

Housing Acquisition Programme

Cabinet	15 November 2018
Report Author	Bob Porter, Head of Housing and Planning
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Lesley Game, Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	Yes
Reasons for Key	Expenditure
Ward:	All Wards

Executive Summary:

This report proposes that Thanet District Council should implement a further acquisition programme with a spend of £727,600 to purchase properties which will be rented to households in housing need on affordable rent, currently in temporary accommodation.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet are asked to agree:

1. To the principles set out in this report for a further acquisition programme of between 3 and 4 homes;
2. To allocate £727,600 of Housing Contributions to fund the programme;
3. To delegate authority to the Head of Housing & Planning services, to complete the acquisition of new homes within the programme.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money	Funding of £727,600 Housing Contributions to be allocated to this acquisition programme.
Legal	<p>The Council has power under section 9 of the Housing Act 1985 to acquire houses for the purpose of providing housing accommodation. The houses so acquired must then be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Act, and any relevant subsequent legislation and may become subject to Right to Buy.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework defines affordable housing as social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.</p>
Corporate	Supports corporate priority " <i>Supporting Neighbourhoods.</i> "
Equality Act 2010 & Public	Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to

Sector Equality Duty	the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	
	Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.	
	Once properties are purchased they will be let in accordance with the council's agree allocations policy. This policy has been subject to a full EIA.	
	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.	
	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,	✓
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it		
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.		

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant)✓	
A clean and welcoming Environment	
Promoting inward investment and job creation	
Supporting neighbourhoods	✓

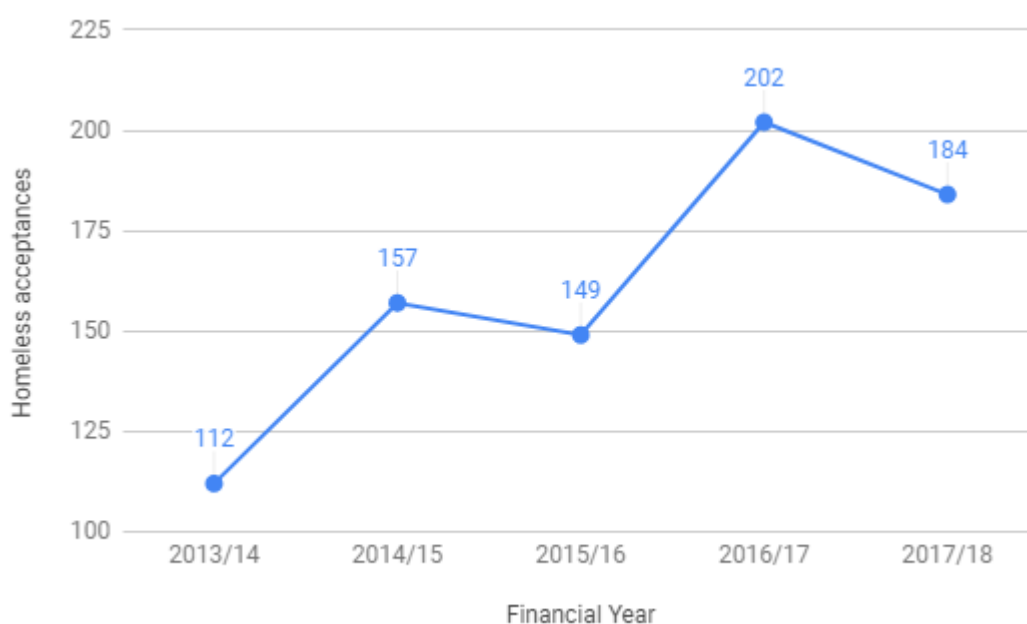
CORPORATE VALUES (tick those relevant)✓	
Delivering value for money	✓
Supporting the Workforce	
Promoting open communications	✓

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 New homes are urgently needed to assist households on the council's housing list and those who are homeless and living in temporary accommodation.
- 1.2 The housing contributions of £727,600 that are proposed to be used for this programme were secured by the council as part of the conditions attached to the 2004 permission of the Royal Sands Development, which was received in 2017. The condition required that the contributions would be allocated for affordable housing in local area.
- 1.3 This receipt does not have a timescale restraint. It is not currently included in the capital programme.
- 1.4 Homes can be newly built or acquired on the open market for the provision of affordable rent.
- 1.5 This report recommends that the council funds a further acquisitions programme with housing contributions collected.

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 Over the past seven years an average 73 new affordable homes have been provided each year by the council and its housing association partners. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment completed in 2016 identified a need for 397 affordable homes per year. New initiatives to increase the supply of new affordable homes are needed and this is recognised as a priority within the council's Corporate Plan.
- 2.2 In addition, the council is facing a rapid growth in the number of homeless households as shown in the table below. This has led to an increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation; currently 135 households are living in temporary accommodation provided by the council (at October 2018).



- 2.3 The council's existing, approved development programme will have provided around 140 homes by 2019, and includes a mixture of new build homes and acquired and refurbished homes.

Our intervention programmes have so far invested approximately £14m across Thanet. These projects include new build programme, Margate Housing Intervention project, Empty Homes Project 2012-15, and King Street intervention.

The table below shows the spread of the spend to date across the three towns.

Investment	Area
£7,258,330	Ramsgate
£1,377,202	Broadstairs
£6,048,514	Margate
£14,684,046.13	

2.4 Since October 2016, average property prices across Thanet have increased by 16% (Hometrack). The average price in the district at July 2018 is £267,542 and the average price for a lower quartile property is £183,666 (Hometrack). If properties within a value band of between £175,000 and £210,000 are targeted, the available resources will fund the purchase of between three and four homes.

3.0 Options

3.1 The housing contributions secured as part of the planning consent for the redevelopment of the Royal Sands, totalling £727,600 are restricted for the provision of affordable housing in the local area. The contributions could be used in the following ways:

- Acquiring existing homes, either new directly from a developer or from the existing private housing stock, or
- Building new affordable homes.

3.2 The previously approved district wide acquisitions programme has so far secured 6 new affordable homes at an average cost of £200,000. The programme has proved to be cost effective and can be delivered alongside the council's new build programmes.

3.3 The approval of a further acquisitions programme of 3-4 new homes, utilising the available contributions is recommended.

Contact Officer:	Bob Porter, Head of Housing & Planning Services
Reporting to:	Tim Willis, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer

Annex List

None	N/A
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation

Finance	Clive Bowen, External Funding Officer
Legal	Sophia Nartey, Interim Head of Legal Services
Communications	Hannah Thorpe, Head of Communications