



GREATER NORWICH HOUSING PARTNERSHIP HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2011-2014

ACTION PLAN

Strategic Aims

1. Deliver early intervention to prevent homelessness
2. Placing the customer at the centre of service delivery
3. Maximising resources and effective partnership working
4. Providing a wide range of sustainable housing solutions and support links to people at risk of being homeless

Notes:

- The Action Points are not in priority order. Within each Strategic Aim they move from strategic to specific.
- The contents take account of The Equalities Impact Assessment undertaken before adoption
- Unless otherwise stated, all milestones and actions fall within existing resources

Key to action plan:

Grey = Not started

Red = Serious slippage

Green = On target

Yellow = Target slipped by up to three months

Blue = Completed



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DASHBOARD OF MILESTONES SEPTEMBER 2011:

Nos of milestones	Stage
20	On target
27	Not started
3	Complete
2	Target slipped
0	Serious slippage

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Strategic Aim 1 – Deliver early intervention to prevent homelessness							
No	Action	Milestones	Link to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress



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<p>1. A. Enable those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and not in education, training or employment (NEET) to engage in meaningful activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build links and referral routes with voluntary sector, statutory services, DWP, education, IAG and training services. 	1,2,3,4	Apr 2012- Mar 2013	LA team leaders	Reduced risk of repeat homelessness.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend housing options letters to signpost people to volunteering, educational and work based learning, along with employment and training opportunities. 	1,2,3,4	Mar 2013 – Apr 2014	LA team leaders	Reduced risk of repeat homelessness.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and build links between the proposed Certificate of Merit in supported housing and the Housing register move on protocol. 	1,2,3,4	Apr 2012 – July 2013	Steering group and SPACE EAST		Launch could depend on provision of initial funding

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No	Action	Milestones	Links to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress
1.	B. Carry out a review of existing early intervention tools against the main causes of homelessness and review our use of them to learn from successes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map tools used against P1 E outcomes. 	1,2,3,4	Sept 2011 – Feb 2012	LA team leaders	Tools used meet current needs.	Work to start in September 2011.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map and review tools and services, and benchmark best practice across the homelessness sector. 		Sept 2011 – Feb 2012	Steering group	Reduction in repeat homelessness	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommended actions from benchmarking report 		May 2012 onwards	LA team leaders		
1.	C. Build on our means of communicating with our customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the NCAN mapping project and any future update of the SPACE EAST housing and support directory 	2	Led by NCAN	LA team leaders	Improved partnership working	New SPACE East directory to be produced in early 2012. NCAN coordinator is represented on the Greater Norwich Preventing Homelessness Strategy Group meetings.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a sample survey of customers after 6 months to see if they have acted on advice and intervention given and, if so, how successful these were. 	2	Aug 2012	LA team leaders	Strengths and weaknesses of the service established and services improved.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the results of the survey sample to identify where communication needs to be improved and agree improvement plan. 	2	Dec 2012	Steering group	Advice services in the sub-region improved and consistency of approach and delivery established.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish pre-tenancy education schemes across the GNHP, where recent mapping exercise indicates there are gaps. 	2	Sept 2011 – Mar 2012	LA team leaders and steering group	Homelessness prevented through tenancy sustainment.	LA team leaders are meeting in January 2012 to discuss this. Meeting has not yet taken place.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate people about legislative and policy changes, showing them their options in e.g. HB/ under-occupation moves. 	2	In response to changes	Steering group	Customers are enabled to make informed housing decisions.	This will be coordinated with the three LA Housing benefit and revenue teams.
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Strategic Aim 2 – Placing the customer at the centre of service delivery

No	Action	Milestones	Link to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress
2.	A. Increase customer involvement in shaping our services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively engage with service user groups, Accessing Home Options Group and the Homelessness Forum when developing policy, guidance, surveys and literature. 	1,2,3	Sept 2011 onwards	Steering group, LA team leaders and Home Options Partnership Manager	Customer satisfaction. Services are relevant and inclusive. Policies are robust.	The Accessing Home Options group has merged with the Operations group and will meet until the end of the sub-regional Choice based lettings scheme in 2012.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop and carry out annual housing advice surveys including 'catch up' mid-year surveys. 	1,2,3	Feb annually	LA team leaders		



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No	Action	Milestones	Links to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence and develop homelessness customer satisfaction surveys including more specific surveys within larger temporary housing schemes were required. 	1,2,3	Sept 2011 onwards	LA team leaders		SNC commenced surveys. BDC and NCC yet to start.
2.	B. Improve service delivery based on feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the outcomes of the customer satisfaction surveys and engagement with service user groups into the homelessness strategy action plan annual update. 	1,2	Apr 2012 and Apr 2013	Steering group	Responsive and robust Action plan.	11
2.	C. Improve communication through the development and delivery of a communication plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a communications plan. 	1,2,3,4	Dec 11 – Feb 12	Steering group	Range of ways we provide information expanded.	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with HB teams to communicate with service users in preparing for the changes to HB etc – ‘Awareness campaign’ of changes, and routes for help available. 	1,2,3,4	In response to legislation	Steering group with HB team leaders	Customers and partners receive the necessary information to enable them to make informed choices.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent approach and guidance to assessment of Housing register applications where there are rent arrears or a history of anti-social behaviour. 	1,2,3,4	Sept 11	Housing options managers	Consistent practice is adopted across the sub-region.	Guidance note has been drafted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent approach to communicating decisions to homelessness applicants 	1,2,3,4	Sept 11 – Sept 12	Team leaders	Clearly communicated decisions to customers. Fewer review requests.	LA team leaders are meeting in September 2011 to discuss this.

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	Work with district community teams and support agencies to develop innovative ways to promote and advertise services and improve signposting, in relation to hard to reach groups.	1,2,3,4	Apr 11 – Apr 12	Steering group and team leaders		
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Strategic Aim 3 – Maximising resources and effective partnership working

No	Action	Milestones	Links to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress
3.	A. Continue ongoing development of front-line staff of all agencies working with homeless and vulnerably housed people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a structured job shadowing programme across the sector. Promote the opportunity to join the South Norfolk Council-led training programme to those not already engaged in housing. 	1,2,3,4	Apr 2012 – Mar 2013	Steering group	Increased awareness and knowledge of partner services.	11
				Sept 2011 then annually	SNC	<p>Increased knowledge of housing ad allocations law and practice.</p> <p>Good working relationships across organisations.</p>	South Norfolk Council are in the process of drawing up training programme table of events that will be disseminated with partners not already engaged. These courses are self-financing.



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3.	B. Actively seek engagement with key services and partners who could assist with homelessness prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify services that may come into early contact with clients threatened with homelessness and develop an engagement plan, considering what works well in other areas. 	1,2,3	Sept 2011 – Mar 2012	Steering group	Early identification and prevention of homelessness	<p>SNC and BDC have signed up to NHAS.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to develop a sub-regional hospital discharge protocol. Ermir Prendi leading on this.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop closer links with LSPs, and seek the adoption of homelessness strategy aims into their sustainable community strategies 	1,2,3	Sept 2011 onwards	Steering group	Value of homelessness prevention services demonstrated.	There is a LSP in South Norfolk and Broadland council areas. LSP in SNC currently under review.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively engage in and contribute to the delivery of county 'client group' strategies (under 4: Strategic Framework) 	1,2,3	Sept 2011 onwards	Steering group	Sustainable housing and holistic solutions for vulnerable 'client groups'	?



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with commissioners and other housing services to agree, implement and monitor the new Youth Homelessness protocol 	1,2,3	Sept 2011 onwards	Steering group	Ensure the young person is housed in suitable accommodation with relevant support	<p>Norwich City Council's Housing strategy team representing the sub-region at protocol monitoring meetings with Children services and the steering group for the Unregulated Accommodation Strategy for 16/17yr olds.</p> <p>There has been a county wide workshop in Jan 12 between Children Services and Local Housing authorities to discuss glitches with protocol.</p>
<p>3. C. Share resources across the sub-region and learn from good practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a framework for sub-regional use of temporary accommodation. 	2,3	Sept 11 – Mar 2012	Housing options managers	Value for money and wider availability of resources.	BDC and SNC have agreed framework. NCC team leaders to negotiate with SNC team leaders.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify additional opportunities for partners to share time, office space and other resources. 	2,3	Sept 2011 onwards	Steering group	Better use of resources and partnership working	<p>Police, Citizens advice bureau and Orbit Homebuy are sharing office space at Broadland Council.</p> <p>Ormiston and Family Intervention Project now working at South Norfolk Council.</p> <p>St Martins Housing Trust CAPS team continue to share office space.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver HAALO Action plan 	2,3	Sept 2011 – Mar 2012	Housing options managers and team leaders	Consistency of service delivery, Value for money and homelessness prevented.	HAALO Action Plan updated Sept 11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act on results from HAALO benchmarking exercise 	2,3	Dec 2011 – July 2012	Housing options managers and team leaders	Consistency of service delivery, Value for money and homelessness prevented.	It is unlikely this will go ahead until 2012 at the earliest as services will change so much over 2011/12.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and highlight opportunities for shared services across the sub-region 	2,3	Sept 2011 onwards	Housing options managers		Rough sleeper post funded sub-regionally until April 2012.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulate and agree an approach to discharging the homelessness duty into the private rented sector 	2,3	Within 3 months of enactment of the Localism Bill	Housing options managers	Consistency of approach. Customers housed appropriately	
No	Action	Milestones	Links to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress
3.	D. Review Greater Norwich sub-regional homelessness protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review effectiveness of existing protocol 	2,3	Sept 2011 – April 2012	Housing options managers and NCC Housing strategy team	Improved customer experience	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make amendments if required 	2,3	Dec 2011 – Mar 2012	Housing options managers and NCC Housing strategy team	Improved customer experience	



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set-up programme of on-going refresher training 	2,3	Mar – April 2012	Housing options managers and NCC Housing strategy team	Improved customer experience	
3.	E. Work with strategic partners to maximise the funding opportunities for homelessness services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore other means of maximising funding opportunities including shared services Contribute to key commissioning mechanisms 	1,3,4	Sept 2011 onwards	Steering group and sub-regional strategic lead officers	Funding opportunities maximised for preventative projects.	Joint bid between St Martins Housing Trust and YMCA Norfolk going to Homeless Link. Homeless Transition Fund. Deadline for first round end of Sept 2011.
3.	F. Create a GNHP Homelessness strategy and action plan for future years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a project team Agree project plan Implement project plan 	1,2,3,4	Oct 2012	Steering group	A well planned and coordinated follow on to the previous strategy	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a homelessness review 	1,2,3,4	Nov 2012 – Mar 2013	Steering group	Solid evidence base for new homelessness strategy	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a new Homelessness strategy and action plan 	1,2,3,4	Apr 2014	Steering group	A well planned and coordinated follow on to the previous strategy	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor quarterly and update existing action plan annually 	1,2,3,4	Quarterly after each steering group meeting	Steering group	Up to date Homelessness strategy action plan	On target, updated action plan circulated amongst steering group, strategic lead officers and members of Greater Norwich Homelessness strategy steering group.

Strategic Aim 4 – Providing a wide range of sustainable housing solutions to people at risk of being homelessness

No	Action	Milestone	Links to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress
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4.	A. Review Housing register allocation policies to maximise use of existing stock through innovative solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Housing register allocation policies to identify most effective approach to downsizing/ under-occupation (see 2C above). Compare with successful schemes and innovative 	2,4	Sept 2011 – Sept 2012	Housing options managers	Existing stock used effectively	SNC planning for policy consultation Nov 11
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore best use of stock in relation to Mutual Exchanges – promote scheme and benefits. Consider making links to Housing Exchange more intelligent and targeted 	2,4	Sept 2012 – Sept 2013	Home options operational group	Mobility of social housing tenants increased	
No	Action	Milestone	Links to strategic aims	Timescale	Lead	Outcome	Progress

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4. B. Improve pathways into housing for customers with accessibility needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make better use of limited resources by working with the home options landlords to ensure the accessibility rating in properties is correct. 	1,2,3,4	Sept 2011	Home options operational group	More accurate linking of those in need to suitable accessible properties.	Complete – all housing options teams in sub-region have actioned this.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the accessibility rating of customers is assessed and input on Home Options. 	1,2,3,4	Sept 2011	Home Options managers	Good use of existing stock.	New guidance consulted on and almost finalised Sept 11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a mechanism for the early identification and pre-advertising of forthcoming vacancies of adapted properties. 	1,2,3,4	Sept 2011	Home options operational group	Improved housing outcomes for those with accessibility needs.	County wide scheme proposed and discussed at HAALO Sept 11 with proposed plan/paper to be completed Jan 12.
4. C. Reduce barriers that limit access to accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with HAALO to extend the PPO re-housing scheme across the county 	1,4	Sept 11 – Aug 12	Housing options managers	Contribution towards crime reduction	Workshop taking place with HAALO and Housing strategy probation manager.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Housing register policy for 16/17 year olds 	1,4	Oct – Dec 2012	Housing options managers	Increase in housing options	SNC planning for policy consultation Nov 11



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4. D. Improve access to the Private rented sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Housing register to advertise private rented properties 	3,4	Jan 2012 – Jan 2013	Home options operational group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased choice for Home options applicants Improved relationships with private landlords
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Private Sector Leasing schemes and their cost effectiveness 		July – Sept 2013	Steering group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value for money delivered by Private sector leasing schemes

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The strategy documents have been produced in consultation with a wide range of partners and stakeholders, service users and councillors, and will be overseen by the Greater Norwich housing partnership policy group and lead GNHP strategic officers.

If you have any questions on the strategy or action plan, please contact the following:

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