

FINAL

Family Housing Group

Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

2008 - 2011



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1. Introduction

For over 40 years, Family Housing Group has been working to make a positive difference by tackling deprivation in some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the West Midlands.

In the last 20 years the gap between the poorest neighbourhoods and those that are more prosperous and able to access opportunities has widened (source: National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal 2001), presenting a range of challenges for Family in working to regenerate neighbourhoods in the millennium.

These challenges include;

- Working in neighbourhoods which have higher than average crime rates, high unemployment, serious environmental problems, poor public services, lower rates of educational attainment and residents experiencing serious health problems.
- Delivering regeneration solutions in culturally and ethnically diverse communities.
- Working to support local housing markets which are at risk of market failure.

Family has developed an extensive range of initiatives in the last 3 years, which has elevated the Association into one of the leading Housing Associations in Birmingham, in terms of delivering regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.

This strategy provides a framework to take forward our work, revitalising neighbourhoods by delivering a combination of both physical and social renewal interventions. It establishes Family's strategic direction and sets clear and achievable objectives for the delivery of a comprehensive programme of neighbourhood renewal activities over the next 3 years, linked to the Group's Corporate Strategy.

This strategy outlines how regeneration and neighbourhood renewal activities will underpin Family's core business as a provider of Social Housing for Rent and Low Cost Home Ownership by helping to create more sustainable communities and by engaging local people in the process of renewal. This strategy further outlines how Family's vision will be achieved within the context of developing innovative solutions and appropriately managing risks.

2. Key Objectives

Family has 10 key Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal objectives that will be delivered over the next 3 years. These are as follows;

Objective 1

We will work to reduce multiple deprivation and improve quality of life for our tenants and residents in areas where we have concentrations of housing stock.

Objective 2

We will develop and support initiatives to provide safer and cleaner neighbourhoods.

Objective 3

We will develop initiatives to connect our tenants with employment, training and life long learning opportunities to provide structured pathways into paid employment.

Objective 4

We will work to improve the range and quality of affordable housing and develop physical regeneration schemes to revive run down buildings and infrastructure.

Objective 5

We will work with Birmingham City Council and other key service providers, our tenants and residents, to improve the standard of public services.

Objective 6

We will work to reduce health inequalities, promote healthy lifestyles and support vulnerable people.

Objective 7

We will encourage active citizenship and the creation of cohesive and sustainable communities by encouraging people to play an active role in the regeneration of their neighbourhood.

Objective 8

We will work with refugees and the 'newly arrived' to develop a range of support activities that build their confidence and capacity, support them to access paid employment and local services, and develop their own support organisations - enabling them to establish themselves as positive members of their local communities.

Objective 9

We will work with local partner organisations to develop initiatives that tackle financial exclusion and promote financial inclusion.

Objective 10

We will work with other FHA departments to provide capacity building support to local organisations and groups, in the areas FHA have concentrations of housing stock, to support them to develop and deliver effective services and initiatives within their local communities, and promote their sustainability.

3. Policy Context

This strategy has been written within the context of a plethora of national, regional and local strategies and policies. These key documents have been carefully referenced to ensure that Family's vision for delivering Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal is appropriately aligned, as well as dovetailing with the Association's own Corporate Plan.

A summary of the key strategies and policies which have informed this document is provided below.

3.1 National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (2001)

The Labour Government set out its long term vision for Neighbourhood Renewal in 2001. This national strategy outlines the Governments vision that ***'in 10 – 20 years no one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live'***.

Although this document is some 6 years old it still represents the cornerstone of national regeneration strategy. The strategy sets out a comprehensive approach to regeneration and proposes that;

- The gap between poor and more affluent neighbourhoods will be

narrowed.

- Poor neighbourhoods will be renewed by undertaking physical regeneration and tackling social issues such as unemployment, crime, health, environment and poor public services.
- By 2010 all social housing should reach the Decent Homes Standard and reversing the trend of low demand housing and integrating wider regeneration and other policies.
- Government, local authorities and key service providers in the statutory and voluntary sectors will be encouraged to work together to prioritise resources to address deprivation and social exclusion.
- Better mechanisms to promote joint working at a local level will be created by establishing local strategic partnerships, neighbourhood management initiatives and giving communities greater say in the operation and delivery of public services.

3.2 The Sustainable Communities Plan (February 2003)

The Communities Plan is split into two component parts – a national plan and a regional plan for the West Midlands.

This document provides a delivery vehicle for the Government's agenda on urban renaissance by providing resources to renew communities suffering from low housing demand. The plan led to the development of the Birmingham Sandwell Housing Market Renewal Area Pathfinder (Urban Living).

It supports a new regional approach to housing policy and area regeneration, which has resulted in the establishment of Regional Housing Boards and the production of Regional Housing Strategies.

3.3 Urban Living Housing Market Renewal Area Pathfinder Prospectus, Strategic Plan (2004) and Scheme Update (2006)

The first Urban Living Housing Market Renewal Prospectus was a significant document for Family and informed our work in North West Birmingham between 2003 and 2006. It enabled us to gain a clear understanding of the Housing Market in North West Birmingham, identify issues which needed to be addressed, gaps in provision and

opportunities. The Scheme Update published in 2006 updates the Urban Living Prospectus and establishes the priorities for the programme between 2006-2008. A further update for 2008 onwards is expected soon, and we will work with them to ensure that we maximise opportunities for FHA's Regeneration delivery.

The key aims of Urban Living are:

- To achieve transformational change by restructuring the local housing market to create more sustainable communities.
- Providing greater choice within the local housing stock to enable existing residents to trade up as their needs change and attract new residents by offering more desirable housing.
- Development of large scale mixed use/ housing projects which are able to change perceptions.
- Provide improved and new public services which contribute to changing the wider environment.
- Reducing levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Deliver quality through design.
- Recognising strength in diversity.

3.4 Local Area Agreement 2006-2009

Birmingham's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy - 'Flourishing Neighbourhoods' was replaced in 2006 by the Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2006 -2009. The aim of the LAA is to improve the quality of life for Birmingham's citizens, with particular focus on making the fastest improvements for the people and the places with the greatest need. The Birmingham LAA supports the delivery of key targets in the Community Strategy - '*Taking Birmingham Forward*' which was published in October 2005.

The overarching vision for the Birmingham LAA is around:

- 'Closing the gap' improving all neighbourhoods and communities, but with a particular focus on those with the worst starting position.
- Systematic approaches – prevention, targeting and sustainability.

- Clear priorities – helping people into jobs, strengthening neighbourhoods, developing a cleaner and safer city.

3.5 Taking Birmingham Forward, Community Strategy for Birmingham 2005-2010

Birmingham's Community Strategy explains how the economic, social and environmental well being of the City will be improved over the period 2005 -2010.

The strategy aims to deliver two key objectives;

- A city of national and international significance which has a successful and sustainable place in the world economy.
- A city whose local neighbourhoods and vibrant urban village are flourishing and whose people benefit from its prosperity.

3.6 Working Neighbourhoods Fund

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund ceases to exist at the end of March 08. This is being 'replaced' by the new Working Neighbourhoods Fund. There is only limited information currently available about exactly how this new fund will operate and its particular focus and aims. We are expecting more information in March 08, but we are informed that it is unlikely that any funding will actually be allocated before June 08. We are clear that its key focus is on tackling worklessness through effective training and employment programmes and this would provide us with an additional opportunity to further develop our successful and innovative work in this area. Many of our successful regeneration programmes could be developed to include training and employment activities as a key focus.

3.7 Family's Corporate Strategy

Objective 2 of Family's Corporate Strategy 2006 – 2011, provides a Strategic framework for this strategy.

- Corporate Strategy Objective 2:-

“To develop innovative housing solutions and to invest in creating sustainable communities”

Family's Corporate Strategy commits the Group to providing a response to opportunities to lead or play a participative role in geographically defined community development, regeneration and renewal activities.

This is further articulated in the strategy by committing the Association to responding positively to;

- Neighbourhood Management Initiatives.
- Actively engaging in Housing Market Renewal areas.
- Developing initiatives to engage local people in employment and training opportunities.
- Develop effective partnerships.
- Working to develop cohesive and stable communities.

A new corporate strategy objective (objective 5) was added in 2006 committing Family to '**promote environmental sustainability in all aspects of our work.**' This objective is reflected within the 2007 revision of the Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

3.8 Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOES)

This strategy has been developed with reference to the Audit Commissions Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOES) for Regeneration against which Family will be assessed when it is inspected by the Audit Commission.

4. The Strategy

Family has developed an extensive Regeneration programme since 2003, which has delivered a range of physical and social housing projects within areas that the Association has concentrations of housing stock. These projects have been developed as a result of Family identifying strategic needs that are not being addressed and developing interventions across neighbourhoods, Wards and Districts within Birmingham and the wider areas that we operate.

The aim of this strategy is to provide a strategic framework for both current and future activity and to guide the decision making process and resource targeting. Each year an Action Plan will be developed outlining the detail of how this strategy will be delivered and providing SMART targets for the Regeneration Team and the Association as a whole.

4.1 Targeting Regeneration Activity

Family will target its Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal activities in geographical areas where it has concentrations of housing stock and in areas where levels of deprivation are above national averages.

Delivering key objective 1

The core business of Family is and will remain as a provider of Social Rented Housing and Low Cost Home Ownership.

We recognise that there is a strong business and social case for investing in the neighbourhoods that we work in, ensuring that they are developed and sustained as thriving places where people want to live. The recently published Hill Report re the Future of Social Housing, and Cave Review of Social Housing Regulation, both reiterated the crucial role that Housing Associations must play in regenerating the neighbourhoods within which we have properties.

We also recognise that there are many examples of deprived neighbourhoods that have fallen into decline and the negative results of this deprivation in terms of providing social housing are identified as follows;

- 1) High levels of abandonment
- 2) Higher repairs costs
- 3) Tenant dis-satisfaction
- 4) Larger numbers of void properties and longer relet times.
- 5) Housing market failure

This strategy commits Family to target its regeneration activities and resources in areas where it has the highest concentrations of its housing stock (i.e above 100 units of accommodation) and in neighbourhoods which experience deprivation levels above the national average.

In the case of Family’s housing stock, it is concentrated within the most deprived wards in Birmingham which also fall within the top 10% of the most deprived wards nationally. This is illustrated by the table below;

Table 1

Ward	Family Stock	% of total Family Stock
Aston	104	5%
Handsworth	223	10%
Ladywood/ Summerfield	302	14%
Nechells	166	8%
Soho	151	7%
Small Heath	114	5%
Washwood Heath	149	7%

4.2 Tackling pockets of deprivation and ‘quality of life’ issues.

Family will assist tenants and residents in tackling deprivation in wards and neighbourhoods which have pockets of deprivation or are affected by a particular ‘quality of life’ issue.

Delivering key objectives 1 and 2

The nature of Family’s housing stock is such that some of our stock is located upon small estates or is ‘pepper potted’ amongst housing of other tenures. We are also developing a property portfolio outside of the Birmingham Area which is extending our areas of operation into the Black Country and into rural areas within North Warwickshire.

We recognise that pockets of deprivation can exist within both urban and rural areas and within areas that are other wise relatively prosperous. We are committed to ensuring that interventions are put in place to assist residents in tackling deprivation or specific issues that are affecting ‘quality of life’ eg anti-social behaviour, community safety, environmental issues.

4.3 Neighbourhood, Ward and District Analysis

Family will use published data and qualitative research to develop profiles for each of its priority Wards to inform decision making and resource targeting.

Delivering key objective 1

A significant amount of data is collected by Birmingham City Council, via the census and key stakeholders which can be used to provide a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the Neighbourhoods, Wards and Districts that Family works in.

The tenants Status Survey, focus groups, reality checks and feedback from residents groups will be used to gain a better understanding of the level of tenants satisfaction with the neighbourhoods that they live in. Family will also periodically survey its tenants on a range of social and economic issues so that it can shape and target its regeneration interventions to be of direct benefit.

It is proposed that profiles will be developed for each of the seven key wards identified in table 1, outlining clear and robust evidence upon which Family's Regeneration Resources can be targeted. It is proposed that these profiles will include the following information;

- 1) Demographic profile and trends
- 2) Housing profile and market characteristics
- 3) Employment Statistics
- 4) Crime Statistics
- 5) Educational Attainment Statistics
- 6) Health Statistics
- 7) Environmental Statistics and levels of recycling.
- 8) An assessment of levels of resident and voluntary sector activity
- 9) Sustainability Toolkit Assessment for estates and areas where FHA has concentrations of housing stock.
- 10) Community Cohesion

4.4 Supporting Area Based Initiatives (ABI's)

We will support Housing Market Renewal and other large and smaller scale Area Based Initiatives (eg New Deal for Communities, Single Regeneration Budget, Sure Start, Healthy Living Centres etc) in areas where the Association has housing stock.

Delivering key objective 1

Housing Market Renewal is a key element of the Labour Governments Renewal Strategy and is of significance to Family, as 36% of our stock is located with the Urban Living Pathfinder Area.

Housing Market Renewal has the potential to offer a range of opportunities for Family in terms of providing funding for improvement of our stock, and the neighbourhoods that we work in, new acquisitions and contributions towards the costs of new development. Urban Living is interested in piloting new and innovative approaches to Neighbourhood Management and to tackling housing demand in the Pathfinder Area.

Family has already established its reputation with the Urban Living Pathfinder and secured a large regeneration programme of Eco improvement works and deconversions in the Summerfield area in 2007. We will continue to develop our relationship with this programme as it progresses over the next 3 years.

Although government regeneration policy has moved from small scale Area Based Initiatives (ABI's) to large scale holistic regeneration programmes like the Housing Market Renewal Area Pathfinder, a number of smaller ABI's still exist. These include;

- New Deal for Communities Pathfinders
- Sure Start (now Children's Centre's)
- Healthy Living Centres
- European Funded Initiatives.
- Regeneration Zones
- RESPECT Zones

Family recognises that ABI's can bring significant amounts of funding to tackle deprivation in targeted geographical areas. We will work with these programmes to ensure that the Association's tenants and neighbourhoods that we operate in, fully benefit from these programmes.

Family will also actively explore opportunities for securing funding from ABI's to develop and deliver specific projects to reduce deprivation.

4.5 Developing Employment and Training Opportunities

We will develop a range of employment and training initiatives.

Delivering key objective 3

Family is committed to assisting our tenants, members of their families and residents living in the neighbourhoods that we are operating in, obtain meaningful employment training and opportunities. In 2006 we strengthened our partnership with Pertemps People Development Group (PPDG)– a key local Welfare to Work provider, through seconding an experienced PPDG Employment Coach to FHA, sharing the salary and on-costs with PPDG in recognition of the mutual benefits of this arrangement. We will continue to work with PPDG and a range of partner organisations to develop initiatives to address this key issue.

The majority of Family's tenants are in receipt of welfare benefits and the aim of this strategy is to develop opportunities for those that are able to work to access employment.

There are significant skills shortages across the West Midlands and with the economy set to grow at a rapid rate over the next 10 years, there will be a range of opportunities for the unemployed to obtain work.

We recognise that people experience barriers to gaining employment such as finding affordable child care, supporting sick or elderly residents, lack of confidence etc and we will build on our successful delivery programmes to develop future work with projects and initiatives that assist in removing these barriers.

Opportunities will be publicised via the Good Neighbours Tenants Newsletter, via Jobs Fairs, attendance at community events and festivals and via promotional campaigns.

We will develop the Family Training Academy to provide a range of in house and external training opportunities to our tenants and the wider community. We will also work with our partners and suppliers to expand the range of training places that we are able to offer using our formal and informal networks.

4.6 Working with Local Schools and Colleges to Promote Life Long Learning.

We will work in partnership with local schools and colleges of Further and Higher Education to promote learning opportunities for our tenants and their families, to increase educational attainment and lifelong learning.

Delivering key objective 3

Family recognises the tremendous value that schools and colleges add to a neighbourhood and we are committed to working with these organisations to ensure that our tenants and their children are able to maximise opportunities to increase their educational attainment and development of skills.

To achieve this aim, we will;

- 1) Work with local schools in our priority wards and neighbourhoods to link national curriculum studies to our regeneration and housing work.
- 2) Work in partnership with local colleges to promote training and adult education opportunities.
- 3) Encourage our staff to stand for election to Governing Bodies for the schools in the Association's priority areas.

4.7 Engaging in Neighbourhood Management Initiatives.

We will actively engage in the development of Neighbourhood Management Initiatives.

Delivering key objectives 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7

Developing Neighbourhood Management is a key component of the National Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and has been a feature of all of the large scale regeneration projects including New Deal for Communities, Housing Market Renewal and Birmingham City Councils 'Vibrant Urban Villages' Programme.

Family is committed to developing Neighbourhood Management and has supported initiatives in Ladywood, Soho Finger and Erdington Wards in Birmingham and has led on the Nechells Housing Coordination Project. We will continue to seek opportunities to lead and support Neighbourhood Management in Birmingham and in the areas that we operate in.

4.8 Tenant and Resident Involvement in Regeneration Activities.

Tenant and Resident Involvement will be at the heart of every regeneration initiative that is undertaken by Family. Structured arrangements will be put in place to involve, train and develop the capacity of tenants and residents to fully engage in the process of renewal at a level which they feel comfortable.

Delivering key objective 7

Family's Tenant and Resident Involvement Strategies clearly set out the Association's commitment to involving local people in the decisions which affect their homes and the neighbourhoods that they live in. We are committed to placing Tenant and Resident involvement at the heart of every regeneration initiative undertaken by Family.

We are firmly committed to adopting a 'bottom up' approach and will provide tenants and residents with the opportunities and the capacity to fully engage in our renewal work.

In the case of physical improvement programmes, 'Planning for Real' will be used wherever possible to ensure that schemes are designed incorporating residents' views from the outset.

Work will be undertaken to build confidence with residents groups and with communities to enable two way communication and full engagement.

Our tenant and resident involvement activity will be carefully monitored to make sure that it is effective and inclusive.

We will work to engage disadvantaged groups and those that are under represented.

We recognise that in many of the areas that we work, existing groups are already meeting and established so we will work to make the best use of existing community groups and infrastructure that is in place.

We also recognise the valuable role that Family can play in promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding between people of different cultures. We will develop initiatives which promote community cohesion and will ensure that this issue is considered when designing and delivering projects.

4.9 Partnership Working.

We will identify key strategic partners and stakeholders in the statutory and voluntary sectors who possess the skills, resources and capacity to work with us to deliver our Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

Delivering key objectives 1 and 5.

Successful partnership working is key to delivering this Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Family is committed to building upon its existing range of partnerships and strategic alliances to support its work.

Family will identify partners who possess skills, resources and capacity to assist in the delivery of initiatives, which otherwise could not be delivered in house by the Association. In selecting appropriate partners we will;

- 1) Identify long term strategic allies that the Association will work with on a range of initiative eg Local Authorities, RSL Preferred Partners, key Voluntary Organisations.
- 2) Identify the strategic partners needed to deliver particular projects.
- 3) Identify organisations which the Association needs to work with to deliver short term initiatives.

We will maintain strategic communications with our partners via the 'Connect' magazine and via face to face contact, to ensure that they are kept regularly upto date with work that Family is undertaking.

We will also periodically survey our partners to obtain their views on Family's performance as an organisation and use this information to ensure that we continuously improve our relationship with our partners.

4.10 Publishing Clear Service Standards.

We will publish clear service standards for regeneration and neighbourhood renewal activity, which will be regularly tested by customer feedback to monitor performance.

Supporting the delivery of all key objectives

Family will publish clear service standards for regeneration and renewal activity outlining to customers the level and content of service that they can expect from projects and initiatives. These will be in line with the wider FHA Customer First initiative.

We will undertake customer surveys to obtain feedback on performance against the standards that we have set. This feedback will be used to ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of regeneration projects.

4.11 Scheme Appraisal.

We will undertake formal scheme appraisals for all projects with a financial value of over £50,000 per annum and seek sub-committee approval before proceeding. This appraisal will include a financial and organisational risk assessment and an assessment of value for money.

Supporting the delivery of all key objectives

Family recognises the importance of establishing projects on robust footing in the interests of minimising risk, ensuring value for money and maximising the likelihood of the project being successful. In addition to the project appraisal process undertaken by external funders, we will undertake in-house scheme appraisals for all projects with a value of over £50,000 per annum and Sub-Committee approval before the project proceeds.

Any project which poses an adverse level of risk to the Association, does not provide value for money or has a limited opportunity for success will not proceed.

4.12 Communication with Staff, Residents, Partners and Key Stakeholders.

We will ensure effective and regular communication with our staff, residents, partners and key stakeholders to ensure that information about projects and their potential impacts is communicated frequently.

Supporting the delivery of all key objectives

Regular and effective communication is an important part of the successful delivery of any strategy and the Head of Regeneration will be responsible for communicating performance against this strategy in the following ways;

- 1) To tenants via Good Neighbours
- 2) To partners via Connect and 1-2-1 contact.
- 3) To residents via one off newsletters and briefings
- 4) To the Association's Board, Executive and Senior Management team via regular reports.
- 5) To staff via Team Brief, Team meetings, 1-2-1's and one off briefing sessions.
- 6) To the wider public via press release, promotional material and attendance at community and public events.

We will ensure that Regeneration communication covers any issues that arise and how these are being addressed, as well as positive news stories, and clarifies the rationale as to why these activities are being delivered in some areas and not others – as recently identified through the FHA Mock Inspection workshops.

The effectiveness of these communications will be monitored and regularly evaluated.

4.13 Engaging Under Represented Groups.

We will work to ensure that under represented and excluded groups are encouraged and provided with the skills needed to engage in renewal activity. Community cohesion will be promoted by encouraging communities to work together, in the neighbourhoods that we operate.

Delivering key objectives 7 & 8

In delivering this strategy, Family recognises that it is working in neighbourhoods that experience multiple deprivation and many residents are socially excluded and feel unable to participate in renewal activities.

Some examples of socially excluded groups are;

- Refugees
- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

- Lone Parents
- People experiencing some form of disability

Family is committed to engaging with under represented and excluded groups and has identified a clear strategy for engaging these groups in its Tenant and Resident Involvement Strategies. In delivering Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal projects, it will work to positively identify and include 'difficult to reach' groups and will monitor and evaluate its activities in this area.

One example of this in practice is our work with Refugees: We will build on the high-profile work with Refugees and the 'newly arrived' being delivered at Piers Road, and develop this to effectively respond to the needs of these groups and to ensure the ongoing sustainability of these initiatives.

4.14 Developing Innovative Solutions and Disseminating Good Practice.

We will develop innovative regeneration solutions and ensure that good practice is disseminated to our staff members, partners and to a wider audience ensuring that any lessons learned are evaluated and adopted.

Supporting the delivery of all key objectives

The challenges faced by organisations in tackling deprivation in the West Midlands require that innovative and highly creative solutions are developed, using the latest good practice and piloting new and untested approaches. It is proposed that any good practice developed by Family through the delivery of its regeneration programme will be disseminated.

4.15 Monitoring Performance.

We will effectively monitor all of our Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal activities.

Supporting the delivery of all key objectives

We will use a variety of quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks, including surveying the views of residents and service users. This information will be used to evaluate the success of projects

and identify areas for improvement. We will strive to continuously improve the delivery of our regeneration work and ensure that new and innovative techniques and initiatives are incorporated.

4.16 Working to Reshape Public Services and securing mainstream funds.

In addition to securing project based funding, we will identify opportunities for achieving regeneration outcomes by working to reshape key public services and mainstream funding.

Delivering key objective 5

Project based funding is unsustainable in the medium to long term, so in order to secure successful projects after they have been piloted, mainstream funds are needed so that projects can move to being adopted as core service provision. Family will work with Statutory and Voluntary sector services providers and the private sector to secure sustainable funding streams for successful projects to be main stream funded.

4.17 Achieving Value for Money in Delivering Regeneration.

We will use procurement arrangements to achieve value for money in delivering Regeneration Projects, including partnering arrangements with contractors.

Supporting the delivery of all key objectives

Regeneration Procurement will be undertaken in accordance with Family's Procurement Management Strategy ensuring that Best Value is achieved in delivering projects and that partnering arrangements are used wherever possible. The recommendations and actions identified in the January 08 Regeneration Best Value Review Report will be implemented within agreed timescales.

4.18 Working with the Statutory Sector to Improve Public Services.

We will work with residents and key service providers to improve public services and support proposals to devolve services closer to the point of delivery.

Delivering key objective 5 and 7

Family is committed to the improvement of public services and is committed to working with service providers and residents to achieve this, particularly in relation to services delivered at street level in the neighbourhoods that we work.

We will work with the District and Ward Teams to identify priorities for local people and contribute to working groups reviewing specific service areas, eg. Environmental Services, Community Safety, Housing etc.

Through our resident involvement strategy we will survey our tenants and residents views on the standards of services that they receive in their neighbourhoods and ensure that this information is fed into the service reviews of key service providers.

4.19 Environmental Sustainability

We will promote environmental sustainability in all aspects of our work.

Climate change presents one of the greatest challenges and risks to Man kind and there is overwhelming scientific evidence to suggest that there will be major changes to the climate and environment within the next 50 Years.

Evidence suggests that the most disadvantaged people in society will be most adversely affected by Climate Change. With most of our housing stock located in Birmingham in inner city areas, our tenants are likely to be adversely affected by rising temperatures and extreme weather conditions that are predicted eg flash flooding etc. Family's Regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal Programme needs to evolve to address these issues and mitigate the negative effects of climate change by;

- 1) Assisting residents in reducing energy use and carbon emissions.
- 2) Encouraging Recycling.
- 3) Improving homes to reduce heat loss, maximise ventilation and provide renewable energy sources.
- 4) Working with vulnerable residents to prepare for climate change and mitigate its negative impacts.
- 5) Working with Communities and Schools to raise environmental awareness at a local level.

We have already made an excellent start by developing an Eco Show Home and developing Birmingham's first Eco Neighbourhood Project, installing Solar Hot Water Systems in 250 homes and encouraging residents to make lifestyle changes to reduce their domestic 'carbon footprint'. The Association needs to continue to grow its knowledge and capacity and build upon its developing reputation, to become a leader in housing led environmental sustainability initiatives within the West Midlands and the UK. We will be working with the other FHA departments to identify opportunities to deliver 'Eco improvement' works to existing FHA housing stock – thus implementing what we have learned from the delivery of Eco Projects within our own stock.

4.20 Tackling Financial Exclusion

We will work with key partners to support and develop initiatives that address financial exclusion and enable financial inclusion.

Financial Exclusion is a key issue that has a huge impact on the quality of life and life chances of many residents living in the most deprived areas. High levels of debt, a poor credit history / CCJs, the lack of access to appropriate financial services, and a 'forced' reliance on inappropriate 'doorstep lenders' with incredibly high interest rates - sends many people into a spiral of debt from which they often can see no way out. Evidence has shown that the fear of having to address this personal debt if an unemployed resident actually goes into paid work, and how they will cope with the transition from benefits to a pay cheque, are key factors that keep many individuals from taking up paid employment.

There are a number of national and local initiatives that seek to address financial exclusion and provide genuine routes to financial inclusion. Credit Unions also provide a highly effective and appropriate source of financial services to individuals with poor credit histories who cannot access banks and other financial services.

We will work with these initiatives, local partner agencies and local Credit Unions to seek to provide practical and appropriate financial support services that address financial exclusion and enable financial inclusion in the key deprived areas in which we have concentrations of housing stock.

4.21 Capacity Building

We will provide capacity building support to local community groups and organisations providing key services within the main deprived areas in which we operate / have concentrations of housing stock.

Providing informal Capacity Building support is something that the Regeneration Team staff routinely do as a key element of the work. In making this explicit and more formalised, we are recognising the value of this type of support and intervention. Many local community groups and organisations have been established within the most deprived areas and deliver much-needed services on which local residents rely. These groups often struggle to keep going due to lack of support and resources.

We will identify key local groups within the main deprived areas in which we operate and establish whether they have any Capacity Building and Support needs which FHA could help meet. Once identified, we will agree specific ways in which we can provide effective and specific capacity building support. We will seek to involve other FHA departments in this, including discussing with Human Resources and Finance re whether they could also use some of their expertise to support these local community groups and organisations, thus maximising the impact FHA can have in delivering Capacity Building support.