

# Achievements of Greater Haven Gateway Sub Region

This document describes some of the achievements that the Greater Haven Gateway has accomplished, in 2006-10, working together to deliver sub regional strategic housing priorities. The achievements are grouped together thematically and give some tangible examples of the added value of the partnership.

## *Achievements to-date*

### **1. Maximising delivery of new housing**

In the 2006-2010 sub-regional strategy a key strategic priority for GHG was maximising housing delivery and this resulted in several achievements including:

- ✓ Delivered 1,175 affordable homes of all tenures for people in housing need..... exceeding Homes and Communities Agency targets for the sub-region for 2006-08;
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- ✓ Improved our understanding of housing need in the sub-region and making the way we carry them out more efficient. Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs) were completed across the districts;
- ✓ Developed more robust planning policies based on SHMAs.....s.106 Affordable Housing contribution thresholds have been lowered and percentages increased across the sub region;
- ✓ Improved the way we assess the ability of sites and developers to provide affordable housing as part of planning obligations..... by procuring the Three Dragons viability assessment tool (funded by Haven Gateway Partnership and Maldon and Braintree DCs);
- ✓ Strengthened our relationship with the Haven Gateway Partnership..... including contributing and shaping the housing chapter in their Integrated Development Plan (IDP);

### **2. High quality and sustainable housing**

In the previous strategy a key strategic priority for GHG was addressing housing conditions in a range of tenures and this resulted in several achievements including:

- ✓ Returned empty properties to use ....we worked with Colne Housing Society on the Safe Haven Project to secure funds from East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) and Housing Corporation ([www.safehavenproject.org.uk](http://www.safehavenproject.org.uk)); Empty properties were brought back into use on 5 year lease and rented to CBL applicants;
- ✓ Worked in partnership to develop a sub regional leasing scheme toolkit developed by Colne Housing Society;
- ✓ Improved our understanding of the condition of private sector homes in the sub-region .....stock condition surveys jointly commissioned by Colchester, Suffolk Coastal and Ipswich – with Braintree and Maldon procuring one together;
- ✓ Shared learning ....hosted a RSL Forum learning event on Code for Sustainable Homes
- ✓ Developed exemplar schemes .....in Elmswell – earth shelters, in Braintree – grass roofs, and in Suffolk Coastal housing with allotments;

### **3. Tackling homelessness**

In the previous strategy a key strategic priority for GHG was tackling homelessness and this resulted in several achievements including:

- ✓ Reduced the use of temporary accommodation..... by working together in the sub-region;
- ✓ Increased housing options.....secured £241k additional funding in March 2009 from Communities and Local Government and Department for Work and Pensions to deliver a sub regional Enhanced Housing Options Programme;

- ✓ Tackling homelessness.....identified common approaches to tackling homeless which were incorporated into LAs homelessness strategies and reviews;
- ✓ Supported development of Domestic Violence services.....new Colchester and Tendring Women's refuge and an outreach project across Suffolk;

#### **4. Improve access to affordable housing**

In the previous strategy a key strategic priority for GHG was improving access to affordable housing and this resulted in several achievements including:

- ✓ Improved access to affordable housing...by introducing a sub regional Choice based lettings (CBL) scheme with full sub regional mobility. This scheme has a Common Allocations Policy across all districts and participating RSL's, enabling a greater level of mobility across a wider geographical area. This scheme is used nationally as an example of Good Practice;
- ✓ Increased the provision of housing options and prevention of homelessness...through the CBL scheme;
- ✓ Increased the range of housing options including Shared ownership provision;

#### **5. Support vulnerable people**

*Achievements to-date*

In the previous strategy a key strategic priority for GHG was improving support for vulnerable people and this resulted in several achievements including:

- ✓ Increased choice and met the needs of people with physical disabilities by including adapted properties in the CBL system;
- ✓ Improved consistency across the sub region in allocating move on accommodation.... through CBL allocations process;
- ✓ Providing floating support for people in their own homes ...provided by SNAP in Suffolk and SWAN in Essex;
- ✓ More extra care accommodation provided for vulnerable older people;

#### **6. Ensure equality for all**

In the previous strategy a key strategic priority for GHG was ensuring equality for all and this resulted in several achievements including:

- ✓ Bringing additional funds into the sub region...by participating in EERA's investment theme exercise and investment for growth theme which resulted in securing approx £1 million;
- ✓ Equality and Diversity sub group set up to ensure equality for all ...carried out an Equality Impact Assessment of CBL and developed an action plan to ensure scheme is fair and accessible;
- ✓ Improved evidence base to ensure equality.....by documenting through SHMAs the range of different housing needs including those of BME communities, Older People and People with Disabilities;
- ✓ Improved services for Gypsies and Travellers ...by developing a floating support scheme in Suffolk;
- ✓ Improved understanding of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs...by carrying out County based Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments and sharing learning;