

Enabling Sustainable Housing Solutions:

A strategy to prevent homelessness in Stoke-on-Trent

September 2007 – December 2010

Action Plan

Homelessness Strategy 2007 - 2010 Action Plan

Why

Why this Homelessness Strategy has been formulated is described in this Action Plan as the Impact. This is the big picture change, often described as the vision, goal, or aim. The desired Impact will be achieved as a as a direct consequence of successfully achieving the intended outcomes. The Impact for this Homelessness Strategy has been influenced as result of findings from the Homelessness Review.

What

What is intended to be different because of this Homelessness Strategy is described in this Action Plan as Outcomes and Results. The Outcomes are the difference that the result creates, they are the logical consequences of the changes achieved by the results. The Results is what will be measured and monitored, these are the consequences of the activities being carried out, for example changes in circumstances, the way people feel, or their conditions.

How

How this Homelessness Strategy will be implemented is described in this Action Plan as Activities and Resources. The Activities is what will be done to deliver the strategy. Each activity will be broken down into a series of key tasks, comprising of four stages; research, design, procurement/implementation, and review. The primary resources required to deliver the strategy are financial, human, and material. The Resources already secured are detailed in the Action Plan, further additional Resources may be identified and secured as the implementation of the Action Plan progresses.

The Difference

The difference the homelessness strategy makes is described in this Action Plan as Outputs. This Action Plan will be re-published annually, an Outputs column will be added to the plan to summarise achievements made against the activities, results, and outcomes.

Delivery

Stoke-on-Trent City Council will be responsible steering the delivery of the strategy, the practical daily responsibilities of this function will be overseen by Housing Solutions Service. Progress made towards achieving the desired Impact of this Homelessness Strategy, along with achievements against national targets will be scrutinised by Elected Members through appropriate commissions'. A series of forums and groups will be established to help drive forward the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, these will be;

- Stoke-on-Trent Homelessness Strategy Steering Group
- Stoke-on-Trent Homelessness Forum
- Stoke-on-Trent Homelessness Prevention Group

The Homelessness Strategy Steering Group will consider and review progress made against the Outcomes and Results from this Homelessness Strategy.

The Homelessness Forum will agree the required steps to ensure successful delivery of the Activities, this will include

- Order of prioritisation for implementing the Activities and the deadline for completing Activities
- Key tasks associated in successfully carrying out each Activity
- Identifying any additional Resources (financial, human material) required that are not already set-out in this Action Plan

The Homelessness Prevention Forum will meet to identify practical solutions for complex cases. The Homelessness Prevention Forum will ensure all sections organisations are working co-operatively to prevent homelessness. This will help to make sure everyone has a consistent approach to tackling homelessness. By working smarter across sectors and organisations, time and money could be saved plus skills and resources can be shared.

Impact

households are empowered to choose sustainable housing solutions, which removes the threat of homelessness

Resources	Activities	Results	Outcome
Financial ➤ Homelessness Grant ➤ Supporting People Grant ➤ Housing advice Award	Establish a City wide provision of accessible housing advice services, including outreach surgeries	Number of households who consider themselves as homeless are helped by local authority's housing advice services through housing advice casework intervention and have their situation resolved	Homelessness is prevented
Human ➤ Housing Options Team Manager ➤ Supporting People Team	Establish effective provision tenancy outreach services to liaise between landlords and their tenants to prevent homelessness Agree a programme to undertake home visits in cases where people are threatened with exclusion by parents, other family or friends	Number of awards gifted from the local authority Homelessness Prevention Fund to resolve cases Percentage of home visits taking place in cases of homelessness threatened due to exclusion by parents/relatives	
Material ➤ Housing Solutions information leaflets ➤ Housing Advice Centre ➤ Stoke-on-line ➤ Various IT systems	Commission a provision of Mediation in cases of relationship breakdown with parents, other family, friends or partner Establish a system of support for social housing tenants threatened with eviction Introduce an early warning system plus other assistance to tackle and reduce rent arrears Undertake joint working on a range of initiatives with the local authority's Housing Benefits Service to help prevent homelessness Review the present local rent deposit schemes and ensure its role in prevention is maximised to its potential Establish an appropriate provision of	Number of cases dealt with by mediation services Number of applications for assistance from former social housing tenants by each social housing provider Performance of all social landlords against rent collection and arrears targets (BV66) Percentage of DHP budget spent on preventing homeless Number of rent deposits tenancies obtained Number of cases receiving floating support who	

	<p>tenancy/floating support services</p> <p>Commission independent provision of services which offers assistance ensuring people housing rights are upheld</p>	<p>become homeless despite this support</p> <p>Number of households where homelessness is prevented due to court advocacy services</p>	
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Resources	Activities	Results	Outcome
<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Grant ➤ Supporting People Grant <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions Development Manager ➤ Supporting People Team <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions information leaflets ➤ Housing Advice Centre ➤ Stoke-on-line ➤ Various IT systems ➤ Stoke-on-Trent Supporting People Services Directory 	<p>Tackle homelessness amongst ethnic minority groups through provision of bespoke advice services and assistance</p> <p>Work with NASS providers to provide advice to asylum seekers who receive a positive decision</p> <p>Provide offenders and ex-offenders information on housing choices available at point of entry into custody, and ensure there are robust information sharing protocols in place between partner services</p> <p>Establish a suitable provision of advice services for ex-service personnel to assist them to secure accommodation</p> <p>Work with Stoke-on-Trent Supporting People to ensure there is suitable provision of housing related support services for homeless households</p> <p>Agree a strategy to tackle youth homelessness, to enable a holistic provision of prevention initiatives, supported accommodation, and wider support services</p> <p>Ensure there is an adequate provision of assistance to help victims of domestic violence help to escape their abusers</p> <p>Identify assistance required to help street prostitutes seeking exit from the sex trade to secure accommodation</p> <p>Work with Adult Social Care Services to establish a protocol for referring households plus undertake joint working on case work and assessments</p> <p>Work with Children’s Social Care to reconcile</p>	<p>Percentage of homeless households who are from an ethnic minority community</p> <p>Number of refugees prevented from becoming homeless</p> <p>Number of offenders secured accommodation prior to discharge</p> <p>Number of ex-service personnel approaching for housing assistance</p> <p>Number of positive move-on’s into settled accommodation</p> <p>Number of homeless 16/17 year olds placed in B&B accommodation</p> <p>Number cases where the sanctuary scheme has helped to prevent homelessness</p> <p>Number of street prostitutes attempting to exit the sex trade who are able to secure accommodation</p> <p>Housing Solutions Services and Adult Social Care Services work together to ensure the needs of households support needs are fully assessed and taken into account</p> <p>Number occasions powers exercised under</p>	<p>Support is available for people when they are vulnerable</p>

	<p>estranged young people to their families, and establish a supported lodging scheme for homeless 16/17 year olds</p>	<p>Children Act 1989 to make payments to assists young people threatened with homelessness to secure accommodation</p>	
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Resources	Activities	Results	Outcome
<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Grant <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions Development Manager ➤ Domestic Violence Coordinator ➤ Supporting People Team <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions information leaflets ➤ Housing Advice Centre ➤ Stoke-on-line ➤ Various IT systems ➤ Domestic Violence Services Directory 	<p>Undertake joint working with NHS Trusts to tackle health issues relating to homelessness, plus specifically hospital discharge and homelessness</p> <p>Through locally developed targeted youth support, identify opportunities to tackle homelessness through education, employment, and school outreach, peer support schemes</p> <p>Work with community Safety Partnership to develop steps to reduce anti-social behaviour relating to homelessness specifically</p> <p>Work with Youth Offending Team to prevent young people from offending</p> <p>Review suitability of provision of treatment services commissioned for homeless households</p> <p>Work with Jobcentre Plus to help homeless households to find and keep a job and ensure they claim and receive benefits they are entitled to.</p> <p>Work with Connexions to provide advice and information on housing and related benefits to all 13-19 year olds who need it</p> <p>Maximise opportunities to work with third sector organisations to provide a range of services for preventing homelessness</p>	<p>Percentage of hospital discharge cases who had no home to return to, who had their homelessness prevented through a planned discharge into appropriate accommodation rather than having to make an application for housing assistance under the homelessness legislation</p> <p>Number of schools where homelessness awareness sessions are delivered</p> <p>Number of evictions due to anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Number of young offenders helped to secure accommodation</p> <p>Number of drug users successfully accessing treatment services</p> <p>Number of homeless households entering into work</p> <p>Number of young people threatened with homelessness who are assisted by a personal advisor to prevent homelessness occurring</p> <p>Provision of lay advocacy services, plus peer support and self-help groups are established</p>	<p>The wider causes and symptoms of homelessness are tackled</p>

Resources	Activities	Results	Outcome
<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Grant ➤ Hostel Capital Improvement Programme Grant ➤ Supporting People Grant <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions Development Manager ➤ Supporting People Team <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Street outreach services information leaflets ➤ CLG Hostel Standards Toolkit 	<p>Commission a provision of street outreach services for people sleeping rough</p> <p>Identify the best routes for rough sleepers to access drug/alcohol, mental health services, and primary health care services</p> <p>Support all local hostels work towards achieving full compliance with the standards set-out in the CLG Hostel Standards Toolkit</p> <p>CLG Hostel Capital Improvement Programme Grant is used to improve physical condition of hostels</p>	<p>Number of people sleeping rough on any given single night within the area of the authority</p> <p>Number of rough sleepers successfully using health and treatment services</p> <p>Number of positive move-on's from hostels to other supported housing or settled accommodation</p> <p>Hostel re-development completed by 2010</p>	<p>The reduction in rough sleeping is sustained; hostels are a place of change</p>

Resources	Activities	Results	Outcome
<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Innovation Fund <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions Services Manager ➤ Housing Services Division ➤ Housing Enabling Team ➤ Renew North Staffordshire <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme ➤ PSL/T2P type scheme 	<p>Housing supply matches needs and aspirations of households in housing need</p> <p>Introduce joint-working arrangements to prevent homelessness due to overcrowding and disrepair</p> <p>A local Empty Homes Strategy is developed, produced and delivered</p> <p>Maximise the potential of the private rented sector through private sector leasing initiative, and/or qualifying offers</p> <p>Establish mechanisms to match landlord to prospective tenants</p> <p>The priorities of the Housing Corporation Tackling Homelessness strategy is rolled out locally</p>	<p>Number of affordable homes developed</p> <p>Number of closing orders issued by Environmental Health Officers</p> <p>Number of empty homes brought back into use</p> <p>Number of qualifying offers</p> <p>Percentage of properties obtained for RDS found by applicants compared to those found through the Landlord Accreditation Schemes</p> <p>Number of homeless households nominated to and accepted by housing associations</p>	<p>More settled homes are provided</p>

Resources	Activities	Results	Outcome
<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Grant ➤ LPSA Award <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions Services Manager ➤ Housing Solutions Development Manager <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Non identified 	<p>Work in partnership with neighbouring authorities to deliver activities set out in West Midlands Homelessness Strategy Sub-Regional Action Plans</p> <p>Share skills and resources to help in the delivery of Local Area Agreement Floor Target Action Plans</p> <p>Adopt and introduce locally the objectives and principles of the West Midlands Voluntary Protocol to Prevent Refugee Homelessness</p>	<p>Number of results achieved from Sub-Regional Action Plan</p> <p>Reduction in the number of homeless households owed the main legal duty</p> <p>Number of refugees provided housing advice</p>	<p>An regional approach is developed</p>

Resources	Activities	Results	Outcomes
<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Grant ➤ General Fund ➤ Rents ➤ Housing Benefit <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions Services Manager ➤ Housing Solutions Development Manager ➤ Homelessness Team Manager <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Strategy document ➤ Temporary accommodation action plan ➤ Partnership service level agreements and protocols 	<p>Commitment from the Local Authority and Members to prevent homelessness</p> <p>Implement new Homelessness Strategy</p> <p>Secure commitment and resources from partners to help deliver Homelessness Strategy Action Plan</p> <p>Robust joint working arrangements and partnerships protocols are put in place</p> <p>Training is provided to all partners increase understanding of homelessness and initiatives available to prevent homelessness</p> <p>An action plan is devised to meet the 2010 temporary accommodation target</p>	<p>Performance on tackling homelessness is reviewed by the local authority's Executive/Scrutiny Commissions</p> <p>Homelessness Strategy Review Group meet at least four times per year to monitor progress</p> <p>Homelessness Forum meets at least four times per year to agree what key tasks need to be undertaken to deliver activities set-out in the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan</p> <p>Homelessness Prevention Corporate Group meets at least twice per year, plus regular case reviews take place</p> <p>Number of sessions delivered each year</p> <p>Use of temporary accommodation is reduced by half by 2010 compared to levels recorded at 2004</p>	<p>There is a strategic approach to tackling homelessness</p>

Resources	Activities	Results	Outcome
<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Grant ➤ General Fund ➤ Rents ➤ Housing Benefit ➤ Housing Revenue Account <p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Solutions Services Manager ➤ Housing Solutions Development Manager ➤ Housing Options Team Manager ➤ Homelessness Team Manager ➤ Lettings Team Manager <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interview and assessment tools ➤ Performance management systems ➤ Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002, CLG Local Authority Code of Guidance ➤ Training materials and programmes ➤ Information leaflets 	<p>Housing advice appointments are conducted to best practice standards</p> <p>Staffing structures are regularly reviewed to ensure staff placed where they are most needed</p> <p>Comprehensive performance management systems are introduced</p> <p>Administration of homelessness services fully complies with legislation</p> <p>Decision making process are open and transparent and subject to independent review</p> <p>An invest to save approach is established, with a focus on demonstrating how services offer value for money</p> <p>Knowledge of homelessness legislation is maintained and regularly updated</p> <p>Customers are actively involved in the design, delivery and review of services and strategy</p> <p>Clear standards are developed for accommodation provision</p>	<p>Independent inspection concludes four star excellence homelessness and housing advice services are delivered</p>	<p>More effective administration of homelessness responsibilities</p>

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Copies of this document are available in the following languages upon request;

Bengali

Farsi

French

Kurdish

Panjabi

Pashtu

Portuguese

Urdu

A Plain English version of this Homelessness Strategy is available on request.

If you have problems reading or understanding this Homelessness Strategy, we can provide it in other formats to meet your needs. Please contact Housing Solutions Services with your request.

Housing Solutions Services

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