

Appendix 1

HHS EVALUATION REPORT : OCTOBER 2001

PROVIDING MICRO-SCALE INFORMATION TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGIES & INVESTMENT DECISIONS

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is strong evidence that HHS data is increasingly being used to inform housing policy making by Harborough District Council. Documentary evidence and interviews with staff indicate a much greater use of this information in 2001 compared to 2000.
- There is an appreciation by Housing Department staff that HHS data has to be used in conjunction with other sources of information.
- Of the five sub-areas for evaluation, HHS data is extensively used by the Council in dealing with low demand stock and in guiding investment and policy decisions (including meeting the needs of vulnerable groups).
- The potential wider use of data is acknowledged by HHS partners. But other stakeholders do not have a sound appreciation of this information source.
- By itself, the thorough and detailed use of the HHS database is unlikely to contribute to a higher grading for the local housing strategy.
- There is, thus, a 'hierarchy' among and between organisations in the understanding and use of HHS data. This can be generally summarised as follows:-
 - High degree of utilisation (indirect through CCHR and direct) and understanding e.g. Housing Department and DPHS.
 - Potential partly understood but not realised e.g. other departments in Harborough District Council and other HHS Partners.
 - Low appreciation of potential and variable degree of support over usefulness e.g. other stakeholders in the region and DTLR
 - Unaware of HHS e.g. Health Authority.

It is strongly recommended that an attempt is made to 'convert' more organisations into the 'top category'.

- All organisations (including Council staff) would generally welcome the opportunity to be more informed about:-
 - Nature and capacity of the HHS database
 - Protocols for accessing and using information

It is recommended that these two points are tackled as soon as possible through (i) a training and demonstration session, and (ii) establishing procedures for accessing and using HHS data.