

**APPENDIX A**  
**IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING SERVICE**  
**2001 – 2005**

<b>What needs improving</b>	<b>How will it be improved</b>	<b>What will it achieve</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Reference</b>
1. Process reviewing	Establish a Process Improvement Team comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Sector Housing Manager</li> <li>• Housing Options Centre Manager</li> <li>• Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a formal framework for reviewing processes and service standards and developing performance indicators</li> <li>• Improved joint working between the two Divisions</li> <li>• ISO 9000 Accreditation</li> </ul>	Establish team by April 2001	Assistant Director - Housing and Advice Services	Whole service
2. Written procedures	Revising existing and introduce new written procedures for all areas of the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearer guidance for staff</li> <li>• Uniformity of approach</li> <li>• Form the basis of a staff training manual</li> <li>• Provide/improve service standards</li> <li>• Introduction of performance indicators to more areas of the service</li> </ul>	Written procedures and performance indicators introduced for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Joint Housing Register</li> <li>• Group Repair</li> <li>• Housing Enforcement</li> <li>• Right to Buy</li> </ul> by April 2002  Remainder of procedures by April 2005	Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator	Whole service
3. Stakeholder consultation	Develop a consultation strategy	Identify trends in levels of satisfaction with the service areas and identify changing needs of stakeholders	Achieve stakeholder feedback for all service areas at least once every two years	Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator	Whole service

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4. Comparative information for those areas that are not currently covered by benchmarking clubs	By identifying benchmarking clubs that we can link into	It will inform us of potential service improvements	Ongoing	Individual service area managers	Whole service
5. Information technology at the Housing Options Centre	Implementation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a new PC network</li> <li>• Right to Buy module</li> <li>• Homelessness module</li> <li>• e-mail</li> <li>• management information</li> </ul>	Better communication, better monitoring of performance, easier access to management information, automatic generation of letters, improved efficiency	April 2001 for the network and new modules  July 2001 for e-mail	IT Unit/HOC Manager	Whole service
6. Existing software	Enhancements to the system	Better performance monitoring of nominations. Improved efficiency	March 2002	JHR Co-ordinator	Whole service
7. Information to customers	Review, update and Plain English information for customers and ensure that it is available in all formats that comply with the Council's policy on equal opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality of opportunity</li> <li>• improved information</li> </ul>	In line with the reviewing of processes with the Process Improvement Team	Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator	Whole service
8. Standard letters and forms	It will give more clear, concise and understandable information to customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved information</li> <li>• clear and concise information</li> <li>• fewer queries</li> </ul>	In line with the reviewing of processes with the Process Improvement Team	Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator	Whole service
9. Publicity of the service	Produce an information booklet on the services that are available throughout the two divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater awareness of available services</li> </ul>	September 2002	Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator	Whole service
10. Liaison with Group Repair and Grant participants	Creation of a liaison role either within the existing establishment or through the creation of a new post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve communication with minority ethnic groups</li> </ul>	Target date: to be discussed further with the Executive Member for Housing	Private Sector Housing Manager / Home Aid Manager	Chapter 1

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help keep grant applicants and Group Repair Scheme participants better informed of progress on the schemes</li> </ul>			
11. Timescale for dealing with Disabled Facilities Grant applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research processes with better performing authorities</li> <li>Through the Process Improvement Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review existing procedures</li> <li>set target times</li> <li>establish performance indicators</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Reduce timescale to deal with grant applications	Reduce average time to deal with a DFG from initial enquiry to completion of works by 50 days by March 2003	Home Improvement Manager	Chapter 2
12. Builder performance in respect of DFGs	Establish a Builders' Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the problems builders face in dealing with adaptation works</li> <li>Keep builders informed of policy and specification changes</li> <li>Identify scope for improving service delivery</li> </ul>	Establish Builders' Forum by September 2001	Home Improvement Manager	Chapter 2
13. Addressing the inequalities of adaptation provision between tenures	Establish a joint working party with representation from Social Services, Private Sector Housing and Public Sector Housing to review inequalities and develop an action plan to address	Reduce inequalities in adaptation provision between tenures	<p>Establish joint working party by September 2001</p> <p>Produce a draft action plan by December 2001</p>	Private Sector Housing Manager / Home Improvement Manager	Chapter 2

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	the issues arising				
14.Awareness of the Landlords' Forum amongst private sector landlords	Write to all landlords with properties registered under the Council's HMO and Student Registration Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised awareness of Landlords' Forum</li> <li>• Improved dissemination and exchange of information</li> </ul>	April 2001	Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator	Chapter 3
15.Information to private sector landlords	Producing a newsletter to all landlords that we are aware of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform landlords of legislative changes to the private rented sector</li> <li>• Advise them of their responsibilities</li> <li>• Inform them about the Landlords' Forum</li> </ul>	September 2001	HMO Manager	Chapter 3
16.The Empty Property Strategy	Relaunching of Empty Property Strategy, including advertising in the local press and setting up an Empty Property Hotline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater awareness of the service</li> </ul>	September 2001	Home Improvement Manager	Chapter 5
17.Delivery of the Empty Property Strategy	Designating a dedicated Empty Property Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of empty properties</li> <li>• Increase properties for letting</li> </ul>	September 2001	Home Improvement Manager	Chapter 5
18.Services provided by the Housing Options Centre for 16-24 year olds	<p>Review which existing protocols are in place across a range of agencies for dealing with young persons.</p> <p>Examine the implications for the HOC of the Homes Bill currently going through Parliament</p>	Improve access to services by young people	Start: already commenced Complete: TBA subject to new legislation	HOC Manager	Chapter 6
19.Flexibility of the	Carry out a feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More effective use of</li> </ul>	September 2003	Housing Options Centre	Chapter 6

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homeless hostel to ensure its availability for emergency use	study including the possibility of outsourcing the function	the hostel		Manager	
20. Advice on counselling to customers with debt	By providing an advice surgery at the HOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention of homelessness</li> <li>• More comprehensive service</li> </ul>	June 2001	Housing Services Manager	Chapter 6
21. Reviewing the Housing Register	By reviewing all applications annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to date information on demand</li> <li>• effective shortlisting</li> <li>• removal of applicants from the Housing Register who no longer want housing</li> </ul>	March 2002	JHR Co-ordinator	Chapter 7
22. Access to the JHR	By linking in our other RSL partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to housing for customers</li> <li>• more customer choice</li> <li>• more housing options</li> <li>• improved efficiency</li> </ul>	December 2001	JHR Co-ordinator	Chapter 7
23. Examine if the Allocations Policy is achieving its aims	Establish a working group to examine and review how the policy currently operates. This will feed into the BV Review of Housing Management Front Line Services to be completed in 2001/02.	Ensure that senior management and members are making informed decisions about the policy	Begin September 2001 End March 2003	Housing Options Manager	Chapter 6 and Chapter 7
24. The Allocations Appeal procedure	A written formal procedure will be introduced	Consistency, fairness and transparency of the policy	Begin September 2001 End March 2003	Housing Options Manager	Chapter 7
25. Processing	The appointment of a	Reduce the length of	May 2001	Housing Options Centre	Chapter 7

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applications to register people on the JHR	data inputter to relieve Housing Services Assistants, enabling them to carry out their other duties	time to register an application, enabling applicants to be advised sooner of their position		Manager	
26.Communication between all JHR partners	Establish a JHR Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniformity of approach</li> <li>• Identify training issues</li> <li>• Identify IT problems</li> <li>• Ability to monitor the effectiveness of the JHR</li> </ul>	Establish a Working Group by April 2002	JHR Co-ordinator	Chapter 7