

Warwick District Council working with the Private Rented Sector

Landlord Forum 18th June 2013.

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Key Priorities for the Private Rented Sector

- Review Housing Strategy and Policies
- Partnership working
- Empty Homes back into use
- Mandatory HMO Licensing
- Housing conditions and response to increase in housing need.

Housing Strategy and Policies

- Understanding the housing markets
- Review of policies to meet increase demand for the sector
- Response to Government priorities
- Targeting limited resources to the poorest properties and risk rating inspections
- Enforcement Policy
- Response to the Private Sector Housing Condition Survey

Partnership working

- Working with landlords to raise management standards, knowledge, advice and signposting to other Partners
- Landlord Steering Group
- Homestamp Partnership
- Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme
- National Landlord and Residential Landlord Associations
- Protocol with Warwickshire Fire Service in response to emergencies
- West Midlands Empty Homes Group
- Working directly with the Council's Housing Options Team to ensure vulnerable residents are safeguarded



Empty Homes back into use

- Link to Council Tax revisions on Empty Homes
- Publicity and proactive approach
- Shortage of homes in the District for rent and homeownership
- Encourage links with Housing Associations e.g. Waterloo scheme
- Contact and visits for those empty in excess of 6 months to encourage back into use
- Enforcement Powers in response to emergency and as a last resort where cooperation has failed.

Mandatory HMO Licensing Scheme

- 3 storey or more occupied by 5 or more tenants sharing amenities
- Approx 400 licensed properties across the District
- No increase in fee planned but stronger line on late applications and administration costs
- Simplified relicensing process for those expiring post Sep 2012.
- Risk rating of inspections during 5 yr period

Housing conditions and response to increase for those in Housing Need

- Poorest conditions in non licensable HMO's converted under previous legislation. Management Regulations and Category 1 hazards
- Occupied by a range of resident groups including newcomers, singles and couples
- Big increase in demand for short term accommodation and properties required for Private Sector leasing and Rent Bond schemes
- Changes in Housing benefit rules impacting on the sector and demand for rented accommodation at LHA rates.
- Rental levels buoyant and becoming unaffordable for low income residents including unemployed.

Summary

- Strategic link with Partners to tackle poorest housing and increase in demand for the Private Rented Sector
- Expand existing Private Sector Leasing and Bond schemes
- Help, advice and encourage good management via Landlord Accreditation
- Target resources and enforce where necessary
- Empty Homes back into use.
- Offer good quality housing to low income families , couples and single people.

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