

Joint Homelessness Strategy for West Kent: Towards 2010 (2007)

Action Plan for the period July 2010 – June 2011

No	Objective	Action	Measurable Outcomes/Timescales	Progress to 30 June 2011
1.	Reduce homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all applicants receive housing options and advice to prevent homelessness, including rough sleepers and non-priority groups • Explore a common format with the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group members to record, and report, to the group incidences of people presenting for advice where the main issue was housing, including 16/17 year olds. Identify potential homelessness through internal and external partners • Parental eviction: All Local Authorities (LAs) to conduct home visits where necessary and practical. (NB: inappropriate for example in cases of alleged abuse or violence or similar cases where staff safety may be compromised) • All LAs to ensure staff are trained to carry out home visits and negotiation 	<p>To maintain reduction in homelessness acceptances (Baseline: no of acceptances July - Sept 2009), reporting outcome to the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group on a quarterly basis</p> <p>Continued increase in homelessness preventions (Baseline: no of preventions in July – Sept 2009)</p> <p>Format for recording incidents of people approaching as homeless or for housing advice set up by June 2010; stats provided by Sept 2010</p> <p>Each LA to carry out at least one parental eviction home visit per month where practical. To be reported to the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group on a quarterly basis</p> <p>Training organised by December 2010</p>	<p>April 2010 - March 2011 homeless acceptances – 38.</p> <p>April 2011 was the go live date for Locata housing/homelessness module. Figures provided in Nov 2011 SHAB report.</p> <p>Home visits are conducted where possible and assessed on case by case basis within existing resources.</p> <p>Lone working training to be evaluated by Health and Safety Officer following completion of corporate risk assessment training.</p>

No	Objective	Action	Measurable Outcomes/Timescales	Progress to 30 June 2011
		<p>with family members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All LAs to take part in West Kent trial of Hospital Discharge Protocol, which aims to reduce homelessness amongst people being discharged from hospital 	<p>Provide feedback on protocol to Kent JPPB - timescale to be confirmed</p>	<p>Deferred at present</p>
2.	Reduce homelessness amongst young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint protocol with Kent County Council Children, Families and Education for 16/17 year olds to be followed (updated Kent protocol currently awaited) 16/17 year olds: All LAs to refer 16/17 year olds who are homeless due to parental eviction to a mediation service where appropriate Evaluate effectiveness of existing schools workshops with a view to exploring funding for a schools programme in the West Kent area 	<p>LAs to use protocol once adopted Kent-wide</p> <p>Referral arrangements in place (TMBC and TWBC to assess the viability of delivering a mediation service by December 2010)</p> <p>Schools workshops evaluated and funding explored by December 2010</p>	<p>JPPB and KCC re-launched and updated joint protocol on 12th October 2010 and currently in use</p> <p>Mediation service currently in use is West Kent and Maidstone mediation services. Referrals are made based on individual case circumstances and where appropriate</p> <p>The schools program is at present is delivered by Porchlight</p>
3.	Reduce the risk of homelessness amongst those experiencing domestic abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and promote support services for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community and black and minority ethnic (BME) groups at risk of domestic violence Liaise with Police Domestic Abuse Unit and other agencies to better understand the support needs of applicants seeking re-housing as a result of domestic abuse 	<p>Services identified and publicised by December 2010</p> <p>Liaison with Police Domestic Abuse Unit carried out by December 2010</p>	<p>Staff work closely with Women's Support Services (Maidstone) who provide ongoing one to one support for the LGBT and BME community members, who are or have been victims of domestic abuse. Broken Rainbow provides specialist support for members of the LGBT community.</p> <p>Housing options presence at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), child in need referrals made by housing options team to social services for households with children and are affected by domestic abuse. Housing options</p>

No	Objective	Action	Measurable Outcomes/Timescales	Progress to 30 June 2011
				team work directly with the Police Domestic Abuse unit
4.	Provide clear information on housing options to reduce homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each LA to have a procedure manual to cover housing advice, homelessness prevention and housing register services ensuring quality assurance and monitoring 	Each LA to have procedure manual in place by December 2010	Achieved – subject to annual review by Dec 2011
5.	Prevent homelessness as a result of eviction or abandonment from RSL accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sub-regional Rent Arrears protocol to reduce the number of evictions for rent arrears from RSL and supported accommodation 	Rent arrears protocol in place by July 2010. All RSLs and other supported accommodation providers to be encouraged to sign up and put protocol into practice	West Kent Liaison Group is leading on compiling a revised version rent arrears protocol. Next West Kent Liaison RSL Group to be held at Sevenoaks District Council on 17 November 2011
6.	Enable the provision of affordable housing to those with support needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities for developing Night Stop and Crash Pad facilities for use as emergency accommodation 	Research into Night Stop and Crash Pad accommodation completed by December 2010	Action deferred and carried forward into Homelessness Strategy 2011-16 for completion December 2011. Domestic violence scheme also proposed.
7.	Improve access to permanent affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with RSL partners to reduce the number of households placed in temporary accommodation / B&B 	<p>Allocations policies to be reviewed to take account of new CLG guidance “Fair and Flexible”</p> <p>NI155 targets met for new affordable home provision (by end March 2011)</p> <p>KA2 targets met for new affordable home provision (by end March 2011)</p> <p>Use of existing stock maximised through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximising nomination rights Develop Under-occupation Policy (March 2011) 	<p>This is an on going process and the current allocations policy will be reviewed to reflect changes announced by the Coalition government and CLG guidance.</p> <p>NI155 actual delivery April 2010 to March 2011 - 169 units</p> <p>KA2 target for affordable housing provision April 2010 to March 2011 - 169 units</p> <p>Draft policy carried forward by the Strategy and Enabling Group under consideration by Kent Housing Group</p>

No	Objective	Action	Measurable Outcomes/Timescales	Progress to 30 June 2011
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore viability of a tenancy sustainment service for West Kent, including whether floating support services are being provided at an early enough stage to be effective for vulnerable tenants 	Tenancy sustainment service researched by June 2010	Floating support referrals are made to Supporting People (SP) service
8.	Promoting the appropriate use of the private rented sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All partners to provide comparable data to the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group on the reasons for the loss of ASTs within the first six months Continue to hold regular sub-regional landlord forum Continue to provide rent deposit bond schemes Promote awareness of Supporting People rent deposit funding 	<p>Data provided on a quarterly basis from June 2010</p> <p>Subject to funding for 2010/11, to achieve an increase in private rentals arranged through LAs rent deposit bond schemes by June 2011 (Baseline: Rentals arranged during 2009/10)</p> <p>Subject to applications from people eligible for the funding, achieve an increase in private rentals for people leaving supported accommodation</p>	<p>Implemented for the new homelessness strategy and attended by Chief Housing Officer and Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>On going</p> <p>On going. TMBC rent deposit scheme revised February 2011</p> <p>On going and recently audited by Internal Audit team (report to be issued)</p>
9.	Ensure services are equally accessible for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep under review relevant policies and procedures in line with good practice 	Ensure equal access for clients accessing housing services - ongoing	On going process
10.	Monitor the impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement the 	Each LA to review households on their	Home Choice team lead on this and have a

No	Objective	Action	Measurable Outcomes/Timescales	Progress to 30 June 2011
	of CBL	<p>Vulnerable Persons Strategy to ensure that vulnerable households are supported to access accommodation through Kent Homechoice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With other Kent Homechoice partners, develop proposals for cross-boundary mobility, on-line registration and the advertising of private rented accommodation 	<p>Vulnerable Persons list by June 2010</p> <p>Timescales to be confirmed by CBL Project Board</p>	<p>vulnerable person's list. Staff bid on behalf of vulnerable households each bidding cycle</p> <p>Proposals for cross-boundary mobility deferred pending development and roll-out of Common Housing Assessment Framework (see report to Board November 2011). Online registration currently being trialled</p>
11.	Continue to ensure that relevant households have access to appropriate support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain regular contact with homeless households placed into temporary accommodation Refer applicants to Supporting People floating support services where appropriate 	<p>LAs to contact all households in temporary accommodation every six months from March 2010</p> <p>Floating support referrals to be completed within one week of support need being identified</p>	<p>Achieved and on going</p> <p>Achieved and on going</p>
12.	Involve service users in service delivery and formation of new policy and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include representative group of service users in all stakeholder consultation and information events 	<p>To look at a programme for including service users by September 2010.</p> <p>To have service users represented on the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group and/or the wider Homelessness Group by July 2011</p>	<p>To be addressed as part of the review of the Homelessness Strategy Group, due June 2012</p>
13.	Ensure that emergency or temporary accommodation is appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All emergency B&B accommodation is regularly inspected to ensure it meets health and safety requirements of HHSRS Households placed outside of the borough in an emergency will be moved to more appropriate accommodation whenever 	<p>All B&Bs inspected annually from July 2010</p> <p>To put agreement into practice within timescales set by JPPB</p>	<p>On going on annual and ad hoc basis</p> <p>Achieved and on going. Emergency accommodation in Tonbridge and Malling is limited and where households have to be placed outside the borough it is generally Maidstone or</p>

No	Objective	Action	Measurable Outcomes/Timescales	Progress to 30 June 2011
		practicable (As per Kent agreement being developed by Kent County Council and Kent JPPB as a result of issues raised through use of Hotel Leslie in Thanet)		Tunbridge Wells.
14.	Dealing with the current recession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice and assistance to homeowners in mortgage difficulties on how to access the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme and other support as appropriate Maximise the use of CLG Repossession Prevention funding to assist households at risk of possession 	<p>Monitoring of use and progress on MRS Action Plan reported to Homelessness Strategy Steering Group on quarterly basis.</p> <p>All LAs to report back on activity each quarter, starting in July 2010 (quarter 1 data)</p>	<p>Due to changes announced by the coalition government, LAs are placed on a quota system and TMBC are allocated to have two MRS applications approved in this financial year</p> <p>2010-11 – 11 cases assisted: § 4 grants (total £4803) § 7 repayable loans (total £10162)</p>
15.	Review West Kent Homelessness Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a timetable from commencement of review through to strategy becoming effective Carry out a review of homelessness services within West Kent with assistance of stakeholders including service users 	<p>Timetable in place by March 2010</p> <p>To commence review from April 2010</p>	Reviewed Homelessness Strategy approved July 2011
16.	Undertake street count of rough sleepers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantify levels of rough sleeping within individual boroughs/district and the sub-region Explore additional methods of verifying and recording instances of rough sleeping. For example, single person's survey 	<p>CLG count carried out as required</p> <p>Additional methods explored by June 2011</p>	<p>Annual estimate/count carried out in partnership with Porch Light and Homeless Link</p> <p>JPPB leading on this piece of work. No progress to date</p>

Glossary of Abbreviations

CBL	Choice Based Lettings	RSL	Registered Social Landlord	SP	Supporting People
TA	Temporary Accommodation	EIA	Equality Impact Assessment	AST	Assured Shorthold Tenancy
HHSRS	Housing, Health and Safety Rating System	CLG	Communities and Local Government	JPPB	Joint Policy & Planning Board