commitments for Supporting People schemes in order to facilitate obtaining the necessary revenue funding.
4.30	The RHB encourages the role of the <u>Supporting People RIG</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to provide strategic advice to the RHB on both general SP issues and supported housing investment decisions</li> <li>• to provide advice to RHB on the regional allocation of SP funds – exploring where Local Area Agreements are being developed to seek improved strategic fit</li> <li>• to raise the profile of Supporting People and seek engagement with associated organisations (i.e. health family - PCTs and SHAs, Social Services)</li> <li>• to gain support and enthusiasm for the RHB and Regional Supporting People Strategy from all Administering Authorities, ensuring needs and requirements are reflected in local investment decisions.</li> <li>• to co-ordinate the implementation of the Regional Supporting People priorities of the Regional Housing Board and</li> <li>• to strengthen its links with the Housing Corporation</li> </ul>
4.31	The RHB encourages issuing by the SP(RIG) for Supporting People administering authorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action plans that build on the existing Regional working</li> <li>• Information sharing to take the RHB and RSP Strategy forward</li> <li>• An overview of provision across the Region to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supply maps highlighting the distribution of services between rural and semi-Rural areas and the major urban conurbations;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A directory of Supporting People provision for service users across the Region;</li> <li>• Develop good practice models</li> <li>• Identify information gaps to develop the RSP strategy further</li> </ul>
4.32	The RHB expects Local Authorities to establish Disability Housing Registers so that disabled people have access to available housing opportunities and to also improve the quality of the data on the needs and characteristics of people with disabilities, in order to more effectively meet their needs.
4.33	The RHB supports the targeting of resources to deliver wheelchair standard homes where the need is evidenced and delivery assured.
4.34	The RHB supports specific consideration in the Black Country Study, and in research in other restructuring areas, being given to the long term trends and policy responses necessary to achieve social and economic integration of asylum seekers and refugees.
4.35	The RHB expects RSLs to work together and with National Housing Federation to explore the extent to which they can assist refugees and how they can make themselves more accessible to this group.

4.36	The RHB supports the development of a monitoring process to establish as accurately as possible, the rate of absorption of the ASR population into the general housing market and the development of policy sensitive to the needs of ASR households which are at risk of becoming socially excluded.
4.37	The RHB requires all housing providers and agencies to review their policies to ensure refugees can access suitable move-on accommodation in which they can live for the long-term, rather than short-term temporary accommodation. Any barriers identified are to be removed promptly.
4.38	The RHB recognises that the needs of vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees should be understood and that their needs,- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be included as core to all service planning including neighbourhood renewal, housing, social services, education and health</li> </ul> and therefore encourages the most effective and sensitive approaches to service provision, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific measures to inform Asylum Seekers and Refugees of the services available and that</li> <li>• appropriately trained and briefed staffs deliver these.</li> </ul>
4.39	The RHB expects all LHAs to develop a consistent set of policies across HMAs for developing bond schemes with private landlords which will be of benefit to both private rented housing suppliers and tenants, especially asylum seekers and refugees.
4.40	The RHB encourages LHAs to issue all new refugees with a guide to locating move-on accommodation, explaining the relevant procedures and processes that a refugee needs to follow.
4.41	The RHB encourages the work of organisations who are delivering on key integration initiatives such as access to employment, adult education to work together so that a holistic approach is taken in resettling refugees.
4.42	The RHB supports the existing multi-agency forums established in key dispersal and resettlement areas, and refugee networks to advise, guide and deliver initiatives for ASRs as are encouraged in Policy 4.38.
4.43	The RHB will work with regional agencies and organisations to research and examine the success of initiatives in the areas referred to above and the ways in which they might be applied elsewhere across the West Midlands.
4.44	Further research into the housing needs of Asylum Seekers and Refugees within the Region has also been identified, to provide local authorities with a steer on how to place, manage and monitor Asylum Seekers most effectively in the future.
4.45	The RHB expects to see Local Authorities working with the Housing Corporation and the RSLs to see where additional pitches may be needed and how they might be delivered.
4.46	The RHB will consult with Local Authorities through the joint WMRSS/RHS monitoring system on the process of updating Regional household needs information, data on pitches required and of trends.
4.47	The RHB requires local authorities' integrate their strategies take account of Gypsies and Travellers and especially pitch provision.
4.48	The RHB expects local authorities to ensure there is good coordination, liaison and consistency of housing advice, on accommodation matters for Gypsies and Travellers.
5.1	The RHB expects to see the development of sustainable communities incorporated into all LDDs across the Region. When in the production of their LDDs, LPAs wish to consult the RHB in compliance with the 'PPS12 consultation' provisions, LPAs will be directed to this RHS, and the requirement to ensure pathways of housing choice are being provided within the overall objective of achieving sustainable communities.
5.2	To promote housing that minimises greenhouse gas emissions, car travel and

	car dependence
5.3	To promote residential development and improvements to the housing stock which protect and enhance the quality of the natural and built environment; and which maintains and enhances biodiversity in urban as well as rural areas.
5.4	The RHB supports the promotion of opportunities for the renewal of existing stock in areas of historical and architectural significance where appropriate.
5.5	To promote development and improvements to the housing stock which utilise good design to reduce crime and fear of crime and increase 'passive security' and physical activity through encouraging utilisation of pleasant public spaces.
5.6	To promote development and improvements to the housing stock which support healthy lifestyles, which reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport for example by ensuring that journeys on foot or by bicycle are safe, easy and attractive as well as practicable.
5.7	To advocate incorporating land within housing development for community services where appropriate, such as open space and recreation facilities, in the interests of creating sustainable, well managed and properly resourced communities.
5.8	Set a target for all social housing (owned by local authorities and housing associations) to meet the decent homes standard as a minimum by 2010.
5.9	In refurbishments for Decent Homes Standard, raise energy efficiency to current Building Regulations standards, or as near as practicable, not only to Decent Homes minimum
5.10	Accept the demolition of homes incapable of being brought up to acceptable thermal standards where practicable.
5.11	Link the delivery of decent homes clearly with wider neighbourhood renewal and Urban and rural renaissance agendas.
5.12	Work with the West Midlands Public Health Group to better understand the needs for Affordable Warmth in the Region
5.13	Aim to eradicate fuel poverty for vulnerable households by 2010 and for all households by 2016.
5.14	Local authorities to demonstrate both that they have a robust assessment of the extent to which vulnerable households in the private sector are housed in non-decent stock within their area and that they have a clear and effective strategy, within the context of their overall neighbourhood renewal strategy, to deal with this. All possible sorts of funding sources should be explored in order to establish the most effective means of obtaining sustainable improvements.
5.15	Local authorities should benchmark and share good practice in meeting the Decent Homes standard.
5.16	The RHB will enhance ,as appropriate, the resources (where available) to local authorities within the Region to give greater prominence to private sector housing renewal programmes within their local housing strategies, where good evidence is presented of the needs to be addressed.
5.17	The RHB will encourage the development of a learning environment, consolidating the training programmes likely to be established by central government, to bring the main elements of the Housing Act 2004 into practice and ensure the development and dissemination of good practice over the implementation of private sector housing renewal programmes as a whole between local authorities in the Region.
5.18	The RHB will continue to facilitate the development of the loans agenda. This continues its support for the Kick-start initiative, extending the scope of the project in a subsequent phase to other authorities in the Region; in seeking to attract increasing levels of private finance into the equation.
5.19	The RHB, mindful of the change in legislation, the government's adoption of an enabling role for local authorities, the RHB will encourage the exploration of different local delivery mechanisms in order to sustain and increase the scale of

	repair and improvement activity.
5.20	The RHB will encourage a shift in the nature and scale of activity as far as energy efficiency and fuel poverty initiatives are concerned. The RHB will wish to see these programmes more effectively targeted than hitherto on 'vulnerable households' and on 'hard to heat' homes. These programmes should be more closely integrated to repair and improvement programmes under the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO), so that investment on improved energy efficiency is more effectively protected by repairs to the fabric of dwellings;
5.21	The RHB encourages local authorities in the Region to continue to pursue and designate area based approaches.
5.22	Support the procurement of affordable housing supply where needed through both new building and acquisition of the existing stock and support the wide range of affordable housing types being used to meet needs including social rented, shared ownership and other forms of low cost home ownership housing.
5.23	Require LHAs which under most pressure to provide more affordable housing to consider whether their plan policies can be strengthened (e.g. through the inclusions of a wider range of development sites) and how affordable housing policies can be implemented more robustly.
5.24	In supporting the use of Section 106 agreements to maximise opportunities to obtain affordable housing, the RHB considers that where there is insufficient means to secure all the internal cross subsidy needed to deliver the quantity of affordable housing required, then the LPA jointly with the LHA may present a case to the Housing Corporation for additional funding. However before such an approach can be successful all other potentially available sources of finance should be evaluated for their applicability and their sources exhausted, including recourse to the LAs own funds and borrowing approvals.
5.25	Public funding for affordable housing schemes on Section 106 sites will only be available where a viability study shows this is necessary or where public funding can be shown to add value by improving the quality and mix of affordable housing provided so that it more accurately meets local needs.
5.26	The RHB supports improvements to the clarity and consistency within and between authorities, at HMA level, in securing affordable housing through planning and Section 106 Agreements.
5.27	The RHB adopts the same definition of social and affordable housing in the RHS as used in the WMRSS.
5.28	The RHB expects LHAs to maximise the gain in affordable housing in writing LDF policy, if necessary going below the thresholds set out in national guidance in areas where the LPA/LHA can prove that needs would otherwise risk being unmet and that low income households have particular difficulty in affording local house prices (see WMRSS policy CF5).
5.29	The RHB will work with the RPB to consider the need for a WMRSS policy supporting the provision of affordable housing without subsidy in rural areas through development controlled by planning conditions and legal agreements.
5.30	The RHB encourages local authorities at HMA level to undertake joint research into the financial viability of different tenure options when provided as newbuild or purchase of existing properties. The RHB supports making use of commuted sum payments, or mechanisms such as PFI in order to enhance their ability to support the provision of a range of affordable housing options.
5.31	The RHB wishes LHAs within HMAs to begin the process of operating Common housing registers between local authorities and if possible RSLs operating in the area. Local authorities and RSLs should positively market the range of affordable housing options and should keep a common register of affordable housing demand for different tenure and housing options. (See also Choice Based Lettings at RHS Ch7 para 7.34 )
5.32	Local authorities should use their full range of planning powers, including

	<p>where appropriate compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) to facilitate an adequate supply of land for affordable housing. In their disposals of land public sector landowners should release underused and surplus land with the <u>presumption that it be used to address affordable housing needs</u>. Land should be released at prices which may be below the market value where that is 'artificially' inflated by inter or intra - migration pressures, and that allows the use of the site to genuinely address affordability requirements, by affordable housing suppliers, subject to scheme compositions reflecting the proper principles of sustainable development and mixed and balanced communities.</p>
5.33	<p>The release of a site for affordable housing should not unnecessarily require a set mix of type or tenure if the surrounding housing mix addresses the needs of some sections of the market. <u>Site release should be used to prioritise the meeting of gaps in choice and provision</u>. The judgement on whether a scheme satisfies the criteria for contributing to mixed and balanced community must be made in relation to the site in its strategic and local context, including any overall phasing proposals that will come forward in the near future. The variety of tenure and type of housing to be made available or that already is in situ in the surrounding vicinity should be weighed in the consideration of the particular mix to be brought forward on any one site.</p>
5.34	<p>LPA and LHA together should consider agreeing with developers in Sec 106 schemes whether it is preferable to have fewer more expensive properties that match the housing needs priorities rather than accept a greater quantity of less useful inappropriate property on offer. Continued bias in supply outcomes can lead to serious discriminatory outcomes which must be avoided.</p>
5.35	<p>The RHB encourages local authorities to require developers to meet the Housing Corporation's Scheme Development Standards and Eco Homes ratings on the affordable housing element.</p>
5.36	<p>The RHB (through the Regional Housing Partnership) will convene a working group to develop templates for local policies and legal agreements, and monitoring and management arrangements for such development bearing in mind the need not to prejudice locally generated, creative policy solutions, and to avoid a 'one size fits all solution'.</p>
5.37	<p>The RHB supports the acquisition of existing houses by RSLs through ADP in circumstances where new build is unlikely to provide sufficient affordable houses. The RHB supports the use of CPOs (under Planning, Housing or other legislation as appropriate) by local authority or other public agency so empowered, to secure sites for affordable housing where RSLs or other providers are otherwise finding this intractable. Local authorities and other public agencies should not postpone taking CPO action indefinitely. If privately owned sites fail to be brought forward for development, especially for affordable and /or social housing, Authorities should commence Orders as soon as attempts at negotiations have been unsuccessful and there are reasonable grounds for considering further attempts would remain unsuccessful.</p>
5.38	<p>The RHB supports the use of CPOs (under Planning, Housing or other legislation as appropriate) by local authority or other public agency so empowered, to secure sites for affordable housing where RSLs or other providers are otherwise finding this intractable. Local authorities and other public agencies should not postpone taking CPO action indefinitely. If privately owned sites fail to be brought forward for development, especially for affordable and /or social housing, Authorities should commence Orders as soon as attempts at negotiations have been unsuccessful and there are reasonable grounds for considering further attempts would remain unsuccessful.</p>
5.39	<p>In the event that the Government Policy introduces affordability targets at national, and regional level, and if these are to be applied sub regionally the RHB will hold to the following policies;</p>

	<p>a) RHB will work with the RPB to determine the implications of the regional affordability target for the West Midlands, for Spatial planning, residential land release and the pattern of investment in affordable housing,</p> <p>b) the WMRSS overall strategy of delivering reduced migration from the MUAs to the non - MUA areas will be maintained</p> <p>c) urban renaissance will remain the strategic goal for the MUAs</p> <p>d) the rural renaissance must be enhanced by the application of new policy</p> <p>e) where tariffs on new build development or a development based tax is introduced and the funds are collected by local authorities, the RHB expect the funds raised to be used in the following order of priority,</p> <p>i) the production of affordable housing in the local authority</p> <p>ii) the production of affordable housing in the Housing Market Areas (on the basis this meets needs arising in whole or part from the local authority's area)</p> <p>iii) other works required to secure sustainable communities.</p> <p>The RHB would not support the use of such funds a programme unrelated to addressing affordable housing and sustainable, mixed and balanced communities.</p> <p>The RHB would not support a unilateral departure from the WMRSS. Until such time as the WMRSS itself has been modified through the Partial Review Process the RHB will continue to invest in line with the adopted and approved WMRSS (RPG11).</p> <p>In the event the planning reform proposals go beyond the issues addressed here the RHB will consider whether supplementary guidance for LHAs is necessary in their dealings with LPAs and the RPB conformity process.</p>
5.40	In the event the planning reform proposals go beyond the issues addressed here the RHB will consider whether supplementary guidance for LHAs is necessary in their dealings with LPAs and the RPB conformity process.
5.41	The RHB encourages the minimisation of use of energy and natural resources in residential development and improvements to the housing stock .This objective applies to the design and construction of dwellings, the performance of the housing stock when occupied, and travel to and from housing.
5.42	The RHB encourages the drive for excellence in the design of new housing and in the improvement and adaptation of the existing housing stock.
5.43	The RHB encourages sustainable construction methods in residential development in the West Midlands, and encourages developers to reduce waste arising from construction, by ensuring that principles of efficient waste management are used (e.g. site waste management plans, re-cycling of materials in house building) and that waste management schemes for subsequent occupiers are built into the overall design (i.e. waste separation in homes).
5.44	The RHB encourages new residential development and improvements to the housing stock that adapt to the predicted effects of climate change.
5.45	The RHB will expect to see the RHS monitored jointly with the RPBs Regional Monitoring Officers Group (RMOG), and together with LHAs this process is expected to identify appropriate interventions in a timely manner. This will require close liaison between the Private housebuilders, the Private Rented Sector, LHAs, Environmental Health Officers, RPB/RMOG, the Regional Housing Board, and GOWM, all via the RHP, in order to track this potential impact.
5.46	Support the development of the West Midlands Regional Design Stakeholders Forum, together with the four key components of the Regional Design Framework: * Development of a Regional Design Charter – a vision which captures the

	<p>imagination and commitment of local partners to jointly pursue quality design</p> <p>* Benchmarking and setting of best practice through a 'design panel' to provide an informed and multi-professional peer review, providing advice to design and development teams in the Region</p> <p>* Improved greater co-ordination between all those involved in the design process through support - signposting and advice, co-ordination - accessible consolidated information, networking - developing enhanced practitioner links - bringing experience and expertise together</p> <p>* Skills - Enhancing design awareness and promotion of design skills in local agencies. To support CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and the Region's two Architecture and Built Environment Centres in piloting a "Design Stakeholder Forum.</p>
5.47	To support CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and the Region's two Architecture and Built Environment Centres in piloting a "Design Stakeholder Forum.
5.48	The RHB will support best practice in housing design as formulated through the Regional Design Framework mechanism.
5.49	The RHB will support work on an initiative to enhance the Region's Planning, Architecture and Design Skills - and in its response to the Egan Skills for Sustainable Communities Agenda.
5.50	The RHB requires that where ever possible housing developments and improvements to existing housing in the West Midlands should be designed to standards that will minimise energy use, water use, waste, reuse and reclaim waste where possible, incorporate water efficiency measures and sustainable drainage, reduce CO2 emissions and be fit for future anticipated climate change, including extremes of weather and taking into account the need to avoid building in areas prone to flood. Housing developers will be expected to consider the issues thoroughly and adopt the best practicable option(s).
5.51	In order to produce a safer environment the RHB expects to see Secure by Design principles continue to be used in the creation of new residential development.
5.52	The RHB requires that new affordable housing built should continue to be built to the Lifetime Homes standard.
5.53	Housing should promote positive health, in particular by enabling and encouraging people to walk and cycle as part of their normal daily routine, and providing good access to open space.
5.54	The RHB welcomes a closer understanding of the inter relationship between Housing and Health, and will support joint working on those areas of mutual benefit between Health and Housing at the Regional level and where either Health or Housing functions have a policy impact on the other.
5.55	<p>To this end, subject to resources and the assistance of other Regional and local organisations, the RHB will support the Regional Health Partnership, Department of Health, Strategic Health Authorities, other NHS departments and health providers and their constituent bodies will aim to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estimate the impact of new housing development and population migration on the local health services; to assist the NHS in ensuring services are appropriate to meet changing needs;</li> <li>• Support the use of planning gain and to fund local health services or necessary enhancements, where appropriate within large scale developments, to achieve mixed, balanced and sustainable communities;</li> <li>• The NHS to consider the impact of its investment and land-use decisions as part of wider neighbourhood renewal;</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Regional Health Partnership, Department of Health and Local Authorities to support and encourage better design of new developments to provide safe access to work and services and encourage healthier lifestyles (improved footpaths and cycle routes for example);</li> <li>• Work with the Regional Health Partnership, Department of Health and Local Authorities to support measures to combat the risk of accident and hazard in the home, especially relating to young people and older residents;</li> <li>• Work with Local Authorities and other housing providers, health providers and the voluntary sector to achieve the shared outcomes of reducing homelessness, improving the health of homeless people and improving access to primary care for homeless people, by providing health outreach services. Asylum seekers and refugees to be included as core parts of service planning, including health;</li> <li>• Encourage Local Authorities and local housing providers to integrate work between homelessness and mental health practitioners, developing effective support in hostels and day centres;</li> <li>• Work with Local Authorities and voluntary sector to provide clear pathways to services and information, making better access to existing care and support options.</li> </ul>
<b>6.1</b>	The RHB will oversee with the RPB the development of a comprehensive joint regional housing monitoring system. This will be consistent with the WMRSS and RHS policies and housing environment with the express purpose of informing on policy impact, policy review and to support the ongoing maintenance and development of the Shared Evidence Base. This will be maintained for the duration of the RHS period to 2021.
<b>6.2</b>	In developing the RPB / RHB combined monitoring system will make best use of existing data and will only request additional information when this is critical to an assessment of progress in meeting RHS aims and objectives.
<b>6.3</b>	The RHB will set up appropriate arrangements via the WMRHP to seek the cooperation of LHAs to establish the monitoring system and to see this is integrated with that already in being under the RPB for the WMRSS.
<b>6.4</b>	Notwithstanding the RHS use of the RSS definition of affordable housing the RHB wishes to establish a Region-wide protocol for the definition of affordable housing and it's monitoring to achieve a clear accurate and reliable picture of the quantity, type and location of provision will be sought between all relevant stakeholders.
<b>6.5</b>	Reports on progress will be prepared annually and reviewed by RHB. Each year RHB with the RPB will prepare a joint annual monitoring report to include and enhance the statutory WMRSS Annual Monitoring Report.
<b>6.6</b>	The RHB will require data to be presented for the joint monitoring process in terms of the four HMAs, to include data collection and collation from the local level tracking progress in each of the HMAs. The RHB will work with each of the four Regional Housing Market Areas to identify consistent and appropriate mechanisms to contribute to the joint monitoring process.
<b>6.7</b>	The monitoring regime will seek to develop a better understanding of the impact and results of the RHB's and others investments, including the expenditure against RHS policy targets by Local Housing Authorities.
<b>6.8</b>	On behalf of the RHB, the joint WMRSS/RHS monitoring regime will seek the help of LHAs to assist in providing data that informs the RHB/RPB on the

	delivery of mixed and balanced communities with the development of pathways of housing choice by housing market area. To this end data on tenure, the types of properties being provided, origin of housing movements into new homes, and continued understanding of affordability will need to be reported upon and inform policy review and further strategy development, regionally, sub-regionally and with local authorities.
6.9	Subject to resources and the extensive cooperation of the relevant organisations, bodies and authorities, the RHB will welcome integrated annual reports on Supporting People, and other thematic policy topics. These reports will demonstrate performance against strategic themes.
6.10	Wherever a new call upon the Single Regional Housing Pot may arise from the operation of the Housing Act 2004, local housing authorities will be expected to identify each category of action, quantify the extent or scope of the intervention and enter into Regional protocols for monitoring the incidence and impact of the provisions concerned.
6.11	The RHB will work with the RPB to develop RPB and the draft monitoring regime for MKSM impacts on the West Midlands and will seek to join with the East Midlands Regional Housing Board and RPB to conduct joint cross border research if the trends suggest this is necessary for the securing of the Strategic agenda for the West Midlands Region.
6.12	The RHB will support in whole or part the costs of further joint LHA working where this involves researching a closer understanding of the dynamics and issues within the sub-regional housing markets, their neighbourhoods, towns, villages and parishes. The RHB will particularly wish to encourage such joint working with LPAs.
6.13	The RHB strongly urges LHAs and LPAs to proceed jointly with the development of Housing and Planning policy for housing, on the basis of the understanding of housing markets presented in this RHS, the RHS policies designed to address these, and the supporting suite of Research. The RHB does not wish to see local housing policy developed in isolation from the understanding given in this RHS 2005.
6.14	The RHB will continue to engage in a regular dialogue with the representatives of the private housebuilding, and urban regeneration sectors to develop mutual understanding and to facilitate the achievement Regional Strategy objectives by drawing upon the insight, understanding and expertise of the Sector.
7.1	The RHB Will encourage other Public Bodies to release surplus land for affordable housing where planning consent is obtainable.
7.2	The RHB Supports the principle of increasing choice of access to social housing through Choice Based Lettings schemes. The RHB may consider the advantages of a regional or sub-regional approach to Choice Based Lettings once research and evaluations on the scheme have been received.
7.3	<p>The RHB will determine when the RHS is to be reviewed in consultation with the RPB and G:OWM, in line with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The development of the Shared Evidence Base,</li> <li>○ The development of policy in the WMRSS</li> <li>○ The results of new research findings which warrant a Review and</li> <li>○ The results of the enhanced monitoring of the RHS and WMRSS together</li> </ul> <p>However, short run cycles in the housing market would not of themselves warrant a review of the RHS. Consideration will be given to the potential merits of a review in the three to five year period. Such review of the RHS may be in whole or part.</p>
7.4	The RHB will have regard to the prevailing Regional Economic Strategy t the

	time the RHS is reviewed and similarly will expect any revision to the WMES to reflect the RHS of the time.
<b>8.1</b>	In the event of such advice or direction being received, implementing a substantially different Strategic Spatial policy on housing numbers then the RHB reserves the right to thoroughly review the RHS in consultation with its stakeholders.
<b>8.2</b>	The RHB will determine its research strategy, in consultation with stakeholders, in the light of changing trends, government policy requirements, the identification of needs as yet not properly understood, unidentified or emerging at some future stage, or where the complexities of attempting strategic policy alignment require further understanding of processes and the necessary policy tools to deliver.
<b>8.3</b>	The RHB will commission and fund in whole or part the following programme of research, subject to briefs, satisfactory project management arrangements and the availability of funds.
<b>8.4</b>	The RHB will support and fund the above work on updating the Shared Evidence Base for the review of the RHS and to ensure this is consistent with the needs of the WMRSS Partial Review.
<b>8.5</b>	The RHB requires local authorities (and housing alliances, groups of RSLs or other housing partnerships)undertaking household surveys for housing strategy or planning purposes to use the appended questionnaire in whole or in part, as relevant, and to share the resultant data with the RHP/ RPB for collation and analysis at the Regional and sub regional level. Where the funding for such surveys is, in whole or part, funded by the WMRA, RHB, or GOWM, then this will be expressed as a condition of funding.