

Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2006/07 (colours have been used for ease of reading only)

Aims	Proposed future action	Partner agencies / Lead Officer	By When Short = 3mths from Strategy adoption Medium = 6 mths Long = 12 mths	Additional Resources required?	Action to Date
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Prevention of Homelessness & Housing Options

Concentrate resources and develop policies and protocols towards prevention of homelessness	Maintain Housing Advice & Homelessness team 'split' and develop role of Homelessness Prevention Officers, ensuring focus on prevention work throughout the team	BDC/PWHA SHAO/PHO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	2 additional HAO posts created. Team split - 4 Prevention HAOs/1.4 Assessment HAOs
	Develop protocols with LSVT partner and RSLs to reduce possession actions and agree responses to threats to tenancy sustainment	BDC/partner RSLs SHAO	Medium	Existing staffing resources	'Early Warning' system put in place with PWHA re-threatened evictions.
Develop accessible, sustainable and suitable housing options - all households	Assess the need for a direct lettings scheme in the private rented sector in consultation with stakeholders and landlords	BDC SHAO	Short	Homelessness Prevention Budget	Initial research undertaken. Scheme publicised in 'Voice' and register of interested landlords being maintained
	Investigate new housing options initiatives and commission if appropriate	BDC SHM/PHO/HSADO	Long	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
	Assess the need for a lodgings register and commission if appropriate	BDC/Partner agency HSADO/PHO/SHAO	01-Apr-06	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ODPM funding	Lodgings register commissioned March 06 to secure 40 bedspaces within 1 st 12 months

Develop accessible, sustainable and suitable housing options - young people	Assess the need for and feasibility of a supported lodgings scheme	BDC HSADO/SHAO	Short	Existing staffing resources	Analysis of service demand underway
	Assess need for and feasibility of 'crashpad' scheme	BDC HSADO/SHAO	Short	Existing staffing resources	Analysis of service demand underway
	Develop outreach/information service for schools and colleges	BDC/schools & colleges HSADO/SHAO	Medium	ODPM funding	
	Assess need for and feasibility of 'Foyer' type scheme	BDC HSADO/SHAO/PHO	Long	Existing staffing resources	Analysis of service demand underway
	Assess viability and support for Youth Homelessness Forum	BDC/key youth agencies HSADO/SHAO/PHO	Short	ODPM funding	Initial discussion with partner agencies underway. Benchmarking July 06. Provisional date for first forum Sep 06
Develop accessible, sustainable and suitable housing options - victims of domestic violence	Develop 'Sanctuary Scheme' to provide security measures for victims wishing to remain in their own homes	County-wide scheme/ contracted installer HSADO	Jun-06	Homelessness Prevention Budget	County-wide Sanctuary scheme due to be launched June 06. Staff training & Agency information session 29 June 06. Breckland is lead of the development group
	Maintain & monitor PWHA DV protocol - review regularly	BDC/PWHA/Leeway Advocacy Officer SHAO/HAOs	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Protocol developed and initiated Jan-06
Continue and expand Rent Deposit Loan Scheme	Review existing scheme and budgetary provision	BDC HSADO/PHO	Apr-06	ODPM funding/ Homelessness Prevention Budget	Rent Deposit Loan Scheme established – 27 loans made to 16 June 06
	Put in place effective payment arrears recovery system	BDC HSADO/SHAO/SHAO/ HLO	Short	Existing staffing resources/ ODPM funding	HLO liaising with Finance dept. to put effective recovery mechanism in place
Establish need and develop accessible, sustainable and suitable housing options for people sleeping rough	Carry out rough sleepers count and use data to establish need	BDC/multi-agency HSADO	Mar-06	Homelessness Prevention Budget	Rough Sleepers Count carried out March 2006 – 1 person found sleeping rough, and signs of other recent rough sleeping
	Establish baseline target	BDC HSADO	Mar-06	Existing staffing resources	Baseline Target established as 1

	Produce action plan to address evidenced need and improve performance against BVPI	BDC/multi-agency HSADO	Medium	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
Ensure all households accepted as statutorily homeless receive follow-up interviews on risk basis	Maintain and monitor interview timetables to ensure tenancies both sustained and sustainable	BDC SHAO/HAOs	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Interviews taking place at 3, 6, 9, 12, 18 & 24 month intervals
Increase provision of affordable housing in the district	To work towards delivering 165 affordable units per annum	BDC/partners SHM/E&PO	By 2010	Main sources: H Corp SHG/ Contributions from developers/ On-site developer provision/ Recycled capital grant from RSLs/ LA discounted land	
Maximise number of empty properties brought back into use	Form Joint Operational Teams to review and make recommendations on forward plans - feed into Private Sector Strategy	BDC/property owners/partners SHM/PEHO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	JOT teams formed Jan-06
Temporary Accommodation					
To reduce the use of insecure temporary accommodation by 85% by 2010 from 31 Dec 2004 (national target 50%)	Work towards developing alternatives to temporary accommodation through homelessness prevention options	BDC HSADO/PHA/SHAO/ HAOs	Ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	Use of temporary accommodation reduced from Dec 04 figure of 68 households to average of 28.25 households for 2005/06
	Establish a private sector leasing scheme in conjunction with qualifying offer scheme	BDC PHO/HSADO/SHAO	Short	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	Research undertaken to benchmark schemes. Report & recommendations produced June 06

Ensure no households with children or expectant mothers are accommodated in bed and breakfast for more than 6 weeks	Use all available alternative options to meet this target - see Prevention of Homelessness	BDC SHAO/HAOs	Ongoing	Homelessness Prevention budget/ ODPM funding	
	Monitor progress and set procedures in place to tackle non-compliance with target	BDC SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	
Provide 1 domestic violence refuge space per 10,000 population	Bid for funding for >8 additional domestic violence refuge spaces in the district	BDC/Partner RSL E&PO/HSADO	Capital bid Mid-06. Expression of interest made to Supporting People for revenue funding	H Corp/ Supporting People	5 existing refuge spaces = 0.48 spaces per 10,000 population.
Ensure temporary/interim accommodation is of a suitable quality standard and in locations which optimise the opportunity for customers to maintain existing support networks and access further suitable support if required	Establish a programme to regularly check the quality of temporary or interim accommodation and review the need to adopt the Greater Norwich grading system for B&B based on the fitness standard.	BDC HSADO/SHAO/HLO	Medium	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	FT Housing Liaison officer appointed to manage temporary accommodation and nominations to settled accommodation.
	Assess the need to adopt the ODPM hostel review toolkit	BDC HSADO/HLO	Medium	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
	Review procedures and practices engaged in placing homeless people in interim accommodation	BDC SHAO	Short	Existing staffing resources	
	Develop a strategic approach to the provision of interim and temporary accommodation to ensure aims are achieved	BDC PHO	Medium	Existing staffing resources	
	Monitor demand for temporary accommodation and review portfolio accordingly	BDC E&PO/SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	

Achieve BVPI targets for reducing use of temporary accommodation by means of active homelessness prevention casework BVPI 183a - target <4 weeks BVPI 183b - target <8 weeks BVPI 203 - target >15%	Monitor progress against target and set procedures in place to tackle non-compliance	BDC SHAO/HAOs	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	
Maximise income	Improve current systems for income collection	BDC SHAO/HLO	Scope options for improvement within Medium timescale	Existing staffing resources	
Optimise existing and future use of hostel resources	Monitor use of Girling House redevelopment and use data to inform review of John Room House	BDC SHAO/E&PO	Ongoing, outcome and recommendations by Oct-06	Existing staffing resources	Shared facility hostel in Dereham converted into 18 self-contained units
Research & Monitoring					
Monitor number of homelessness presentations prevented through housing advice	Monitor progress against BVPI and instigate action to improve performance against target. Target for 06/07 – 2 per 1,000 households	BDC SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Monitoring procedure in place
Ensure policies around housing and homelessness are based on robust information and reflect trends within the housing market	Maximise use of information sources to monitor socio-economic, demographic and housing market trends, including detailed analysis of local trends	BDC HA(S&P)	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Housing Policy & Strategy Assistant appointed Jan-04. Monitoring and reporting procedures put in place.
	Undertake analysis of P1E returns to monitor trends in homelessness presentations	BDC HA(S&P)	Ongoing – quarterly	Existing staffing resources	Housing Policy & Strategy Assistant appointed Jan-04. Monitoring and reporting procedures put in place.
	Commission Housing Market Assessment for Breckland as part of sub-regional project	BDC/sub-regional partners E&PO/PHO	Specification ready Apr-06 Results 2007	Housing Services budget	Contractor appointed June 06
Maintain input into Leeway Domestic Violence Monitoring	Check HAOs completing relevant forms and submit in a timely manner	BDC/Leeway WA SHAO/HA(S&P)	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Monitoring commenced 01-06. Scheme currently pending.

Develop information gathering processes to establish trends and need	Explore potential value of common monitoring processes including benchmarking existing schemes	BDC/key stakeholders HSADO/SHAO	Sep-06	Existing staffing resources	Some information gathered on existing schemes. Benchmarking ongoing
Support & Advocacy					
Establish and maintain effective intensive money advice service	Review existing scheme and amend to ensure effective working	BDC/CAB and/or alternative partner HSADO/SHAO	Short	ODPM funding	Expressions of interest to be received July 06. Most appropriate scheme to be chosen from these organisations
Establish and maintain effective mediation service	Review existing scheme and amend to ensure effective working	BDC/NFMS or alternative partner HSADO/SHAO	Short	ODPM funding	Review of service underway. Change suggested.
Ensure households in temporary accommodation receive suitable support	Review the level of support given to people in temporary accommodation	BDC PHO	Short	ODPM funding	
Ensure effective signposting/referral arrangements in place for specialist advice/support/advocacy agencies	Develop, initiate and maintain referral systems	BDC HSADO/SHAO	Ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	Referral arrangements developed in last 12 months with CAB/NEAA/YMCA/NFMS/Homestart/Surestart to support existing referral arrangements
Resources & Training					
Provide necessary equipment for front-line service delivery	Review need for IT terminal in interview room	BDC HSADO/SHAO/ Corporate	subject to Corporate Review	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
	Review need for conference phone in interview room	BDC HSADO/SHAO/ Corporate	subject to Corporate Review	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
	Review the use of FLARE system for recording and retrieval of Homelessness/Housing advice information	BDC SHAO/Corporate	subject to Corporate Review	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
	Investigate back-office support packages and commission if appropriate	BDC HSADO	Ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	Benefit and Legal IT packages purchased

Ensure staff training needs planned for	Develop training schedule for 2006/07 for HAOs	BDC SHAO	Short	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding/ Training Budget	
	Deliver customer care training to staff	BDC SHAO	Ongoing, to commence Mar-06	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding/ Training Budget	Interview skills training undertaken for all HAOs
	Assess need for and deliver technical training	BDC SHAO	Ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding/ Training Budget	Technical training delivered on a personalised ongoing programme
Ensure additional surgeries/presence offices are suitably equipped to deal with housing customers and enquiries	Contribute to corporate review of equipment for customer contact centres	BDC SHM/SHAO/Corporate	In line with corporate review timetable	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding/ Training Budget	Detail of customer contact centre requirements submitted to corporate review
Deliver cost-effective multi-agency training to optimise skills and knowledge base of relevant agencies including other LHAs	Investigate opportunities for setting up joint training courses - including cascade training - and distribute information to key agencies - arrange if relevant and sufficient interest expressed.	BDC HSADO/SHAO/PHO	Ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding/ Training Budget/ recharge	Document verification training arranged with HAOs and partner RSLs delivered through ARP - Spring 2006
Consultation					
Ensure full consultation on migration to Contact Centre	Develop consultation plan	BDC SHM/Corporate	Jan-07	Existing staffing resources	
Provide comprehensive accessible consultation opportunities to customers and key stakeholders regarding policies and procedures	Develop a consultation strategy for Housing Services - feed into policy development	BDC SHM	Medium	Existing staffing resources	

	Develop systems for involving partners, particularly in rural areas, and customers in monitoring performance and reviewing the continued relevance of strategies on a regular basis	BDC PHO/PEHO	Medium	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
	Continue Customer Satisfaction Surveys - feed into policy development Targets: Review surveys to ensure accessibility Compile results Develop protocol for distribution	BDC HA(S&P)	Ongoing - monthly and in accordance with distribution deadlines	Existing staffing resources	Monthly Customer Satisfaction Surveys established March 2005
	Continue Homelessness Prevention Forum - feed into policy development	BDC HSADO	Ongoing - bi-monthly	ODPM funding	Homelessness Prevention Forum re-established June 2005
	Hold Annual Landlord's Forum in line with landlord's wishes -feed into policy development	BDC HSADO/PEHO/ARP	Ongoing Annual	ODPM funding	Landlord Forum 30 September 2005
Strategic Housing Team to be consulted on policies and initiatives at draft stage	Maintain regular contact with team through team and operational meetings and other forms of communication such as emails where appropriate - feed into policy development	BDC PHO/SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Regular team and operational meetings established
Ensure Members fully involved with policy/strategy development	Maintain quarterly portfolio information sessions and ensure all relevant policy/strategy decisions are taken through appropriate political channels	BDC SHM/PHO/SHAO/ E&PO/HSADO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Procedures and timetables in place
Maximising use of Housing Stock					
Ensure housing stock is administered to best use and value	Review administration of Social Housing Register and make recommendations to Council on medium term options	BDC/PWHA PHO/SHAO	Short	Existing staffing resources	

	Review in partnership with RSLs designation of stock currently used for elderly and disabled tenants	BDC/RSLs PHO/E&PO/SHAO	TBC	Existing staffing resources	
	Investigate 'Incentive to move' schemes operated by key partner RSLs	BDC/RSLs PHO/E&PO/SHAO	Medium	Existing staffing resources	
Information					
Provide comprehensive accessible advice through available media formats	Review and expand website content	BDC HSADO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Website pages updated to include advice, signposting and downloadable forms and leaflets - Dec 2005. Reviewed and updated regularly
	Review and expand leaflet content in consultation with key stakeholders	BDC HSADO	Ongoing - 1st review June-06	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	12 leaflets produced May 2005 - distributed to CABs & LSVT partner offices.
	Review out-of hours service	BDC HSADO	Short	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	Contact details publicised in presence offices and on web site
	Review and amend standard customer/agency communications content and format	BDC SHAO	Ongoing on case-by-case basis. Full review to be carried out by Sep-06	Existing staffing resources	
Provide comprehensive timely and accessible information to residents	Communicate key messages in Housing and Homelessness Strategies to residents through use of media publications	BDC HSADO/PHO/SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources / ODPM funding	Breckland Voice used to communicate key messages to residents
Provide comprehensive timely and accessible advice to private sector landlords	Hold Annual Forum and provide training/information on current relevant issues	BDC HSADO/PHO/PEHO/ ARP	Ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	Landlord Forum held September 2005. Information Day on HA 2004 held 11 April 2006

	Produce quarterly newsletter for private sector landlords	BDC HSADO	Ongoing quarterly - 1st issue Jan-06	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	1 st newsletter distributed March 2006.
Provide comprehensive timely and accessible advice to private sector tenants	Produce Tenant's Information pack	BDC HSADO	Short	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
Provide comprehensive timely and accessible advice to key agencies	Provide regular statistical information to Homelessness Forum	BDC HSADO/HA(S&P)/SHAO	Ongoing - bi-monthly	Existing staffing resources	Customer satisfaction survey results communicated to Forum
Accessibility & Standards					
Consolidate access to services issues into strategic form	Develop an access strategy in conjunction with the corporate centre, based on research into footfall and need, which clearly identifies how the housing service will: improve access for customers; develop service standards; deliver mandatory customer care training; and use complaints, surveys and other forms of customer consultation to ensure access to services meets customer needs	BDC SHM/Corporate	Short	Existing staffing resources	
Provide an accessible advice service	Review need for local rate or free-phone number	BDC SHAO	Short	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	

	Research & pilot Text Messaging service	BDC HSADO/Corporate	Short	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	Specification drawn up April 2006. Research/benchmarking in place by Steria (IT contractors)
	Research need for additional advice surgeries in Thetford	BDC SHM/Corporate	In line with corporate review timetable	Existing staffing resources	Advice surgery set up in PWHA Thetford office one day per week
	Research need for additional advice surgeries throughout district	BDC SHM/Corporate	In line with corporate review timetable	Existing staffing resources / ODPM funding	
	Review need for appointment system	BDC PHO/SHAO	Short	Existing staffing resources	
Provide an accessible out-of-hours emergency assistance service	Review out-of-hours service	BDC PHO/Corporate	In line with corporate review timetable - provisionally Jul-06	Homelessness Prevention Budget/ ODPM funding	
Provide a responsive consistent service	Review, publish & monitor robust service standards in consultation with customers	BDC SHM/PHO	Jul-06	Existing staffing resources	Service standards produced and consulted on with Homelessness Forum May 06
Provide a responsive timely complaints procedure	Establish a complaints procedure for Housing Services	BDC PHO	Short	Existing staffing resources	
Ensure rigorous consistent standards are set and maintained	Review daytime homelessness service and produce and publicise service standards	BDC SHAO	Action plan to be completed by Apr-06 for 06/07 year	Existing staffing resources	
Ensure progress against Homelessness Strategy Action Plan is monitored and action taken to ensure targets met	Undertake quarterly review in partnership with Homelessness Forum	BDC PHO/SHAO/HSADO	Ongoing quarterly - commencing 1st Forum meeting after Strategy adoption	Existing staffing resources	Forum consulted on development of Strategy review and Action Plan

Diversity					
Consolidate diversity service issues into strategic form	Within six months, develop a diversity strategy in conjunction with the corporate centre, which includes: profiling of customers to inform service development; a comprehensive training package for housing staff to ensure behavioural compliance with good practice and which is tailored to housing specific service delivery issues; and a system for monitoring contractor compliance on equalities and diversity issues.	BDC SHM/Corporate	Short	Existing staffing resources	
Ensure minority groups have equal access to services and housing options	Investigate and address the needs of groups other than gypsies and Portuguese including the needs of HIV customers	BDC SHM/Corporate	Short	Existing staffing resources	
	Develop a BME housing strategy and specifically take account of HMOs	BDC SHM/PEHO	Specification by Jul-06	Funding agreed through Star Chamber process	
	Investigate feasibility of translation of key documents into high demand languages to be available immediately in printed/downloadable format	BDC/Intran HSADO/SHAO	Short	Existing staffing resources / ODPM funding	
Partnership Working					
Ensure effective and sustainable case management and nomination agreements in place with partner agencies	Review protocols with partner agencies around case management and nominations to ensure improved services for homeless applicants during assessment and rehousing	BDC/PWHA/other partner RSLs PHO/SHAO	Short	Existing staffing resources	
	Develop protocols with key agencies such as Social Services and DAAT	BDC/key agencies SHAO	Medium	Existing staffing resources	

Develop and maintain good working relationship with LSVT partner	Maintain weekly operations meetings	BDC/PWHA SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Weekly operations meetings in place
Ensure information shared between agencies in timely, comprehensive manner	Investigate feasibility of establishing Inter-Agency Information Sharing Protocol	BDC/Key stakeholders SHAO/HSADO	Medium	Existing staffing resources	
Develop knowledge of key agencies' operations to aid joint working and access to relevant support services for customers	Develop system of visits to key agencies for staff at appropriate service levels	BDC SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	Some visits carried out, contact maintained via caseload management
Casework Management					
Determine set percentage of homelessness applications within 33 working days (currently 95%)	Review progress	BDC SHM/SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	100% of applications determined and notified from 31/08/05 – date (Feb 06)
	Monitor progress against target and set procedures in place to tackle non-compliance	BDC SHM/SHAO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	
Determine 100% of review application within 56 days	Monitor progress against target and set procedures in place to tackle non-compliance	BDC SHM/PHO	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	
Develop and maintain high standard consistent procedures	Develop full set of procedures for Housing Advice and Homelessness service	BDC SHAO	Medium	Existing staffing resources	
Monitor number of homelessness acceptances where the same duty had been accepted towards the same applicant/household within last 2 years - Target 06/07 - less than 10%	Monitor progress against target and set procedures in place to tackle non-compliance	BDC SHAO/HAOs	Ongoing	Existing staffing resources	

