Health Appraisal
of
Bristol’s Housing Strategy 2010-2015
My home is my springboard for life

October 2009

for

Bristol Primary Care Trust

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Health Appraisal
Bristol City Council
Housing Strategy

Introduction
This report arises from a rapid health appraisal that is being used to appraise and improve policies relating to housing at Bristol City Council in the draft housing strategy.

The appraisal has been carried out in with both an expert and a participatory element. The participatory element was supported through involvement of the Healthy City Group of the Bristol Partnership and is part of a wider consultation being undertaken by the Council. The expert element was carried out by Marcus Grant from the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Policy supported by Mel Jones a trainee public health consultant in the initial stages.

It is hoped that this appraisal will help support housing officers and senior leaders in the local council and other stakeholders to reflect on proposed policy as set out in the early drafts of ‘Bristol’s Housing Strategy 2010-2015: My home if my springboard for life’ with a view to better addressing public health through a wider determinants of health model.

The technique being employed for the appraisal is the Spectrum Approach. The aim of this technique is to enable decision-makers to take a quick but holistic overview of policy from the human health standpoint. It acts as a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of a policy, and is useful in public and political as well as professional/technical context. Is also usefully guides policy-makers towards how to improve a policy under scrutiny.

Looking for synergy
Health appraisal needs to be seen in the context of a high level ambition for sustainable development, signed up to at national and local levels. In this context decisions are not about health and health equality versus economic viability social justice versus environmental sustainability, but about how to find integrated solutions which achieve all three.

Sustainable development is an overarching objective across Government. Many policies are now expected to demonstrate how they address sustainable development, including policies that influence spatial development, policies that affect public sector management of assets and policies that influence community development.
Defining Health

The World Health Organisation's objective is the attainment of the highest possible level of health by all the peoples of the world.

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

The health map (Barton and Grant, 2006)

This diagram provides a useful framework, helping to identify the wide range of determinants that support the health of an individual within urban settlement and within neighbourhoods.
The Spectrum approach

The Spectrum approach to project appraisal involves a set of agreed health criteria, a colour-coded grading system, and systematic evaluation.

**BLUE:** excellent
- The health determinant is fully addressed
- A very well-designed policy is backed with realistic action plan and partner backing as appropriate. Delivery is secure and exemplary.

**GREEN:** good
- The health determinant is generally addressed. Well thought out. Current best practice.
- Well thought out policy with an action plan. Delivery is secure.

**YELLOW:** negotiable
- The health determinant is partially addressed. There are significant areas of doubt.
- The criterion is addressed and there is an acknowledgement of a delivery mechanism but success depends on further work and negotiation. A more successful outcome depends on further work but based on the currently approach taken.

**ORANGE:** problematic
- The health determinant is very weakly addressed. A more successful outcome depends on basic changes e.g. in stakeholders, funding or remit
- Either the criterion is not satisfactory addressed or the criterion is addressed but remains largely aspirational. It is not likely to be satisfactorily fulfilled without major reassessment.

**RED:** an unacceptable level
- The health determinant is not being addressed at all.
- It is not likely to be satisfactorily fulfilled.

**Fig 1: Grades of the Spectrum Appraisal**

The key distinction is between a yellow grade and an orange grade. The latter implies that the sustainability criterion is likely to be severely compromised — and a major re-think of approach is required. The former implies that there remain major uncertainties about how far the criterion will be satisfied in delivery, but there are potential strategies that if pursued with vigour have a good chance of success. It is important to note that a mere statement of intent or aspiration is not enough. The mechanism for fulfilling the aspiration must be explicit and convincing, or the grade is yellow.

To merit a green grade the policies must be at least up to good practice standards (that is good practice in sustainable development) and the mechanisms for delivery clear and likely to work. Blue is an excellent best practice standard, where all facets of the criterion are substantially fulfilled, and the policy demonstrates that they can be achieved.
Summary of the results
Bristol’s Draft Housing Strategy 2010-2015

Health Impact Appraisal

Summary

The draft strategy has a lot of high aspirations for housing and it is promising to see. The report clearly list the actions required but these have not at this stage been developed into detailed actions plans.

Although the grades don’t show much ‘green’ or (any) ‘blue’ at present, it was felt that there was the potential for a much better score inmost of the criteria in relation to health.

A clear across the board area for improvement is in to widening the scope of this strategy to secure and ensure better linkage with other strategies and delivery agencies which will influence health in homes and residential areas.

A two way partnership will be required between this housing strategy and other processes. Some of the objectives in this strategy are dependent on the success of other related areas of council and Bristol Partnership work, such as success of local centres mirroring the vitality of the Gloucester Road or North Street. The good practise in strategic and partnership working, evident in this consultation, will need to be continued into the delivery phases.

A preliminary grading was undertaken by Marcus Grant and Mel Jones, a trainee public health consultant, from the Public Health team at Bristol City Council. These findings were then examined and amplified, qualified or contradicted in a workshop session lasting about one hour at the Health City group Bristol Partnership meeting. This meeting had both sub-group and plenary elements.

Workshop session

Facilitator: Marcus Grant
In attendance: Gordon Rudston, Policy and Performance Officer, Housing team

Group 1
John Roy Management, BCC
Claire Lowman Active Bristol Manager, Bristol PCT

Group 2
Ben Barker Chair, Thriving Neighbourhoods Board,
Angela Raffle Consultant in Public Health, NHS Bristol

Group 3
Sarah O’Driscoll Service Manager, Strategic and Citywide Policy Team, BCC
Jackie Beavington Associate Director of Public Health, NHS Bristol

Group 4
Vicky Morris Health and Wellbeing Board, Director Knowle West Health Park
Liz McDougall Principal Health Policy Officer, BCC
### Summary of the results
Below is a summary of the grading by major headings, splitting criteria when necessary:

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<thead>
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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Sub-group working</th>
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<td>Strategic working</td>
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<td><strong>People</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Homes for all</td>
<td>Green/yellow</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
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<td>Well-being support services including NHS and social care</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diet and food access</td>
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<td>Group 1</td>
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<td>Active lives</td>
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<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community regeneration</td>
<td>Orange</td>
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<td>Housing affordability and range</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder involvement in planning and management</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
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<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
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<td><strong>Local economy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Local jobs and wealth creation</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viability and capacity</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
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<td><strong>Built environment</strong></td>
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<td>Wise construction and wise use</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of the home and curtilage</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of the residential public realm</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Natural environment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Air/ Noise</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global ecosystem</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Carbon emissions, by buildings</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carbon emissions, by transport</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
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Evaluation of the criteria
A draft of appropriate criteria was presented to the Healthy City group meeting of the 1st October. The group reviewed the criteria in conjunction with grading the housing strategy.

Strategic links

1. Strategic working

DEFINITION
A healthy residential environment, supporting sustainable and healthy lifestyles can only be delivered through strategic partnership working.

This criterion encompasses linkage with other relevant sectors, transport, planning, economic development, employment, health, education, community development. Understanding and acting on the needs for better co-ordination

GRADE = Green

COMMENTS
This strategy recognises that this is part of Bristol’s (draft) sustainable community strategy and demonstrates the links between these two strategies. The seven objectives set in table 1 are then used to structure the rest of the report giving clear aspirations and the actions that need to be accomplished which could be used to inform an action plan to meet these seven objectives.

The current consultation process is reaching many stakeholders and partners and will help with laying the foundations for future joint working.

Housing and planning are so intertwined, clearly defined links to the Local Development Framework process would assist delivery in terms of health and health equality outcomes.

It is clearly recognised throughout the report that partnership working is required and several of the action plans detail the need for working in partnership but some detail which partners should be involved. The social partners tend to the established RSLs, is any support given to co-housing and self-help groups?

The links with transport need to be made more explicit. In terms of housing people in areas of good access to public transport. This can assist active travel modes, reduce individual car dependency and reduce car traffic in the city and in local areas, with consequential health benefits from a range of risk factors (air quality, noise, road traffic injury, quality of the public realm for walking, cycling safety etc.)

Evidence
Pg7&8
P11

People

2. Homes for all

DEFINITION
Access to a decent home is a key determinant of health. This criterion puts the person at the centre, in terms of their lifetime needs for a home.
It encompasses the variety of housing stock provision responding to local current and future needs in terms of size, form and lifetime / accessibility issues, including the more affluent.

**GRADE = Green/Yellow**

**COMMENTS**

This strategy is clearly focused on providing home for all. The draft strategy looks in detail at need data and at ways of addressing this need. Excellent inclusion of the JSNA to ensure more accurate needs data. The ‘healthy ageing’ agenda is address in a number of ways. Good to see inclusion of issues of adapted and sheltered housing and tenant’s roles. A better score could be obtained with a more innovative and diverse approach to satisfying need, and the inclusion of a more detailed action plan (and deliverables) for meeting the objectives set. With an ageing populating, there are a variety of models of co-housing successful used on mainland which help create supportive communities.

**People**

3. **Well-being support services including NHS and social care issues**

**DEFINITION**

Support services for communities, families and individuals are a key determinant of health.

This criterion encompasses provision responding to local need in terms of health, and other forms of social support. Acknowledge of vulnerable groups in improving well-being and health inequalities

**GRADE = Yellow**

**COMMENTS**

Objective three relates to providing consistent advice and clearly defines its actions. Some excellent provision here in terms of supporting vulnerable people and promoting social inclusion.

However, the majority of these relate to financial advice. A broader scope of advice given could link up different partners and wider issues relating to housing, health, sustainable lifestyles and the home environment.

Objective five – *improving and maintaining independence* has great potential to help serve the vulnerable groups identified. However, the actions appear to focus on older people and sheltered housing. This is a key area where a great range of partners need to be involved but are not detailed for example prison services, social services, care support networks.

Families and carers also need to be included.

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### Evidence

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**People**

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Lifestyle

4. Diet and food access

DEFINITION
Diet is a key determinant of health, housing policy can influence where people live, some residential areas can be virtual ‘food deserts’ in terms of healthy eating.

This criterion is about local access to good quality food choices including local food growing opportunities, having a range of sources. Includes regional issues and quality of food in public procurement.

GRADE = Red

COMMENTS
This is graded as red as at present this is not addressed in the housing strategy. This could be included under objective six contributing to sustainable and cohesive communities as well as in section 5 where social inclusion of vulnerable groups could be linked to partners who are involved in schemes such as community gardens, kitchens, food storage issues or community food stalls. Some of this could be addressed through planned green space, open space provision; community allotments – allocation or clearing of space for these functions.

Evidence
P20-21

Lifestyle

5. Active lives

DEFINITION
An active lifestyle is a major contributor to leading a healthy and long with a commensurate high quality of life. The key requirement is a residential setting whereby everyday activity is supported.

This criterion included appropriate provision and access - accessible and attractive open space, recreational provision, children's play opportunities and sports. It also includes supporting housing and housing areas which encourage residents in walking and cycling.

GRADE = Red

COMMENTS
This appears to be addressed by action 6 pg 21 work with partners to promote healthy lifestyles through the creation of healthy environments this is a big action that will need to involve many partners and different strategies including housing, planning, transport, education, etc.

This alone could be one of the key objectives for a housing strategy linking housing, transport, leisure, work and community.

Housing quality standards need to address safe secure cycle storage either in the property easily accessed garden or on street secure provision for residents.

Shared space for walking, cycling, active play without the dominance of the car is important.

Evidence
Pg 21
Community

6. Community regeneration

DEFINITION
Living in a supportive community can be a determinant for good mental health and well-being. People with high levels of well-being are better able to stay well and to support vulnerable members of the community.

This criterion addresses strategies to reduce isolation and social exclusion. It includes policies supporting the development of confident mixed communities.

GRADE = Orange

COMMENTS

Objective six – contributing to sustainable and cohesive communities has great potential to address this criterion.

The issues are well articulated, research has been built on and policy direction is clear.

However, the actions detailed here are very broad and more detail and an action plan would help ensure this potential. Especially action 4, Building positive bonds between incoming groups and existing residents is vital.

Clear links with the LDF process and statutory housing growth obligations could assist in better addressing this criterion.

Evidence
Pg 20-21

Community

7. Housing affordability and range

DEFINITION
This criterion assesses appropriate provision of social housing. Mix tenure and access e.g. shared-ownership, co-housing and self build

GRADE = Yellow

COMMENTS

A considerable amount of effort has been put into this area. Objective one, two and potential three, all address this criterion. A more detailed action plan into how these objectives could be achieved could be developed from the actions already stated. There is also potential here to broaden the scope in terms of range of housing to include community projects or self builds which could offer training and skills to the local population.

Range of housing must include opportunities for support for group self-build project, learning lessons from past attempts. Exiting self-build and co-housing groups in the city should be identified and supported.

Evidence
Pg11
Pg13
Pg15
Community

8. Stakeholder involvement in planning and management

DEFINITION
This criterion assesses effective involvement of stakeholders: public, private and community sector. Responsiveness to evolving community needs.

Having a sense of control over your life and matters that affect it is an important component of in laying the groundwork for good mental health.

GRADE = Yellow

COMMENTS

This has clearly been thought about and mainly addressed in objective seven ‘Strengthen resident involvement’.

Resident involvement is also part of the action for some other objectives within the strategy.

A green can easily be scored here. There is just not enough focus in the description of delivery. What is the relationship between some of the engagement sought or envisaged and engagement processes and groups already established? Is there a role for specific partners in many areas?

This criterion could easily move to green with the inclusion of a more detailed action plan.

Evidence
Pg22
Pg21 (2)
Pg21 (5)
Pg 19 (6)

Activities

9. Provision

DEFINITION
Provision of local facilities encourages active lifestyles and support community bonds, both are linked to health outcomes.

This criterion encompasses availability of an appropriate range of shops, leisure and learning and health facilities in the neighbourhood.

GRADE = Red

COMMENTS

There is little information regarding service provision to existing or new housing developments.

Objective six – contributing to sustainable and cohesive communities has great potential to address this criterion.

We must ask how can housing policy respond to the provision of services outside of planning and market mechanisms? Location of housing opportunity, phasing and mix of socio-demographic groups as some of the levers that can all help support viability of both private and public services.

Evidence
Activities

10. Accessibility

DEFINITION
The accessibility of local facilities encourages social inclusion and adds to the viability of the local facilities, both are determinants of health.

This criterion encompasses accessibility in the neighbourhood to a good range of facilities by foot/pedal/public transport with direct, convenient and attractive routes.

GRADE = Red

COMMENTS
There is little information regarding service accessibility for existing or new housing developments.

Objective six – contributing to sustainable and cohesive communities has great potential to address this criterion.

Walking and cycling short cuts between roads need to be built-in and embedded into all plans. There may also be a need for scoping the retrofitting of these in some areas to ensure both viability of services (see criterion 9) and accessibility.

Local economy

11. Local jobs and wealth creation

DEFINITION
Access to meaningful employment is a determinant of health both for the economic benefits to the individual and for physiological and social benefits.

This criterion encompasses construction maximising use of local labour, enhancing opportunities for local businesses, training, skills, home working and live-work units, and third sector economy.

GRADE = Yellow

COMMENTS
Objective one- contains action 13 Contribute to the development of a skilled local workforce through opportunities for training, employment and social enterprise from housing-related work. However there is much that the draft strategy could include to enhance local jobs and wealth.

Catering for a range of skills and opportunities is an underlying principal of all developments particularly those the Council funds.
Local economy

12. Viability and capacity

DEFINITION
This Criterion encompasses formation of the relationship and partners that will support economic regeneration.

GRADE = Yellow

COMMENTS
This is implicit in the creation of more balanced housing markets but there is little detail on the delivery in the strategy. There is very little mentioned in the current draft strategy regarding economic regeneration.
Greater clarity of housing investment contribution in areas of priority for regeneration. Include direct references to Core Strategy re: areas of regeneration.

Built environment

13. Wise construction and wise use

DEFINITION
Resources are limited, making the best use of resources makes good economic sense, environmental sense and will pay back health dividends to future generations.

This criterion encompasses the lifetime impacts of neighbourhoods from construction through use and eventual demolition. It also addresses the issues raise through ‘making the best use of exiting housing’ in the draft strategy.
Issues covered include low embodied energy of materials; local sourcing; long life and reusability; reuse/recycling encouragement; organic material composting.

GRADE = Yellow

COMMENTS
Yellow is scored for the actions to bring capacity back into the system where there are empty or under used properties.
Red would be scored as there is very little mentioned in the strategy regarding resource best use in terms reducing resource impacts with the stock.
Land as a resource need also to be considered where appropriate for housing use.
Links between areas of housing need and vacant land, especially small plots, and the ‘call for sites’ work should be established.
The ‘Bristol housing management and quality standard’ that is to be developed as an action for objective 2 could include issues relating to reducing resource footprints for housing.
There is no mention of recycling, refuse collection or composting anywhere in the document.
Cross reference with Core Strategy site allocations document, it is covered in detail there. Add a bit more about South Bristol.
Built environment

14. Quality of the home and curtilage

DEFINITION
Access to a decent home is a key determinant of health
Housing stock and housing liveability. Including safety, privacy to dwellings and management.

GRADE = Yellow

COMMENTS
This criterion is meet through actions in objective two ‘Make best use of exiting housing’ objective six ‘….communities’ and as with the other yellows this could easily be a green with the inclusion of a more detailed action plan for meeting the objectives set.

Standards need to be more explicit but are covered to some extent on page 17

Safety is a key concern.
A clearer account of what would be covered by a ‘Bristol housing management and quality standard’ is essential in better addressing this criterion.

Evidence
Pg 13 (7)
Pg 17
Pg 21 (7)
Pg 21 (8)

Built environment

15. Quality of the residential public realm

DEFINITION
This criterion addresses the quality of the immediate residential environment outside the home.
It includes design and management, sense of place, safety and perceptions of safety. It also includes on-going management.

GRADE = Orange

COMMENTS
There is very little information of public space in the housing strategy although it does mention in objective six action 5 Work in partnership with residents to create safer environments and reduce the fear of crime. However, as with the other objectives there needs to be some work done on a more detailed action plan.

Safety is a key concern addressed in the draft strategy.
Not enough about design of the neighbourhoods and communities that result from housing.

Evidence
Pg 21 (5)
Natural environment

16. **Air / noise**

**DEFINITION**
Air quality and noise are both determinants of health and can be problematic in some residential areas.
This criterion focuses on air pollution and noise intrusion.

**GRADE = Red**

**COMMENTS**

| Needs to be acknowledged through priority outcome three: ‘Improve health through quality housing and places’. | Evidence 4.1 p16 |
| Must also be included in health home section (4.1). | |
| Quiet public space as an aspect of residential quality. | |
| Noise insulation issues to be added to housing quality. | |

Natural environment

17. **Water**

**DEFINITION**
Water is a basic determinant of health, either too little or too much puts health at risk.
Household water use contributes to a large volume of waste of this valuable resource.
Flooding has severe consequences for health in residential areas.

This criterion includes reduced water demand; grey/rain water use; sustainable urban drainage systems, whole catchments management, not building inappropriately/housing people in the flood plain.

**GRADE = Red**

**COMMENTS**

| There is little information regarding use or reuse of water provision for existing or new developments or issues of flooding and drainage. | Evidence |
| In the light of extensive water metering as a medium/long term eventuality we could see a wave of ‘water poverty’ in housing that is water inefficient with health consequences. (Mirroring aspects of fuel poverty ie. poorer households cutting back on the resource use to the detriment of their long term health). | |
| Water efficiency includes not only appliance specifications but harvesting of rainwater and potential grey water systems. Some social landlords have these systems. | |
## Global ecosystem

### 18. Carbon emissions, by buildings

**DEFINITION**

Global warming poses a huge threat for human health.

This criterion includes energy efficiency of buildings; layout for solar access and planting for wind shelter.

**GRADE = Green, with potential for Blue – see comments**

**COMMENTS**

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<th>Evidence</th>
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Objectives 4 – ensuring good quality homes focuses on the reduction of CO2 by households and has many actions set to help assist with this, it is very good to see this in a housing strategy. Good practice.

The response to this criterion could be even stronger, achieving a exemplary grade. For example, it could be strengthened through links with development management (formerly development control) in terms of ensuring that applicants with minor applications for domestic alterations and extensions are fully supported with technical and financial advice to make carbon savings.

This could be a Blue grade if there was more future proofing possible such as all new build homes could be Code for Sustainable Homes level 6 now.

### 19. Carbon emissions, by transport

**DEFINITION**

Global warming poses an huge and negative impact on human health.

This criterion includes local and other policies that reduce demand for transport by say providing homes near to good quality transport nodes or in locations which that promote lower emission modes of transport.

**GRADE = Red**

**COMMENTS**

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<td>Pg 10</td>
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There is very little mention about transport within then plan. Objective 1: Deliver the properties and tenures in shortage, ensuring links to jobs, services and transport options obviously mentions transport. However, this is not carried on to the actions where there is no mention of transport let alone reducing the emissions from it.

There needs to be a recognition that strategic transport decisions do impact on the efficiency of a housing strategy – wielding influence through land values, funding and pragmatic decisions such as those on space, road design and home zones etc.
Global ecosystem

20. Biodiversity

DEFINITION
Global biodiversity is an indicator of the ability of the earth to support healthy human populations. Evidence shows that nearby nature is supportive to health and well-being.

This criterion includes the use of local biodiversity action plan for retention/enhancement of existing valued habitats; creation of new habitats, appropriate management of habitats in relation to existing housing areas and housing development.

GRADE = Red

COMMENTS

| There is no mention of biodiversity anywhere in the draft housing strategy. | Evidence |
| Could be acknowledged through priority outcome three: ‘Improve health through quality housing and places’. | |
| Improving/preserving access to natural habitats. | |