

## HOUSING CORPORATION FUNDING BIDS 2004-2006

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the bids submitted by Housing Associations to the Housing Corporation for funding for housing schemes in the District.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 During the last year the Regional Housing Board for the East of England has been established and has submitted for Ministerial approval its Regional Strategy for Housing Investment for 2004-2006. The submission identifies priorities for housing investment in the East of England across the various sub-regions.
- 2.2 This document will be the basis for consideration and allocation of the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme resources over the next two years.
- 2.3 Of particular importance to Rochford, which falls within the Thames Gateway South Essex Sub-region, the strategy recommends that investment be divided between the various housing themes on the following basis:-

| <u>Theme</u>      | <u>Proportion of Investment</u> | <u>Target</u>  |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Growth            | 40%                             | Growth areas - including Thames Gateway South Essex  |
| Regeneration      | 30%                             | Thames Gateway South Essex   |
| Rural             | 15%                             | Market towns, villages (under 3,000 population), other sustainable villages in need of affordable housing  |
| Supported Housing | 10%                             | All regions for these client groups:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Learning disabilities</li> <li>• Physical difficulties</li> <li>• Alcohol and drug related problems</li> <li>• Frail older people</li> <li>• Vulnerable young people</li> <li>• People with HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• Homeless People</li> <li>• Ex-offenders</li> <li>• People fleeing domestic violence</li> <li>• Vulnerable young parents with babies</li> </ul> |

| <u>Theme</u>                    | <u>Proportion of Investment</u> | <u>Target</u>  |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Black & Minority Ethnic Housing | 5%                              | All regions but focused on areas with relatively high Black and Minority Ethnic population |

- 2.4 The outcome of the bidding process is likely to be announced by the Housing Corporation towards the end of March.

### **3 BIDS FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT**

- 3.1 Attached as an Appendix is information about the bids made by Housing Associations for development in the District.

### **4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

#### **4.1 Strategic Risk**

It is important that the bids meet the Districts strategic housing needs. Both the Housing Needs Study and the draft housing strategy identify a need for the proposed housing developments.

#### **4.2 Third Party Risk**

The Housing Associations will carry the risks associated with the development and management of the proposed schemes.

### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The development of the schemes is solely dependant on Housing Corporation funding. The Council is not being requested to contribute any capital or revenue resources.

### **6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Reads Nursery site is subject to a Section 106 agreement. All the new-build schemes will be subject to joint agreements specifying nomination arrangements for the Council.

### **7 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Reads Nursery scheme is in the Rawreth Parish.

**8 RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That the bids identified in the Appendix be supported subject to any Member comments.

G P Woolhouse

Head of Housing, Health and Community Care

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**Background Papers:**

Letter from Housing Corporation dated 9 December 2003

For further information please contact Alex Coulson on:-

Tel:- 01702 546366 Ext 3326

E-Mail:- [alex.coulson@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:alex.coulson@rochford.gov.uk)

## APPENDIX

**1 Estuary Housing Association****Homebuy – Four Units**

Homebuy is a scheme that enables tenants of Housing Associations or Local Authorities to purchase a property on the open market with the help of an interest free loan for up to 25% of the property value.

The scheme is currently operated by Estuary Housing Association in Rochford and although take-up has been poor in the last year, it is still a useful way of releasing properties within Council and Housing Association stock for re-letting by encouraging home ownership.

Recommendation – Support Bid

**2 NACRO Community Enterprises**

Further details of this bid are still awaited from the Housing Corporation and no prior discussion has taken place with the Association who currently provide supported accommodation for young people and parent and child units in the Rochford District.

Recommendation – The bid is not supported.

**3 New Essex Housing Association**

New Essex Housing Association have been selected by Essex County Council as their preferred partner under the Essex Strategic Reserve Programme for 2004 – 2006 which provides top-sliced funding from the Housing Corporation to develop a range of specialist housing across the district/borough boundaries in Essex. The current programme includes the provision of eight 1 bedroom flats and communal facilities in Rochford for young people leaving care. At this present time a suitable site for the scheme has not been identified by either Essex County Council or the Housing Association.

The Council has identified a need for this particular client group in its draft housing strategy and the Homelessness Act 2002 has placed additional duties on Local Authorities to provide accommodation for 16 and 17 year old children and for 18 – 21 year old young people leaving care.

The Council is receiving an increased number of homeless applications from younger people, many of whom have special support needs.

Additionally the scheme will meet an identified priority for supported housing for vulnerable young people contained in the Regional Housing Strategy.

Recommendation – Support bid

#### **4 Swan Housing Group**

##### **Reads Nursery, Rawreth**

The scheme of 26 units is part of a larger development of 129 properties and comprises a mix of one and two bed flats. Fourteen flats are for general needs housing at social rents. The other twelve units are for key workers at intermediate market rents.

Planning permission for the development was granted at Planning Services Committee on 22 January 2004.

The site benefits from a Section 106 agreement with 20% of affordable homes provided as part of that agreement.

There is an identified need for properties for single people and small family units and as such the scheme will make a significant contribution to housing in the area.

The proposed scheme can be considered consistent with both the Growth and Regeneration investment themes identified in the East of England Regional Housing Strategy.

In keeping with the Regional Housing Strategy, the intermediate housing element of this scheme aims to improve access to more affordable housing for households on low or moderate incomes, to support the provision of key workers services for assisting in the recruitment and retention of key workers and to provide mixed and sustainable communities by promoting mixed tenure developments.

Recommendation – Support bid