Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 25 June at 2.00 pm

Committee Members Present: Councillors: A Thomas (Chairman), N Legg (for part of the meeting), A Pond and K Worsley
Ex officio: Councillor Y Bendle

Apologies: Councillors S Blundell, J Hornby and T Palmer

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Community Services (P Boyce), the Early Intervention Manager (M Pursehouse), the Housing and Public Health Manager (M Swann), the Housing Access and Standards Manager (T Cooke), the Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer (K Mitchell), the Housing and Public Health Partnerships Officer (L Pickering) and the Projects Manager Environment and Housing (T Durell)

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 23 February were noted by the meeting.
2 UPDATES
(i) FOOD BANK POSITION IN SOUTH NORFOLK

The Housing and Public Health Partnerships Officer provided members with an update on the use of foodbanks in South Norfolk. He explained that two foodbanks (Waveney and Norwich) distributed throughout the District, however, although usage was up from the previous year, figures on the usage in South Norfolk was difficult to clarify as both foodbanks crossed multiple districts. He explained that the Waveney Foodbank distributed from the following locations in the District:

Diss (599 uses in 2014/15)
Harleston (556 uses in 2014/15)
Long Stratton (197 uses in 2014/15)
Bungay (no figures on SN usage)
Rural Deliveries via agencies (233 rural distributions)

Members noted that the Norwich Foodbank distributed from Wymondham and several locations in Norwich, and was yet to provide any figures regarding usage.

Anecdotal evidence did suggest that usage in the District was lower than in some other areas, and the Housing and Public Health Partnerships Officer explained that this could be attributed to the quick turnaround of Housing Benefit applications in South Norfolk. He reminded members that the Council had a proactive approach to supporting people, suggesting that the Early Help approach, and the strong economic position in the District, might also positively impact upon usage figures. Members noted the likely upsurge in foodbank usage during the school holidays, due to the loss of free school meals for some families, and attention was drawn to the impact of benefit caps and the introduction of universal credit and the need to ensure that residents had the right skills and support to manage their finances effectively.

During discussion, Cllr Y Bendle reminded members of the Council’s own discretionary fund available to those families struggling financially. The Chairman agreed that it would be interesting to hear an update at the next meeting of the Committee, to include Norwich foodbank figures and comparative data across the summer.
(ii) STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT

The Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer stressed the importance of the Strategic Housing Assessment (SHMA), explaining that this research was essential for the future calculation of housing need and would be used to underpin the Council’s future planning policies. Members noted that ORS consultants had been appointed to carry out this research, to include the areas of North Norfolk, Breckland, Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk. It was anticipated that this work would be completed within a couple of months and the findings for the South Norfolk area would be reported back at the November meeting of the Committee.

(iii) VANGUARD

The Project Manager (Communities) explained that the Council had been chosen to pilot a Government scheme, which involved the Council maintaining a register of people interested in constructing their own home, and also identifying sites appropriate for self-build homes.

The Council had been awarded funding to pilot this activity, and to work with Saffron Housing Trust, to deliver custom build plots for affordable housing. Members noted that there had been 50 expressions of interest from people interested in self-build, 12 of whom had no local connections to the area. Members were interested to note that most of those interested did not require a mortgage and did not need to sell their current homes to progress any build.

During discussion, the Project Manager confirmed that planning applications for self-build projects would not receive any preferential treatment. Officers explained that the Council would be encouraging developers to give up plots within bigger developments for self-build. It was acknowledged that this might prove difficult, but it could be attractive to those developers needing cash flow in the early stages of their own projects.

Members noted that the work was ongoing and that the Government would take Vanguard outcomes into account for future policy making and deciding how it would implement its intention to extend the Right to Build Scheme nationwide.
3. INTRODUCTION TO THE POLICY COMMITTEE

The Housing and Public Health Manager delivered a presentation entitled “Introduction to Policy Committee”, which introduced members to key officers and outlined the Committee’s areas of responsibility, including Early Help, Independent Living, Housing Standards, Housing Options, Housing and Public Health Partnerships, and Revenues and Benefits.

Members noted the work undertaken so far and the key outcomes achieved, which included the formation of a Health and Wellbeing Strategy, a new approach in tackling empty homes and the development of the Early Help Hub. Officers also explained the Committee’s input into the Affordable Housing Grants Scheme, and the consideration of bids from Housing Associations.

Looking ahead, the Housing and Public Health Manager drew attention to a number of challenges and opportunities moving forward, referring in particular to three new Bills announced in the Queen’s Speech 2015. The Housing and Public Health Manager stressed the need to align all future delivery with the South Norfolk vision, priorities and focus areas.

During discussion, Cllr A Pond referred to the growing need for properties to accommodate larger families across the District, suggesting that there were a growing number of such families, currently not adequately housed, which in turn led to other concerns such as health issues. The Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer explained that due to the significant amount of growth in the area, targets for affordable housing were currently being met. He did know of plans for larger properties at Lodge Farm, Costessey, however the Council had no control over the order in which developers built affordable properties, so could not predict when they would become available. He stressed that the shortest supply and in greatest need was in smaller 1 or 2 bedroomed homes.

4. SOUTH NORFOLK HOUSING STATEGY

Members considered the draft Housing Strategy, which would provide the basis for housing activity in South Norfolk until 2019.

The Housing and Public Health Partnerships Officer presented the draft Strategy to the Committee and outlined the background to its formation. Members noted the four outcomes that were a focus throughout the document, and how these areas of focus tied in with the wider strategic vision of the Council.
During discussion, the Chairman referred to data within the document that referred to people suffering from dementia in South Norfolk. The Committee agreed that it would be helpful if the Strategy included figures for those currently living with dementia, in addition to those numbers predicted to be suffering from the condition in 2020 (already supplied).

With regard to the reference made concerning the five year land supply, it was suggested that a cautious approach should be adopted. It was noted that this was an ever moving figure, and suggested that the word “currently” was added between the words “Council” and “has”. The sentence would then read; “The Council currently has a five year land supply…”

Referring to priority outcomes and how the Council would measure performance in these areas, officers explained that outcome measures would be put in place. An Action Plan was to be formed and presented to the Committee at its meeting in November. In response to a query regarding the delivery of safeguarding arrangements, the Housing and Public Health Manager explained that these arrangements had been reviewed and training was delivered to staff, members and partners. The overall theme of the sessions was to ensure a change in culture where everyone accepted ownership and responsibility. Members noted that a member training session on safeguarding was to take place at 5.30pm on 2 July.

It was then

**RESOLVED:** TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET that the draft Housing Strategy be issued for consultation, following minor amendments.

5. **HEALTH, WELLBEING AND EMPLOYMENT**

Members considered the report of the Early Intervention Manager which sought the Committee’s views on a potential project relating to health, wellbeing and employment. Members noted that initial ideas centred around working with employers to promote the benefits of health and wellbeing amongst employees, and also to support individuals not in work to build skills and confidence to access employment and training.

The Early Intervention Manager presented his report and referred members to the table at paragraph 4.4, which summarised the support that could be provided. He stressed that the project was not seeking to duplicate the strands of work already carried out by a number of different agencies, such as MIND, but sought to add value through a co-ordinated approach.
In response to queries, the Early Intervention Manager explained that the Department of Work and Pensions would be an active partner in the project, helping to identify those in need. Members agreed that identifying those already in the workplace might be more of a challenge, and discussion followed with regard to engagement with smaller employers and the potential support given through counselling helplines. Members also expressed their support in working closely with the Ministry of Defence and ex-servicemen and particular mention was also given to women wishing to return to work following career breaks to care for their children, and the confidence boosts needed in recognising and developing their own skills.

The Committee agreed to support the development of the project, and looked forward to an update on progress at its next meeting.

6. NORFOLK MILITARY COVENANT

The Housing Access and Standards Manager explained that the Norfolk’s Armed Services Community Covenant was a voluntary statement of mutual support between the civilian community and the local armed forces. The covenant was led by a Board of members, which managed an action plan supporting three main priorities:

- Building Communities
- Health and Welfare
- Education  Employment and Skills

Members noted that the Council had become a signatory to the covenant back in 2012. Members also noted that the Council expressed its support through the Home Options scheme, allowing current and former members of the armed forces on to the housing register, with no need to satisfy the usual local connection requirements.

In response to a query regarding the upkeep of war memorials, officers explained that the Housing Standards Officer was the Council’s war memorial champion, and would provide advice on such matters.
7. **WORK PLAN FOR 2015/16**

Members noted the future work plan for the Committee.

Referring to the Housing, Energy, and Full Employment and Welfare Benefits Bills, to be considered at the November meeting of the Committee, the Chairman stressed the need for reports to be succinct and to focus on the local context. Members noted that an update on the Housing Strategy would also be provided at the November meeting.

Members looked forward with interest to the item regarding Dementia (programmed in for March 2016), and discussion followed regarding how people suffering from the condition could best be supported. The Housing Access and Standards Manager explained that the Council was considering applying for funding to assist with this work.

8. **DATE OF NEXT FORMAL MEETING**

Members noted that the next formal meeting of the Committee was to be held at 10.00 am on 23 November 2015.

(The meeting concluded at 4.14 pm)
General Services Update

Report of the Director of Community Services
Cabinet Member: Cllr Yvonne Bendle, Portfolio Holder for Well-being and Early Intervention

CONTACT
Paula Boyce
pboyle@s-norfolk.gov.uk
1. Introduction

1.1. This report is to update Members of recent and ongoing pieces of work within housing, wellbeing and early intervention services.

2. Updates

2.1. Temporary Accommodation

Work is underway to look at how to improve our temporary accommodation and make the best use of our assets. Specifically looking at when and how we house single people. We are also considering how we could use other temporary accommodation to support specific client need. We are currently looking at possibilities around how we can provide a support element for temporary accommodation to deliver more sustainable housing outcomes for single people through the cost effective use of the right type of temporary accommodation tailored to client need. This work should also allow us to reduce the amount of people we place in bed and breakfast accommodation.

2.2. Health & Wellbeing Strategy

In partnership with Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Breckland District Council we are looking at how we can jointly deliver on our shared objectives in relation to health & wellbeing. Recent workshops have taken place between the Council and Adult Social Care and the Council and South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group. The next step is a joint workshop with all partners together to identify collaborative working in the future.
We are progressing the South Norfolk Council Health & Wellbeing Strategy into a year two action plan. Some of the accomplishments of the strategy to date include:

- Diss, Wymondham and Hethersett have undertaken work to make themselves dementia friendly as part of the Dementia Friendly Communities Programme in partnership with Age UK.
- The promotion of healthy living and healthy eating through the HONOR (Healthier Options Norfolk) project has had a positive impact on actions to reduce childhood obesity. The programme supports business to provide healthy options. So far 63 schools, nurseries and academies have received HONOR awards.
- A GP taster session for accessing leisure services was launched in South Norfolk through the Diss and Wymondham leisure centres. The progress is currently being reviewed in order to provide a basis on how this work is taken forward in the second year action plan working closely with GP Practices.
- South Norfolk Council is working in partnership with Norfolk County Council Public Health, South Norfolk CCG, Active Norfolk and Breckland Council on Design in Public Sector – a piece of work aimed at reducing childhood obesity through the design of public services.

2.3. Mental Health and Learning Difficulties pathway

We are working on developing a joint document which will describe how clients can access services with our partners over the coming months to ensure that residents with learning difficulties and mental health needs and also professionals can navigate through the relevant support provision to access suitable housing and achieve independent living. A workshop for partners has been arranged for December. We will provide further updates to Members’ as this work progresses.
2.4. **Forget me not Grants**

In partnership with South Norfolk CCG and Norfolk County Adult Social Care, we have established a new grant fund of up to £55,000 to make residents’ homes more dementia friendly. Works up to the value £1,000 can be carried out on an individual’s home: funded at 100% for those on means tested benefits and 50% for those that are not. The grants are available to anyone living in the South Norfolk CCG area that has a diagnosis of dementia or is receiving support in relation to dementia but is not diagnosed. The home improvement works will be carried out through the South Norfolk Handy Person Service. We are also working closely with the Age UK Admiral Nurses and the Dementia Intensive Support Team to target individuals who would benefit from this grant service.

2.5 **Affordable Housing**

Developments by housing associations 2015/16:
To date: 27 units
Total Expected by March 2016: 113 units (up from 98 in 2014/15)

Work has started on some large sites which are expected to deliver affordable housing, with first completions in 2016/17:
- Costessey – Lodge Farm 2 – 163 units
- Framingham Earl – 33 units
- Poringland, Area D (including the Big Sky site) – 44 units
- Poringland, David Wilson Homes – 49 units
- Stoke Holy Cross – 17 units
- Tharston – 12 units
- Wymondham - Becketts Grove 2 – 83 units
The timing of delivery will depend on the speed of market sales.

2.6 Early Help

Community Connectors
With the 2 Diss Community Connectors in place and working well, we have now recruited to 4 additional part time Community Connector posts; 2 in Wymondham and 2 in Costessey. Promotional literature for the delivery areas has been developed and the team is delivering some real tangible results in relation to early help or support for residents in need.

Go for It Grants
6 applications totalling £1,800 have been approved to the following groups:

- Hethersett Jubilee Youth Club – art lessons
- Wymondham Dementia Support Group – new Pablum Sports and Leisure Club
- Costessey TC – development of a permanent memories / history group
- Newton Flotman – community lunch
- Queens Hills Residents Association – Christmas lights event
- Hingham Tennis – tennis facility for all

2.7 Housing Standards

The Deregulation Act 2015 covers a number of issues governing the private rented sector including tenancy deposit, ending tenancies and retaliatory evictions. These are new provisions and will be dealt with by the Housing Standards team who are assessing the implications.
We submitted a joint funding bid to British Gas and successfully secured funding to assist vulnerable households to keep warm and reduce their fuel bills. £30,000 will be available to deliver a range of measures in South Norfolk and we are currently working with County partners to finalise the schemes.

2.8 Housing Options

There are currently 720 people on the Housing Register. Properties advertised for let are loaded onto the Homes Option website at midnight on a Wednesday. A recent check of the Home Options system showed that in the last three years there were only two occasions this did not happen and the fault was remedied by 09:00 the following morning.

2.9 Safeguarding responsibility

With the changes in Children’s Services restructure to locality working, to have a better understanding of local need and resource. SNC was previously part of the City & South locality but this has now split to meet local need. This change now means that SNC benefit from its own local safeguarding children’s group. The Housing Options Senior Case Adviser is Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children group (LSCG) this is a sub-group of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board, chaired by David Ashcroft. The LSCG has representation at Manager level from all key agencies including Police, Children’s Services, Health, Education and the Voluntary Sector.

In addition the Housing Access and Standards Manager, is now the Chair of the South Local Adult Safeguarding Partnership. The partnership existed previously (as a City and South entity) but is being re-launched as it is now a statutory requirement following the introduction of the Care Act. The partnership aligns with the South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) area.
At SNC we have our own Designated Safeguarding Officers' Group led by the Director of Community Services. The aim of the group is to support SNC staff who might have safeguarding concerns and to ensure that SNC practice is always of an excellent standard.

Officers are in the process of putting together a Safeguarding training package for officers and Members.
Delivering Affordable Housing

Report of the Housing Enabling and Strategy Officer
Cabinet Member: Yvonne Bendle, Wellbeing and Early Intervention

CONTACT
Keith Mitchell 01508 533756
kmitchell@s-norfolk.gov.uk
1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is an assessment of housing need in all tenures (market sale, affordable home ownership and social/affordable rent). The project to produce the SHMA report was undertaken by Opinion Research Services (ORS).

1.2 This paper focuses on the delivery of affordable housing in relation to the evidence presented in the SHMA; affordable housing being defined as housing available, for rent or sale, at less than its market price. Affordable housing is a key part of this Committee’s remit. Cabinet received a wider briefing on the SHMA on 2 November from the Planning Policy Manager as part of an update on planning policy issues (page 60) http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/CARMS/meetings/cab2015-10-02-reports.pdf

1.3 The SHMA project fulfilled the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance (which provide government guidance on planning issues) taking into account the Planning Advisory Service’s advice note Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) as well as the outcomes of Examinations undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate. The latter is particularly important because Planning Inspectors consider whether a local authority has a 5 year supply of housing land which suffices to meet the OAN.

1.4 In accordance with government guidance, the SHMA must be based on a housing market. Initial research by ORS found that the housing market centred on Norwich covers all of Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk plus the majority of Breckland, North Norfolk and the Broads Authority. It was agreed that these six authorities would commission the project, with Norfolk County Council also participating. The analysis is on a ‘best fit’ basis, being for the whole of the six administrative areas.

1.5 The project establishes housing need for Central Norfolk until 2036, and it will provide the evidence base for planning and housing policy until such time as it is updated or replaced.
1.6 The project will be signed off in the near future, and the report will be placed on the Council’s website.

2. Key Findings

2.1 The table below summarises the key findings, which are presented on the basis of an annual requirement for the whole of the period to 2036. They are at three levels:

- Central Norfolk – the whole housing market;
- Greater Norwich – because Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk have a Joint Core Strategy, the basis for planning policy;
- South Norfolk – to demonstrate the District’s needs and the contribution required of South Norfolk Council to deliver its share of housing growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Central Norfolk</th>
<th>Greater Norwich</th>
<th>South Norfolk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) – all tenures</td>
<td>3,190</td>
<td>2,174</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Norwich Policy Area)</td>
<td>(1,698)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing need</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing as a proportion of OAN</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent as a proportion of affordable need</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: affordable housing is housing available (for rent or sale) at less than its market price
2.2 The above figures have been derived taking into account a number of factors, including Government population projections, household formations/headship rates, and for Greater Norwich in particular, the implications of the economic growth aspirations of the City Deal.

2.3 The methodology used to calculate the need for affordable housing uses the assumption that it is reasonable for a household to spend 25% of gross household income on housing costs. Households which cannot afford market rent require affordable rented housing.

2.4 The SHMA provides a breakdown of the sizes of homes required within the affordable sector:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SHMA Findings</th>
<th>South Norfolk Housing Register</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Norfolk</td>
<td>Greater Norwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bedroom</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bedrooms</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bedrooms</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+ bedrooms</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NB: Figures may not sum due to rounding*

2.5 The low percentage for 1 bedroom need and the high percentage for 3+ bedroom need are currently not reflected in housing register figures, which are provided above for South Norfolk for comparison. Officers have discussed this with ORS, who are confident that their findings are correct for the long term because the model has been used many times. Please see paragraph 3.5 for implications. Officers will provide an up to date breakdown of housing register figures at the meeting for members to consider.
3. Policy Implications

3.1 It is important to stress that the figures in the table above do not immediately become policy targets. They are the evidence base from which policy evolves and is implemented. This is particularly true with regard to affordable housing.

3.2 The three Greater Norwich councils will need to consider how and when the OAN figures for Greater Norwich and South Norfolk will be implemented as the basis for calculating whether there is a 5 year supply of housing land. ORS have also produced figures for the current Norwich Policy Area. That figure is important because currently the Norwich Policy Area does not have a 5-year supply of housing land, making it difficult to refuse planning applications on some unallocated sites.

3.3 Policy 4 of the Joint Core Strategy for Greater Norwich requires up to 33% of dwellings on qualifying sites to be affordable homes. Officers will continue to seek this proportion because:

- between 20% and 33% is the adopted policy;
- some sites will deliver less than the policy requirement for justified financial reasons (such as decontamination or the cost of off-site road improvements, whilst other sites will fall below the threshold for an affordable housing requirement); and
- it is unlikely that Norwich will be able to meet its affordable housing need (292 p.a.), so some of that need will have to be met in Broadland and south Norfolk.

3.4 The sub-regional tenure split requirement (86% rent / 14% low cost home ownership) justifies continuing to seek 85% rent on sites of 16+ dwellings in accordance with the adopted policy.
3.5 The size requirement should not present a problem when seeking affordable housing through planning policy:

- One bedroom homes are generally cheaper for housebuilders to provide.
- Especially if there are three storey blocks of flats, the smaller land requirement provides housebuilders to construct more floorspace for sale on the open market.
- Consequently the mix achieved should succeed in reflecting current need rather than long term need.

4. Recommendation

4.1 That the Committee notes the contents of this report.
South Norfolk Housing Strategy 2016-19

Report of the Housing and Public Health Partnerships officer
Cabinet Member: Councillor Yvonne Bendle

CONTACT
Liam Pickering
lpickering@s-norfolk.gov.uk
1. Introduction

1.1. This report presents to Committee a draft of the Housing Strategy (Appendix A) and Action Plan (Appendix B) which will provide the basis for housing activity in South Norfolk until 2019. The document has been subject to a twelve week consultation period and the response to consultation is attached as Appendix C. Members are asked to consider any possible amendments to the Strategy and its Action Plan and to recommend to Cabinet that it be adopted.

2. Background

2.1. The previous Housing and Public Health Policy Committee and the Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee have overseen the evolution of a new Housing Strategy for South Norfolk. It builds on progress to date, and it sets out how the Council will continue to deliver improvements on an evolving innovative basis. When it is adopted the Strategy will provide the context for all housing activity in South Norfolk until 2019.

2.2. The document has been subject to a twelve week consultation period.

2.3. This report summarises for the Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee the process to date, presents a working version of the draft Strategy and Action Plan, and seeks the comments of the Committee prior to it being presented for adoption.

2.4. The key stages in developing the Strategy to date have been:

- At a workshop Policy Committee members considered evidence and issues, and agreed on the key themes for the Strategy, including housing’s contribution to wider council activity.
- Policy Committee members used a horizon scanning exercise to consider emerging issues for inclusion.
• Policy Committee supported the person-centred focus that is found throughout the Strategy, and agreed on stressing links with public health and early intervention.

• There was a consultation event with staff to identify how their activity contributes to achieving the Strategy’s outcomes and how any barriers might be overcome.

• Engagement with the Senior Leadership Team throughout the formulation of the Strategy has ensured conformity with the wider strategic direction of the Council.

• There was a consultation event with key stakeholders, obtaining their views on how the strategy might be delivered to the benefit of their customers.

• Policy committee and cabinet agreed a draft document for full consultation.

2.5. The Strategy contributes to the delivery of all four corporate priorities:

• Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in. This is the first Priority Outcome of the Strategy, which includes many ways in which life and the environment will be improved.

• Promoting a thriving local economy. This is also a Priority Outcome, and it includes improving the abilities of individuals to prosper.

• Supporting communities to realise their potential. This is another Priority Outcome, with a focus on building prosperous communities.

• Driving services through being business like, efficient and customer aware. This underpins the approach of the Strategy.
3. Current Position

3.1. The current version of the Housing Strategy is attached as Appendix A. The next step is to seek the approval of Cabinet to adopt the document.

3.2. The Strategy is for the Council, our partners and our communities. It adopts a four-outcome approach to housing:

- Providing it: a good supply of housing within South Norfolk which meets need, supports growth and can be afforded at all income levels.
- Accessing it: a home that meets residents’ requirements that they can pay for and maintain.
- Living in it: residents live in warm, decent and safe homes within a resilient community, and receive support to help them achieve independent living in their own home.
- Prospering in it: residents receive easily accessible advice and support which improves the life chances of them and their families, which targets those needing early interventions and support to get the most out of life.

3.3. The document itself is succinct, and sets out how housing activity contributes to the Council’s wider aims, whoever is delivering it. As a result of consultation, the aims and outcomes contained in the Strategy have been developed into an outcome-focused Action Plan (Appendix B).
4. Feedback to Consultation

4.1 The consultation process set out to evaluate the suitability of the draft Housing Strategy with key partners, establish any potential barriers to implementation of the proposed Strategy and identify actions for delivery of the Strategy to be incorporated into an Action Plan for implementation.

4.2 As a reminder the consultation process ran from 3rd August 2015 to 23rd October 2015 with two consultation events taking place on 8th and 22nd September 2015 for stakeholders and partners. A survey for feedback was available online and in hard copy for postal return and was also sent to several key stakeholders and all parish councils. The consultation was advertised via social media, website, internal and external communications and via partner agencies and included posters and flyers within SNC buildings and partner services. Discussions also took place at events and forums including the South Norfolk Older Peoples Forum.

4.3 During the twelve week period the Council received the following in responses:

- 58 full responses to surveys
- 38 individuals and representatives from key partners at events
- Responses via letter from some parish councils
- Discussion and verbal feedback from the Older People’s Forum

4.4 Full details of the feedback gained and our response to it is set out in the Response to Consultation document in Appendix C with a summary of the comments and modifications to the Draft Strategy are shown below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues Raised</th>
<th>Changes made to the Housing Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Providing it</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity was needed on the various groups mentioned within the Strategy in relation to housing need.</td>
<td>We have amended the Strategy to refer more clearly to the needs of various groups of people, including those with special needs and local people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessing it</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ‘Accessing it’ section did not previously include issues around homelessness.</td>
<td>We have made homelessness an aspect of ‘Accessing it’ – previously it was only in ‘prospering in it’. The Action Plan also reflects this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ‘Accessing it’ section needed further detail around helping people access a home.</td>
<td>The Housing Strategy has been amended to highlight the importance of obtaining a home in which to live and prosper. The Strategy and the Action Plan have been amended to emphasise this in relation to access to all tenures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living it in</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The importance of partnership working and early interventions was raised</td>
<td>More emphasis on importance of Early Help within ‘living in it’ section.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prospering in it</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The ‘prospering in it’ section did not make reference to employment and training in allowing people to prosper.</td>
<td>The “Prospering in it” section of the Strategy has been amended to include the issue of employment and training and Action Plan updated accordingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The strategy as a whole</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The list of partners was not fully inclusive</td>
<td>Parish Councils and Early Help partners added to list of partners within the Strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The details in the strategy of the national picture needed updating following policy developments since the draft was written.

The section of the Strategy relating to the wider national picture has been updated to include more detail in light of recent policy developments.

Current trends were not specific enough in the draft document.

Current trends affecting social housing are now set out more clearly in the Strategy, and the intention to keep the Council’s Home Options Service under review is in the Action Plan.

A number of respondents wanted further detail on delivery aims identified in the strategy and a number also suggested action points.

Each section of the Strategy has been expanded in detail through the Action Plan. A number of suggested actions raised by respondents have been included within the Action Plan.

### 5 Proposals

5.1 Members are asked to comment on the attached draft Housing Strategy, the draft Action Plan and the response to consultation document so that any amendments agreed can be incorporated.

5.2 Subject to further comments by the Committee, Members are also asked to approve the document and recommend to Cabinet that it is adopted.

### 6 Risks and Implications arising

6.1 Financial – no direct implications in creating the Strategy, but the Council’s expenditure, decided within the annual budget-setting process, will provide the opportunity to fund in innovative ways while taking account of available resources.
6.2 Environmental – aspects such as improving the energy efficiency of homes and the quality of new homes will contribute to improving the environment of South Norfolk.

6.3 Equalities – the Strategy seeks to help people who are disadvantaged, thereby improving their opportunities.

6.4 Crime Reduction – early help through work with support agencies should reduce the amount of crime.

6.5 Risks – non-delivery or lack of progress in prioritised areas. Officers will ensure the Action Plan is kept under review and that adequate resources are prioritised to deliver key projects as well as business as usual for each focus area. The Action Plan itself is a ‘live’ operational document which will evolve as the Strategy progresses.

7 Recommendation

7.1 That the Committee comments on the attached draft Housing Strategy, draft Action Plan and responses to consultation and considers any possible amendments.

7.2 That the Committee recommends to Cabinet a final version of the Housing Strategy ready for adoption.
South Norfolk Housing Strategy 2016-19
FOREWORD by Councillor Yvonne Bendle

The term “housing” means different things to different people. Let me say what it means to South Norfolk Council.

It is part of a much bigger picture. The Council wants young people and families to have the best start in life; it wants a district that is full of opportunity, be it jobs and training, health and wellbeing, or a strong environment and vibrant local community. It wants vulnerable people to be supported to make the most of life: where ambition is endemic; a strong sense of fairness for all throughout; and we want everyone to live with dignity and peace of mind. Housing makes a major contribution to all of this.

How are we going to achieve these ambitious plans?

Firstly, we want build on our excellent track record of ensuring the supply of homes in the district meets the needs of residents, and offers a choice in the type of home they access – be it affordable rent, shared ownership, outright purchase, private sector rent, Starter Homes, the Help to Buy scheme and so on. Our delivery in the last four years has been the strongest across Norfolk and Suffolk. But we aim to go further and faster, recognising that housing and the development of our district go hand in hand; local businesses want their employees to be decently housed, and the local economy benefits enormously from inward investment and economic growth generated by new housing.

Secondly, having supplied excellent levels of housing and choice, we want residents to be able to access them – which is not always easy. It’s not simply about accessing a home – it’s helping people ensure they have planned for all the costs associated with managing that home, they are able to manage their home properly and they can make a positive contribution to their community.

Thirdly, having accessed a home, we want the home to be warm, decent and safe for our residents. It mustn’t hold people back in life – a cold home may cause children to be off school, an accident-prone home increases the chances of older people going into hospital or more costly forms of care, and a home where the bills cannot be paid causes untold worry for the occupants which impacts on their wellbeing. We help customers achieve independent living in their own home: we want to go further with our partners, and to develop our role on dementia and treating older people with dignity.

Fourthly, we want people to prosper in their home, getting the most opportunities out of life. This Strategy is not about South Norfolk Council “doing to” local people. It’s about empowering people to take control of their own lives with the right support – when it’s needed. This is what Early Help is about for us – making sure that all the right support is available at the right time. Helping customers to help manage problems before they become unmanageable to prevent tough times; reducing the likelihood of someone becoming homeless, for example.

The aspirations set out in this Strategy cannot be delivered by the Council alone – and nor should they be. We have a raft of committed partners working with us who can, and need to play a massive part in getting the best results for local people. Of course, we don’t come into contact with all residents each year. But when we do, we will ensure that by working together we can remove confusion for customers, understand their needs better, and deliver better services for them. We are asking people who contact us to understand their part of the bargain: to take advantage of the opportunities on offer, to “own” their plans for the future, whilst continuing to recognise that sometimes you will need help to do this and that is why we are here.
INTRODUCTION

A person’s home is a central factor in determining whether or not they are able to achieve their potential in terms of health, wellbeing, education, employment, and participation in the community and society. All residents should have access to a safe home of a good standard which they can afford and are able to sustain, maintain and prosper in.

This is encapsulated in our vision:

*To ensure all residents have access to and are able to maintain a good quality home that meets their needs and aspirations. The housing secured, and the support provided where appropriate, will assist local people in maximising their life opportunities. Residents will be ‘opportunity ready’ for housing, jobs, healthy lifestyles, independent living and their community.*

This Strategy clarifies what we want, and how we plan to get there. Improving opportunities for the individuals and families is at the heart of what we are striving to achieve, and partners are fundamental in securing this. We will do this in a manner which is efficient and cost-effective; utilising our resources in a different way to maximise longer term outcomes for the customer, whilst minimising demand and cost on public organisations in the future.

The Strategy covers the period 2016-2019. It sets out how the Council and its partners will achieve its vision through four Priority Outcomes. It is accompanied by an Action Plan which will be reviewed on an annual basis. The plan will be used to identify the key actions which will deliver those Priority Outcomes. The involvement and support of our partners will be crucial in delivering this plan.

The Strategy has been subject to a 12 week consultation period between August and October 2015. This consultation sought the views key stakeholders and the public. A consultation survey was produced to allow the public and key stakeholders to feed into the development of the strategy by:

- establishing whether people agreed with the Priority Outcomes and key themes within the Strategy
- gathering comments on each of the Priority Outcomes and the Strategy as a whole
- allowing people to suggest actions and measurements of success for the strategy

The consultation survey was available on the South Norfolk Council website and was publicised through partner agencies, social media, posters and marketing materials and sent directly to partner agencies. A hard copy for postal return and an email copy of the survey were also produced to widen participation. The survey was completed by a total of 58 respondents consisting of members of the public and representatives from key stakeholders. Letters and email responses were also received.

Two stakeholder consultation events took place in September to allow representatives from key stakeholders to feed into the strategy. These events were attended by representatives from partner agencies and from Parish Councils. The feedback gained from these events and from the survey is detailed in the Response to Consultation document and has been used to develop the final version of the Strategy and formulate the Action Plan.
WHY DO WE NEED A HOUSING STRATEGY, AND WHO IS IT FOR?

**Ourselves**

South Norfolk Council (SNC) has set out its corporate priorities and the housing role can be enhanced to make a fuller contribution to delivering on these.

We have already started to realise the benefits from embedding all our work within different approaches: around Early Interventions, Health and Wellbeing, Economic Development, and building Community Capacity.

We have a major opportunity to drive forward the work of SNC and its partners to get better outcomes for customers, whilst addressing innovatively the financial pressures on the public sector.

**Our Partners**

We already know the excellent contribution that our partners can make to address challenges within South Norfolk.

The role for partners is around strategic and operational partnerships. By working in collaboration, better outcomes for customers can be achieved.

We can make the most of opportunities that are available to us by working together and seeking imaginative ways of identifying funding solutions.

**Our Communities**

We want to make our services simple to access and provide support that really works. Our district is diverse and we will offer flexible services which reflect this and meet local requirements.

This Strategy is intended to help communities to help themselves: by making sure our customers know what we do, what they can expect from us and what is expected of them.
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To ensure all residents have access to and are able to maintain a good quality home that meets their needs and aspirations. The housing secured, and the support provided where appropriate, will assist local people in maximising their life opportunities.

Our Vision

Our Priority Outcomes
Enhance the quality of life and environment we live in
Support communities to realise their potential
Promote a thriving economy
Work collaboratively to deliver to customers’ needs

The Focus areas for our outcomes
Promoting Health and Wellbeing
Early Intervention Opportunities
Supporting Economic Growth
Building prosperous communities
New products and services, and funding

SNC contributions
Local Plan
Early Help
SNC Economic Development Strategy
Wider determinant of health
Deliverer + influencer of services…
e.g. housing, council tax/benefits, customer services environment

Partner contributions
Adult Social Services
Children’s Social Services
Development Partners
Housing Providers
Employers
Voluntary + Community Sectors
Residents + Families

The strategy will help…
partners to provide housing
residents to access the housing
residents to live well in their home
residents to prosper in their home
THE BIGGER PICTURE: WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT SOUTH NORFOLK

Data provides the basis for the strategic outcomes sought in this Strategy. Some key points of note about South Norfolk are as follows:

Our Communities

South Norfolk is a predominantly rural district, with 78% of the area officially designated as ‘rural’. There are a small number of market towns, over 100 villages and some northern parts of the area fall into the suburban parts of Norwich – the closest city.

South Norfolk is projected to be the fastest-growing local authority area in the County, with the population increasing by around 13,100 between 2011 and 2021. South Norfolk does not have a high population density at 1.39 persons per hectare, compared to the average for England at 4.11.

48.8% of the South Norfolk population is male, 51.2% is female.

The population in South Norfolk is older than average. The number of residents aged 65+ is higher than the average for the East of England, and England at 30% of the population. However, it is similar to the population in other parts of Norfolk – with the exception of Norwich City. This proportion is projected to increase over the next 20 years, with the greatest increase being in those aged 75 to 84.

Health and Wellbeing

In 2012, 61% of the adult population were considered as having excess weight, with 22% considered obese; both slightly below the national average.

In 2011, 7.4% of the population had a long term illness that limited day-to-day activity ‘a lot’ and 10.5% ‘a little’.

In 2011-12, 33.6% of adults regularly participated in 30 minutes of moderate intensity sport; this is lower than the national average.

There are an estimated 2,480 children (11.9%) living in poverty in South Norfolk. (HMRC Child Poverty 2010 statistics, cited in Norfolk’s Child Poverty Assessment, Norfolk County Council, April 2015)

The number of pupils achieving at least five GCSEs, including English and Maths (A+ to C) in South Norfolk is currently 67.5% (national average 53%)

Between December 2011 and March 2013 there were 180 excess winter deaths in South Norfolk (Office for National Statistics 2014).

Hospital admission rates from falls are rising: by 2020 in South Norfolk 9,020 people are expected to have a fall and 734 are predicted to be admitted to hospital as a result.

By 2020 it is expected that 3,100 people living in South Norfolk will be diagnosed with dementia. On current estimates over 2,000 of these will live in the community.

Housing Stock

On 1st April 2015 there were 57,769 properties in South Norfolk. Very few of these are second homes.
The total number of properties owned and managed by Registered Providers on 1st April 2015 was 6,685.

The Council has taken a proactive approach to reducing the number of homes standing empty for a long period of time. Using the government benchmark, the number of homes empty for more than 6 months has been reduced from 618 in 2007 to 338 in 2014, down by 45%.

South Norfolk Council holds none of its own social housing stock (with the exception of some temporary accommodation for homeless households) since transferring it to Saffron Housing Trust in 2004.

20% of private sector households in South Norfolk experience fuel poverty.

Average house prices are about 7 times average earnings, making it very difficult for local people to become owner occupiers.

There are currently only 10 housing with care properties designated for people with dementia in South Norfolk.

Since April 2011:
- 3,035 homes have been built in South Norfolk;
- 971 additional affordable homes have become available – 552 new-build to housing associations plus 419 others (such as Help to Buy);
- The 552 to housing association comprised almost 18.2% of the 3,035 total.

5% of homes in the private sector are in disrepair.

1.7% of properties in South Norfolk don’t have central heating.

**Housing Need**

The Council has commissioned research into housing need, and data will be available by the time the final version of this strategy is published.

**Economic Development**

- 0.47% of the population was long-term unemployed in 2013.
- South Norfolk has lower levels of unemployment when compared to the national and regional average with 678 claiming Job Seekers Allowance (0.90% of the working population).
- In 2012, 10.3% of children (dependants under 20) were living in low income families.
- Average earnings in April 2014 were £20,384.
THE BIGGER PICTURE: WHERE HOUSING FITS NATIONALLY

South Norfolk Council and its partners are inevitably affected by nationwide pressures and it is crucial that we interpret these and react locally to make the most of chances presented and counter potential risks which arise.

There is a wide range of political, social, economic and environmental factors which impact on this Strategy, and which influence the Priority Outcomes. Many of them were debated during the 2015 General Election campaign, and some are included in the legislative programme, especially Housing and Planning Bill.

It is expected that the aspects of the national picture which will impact most on South Norfolk during the next three years will be:

**Housing Policy**
The Government’s intentions are to increase the number of homes built each year, and to improve access to owner occupation. This has led to several initiatives:

**Delivering More Homes**
South Norfolk Council, through the Greater Norwich Growth Partnership, has already embraced the growth agenda, and planning policy will deliver new homes into the 2030s, providing a significant contribution to local economic growth and employment opportunities.

**Helping First-Time Buyers**
Starter homes (to be sold at a discount of at least 20% from the market value to under-40s) are to be included in all sites of ‘a reasonable size’ as a significant proportion of the housebuilder’s affordable housing obligation.

**Self-build and Custom Housebuilding**
All local authorities will have a duty to have a register of people wishing to build their own home, and to grant planning permissions for sufficient serviced plots to meet demand.

**The Right to Buy for Housing Association Tenants**
A voluntary agreement between the Government and housing associations will deliver this initiative to encourage tenants to become owners. There is potential impact on South Norfolk, especially the more rural parts where there is a limited supply of homes for rent.

**The Sale of Vacant High Value Local Authority Housing**
This will fund the Right to Buy discounts. Although there is no council housing in South Norfolk, there might be a sub-regional impact if certain property types in Norwich (such as larger family houses) were to leave the social sector.

**Higher Rents for Social Tenants (‘Pay to Stay’)**
Housing association tenants with an annual household income over £30,000 will have to pay a higher rent, perhaps up to the market rent. This reflects the Government’s view that subsidised housing should be occupied only by households who require the subsidy.

**Welfare Policy**
The Government is committed to saving £12 billion, and has proposed specific changes such as ending housing benefit for people under 21. All partners will need to react quickly to changes so that they can deliver this Strategy’s Priority Outcomes.
Health Policy
The government is committed to protecting expenditure on health. It has made mental health and dementia particular priorities. Dementia will have a significant impact on South Norfolk due to its aging population.

Limiting the Costs of Care / Independent Living
The Government’s wish to limit total public expenditure on care by helping people to live independently matches the Council’s wishes. This might well create opportunities for the Council to improve further the accommodation and services available in South Norfolk.

Energy Efficiency
With the policy move away from subsidies for low-carbon electricity generation, the emphasis on improved insulation should present further opportunities to reduce energy consumption and provide affordable warmth.

Training and Employment Opportunities
Government support for the Local Enterprise Partnership is likely to continue, building up the local economy, creating employment opportunities and demand for housing. The housing sector can also seek to take advantage of particular initiatives such as the creation of three million apprenticeships over the next five years.
OUR PRIORITIES

To achieve our ambitious vision we need to focus our attention – and to do this we have come up with four priority outcomes which offer structure to our work in 2016-19. Our four priority outcomes are:

1. PROVIDING IT: A good supply of housing within South Norfolk which meets residents' needs, supports growth and can be afforded at all income levels.
2. ACCESSING IT: Residents have access to a home that meets their requirements, and that they can pay for and maintain.
3. LIVING IN IT: Residents live in warm, decent and safe homes within a resilient community, and receive support to help them achieve independent living in their own home.
4. PROSPERING IN IT: Residents receive easily accessible advice and support which improves the life chances of them and their families, which targets those needing early interventions and support to get the most out of life.

Each has a relationship to the others, and to wider priorities in South Norfolk: for example building new homes not only helps to increase the supply of housing to meet need, it also contributes to economic growth by providing jobs, generating inward investment and creating local spending power in South Norfolk.

Each priority outcome has a number of key areas which set out how it will be achieved. For example, to ensure that customers can access a home which meets their needs, which they can pay for and maintain we will focus on ensuring that homes are suitable for households’ financial, social and medical circumstances. This will help ensure that the option they have taken is sustainable and right for that individual in the long term.
The illustration below encapsulates the approach that we have taken.
Overall, the housing market is working well in South Norfolk. We are providing new homes, reducing the number of empty homes and enabling the expansion of the private rented sector without rents rising excessively.

We recognise that in order to support economic growth, our housing supply will need to grow and be flexible to the requirements of those residing within our district.

How will we know we are there?

- The number of homes built reflects the level of economic growth, and delivers Local Plan targets.
- There is a choice of homes and tenures which meet the range of housing needs (including specialist needs such as dementia).
- There is consistent and robust evidence to tell us what new homes are needed.
- Empty properties are minimised as they are brought back into use as quickly as possible.
- Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision meets identified need and national policy requirements.

What we will do to achieve our outcomes

**Being “Investment Ready”**
- Facilitate investment in South Norfolk; enabling the growth to which we are committed through the Local Plan, delivering infrastructure, housing and employment.
- Ensure new housing developments have a positive impact on local people who are accessing employment, education and training.

**Enabling Delivery**
- Meet needs by promoting and delivering affordable housing, through a range of tenure types (which includes helping first time buyers).
- Assess demand for custom build, and seek ways to meet this.
- Facilitate the development of and improve the standard of new affordable housing within South Norfolk, via the affordable housing grants scheme.
- Examine the possibilities to increase the number of private sector rental properties within new developments.
- Investigate the housing requirements of people with special needs.
- Seek opportunities for developing accommodation for people with special needs, including appropriate models of supported housing (including housing with care).
- Avoid the longer term costs of property adaptations by supporting the building of homes which promote independent living.
- Create and implement the Gypsies and Travellers Local Plan, to provide homes for that group.

**Maximising Existing Housing Stock**
- Reduce the number of empty homes using innovative techniques, maximising the benefits for local communities.

**Utilising Council Assets efficiently and effectively**
- Utilise the council-owned Big Sky Developments, to develop mixed residential and commercial property; and to maintain and rent residential property for market lets.
Introduction

We help all residents who need assistance to find the right home. If they are in priority housing need in South Norfolk, we will endeavour to accommodate them quickly. We will ensure that their housing is appropriate to their short and longer term needs and which they can afford to live in comfortably.

How will we know we are there?

- Residents can find a home that helps them to prosper in life, being suitable for their need and income.
- There is tailored advice and guidance for people on the options available to them such as housing, employment and training opportunities, and health and wellbeing. This is delivered through our Early Help approach.
- We maximise opportunities that we have with residents to inform them of the other chances there are for support and assistance to manage their homes and prosper in them.

What we will do to achieve our outcomes

Enabling the appropriate access to housing
- Ensure that the Home Options Scheme continues to provide fair assessment for applicants
- Improve access to the private rented sector
- Promote low cost ownership
- Promote custom build opportunities
- Improve access to lodgings for single people
- Develop Early Help services that deliver meaningful and lasting outcomes.
- Work with partners so that the client is helped to get more outcomes than simply meeting their housing need when they come to us for help.
- Ensure that housing outcomes help residents to access employment, education and training for the long term.
- Ensure partners, stakeholders and residents understand “housing” and the wider impact that meeting housing need has on people’s wellbeing.

Ensuring residents can manage their home and manage their finances
- Support residents to maximise their financial independence by providing guidance that minimises repeat requests for assistance.
- Enable residents to contribute to and be part of thriving and supportive communities.
Introduction

South Norfolk Council has a positive track record of supporting vulnerable households – sometimes this support is personal, and sometimes it is an improvement to the home. We work with our many partners to deliver and support customers who would otherwise require further, more intensive and costly interventions. We want customers to feel able to remain living independently in their own home with dignity for as long as they feel able to.

How will we know we are there?

- The home has helped households to improve their opportunities in life, be it in health and wellbeing, employment and training, or being part of and contributing to a local community.
- The number of repeat presentations to the Council and partners for advice is reduced, and the household is able to take ownership and control over their own problems when they arise – this includes knowing how and when to ask for help.
- There is a reduction in the number of falls, excess winter deaths and hospital readmissions in South Norfolk.
- There are cost savings for health and social care services, achieved by Independent Living and Early Help services’ preventative intervention.
- People with dementia and other mental health issues are able to access services in ways that achieve better outcomes for the individual and less cost to the public sector as a whole.

What will we do to achieve our outcomes

Achieving Independent Living
- Identify where independent living and early help interventions reduce the impact on health and social care services. In turn, this will create savings and reduce demand, ensuring external funding is utilised in the most efficient way.
- Provide housing adaptations and other interventions which enable people to continue living independently in their own homes.
- Enhance support to vulnerable residents to reduce avoidable hospital admissions and enable timely hospital discharge by ensuring homes are suitable to meet residents’ changing needs through joint working and innovative funding with partners.
- Help members of the community and staff to keep aware of, and able to support people with dementia and other mental health issues.
- Assist residents to maintain their homes and keep warm and well through access to small grants and loans.

Creating Affordable Warmth
- Make homes more energy-efficient and help residents to live in a warm home as cost-effectively as possible by providing information, advice and loans.
- Reduce the number of excess winter deaths through campaigns in high risk areas to help support older and vulnerable residents.

Enabling Decent and Safe Homes in Resilient Communities
- Improve the quality of housing and the local environment across all housing tenures by ensuring it meets legal standards and does not present unacceptable risks to health.
PROSPERING IN IT: Residents receive easily accessible advice and support which improves the life chances of them and their families, which targets those needing early interventions and support to get the most out of life

Introduction

Through Early Help we have been supporting families and older people to resolve issues more quickly; preventing escalation, promoting wellbeing and creating sustainable futures for our residents. South Norfolk Council has been proactive in reducing homelessness in the district in the last three years, following the implementation of a prevention approach, and we want to build on this.

How will we know we are there?

- Residents can access information and advice at a time that is convenient to them.
- More clients have their concern acted on at the first point of contact with SNC or its partners to ensure that they do not have to repeat their story to ‘umpteen people’.
- People who access our temporary accommodation progress into sustainable housing, and benefit from a move-on plan which supports them to stay in their new home.
- Residents receive joined-up help tailored to their individual needs because partners have improved understanding of how each one’s service links with the others’.
- Residents are able to obtain a job and remain in employment.

What we will do to achieve our outcomes

Maximising the opportunities of Early Help

- Utilise the Early Help Hub to improve the way we work with families and older people through coordinated and targeted support to achieve the right outcomes.
- Provide low cost early support which resolves problems before they escalate, avoiding higher costs and more significant impact on the household.
- Provide an appropriate range of temporary accommodation for homeless households, and support them to move into sustainable accommodation which they are able to maintain and prosper in.

Working collaboratively to secure wider outcomes

- Work with the voluntary and third sectors to ensure that the support they provide achieves sustainable outcomes for customers.
- Deliver outcomes that matter for residents by ensuring all partnership arrangements help us to deliver jointly-agreed outcomes.
- Work with partners to deliver plans detailed within the Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20.
- Fully utilise, promote and increase capacity for support from within the community and voluntary sector, to offer as much support to those who need it as is possible.

Delivery of safeguarding arrangements

- Develop our staff and partners to achieve a high standard of safeguarding practice.
- Improve the way we work with partners and the community to identify safeguarding issues as early as possible to prevent escalation.
- Reduce the number of victims of Domestic Abuse to ensure the safety of all in our communities; and reinforce a culture of non-tolerance of abuse within South Norfolk.
HOW WILL WE MAKE IT HAPPEN?

Our new three year Housing Strategy is to be supported by an annual Action Plan which will be revised quarterly to ensure that it is up to date and fit for purpose. The Action Plan sets out in detail how each priority will be achieved. These actions will be incorporated into future South Norfolk Council Business Plans and any individual initiatives will have a delivery plan which will set out a programme of activities and progress against each one.

The implementation of this Strategy will be overseen by the Council’s Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee, and the Action Plan will guide this work.

The delivery of objectives detailed in our Strategy and Action Plan is supported by other local housing-related strategies and action plans.

To ensure successful outcomes are achieved the Housing Strategy requires buy-in and commitment across all organisations and from our residents. This table offers suggestions of how everyone can contribute.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk Council</td>
<td>Lead Housing Strategy partner</td>
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<td>Drive, support and co-ordination of activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identifying funding opportunities</td>
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<td>Research and evidence of need</td>
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<td>Delivery of services</td>
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<td>Influencer of services</td>
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<td>Enforcer of standards in the private sector</td>
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<td>Facilitator of partnership meetings</td>
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<td>Home Options service – ensuring fair access</td>
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<td>Benefits Service – ensuring support for those in need</td>
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<td>Norfolk County Council</td>
<td>Health and Wellbeing lead including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</td>
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<td>Commissioner of housing support</td>
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<td>Early Help provider</td>
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<td>Occupational Therapy Service</td>
<td>Specification and integrated provision</td>
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<td>Adult Social Services</td>
<td>Specialist help provider</td>
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<td>Children’s Services</td>
<td>Specialist help provider</td>
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<td>Parish Councils</td>
<td>Information sources and partners</td>
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<td>South Norfolk CCG</td>
<td>Commissioner of services</td>
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<td>Registered Providers (RPs)</td>
<td>Affordable housing providers</td>
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<td>Community Safety</td>
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<td>Early Help</td>
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<td>Access to housing</td>
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<td>House builders</td>
<td>Providing new homes for market sale</td>
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<td>Helping first-time buyers via Help to Buy</td>
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<td>Homes and Communities Agency</td>
<td>Funding and regulating RPs</td>
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<td>Voluntary Sector/Community Groups</td>
<td>Facilitating Independent Living</td>
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<td>Delivery of services</td>
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<td>Advocacy</td>
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<td>All Early Help partners</td>
<td>Providers of services and interventions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residents</td>
<td>Feel empowered to take control of their future</td>
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REVIEW AND MONITORING

The Action Plan will be a ‘live’ operational document and as such, it will be kept under review and updated during the year. Any significant legislative or local market changes will be taken into consideration as part of the Action Plan and reflected in further iterations of the Strategy thereafter.
South Norfolk Housing Strategy 2016-19

ACTION PLAN 2016/17
Vision:

- To ensure all residents have access to and are able to maintain a good quality home that meets their needs and aspirations. The housing secured, and the support provided where appropriate, will assist local people in maximising their life opportunities. Residents will be ‘opportunity ready’ for housing, jobs, healthy lifestyles, independent living and their community.

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Strategy covers the period from April 2016 to March 2019. It sets out how the Council and its partners will achieve its vision through four Priority Outcomes:

- providing it,
- accessing it,
- living in it,
- prospering in it.

This Action Plan sets out in detail how the Council will work to deliver each of the Priority Outcomes. The points include direct actions by the Council, but also those that arise from our strategic role – working with partners to ensure that they deliver their agreed actions.

This is a one-year Action Plan, and as a working document, it will be updated quarterly. If you wish to discuss any aspect of this document, please contact Liam Pickering, Housing and Public Health Partnerships Officer (lpickering@s-norfolk.gov.uk 01508 533783).

Note: As this is a one-year plan, all actions are to be completed within the year unless a longer timescale is specified.
PROVIDING IT: A good supply of housing within South Norfolk which meets residents’ needs, supports growth and can be afforded at all income levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will do (taken from the Housing Strategy)</th>
<th>Action Point</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Comments &amp; Updates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being “Investment Ready”</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Facilitate investment in South Norfolk; enabling growth to which we are committed through the Local Plan, delivering infrastructure housing and employment. | • Implement the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan  
• Deliver the Greater Norwich Joint Core Strategy (the Local Plan for South Norfolk)  
• Ensure that housing developments deliver the District’s growth, while contributing to Greater Norwich and County level growth objectives | Residents of South Norfolk have suitable provision of services and infrastructure to meet local need | Greater Norwich Growth Board  
Planning Policy Team  
Development Management | £440m for Greater Norwich  
Staff time  
Site-by-site calculation | This will continue well beyond 2016/17  
The Site Specifics DPD helps to achieve this. In some instances infrastructure will take precedence over affordable housing |
| Ensure new housing developments have a positive impact on local people who are accessing employment, education and training. | • Encourage housing developments achieve the Building for Life standard  
• Assess the quality of completed developments to improve standards | Homes and their environment meet the ambitions of the Council and fulfil the requirements of residents | Development Management  
Planning | Planning fees  
Staff time | |
| **Enabling Delivery**                            |              |          |             |                  |                    |
| Meet needs by promoting and delivering affordable | • Seek the Local Plan target tenure mix on larger sites: 85% rent / 15% | Homes provided match need and affordability | Partnerships Team  
Staff Time | Legal costs |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing through a range of tenure types (which includes first time buyers).</th>
<th>intermediate tenures</th>
<th>Development Management Partnerships Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Support housebuilders applying for Help to Buy</td>
<td>Access to home ownership</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promote Custom build</th>
<th>Keep the register of interest set up in November 2014, implementing government Regulations.</th>
<th>Partnerships Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Seek and pursue serviced plot opportunities</td>
<td>Plots available for people interested in custom build. More homes built.</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitate the development of and improve the standards of new affordable housing within South Norfolk, via the affordable housing grants scheme.</th>
<th>Use SNC funding to achieve energy efficiency standards higher than Building Regulations</th>
<th>Affordable warmth for social housing tenants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Use funding to deliver homes suitable for people with mobility problems</td>
<td>Ability to live independently</td>
<td>Partnerships Team + Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate the housing requirements of people with special needs.</td>
<td>Work with partners to identify the needs of: older people, mental health problems, learning disabilities, physical/sensory disabilities, substance misuse, etc. (13 groups identified)</td>
<td>Robust evidence on which to base housing and planning policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek opportunities for developing accommodation for people with special needs, including appropriate models of supported housing (including housing with care)</td>
<td>Work with partners to achieve the delivery of housing with care in locations identified in the Local Plan: Cringleford, Hethersett, Wymondham and Long Stratton</td>
<td>Independent living for older people who require some support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Take advantage of emerging opportunities to deliver housing with care in other locations</td>
<td>Partnerships Team + Development Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create and implement the Gypsies and Travellers</th>
<th>Adoption of a Local Plan.</th>
<th>Planning Policy Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A clear policy for the provision of homes in</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local Plan, to provide homes for that group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximising Existing Housing Stock</th>
<th>suitable locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the number of empty homes using innovative techniques, maximising benefits for local communities.</td>
<td>Monitor and work with the owners of long-term empty properties (empty for 6 months) in South Norfolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective use of the housing stock. Less deterioration and potential unsightliness.</td>
<td>Housing Standards Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding: Staff time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utilising Council assets effectively and efficiently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilise the council-owned Big Sky Developments, to develop mixed residential and commercial property; and to maintain and rent residential property for market lets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify future opportunities for utilising Big Sky developments: e.g. land at Wymondham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10m capital investment committed to development companies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACCESSING IT: Residents have access to a home that meets their requirements that they can pay for and maintain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will do (taken from the Housing Strategy)</th>
<th>Action Point</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Comments &amp; Updates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enabling the appropriate access to housing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Ensure that the Home Options Scheme continues to provide fair assessment for applicants | • Review with partner housing associations  
• Implement any agreed changes | Fair access to appropriate housing. Reduction in repeat applications for housing. | Housing Advice Team | Staff time | Likely to be after 2016/17          |
| Improve access to the private rented sector (PRS)  | • Work with landlords and agents to increase the size and availability of the private rented sector | Quicker access to the PRS, reducing reliance on the housing register | Housing Advice Team | Staff time | Likely to be after 2016/17          |
| Promote low cost ownership | • Promote Starter Homes as required by the Housing Bill | Better access to home ownership | Partnerships Team | Staff time |                                |
| Promote custom build opportunities | • Fulfil obligations arising from the Housing Bill | Access to plots for South Norfolk residents | Partnerships Team | Staff time |                                |
| Improve access to lodgings for single people | • Work with partners to develop the supply and range of lodgings available | Residents are able to access suitable safe accommodation. Reduction in repeat homelessness among this group | Partnerships Team | Staff time |                                |
| Work with partners so that the client is helped to get more outcomes than simply meeting their housing need when they come to us for help. | • Improved collaboration between Housing Options Officers and Early Help partners  
• Co-locating external services into SNC buildings to aid partnership working | Residents able to address issues more sustainably leading to improved safety and wellbeing and a reduction in repeat applications for support. Reduction in costs to statutory services. | Housing Advice Team and Early Intervention Manager | Staff time: SNC & partners | Staff time + office space |
| Ensure that housing outcomes help residents to | • Work with support providers to ensure that those leaving supported | Reduction in number of supported accommodation | Housing options team | Partners |                                |
| Access employment, education and training for the long term. | accommodation have the appropriate life skills to help them achieve employment education and training.  
- Work with early help partners to deliver programmes that provide support for young people to access employment education and training | move-ons making repeat homeless applications or repeated referrals for support with the same issues. Reduced cost to services as a result. | / housing and Public health partnerships team |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ensure partners, stakeholders and residents understand “housing” and the wider impact that meeting housing need has on people’s wellbeing. | • Work with partners to encourage people to become tenancy ready.  
- Move-on protocols with supported accommodation and home options take into account someone’s ability to live independently when weighting banding (not sure of wording for this: essentially difference in banding when support provider does not feel the client is ready) | Within those receiving this support a reduction seen in those making repeat homeless applications or repeated referrals for support with the same issues. Reduction in repeat homeless applications | Housing Advice Team |
| Ensuring residents can manage their home and manage their finances | | | |
| Support residents to maximise their financial independence by providing guidance that minimises repeat requests for assistance. | • Specialist Welfare Rights and Debt Adviser to be available.  
- Work with floating support providers to ensure that vulnerable residents budgeting and financial issues are addressed at an early stage. | Improved financial independence for those receiving support. Positive financial impact on partners through reductions in debts and arrears | Independent Living Team  
Partners: Together/Stonham |
| Enable residents to contribute to and be part of thriving and supportive communities. | • Community Capacity Team to engage with individuals and community groups to support them to support the community. | Community based services provide effective, locally relevant services. Improvements seen | Community Capacity Team  
Staff time |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Capacity Team</th>
<th>Against identified need</th>
<th>SNC Budget:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide 'Go for It' grants and other small grants to residents wanting to start community projects.</td>
<td>Gaps in support service delivery minimised</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with community groups to establish project delivery needs within given locations</td>
<td>Community Capacity Team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LIVING IN IT**: Residents live in warm, decent and safe homes within a resilient community, and receive support to help them achieve independent living in their own home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will do (taken from the Housing Strategy)</th>
<th>Action Point</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Comments &amp; Updates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achieving independent living</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify where independent living and early help interventions reduce the impact on health and social care services. In turn, this will create savings and reduce demand, ensuring external funding is utilised in the most efficient way.</td>
<td>• Work with CCG to establish locations with specific need and provide targeted interventions within that location.</td>
<td>Improvements in health and wellbeing of residents in those locations with reduction seen in hospital admissions and care costs</td>
<td>Independent Living Team</td>
<td></td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide housing adaptations and other interventions which enable people to continue living independently in their own homes.</td>
<td>• Work with CCG to implement small grants scheme for people with dementia to make homes more suitable</td>
<td>Between 50 and 100 homes made dementia friendly</td>
<td>Independent Living Team</td>
<td>Grant funding Available: £55,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitate delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants</td>
<td>Residents living independently for longer, reduction and delay in hospital admission and moves to residential care</td>
<td>Housing Standards Team</td>
<td>SNC Budget:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Continue to deliver Integrated Housing Advisory Team (IHAT) services</td>
<td>Quality of housing stock maintained</td>
<td>Independent Living Team</td>
<td>SNC Budget:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Deliver an integrated home improvement agency service for vulnerable residents</td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent Living Team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance support to vulnerable residents to reduce avoidable hospital</td>
<td>• Deliver objectives of multi-agency affordable warmth group</td>
<td>Reduction in excess winter deaths, avoidable hospital admissions and falls and</td>
<td>Housing Standards Team</td>
<td>Energy efficiency funding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help members of the community and staff to keep aware of, and able to support people with dementia and other mental health issues.</td>
<td>Ensure a basic level of awareness across the organisation of dementia. Higher level of training for those colleagues with frontline customer facing roles.</td>
<td>SNC able to offer suitable advise to residents</td>
<td>Housing and Public Health Partnerships Officer</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with providers to deliver dementia friend champions training to members of the SN community</td>
<td>Members of the community have increased awareness of dementia and support available leading to better outcomes for residents with dementia and carers</td>
<td>Independent Living Team</td>
<td>Grant funding available: £55,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide Forget Me Not grants to improve homes to support people with dementia and their carers to maintain their independence</td>
<td>Between 50 and 100 homes made dementia friendly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist residents to maintain their homes and keep warm and well through access to small grants and loans.</td>
<td>Provide advice and assistance to vulnerable older people to service and maintain their boilers of using £5000 funding from SN CCG</td>
<td>Reduction in fuel poverty and improved health of those receiving grant.</td>
<td>Housing Standards Team</td>
<td>SNC budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Creating Affordable Warmth**
Draft – subject to Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee comment

| Make homes more energy-efficient and help residents to live in a warm home as cost-effectively as possible by providing information, advice and loans. | • Use result from stock condition survey to target areas where energy efficiency measures are most needed. | Reduction in fuel poverty and improved health of those receiving support | Housing Standards Team | Staff time | Energy efficiency funding streams |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Enabling decent and safe homes in resilient communities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improve the quality of housing and the local environment across all tenures by ensuring it meets legal standards and does not present unacceptable risks to health.</th>
<th>• Work with housing association partners and residents to ensure that social housing properties meet required standard</th>
<th>Social Housing properties continue to meet the required standard.</th>
<th>Housing Standards Team</th>
<th>Staff time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Through the private sector stock condition survey, focus attention areas with concentration of properties that do not meet required standards</td>
<td>Measurable improvement in quality of private sector stock in those areas identified. Resulting in reduction in homelessness applications citing poor housing</td>
<td>Housing Standards Team</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grants and loans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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PROSPERING IN IT: Residents receive easily accessible advice and support which improves the life chances of them and their families, which targets those needing early interventions and support to get the most out of life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will do (taken from the Housing Strategy)</th>
<th>Action Points</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Comments &amp; Updates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximising the opportunities of Early Help</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Utilise the Early Help Hub to improve the way we work with families and older people through coordinated and targeted support to achieve the right outcomes. | • Implement information sharing agreements with Early Help partners to help deliver joined up actions in response to customers issues  
• Using a set of indicators and an evidence base, target interventions into child poverty at areas with the most need  
• Provide proactive and reactive Domestic Abuse support based within the Hub | Information sharing agreements in place with all partners by March 2016.  
Localities identified by Jan 2016 and process for monitoring outcomes in place by March 16  
Early Help domestic abuse worker undertakes interventions and preventative work with 85 cases per year  
Less children in care | Early Intervention Manager  
Early Intervention Manager  
Early Intervention Manager | Staff time  
Staff time  
Staff time |                   |
| Provide low cost early support which resolves problems before they escalate, avoiding higher costs and more significant impact on the household. | • Embed and monitor a culture of continuous improvement within the Early Help hub and monitor  
Improve practices based on shared learned across partners  
• Use Community Connectors to bridge the gap between residents, community groups and services | Identified issues are improved leading to improved outcomes for residents and partners  
Services delivered will be more locally relevant with an increase seen in community engagement. | Early Intervention Manager  
Early Intervention Manager | Staff Time: SNC & partners  
Staff time |                   |
| Provide an appropriate range | • Review temporary accommodation | A cost effective temporary | Housing | Staff Time |                   |
Draft – subject to Housing, Wellbeing and Early Intervention Policy Committee comment

| Of temporary accommodation for homeless households, and support them to move into sustainable accommodation which they are able to maintain and prosper in. | Provision to ensure it meets the need  
- Use evidence from review to remodel temporary accommodation services to deliver more cost effective service with more sustainable outcomes for customers | Accommodation provision that results in long term outcomes for residents |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advice Team Housing Advice Team</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partnerships Team</td>
<td>DCLG grant funding obtained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Working collaboratively to secure wider outcomes**

| Work with the voluntary and third sectors to ensure that the support they provide achieves sustainable outcomes for customers. | Adopt outcome based performance measures when commissioning new services or reviewing SLAs of existing services  
- Consider with partners using the Housing First model of resettlement | Commissioned services will provide outcome based support to an identified number of residents |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Housing Advice Team Staff time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Deliver outcomes that matter for residents by ensuring all partnership arrangements help us deliver jointly-agreed outcomes. | Implement joint working protocols with all Early Help partners  
- Encourage an ethos toward shared outcomes and efficiency among partners | Commissioned services will provide outcome based support to an identified number of residents  
Residents will receive better outcomes. Council and partners will provide more cost effective service |
| | | Partnerships Team Staff time |
| | | Partnerships Team Funding Staff time |
| | | Early Intervention Manager Staff time: SNC & partners |
| Work with partners to deliver plans detailed within the Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20. | Complete actions listed within Homelessness Strategy action plan | Improvements within homelessness prevention and provision of services |
| | | Housing Advice Team Staff time |
| Fully utilise, promote and | Community capacity team to | Community based Community Staff time |

66
increase the capacity for support from within the community and voluntary sector, to offer as much support to those who need it as is possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery of safeguarding arrangements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop our staff and partners to achieve a high standard of safeguarding practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure all staff are suitably trained within safeguarding to a level relevant to their role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continuously identify areas for improvement within safeguarding practice and implement the necessary improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding issues are identified and addressed resulting in improved safety of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All SNC managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improve the way we work with partners and the community to identify safeguarding issues as early as possible to prevent escalation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Have information sharing protocols in place with the relevant partners to facilitate the sharing on safeguarding information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take a collaborative approach to safeguarding through working in partnership with our Early Help partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Utilise the Early Help hub as a space for co-location of services, leading to improved communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding issues are identified and addressed through partnership working and information sharing resulting in improved safety of residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners utilising the Hub achieve progress on shared objectives through colocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Intervention Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Intervention Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff time: SNC &amp; partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reduce the number of victims of Domestic Abuse to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Deliver an enhanced DA accommodation service in the Diss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 additional refuge spaces available including 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orwell HA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCLG grant £45k per</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Likely to be after 2016/17 | 2016/17 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensure the safety of all our communities; and reinforce a culture of non-tolerance of abuse within South Norfolk.</th>
<th>Area with Orwell HA using DCLG grant funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Deliver a district wide Early Help domestic abuse support provision using DCLG grant funding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work with partners to deliver projects that reinforce healthy relationships from an early age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community based providing safe accommodation for those at risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Help domestic abuse worker undertakes interventions and preventative work with 85 cases per year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Intervention Manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year for 2 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff time DCLG funding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
South Norfolk Council
Housing Strategy 2016-19

Responses to Consultation
Introduction
The issue of housing is of significant importance to the South Norfolk Council area, to its residents and to partner agencies and service providers. The South Norfolk Council Strategy will underpin the delivery of housing and housing services until 2019 and as such it is vital that this document is fit for purpose and has the support of local people and partner organisations.

Aim of the consultation
- To evaluate the suitability of the draft Housing Strategy
- To establish any potential barriers to implementation of the document
- To identify actions for delivery of the Strategy via the Action Plan

The consultation process
- The consultation period ran for twelve weeks between 3rd August 2015 and 23rd October 2015.
- It was aimed at public and partner agencies and sought feedback on the priorities contained within the Strategy and on the document as a whole.
- 2 consultation events of 8th and 22nd September 2015
- A survey was available online and in hard copy for postal return
- Surveys sent to several key stakeholders and all parish councils
- Consultation advertised via social media, website, internal and external communications and via partner agencies
- Posters and flyers put up within SNC buildings and partner services
- Discussions at events and forums including South Norfolk Older Peoples Forum
- Responses to e-survey completed confidentially

Responses
- 51 full responses to online survey
- 7 surveys returned by post or email (including 4 from Parish Councils).
- 2 letters received from Parish Councils
- 20 attendees at event on the 8th September representing their organisations
- 18 attendees at event on the 22nd September
- Collated responses via surveys or letters from groups including:
  - Stoke Holy Cross Parish Council
  - Tacolneston Parish Council
  - Tasburgh Parish
  - Easton Parish Council
  - Trowse with Newton Parish Council
  - Cringleford Parish Council
- Diss Town Council
- Marlingford Parish Council
- South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group
- Eastern Landlords Association
- Several other Parish Councils whose names have not been recorded on the survey reports.

- The consultation events received representation from several organisations including:
  - South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group
  - Genesis Housing Association
  - Saffron Housing Trust
  - Norfolk County Council
  - Solo Housing
  - N-able
  - Broadland Housing Association
  - Together
  - Cotman Housing
  - Orbit Housing
  - Julian Support
  - Age UK
  - Eastern Landlords Association
  - Several Parish Councils
Survey results
The online survey and postal return surveys asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with our priorities. Below are findings for each priority outcome. These were accompanied in the survey returns by a number of comments; these will be evaluated in more detail at a later stage in this report.

Did respondents agree with the priority outcomes?

**Providing it**
- Yes: 88%
- No: 7%
- Did not answer: 5%

**Accessing it**
- Yes: 90%
- No: 3%
- Did not answer: 7%

**Living in it**
- Yes: 83%
- No: 9%
- Did not answer: 8%

**Prospering in it**
- Yes: 78%
- No: 10%
- Did not answer: 12%
The responses above show that the vast majority of people surveyed agreed with the general approach taken within the Strategy with regard to the 4 priority outcomes that the strategy seeks to address. The verbal feedback received from the workshops and conversations with forums and groups backs this data up; there was general agreement that these are the correct priorities for the strategy to address.

The survey contained a number of closed questions aimed at identifying what people felt in relation to different topics within the strategy:

- There was widespread agreement with the priorities
- Results suggested people felt there was a need for a range of tenure types within South Norfolk
- When asked “how can we make sure people can access a home that meets their needs?” Results suggested that all of the following were needed:
  - A range of types and sizes of home
  - A range of tenure of types
  - Support available for issues that might have an effect on their homes
  - Making sure homes were affordable

- A number of groups were identified as needing more help to live in their home:
  - People with serious health conditions or disabilities and older people were the most commonly identified
  - Single people and families were the least commonly identified groups

- A range of things were identified that would help people live well in their homes as their needs change with people supporting adaptations to homes, suitable new home, strong communities, support and advice services, grants to improve homes and making homes more energy efficient.
- People felt it was important to work with a range of organisations to allow people to prosper in their own home
- People felt that intervening early to resolve and prevent problems stops issues getting worse, saves money in the long term and stops the problem affecting other people or the community

Comments
As well as producing a range of statistical information the surveys also produced a wealth of comments. The amount of response to the survey, letters and stakeholder events has resulted in their being too many comments to allow an individual response to each comment. The comments have therefore been grouped according to theme with a view to offering a representative illustration of each of the points. These
themes and our responses are detailed in the tables below. These tables do not include every comment but do include representative comments on the issues being raised.

### Providing It

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Representative Comments</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Property types and design    | • Identify how many houses and what type will be required  
• Smaller properties are needed  
• Differing sizes are important  
• … sheltered housing / …retirement communities  
• … flats, 2 and 3 bedroomed houses [are needed]  
• Build more affordable housing  
• Concentrate on greatest need … social rent  
• Allow self builders to build suitable housing in rural areas  
• Properties need to be well above current standards  
• All affordable housing should be adaptable | The Council is attempting to meet the need for smaller homes, especially for rent. The Action Plan makes it clear how we will do this.  
The matters concerning the balance of property sizes built for sale and the standards to which they are built will be considered when the Local Plan is reviewed, as will the implications of self-build. However, affordable housing is built to lifetime homes standard.  
Until the Local Plan is reviewed through a formal procedure, all development must comply with adopted policy: [http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp) |
| Meeting need                 | • Local people should be the priority [for homes for sale and rent]  
• Help people to get on the property ladder  
• Young people should have opportunities … so we don’t lose a valuable asset  
• There are few small adapted homes for [older] people to rent or buy  
• Hidden need … mental health and older people … dementia  
• Gypsies and Travellers – don’t forget them  
• … first time buyers homes – 1 or 2 bed semi  
• Housing needs studies are quickly out of date  
• The needs of Norwich need to be factored in  
• There should be key worker housing to attract staff  
• Parish councils should be involved [in ensuring | We have amended the Strategy to refer more clearly to the needs of various groups of people, including those with special needs and local people. The Action Plan sets out what the Council will do in seeking to meet these needs.  
The Council recognises the contribution that affordable housing can make to community sustainability. Refer to the Action Plan for details about how we intend to achieve this.  
We acknowledge the various needs raised by respondents. Growth provides the opportunity to provide a wide range of homes, including for people with special needs. ‘Local connection’ criteria are based on a policy decision by the Council after thorough consideration, and the eligibility and priority of applicants is decided through objective criteria. |
| Housing need | Quality research to establish the type of housing that is suitable to meet the needs | A Strategic Housing market Assessment has been completed for Central Norfolk. It considers housing need in all tenures. |

| Community | • The countryside is becoming the preserve of the rich  
• Listen to communities … observe what they consider is needed  
• …using local contractors  
• Consult local people … accessible exhibitions, road shows and questionnaires | The Council seeks to balance the views of various stakeholders in drafting policy. We recognise the importance of those who currently live in South Norfolk in influencing the future of the community. These wider social and economic aspects are integral to the Housing strategy, and are reflected in the Action Plan. |

| Infrastructure | • Ensure there is infrastructure to support [new housing]  
• … facilities nearby such as shops, parks etc.  
• …e.g. schools and other services such as leisure  
• Will CIL [Community Infrastructure Levy] suffice?  
• Safe cycling and walking to local services. Cycle paths can also be used by mobility scooters | The Greater Norwich Growth Programme [http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/delivery/growth-programme/](http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/delivery/growth-programme/) co-ordinates the provision of infrastructure. There is also dialogue with the Health Service, intended to ensure the availability of GP services. |

| Location | • Smaller developments … in proportion to size of existing community | The Local Plan [http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp) sets out the sites selected for housing development. The Council acknowledges that in some instances, because there was not the required 5 year supply of housing land, applicants obtained planning permission for some sites which were not allocated in the Local Plan. |

| Environment | • Use brownfield sites first  
• Design should enhance, not ‘impact’  
• Better thought given to the density per acre  
• …green renewable energy  
• …pedestrian and cycle access to facilities  
• Effect of large scale developments  
• What is your target for reducing empty homes? | Design is important (within the home and outside it), and housing development proposals are assessed against the Place-Making Guide [http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/5287.asp](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/5287.asp) The Council has a good record in bringing empty homes into use, and a target for 2016/17 activity is in the Action Plan. |
| of a balanced population | • Find out how many empty properties and second homes there are and count them into the equation  
• Ensure socially balanced communities  
• Liaise with Parish Councils – they understand local need. And support community groups  
• I don't like the idea of houses with just one person in them |

| Helping access | • Current stock should be accessed on the basis of need  
• People need a home that is right for them. Some people need help with this  
• …a right to access homes where [people] were born/raised is not an absolute right. Folk need to be encouraged to be brave and move (not too far perhaps!) to places where employment, transportation and services are more easily accessed  
• Reply to people when they contact SNC with housing issues. Yet you don’t, because you don’t really care  
• Provide advice more readily  
• Perhaps a mobile unit to visit village halls to provide signposting  
• Spend money, get building: if you haven’t got it, borrow it  
• Link to Community Connectors  
• Could more families be encouraged to live together?  
• Encourage 2 or 3 people to make joint tenancy applications (noting potential tenancy management problems)  
• How to establish which individuals need |

| ADD LINK WHEN THE SHMA IS ON THE WEBSITE | This is a key context document.  
We encourage Parish Councils' involvement in any proposals for local needs housing as an exception to normal planning policy.  

| Although the Council is seeking to increase the number of smaller homes, there are not enough 1 and 2 bedroom properties available for rent. We have to prioritise through Home Options [http://www.snhomeoptions.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/30.aspx](http://www.snhomeoptions.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/30.aspx)  
Some affordable homes have priority for local residents, and we expect this arrangement to continue.  

| We have a Housing Advice service which responds to requests for help [http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/housing/513.asp](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/housing/513.asp)  
We respond to all contacts. We will continue to review how best to make the advice available for those who need it.  

| The Housing Strategy has been amended to highlight the importance of obtaining a home in which to live and prosper. The Strategy and the Action Plan have been amended to emphasise this, demonstrating the Council’s wish to help residents to access all tenures.  
We advise and work with individuals to identify the best solution for their circumstances.  

| We are aware of the potential impact of the Right to Buy on the future availability of affordable housing.  

<p>| 76 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help</th>
<th>Lobby against the Right to Buy in housing association property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Homelessness** | Be clear how the Council is addressing homelessness (including statutory duty)Suitability and location of temporary accommodation  
• Link to the Homelessness Strategy  
• Use of B&B should be minimised | We have made homelessness an aspect of ‘Accessing it’ – previously it was only in ‘prospering in it’. The Action Plan also reflects this.  
We will keep under review the availability and suitability of temporary accommodation. |
| **Specialist accommodation** | A joined up approach is needed with Public Health, CCG and health care  
• Separated parents should have somewhere for children to stay  
• …the impact of HB rules limit under-35s’ access to accommodation … proposal to exclude under-21s entirely  
• Need for tenancy awareness courses  
• Encourage people to offer ‘rent a room’  
• Encourage young people to live with their parents | Public sector organisations recognise the benefits of joint working to achieve independent living. The Council intends to explore how particular requirement can be best met.  
We note these suggestions, and we will consider whether they might be appropriate in meeting the needs of individual customers. |
| **Affordable housing** | Affordable housing is important  
• Social rents will help not only single parents or people who cannot work, but those who do work but cannot afford a mortgage  
• More shared ownership | Current trends affecting social housing are now set out more clearly, and the intention to keep Home Options under review is in the Action Plan. |
| **Ownership** | Ensure planning policies allow for a range of homes by self builders  
• Make grants easily available, affordable plots… | We will be implementing the custom build obligations proposed in the Housing and Planning Bill. |
| **Private rent** | [more] straight forward rent  
• Don’t allow buy to let  
• Potential landlords are reluctant to let due to complexity of RADS schemes  
• Rent deposits for those who are statutorily | The Council recognises that people needing assistance will be housed in the private rented sector, and we will work to improve people’s ability to access it.  
Buy to let is likely to continue, and the Council will ensure that |
### Changing needs

- Councils have a duty to provide housing; how the clients pay for it is up to them and the Government
- Those that need help should get it, but that does not mean forever
- New homes should be future proofed
- If we had a good mix of housing, people would feel more able to switch housing to meet their individual needs at different times during their lifetime, particularly if there was support/incentive to do this
- The current DFG system sort of works – just needs better funding
- Provide “attractive” options that will persuade older people to vacate their large family homes before they are forced out by infirmity. They are too terrified of ‘going into a home’
- Look several years ahead
- Adopt the flexible design principles as used by Saffron Housing, e.g. removable panels to allow greater door widths
- Build different properties to suit stages (young, elderly or disabled)
- What happens when to the surviving partner when a Housing with Care resident dies?

The Strategy is based on the premise that people have a ‘housing pathway’, with different needs at different times. Many will be able to meet their needs without assistance, but other will require help.

The suggestions made reflect the wide range of respondents’ interests, and all are noted.

It is intended that, by taking a person-centred approach, the Council can help residents to achieve their wishes.

The Strategy and the Action Plan have been amended to reflect points raised.

### Living in it

| The home | You see evidence [of bad housing] especially with private landlords | Independence is a key aspect of this part of the Housing Strategy. |
- We need to support the vulnerable who wish to remain in their homes
- When making improvements, look at the needs of people first
- Adaptations should be by specially commissioned traders
- Adapt early – before the condition worsens
- When you agree to adaptation work DO IT!!
- RP's reluctant to adapt properties if other properties are more suitable
- Obsolescence is an issue which is not addressed
- What is the council’s view of the Green Deal announcement?
- Green energy to reduce cost, with home visits by Advisors
- Deliver affordable warmth despite spending cuts
- Making some RP homes energy efficient might not be financially viable

The Council believes that the adaptations service in South Norfolk provides a good service, although we recognise that there is always scope for improvement. Any specific suggestions would be welcome.

| Households | We provide the affordable housing and let the tenants get on with life. The council has no expertise and no responsibility for social engineering
- Sadly people will have to fund their care as they get older – the taxpayer cannot afford it
- More emphasis on young people as well as old
- Note the move away from a tenancy for life
- Be more specific about the impact of welfare reform
- Pay to Stay is a threat
- Risk of older people losing their home because of interest-only mortgages and reduced income after retirement

The Council believes that it is in a good position to help people who contact via the housing service. We have taken action to provide early help through the Hub to those who need it by supplying working space for partner organisations at South Norfolk House. This helps joint working. We firmly believe that this approach saves money in the longer term, and helps individuals.

People affected by the type of specific problems mentioned can be helped in appropriate ways.

| Community | We are hampered by poor modern communications methods
- Investment needed in community initiatives
- Community is important
- You cannot make communities

The Council has a Community Capacity Team – e-mail: communities@s-norfolk.gov.uk which seeks to help communities to benefit their residents.

There are various ways in which the Council can help local
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providing help</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Not every householder wishes to be part of a community  
• SNC fails to listen to communities  
• Pushing younger people to larger villages, towns and cities has resulted in decline of our rural communities  
• Encourage older people who are fit to look after those who are less able  
• Involve individuals  
• Openness and honesty [are required]  
• Funding is needed to encourage volunteers  
• Early intervention – savings for police | • Buy-in from partners is needed to promote independent living  
• Not sure how the council can impact effectively under current economic constraints  
• Can County Council budgets cover care costs? The |

initiatives, and anyone interested is invited to contact the team.

We note the various suggestions.

As a strategic authority, South Norfolk Council believes it is well-placed to identify needs and to co-ordinate assistance. The Community Connectors are locally-based staff who can help people to make their needs known.

We acknowledge that, although support is important, less money is available to fund it. The Council’s involvement as a co-ordinator can help to ensure that the right support is made available.

The Strategy sets out what the Council wishes to achieve, and the Action Plan provides more detail.

The Strategy is explicit that joint working is essential. The limited finance available to provide support does cause problems, but the various organisations mentioned all have specialised knowledge and abilities.
Prospering in it

Issues

- [Generally] it is not the job of the Council to interfere with how people live their lives … but [to aid] the vulnerable … listen, look and learn what they may require
- People have to take responsibility for their own wellbeing – unless they can’t, then the community should pull together
- People deserve safety and a chance in life whatever their background
- I have no understanding of what “achieve potential” has to do with housing policy – it seems much more in the area of education, training and meaningful employment
- A sense of self and home is important for a multitude of people but in particular those with mental health conditions
- Be aware of potential rent arrears when rent is paid through Universal Credit

We acknowledge the view of some people that it is not the role of a district council to help individuals to prosper. However, previous comments have stressed the importance of partnership working and co-ordination. South Norfolk Council believes that it is best-placed to ensure the delivery of this approach. Therefore we will continue to help residents to acquire the skills necessary to prosper.

“Achieving potential” does involve education, training and employment, often with input from organisations dedicated to helping people with special needs, and these links are highlighted in the Housing Strategy.

We agree that national policy changes can be the trigger for households’ problems, and early help can prevent serious consequences.

Community

- More social engineering NO
- Develop communities through outreach services
- Each village needs a representative to listen, support and respond in a timely manner

We believe that ‘helping people to help themselves’ is not ‘social engineering’. Similarly, the Council encourages communities to facilitate mutual assistance.

Solutions

- Improve digital isolation

We agree that early intervention is best, and the work of the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • [Helping ‘prospering in it’] is what councils should have done in the last 40 years  
• Prevention is better than cure  
• Be clever at identifying what is really going wrong and fixing that  
• A mix of support services may be needed but not for everyone all the time  
• Access to good quality information, e.g. financial capability / debt management / employability / advice on benefits  
• Focus on the lowest earners and most vulnerable  
• …a voluntary fund so that wealthier inhabitants of South Norfolk could contribute extra, with Gift Aid?  
• One to one contact instead of letters  
• Include healthy eating and healthy lifestyles  
• Can the strategy be more proactive about getting people into jobs? | Early Help Hub is included in the Action Plan. The joint working within the Hub should help to identify the real problem, and provide rapid access to whichever organisation is best-placed to engage with the customer and agree on the way forward.  
This specialist help is provided on a one-to-one basis, which can help with financial advice, healthy lifestyle, work skills etc.  
Referrals can come from any agency, and publicity is intended to encourage direct contact.  
We have emphasised the links to employment in the Strategy and the Action Plan.  
We acknowledge that the approach is interventionist, but it is based on evidence that not all residents are able to solve their own problems. We would not seek to impose intervention unless there were issues which required referral to, for instance, Children’s Services.  
Partnership working does require good understanding, effective communication and agreed purpose. We believe that the Hub is the best way to achieve this.  
Specialist advice can be facilitated by the contacts available within the Hub. |
- Regular communication
- Agencies [should] link up and co-ordinate services
- Possible business start-up via specialist agencies
- Measure outcomes by monitoring the number of 'crises’ before and after actions

The Action Plan sets targets to measure the achievements of intervention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General feedback</th>
<th>Representative Comments</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issue</strong></td>
<td><strong>Representative Comments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Response</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Communication    | - Fails to communicate key issues: how many houses are required, what type, how will SNC deliver this.  
- Need to communicate to ensure success  
- People won’t buy in because they haven’t been asked about their needs  
- Would like to be kept informed of the success of the strategy | The Strategy discusses the key themes but key issues such as identifying the numbers and types of homes required and how this will be met will be established through ongoing assessment.  
The Action Plan identifies how we will work with communities to identify need.  
The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis and details of this will be on the South Norfolk Council website. |
| Partnership working | - List parish councils in table of partners, they are the eyes and ears partners in local needs schemes  
- List all early help partners  
- Will partners named in the strategy “own it”?  
- Can working relationships with other authorities be improved | Parish Councils are key partners and have now been included in the list of partners.  
Key early help partners have been listed within the document.  
Communities and partners will be encouraged to take ownership of the strategy and SNC will work closely with partners to support this. |
| Quality of strategy and language used | - A poorly written document. Lacks meaningful content  
- Fairly broad which is positive  
- Good intentions but fails to make commitments | The document has been written for a variety of readers and seeks to be inclusive. Further content of delivery of the aims forms the basis of the Action Plan.  
The delivery of this strategy will be based on need and |
| National context and external barriers | Structure the strategy on the basis of need, supply and gaps.  
Document written to avoid measurable actions  
You need to be clearer about what you mean by the various groups mentioned  
Inconsistent use of terms  
Laudable but general aims | In light of recent policy developments, page 9 of the strategy (where it fits nationally) has been updated SNC acknowledges that there are challenges for partner agencies. SNC will work closely with partners and communities to develop capacity within to ensure the success in a challenging environment. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National context and external barriers</td>
<td>The strategy seeks to be consistent across the District but different parishes will have different needs. The individual actions within the strategy will be implemented with a local context and with involvement from local communities. We are aware of Parish Plans and will work closely with Parish Councils on issues relating to their area. There is no suggestion in the Strategy of expecting parishes to cover funding shortfalls in housing services. SNC will work closely with communities to build capacity to provide support locally. The impacts on local people, services and infrastructure are evaluated for each development through the planning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback and monitoring success</td>
<td>Suggested measurements of success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ask for feedback from parish councils, community groups and residents, revisit regularly</td>
<td>• More homes, better services and community engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nothing on which to hold SNC to account</td>
<td>• Social mobility index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You need to have clearer measures of success</td>
<td>• Crime figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I don’t have confidence in the self-measurement of any strategy</td>
<td>• Better homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Document is written to avoid measurable outcomes</td>
<td>• Ask people for their feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Allow scope for more qualitative evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Decrease in problems, measure savings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SNC will continue to engage with Parish Councils, community groups and residents on all issues, including housing. The individual objectives for this Strategy are contained within the Action Plan. The effectiveness of the Strategy will be measured against these.

These are noted and a number of measurements are contained within the Action Plan in relation to the different sections of the Strategy.

The Strategy seeks to improve current practices and improve partnership working. As such its success will not necessarily rely on new resources. The Action Plan identifies actions which will require additional resources.

There are challenges raised through the anonymity of the survey and this does make it difficult to respond directly to individual comments on specific issues. Using an anonymous survey has, however, allowed people to put forward their views with confidence and it means we were able to consider each comment objectively. Where people had particular issues that they wished to raise, contact details for the Housing and Public Health Partnerships Team were contained within the Strategy; this allowed more detailed feedback to be provided. A number of organisations chose to feed back in this way.

**Changes made to Strategy**
As a result of the consultation process and responses discussed above a number of changes have been made to the Housing Strategy. The changes made could not reflect all feedback as there was not necessarily consensus among respondents as to what was required in the various aspects of the strategy. There has been a conscious effort to keep the Strategy as a succinct, concise and easily understood framework for housing activity. There has however been a determination to include as many suggestions from respondents as appropriate within the Action Plan that accompanies the strategy and provides more detail on how the Strategy will be implemented. The table below details the changes that have been made to the Draft Strategy document as discussed in the responses section above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues raised</th>
<th>Changes made to the Housing Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity was needed on the various groups mentioned within the Strategy in relation to housing need.</td>
<td>We have amended the Strategy to refer more clearly to the needs of various groups of people, including those with special needs and local people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Accessing it section did not previously include issues around homelessness.</td>
<td>We have made homelessness an aspect of Accessing it – previously it was only in prospering in it. The Action Plan also reflects this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Accessing it section needed further detail around helping people access a home.</td>
<td>The Housing Strategy has been amended to highlight the importance of obtaining a home in which to live and prosper. The Strategy and the Action Plan have been amended to emphasise this in relation to access to all tenures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living it in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The importance of partnership working and early interventions was raised</td>
<td>More emphasis on importance of Early Help within the ‘living in it’ section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospering in it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prospering in it section did not make reference to employment and training in allowing people to prosper.</td>
<td>The Prospering in it section of the Strategy has been amended to include the issue of employment and training and the Action Plan has been updated accordingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The strategy as a whole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The list of partners was not fully inclusive</td>
<td>Parish Councils and Early Help partners added to list of partners within the Strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The details in the strategy of the national picture needed updating following policy developments since the draft was written.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The section of the Strategy relating to the wider national picture has been updated to include more detail in light of recent policy developments.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current trends were not specific enough in the draft document. Current trends affecting social housing are now set out more clearly in the strategy, and the intention to keep Home Options under review is in the Action Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A number of respondents wanted further detail on delivery aims identified in the strategy and a number also suggested action points. Each section of the Strategy has been expanded in detail through the Action Plan. A number of suggested actions raised by respondents have been included within the Action Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

The consultation has resulted in a substantial number of responses which highlight the importance of housing in the District and underline the need to get this Strategy right. There has been a wide range of both positive and critical feedback on the draft Housing Strategy. This feedback has been used to develop and amend the strategy, including a greater reference being made to national challenges and improving the Accessing It section to include a greater emphasis on what can be done to help people access a suitable home. A number of respondents made reference to how we will establish need at a district and local level and how we will measure and monitor the success of the Strategy. Accordingly the Action Plan has been designed to provide a detailed framework and recording mechanism for delivery of the Strategy. The majority of respondents were supportive of the key priorities of the strategy and the aims contained within. With the added clarity from the Action Plan it is felt that the strategy can be an effective tool for delivering on the housing needs of South Norfolk.
Housing, Wellbeing and Early Interventions Policy Committee

Work Plan for 2015/16

This is a draft work plan to cover the three scheduled meetings for 2015/16. It does not include the informal meetings. The work plan includes policy discussions and specific training/good practice sessions.

There will be a need for flexibility as new Bills are developing nationally through the legislative programme and Policy Committee needs to consider the opportunities for SNC in a timely way. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Full Employment and Welfare Benefits Bill
- Housing Bill
- Energy Bill

The SNC priority focus areas for 2015/16 are:

- Wellbeing and Early Intervention
- Commercialisation
- Place and Communities
- Economic Growth

November 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>What do we want to achieve?</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Services Update</td>
<td>Members are aware of recent issues affecting these services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN Housing Strategy</td>
<td>Feedback from Consultation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Housing Market Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness Strategy</td>
<td>The Action Plan and Strategy. For member comment ahead of Cabinet approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>What do we want to achieve?</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Bill 2016</td>
<td>Raising Member awareness of the actual provisions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Bill</td>
<td>Maximising opportunities and understanding impact on SN</td>
<td>Scheduling under review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Advice Bureaux</td>
<td>Progress on the SLA arrangements for 2016/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-agency working</td>
<td>Update on progress of the outcomes of the Health &amp; Social Care Workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>Members are aware of the new arrangements for delivering a routine Maintenance, Repair and Adaptation service</td>
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Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy

Report of the Housing and Public Health Partnerships Officer
Cabinet Member: Councillor Yvonne Bendle, Wellbeing and Early Intervention

CONTACT
Tony Cooke
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1. Introduction

1.1. This report presents to the Housing, Wellbeing and Early Interventions Policy Committee the Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy (Appendix A) and the accompanying draft South Norfolk Action Plan (Appendix B). The Strategy underpins local delivery of homelessness services, homeless prevention services and approaches to address and avoid homelessness across the South Norfolk Council, Broadland District Council and Norwich City Council areas until 2020. It recognises the wider determinants and effects of homelessness and its impacts on individuals and communities’ health, wellbeing and prosperity. It seeks to address these issues through a holistic approach to homelessness services.

2. Context

2.1. South Norfolk Council is in a strong position with regard to homelessness services and prevention activity:

- There is strong performance in delivering early preventative measures to avoid homeless cases.
- Homeless applications are completed well within the required timeframes.
- An early intervention approach exists that seeks to address the wider issues a person faces before homelessness becomes an issue.
- A culture of continuous analysis and improvement of services helps ensure best practice.

2.2. This is the third consecutive Homelessness Strategy for the Greater Norwich area.

2.3. The Strategy seeks to build on the strong foundation of delivery from the previous strategy and improve things further.
3. Background

3.1. The Strategy itself has been developed in partnership with Broadland District Council and Norwich City Council, and with involvement from the relevant Clinical Commissioning Groups. It identifies the current provision and processes in regard to homelessness services as well as the challenges each district needs to address. It is recognised that whilst each locality area has its own priorities and challenges it has many common issues too. Therefore the Strategy has been used to develop locality-based Action Plans in terms of service improvement and delivery.

3.2. The development of the Strategy has been informed by consultation with key stakeholders across the districts concerned. This included a workshop for partners within South Norfolk in September 2014 and a formal consultation period between November 2014 and January 2015.

3.3. The Homelessness Strategy evolved under the oversight of the previous Housing and Public Health Policy Committee.

3.4. The Strategy represents an opportunity for South Norfolk Council to build on its strong foundation of preventing homelessness and support for people facing becoming homeless and to improve its approaches to addressing trends in homelessness levels.

3.5. The Strategy contributes to the delivery of all four corporate priorities:

- **Enhancing the quality of life and the environment we live in.** A reduction in homelessness and the associated issues will have a positive impact on the quality of life for residents of South Norfolk.
• **Promoting a thriving local economy.** By providing people with the opportunities for further support and access to employment education and training and reducing the costs associated with homelessness.

• **Supporting communities to realise their potential.** By taking a community based approach to the prevention of homelessness and enabling individuals to achieve security and allowing them to be opportunity ready.

• **Driving services through being business-like, efficient and customer aware.** By delivering homelessness services and preventative services that deliver a cost benefit against the effects of homelessness.

4. Challenges

4.1. There are a number of challenges relating to South Norfolk that the actions contained within the Strategy seek to address. These are identified in paragraph 5.5.3 of the Strategy and include:

- To work with partners so the risk of homelessness is identified at an early stage.
- Addressing the use of B&B to accommodate homeless households and to improve the quality and reduce the cost of the temporary accommodation service.
- Maintaining a properly regulated private rented sector where landlords are encouraged and supported to provide good quality homes to local residents.
- Understanding the impact on health and wellbeing of homelessness to individuals and services.
- A shortage of appropriately sized homes across all tenure types.
- Ensuring effective use of temporary accommodation, providing transitional shelter between homelessness and sustainable accommodation.
• Ensuring customers can regain and maintain independence.

4.2. Further to these challenges the Strategy also identifies the wider factors that will impact on our ability to tackle homelessness.

5. How will the Strategy make a difference?

5.1. The Strategy is underpinned by the need to collaborate on issues. It has been written with the other districts within the Greater Norwich area as it is recognised that no single district within this area will be able to address the challenges without collaboration from the other districts. The method adopted will allow each individual to address the issues most relevant to their area whilst also addressing the wider cross-district challenges.

5.2. The Strategy also recognises the need to work in partnership with key stakeholders, communities and service providers to deliver against the challenges.

5.3. Central to the function of this Strategy is a continued focus on prevention and early intervention. It recognises the vital interconnectivity between this Strategy and each district’s related strategies. In the case of South Norfolk these being: the South Norfolk Housing Strategy, Norfolk joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and South Norfolk Council’s own Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

5.4. The Strategy takes account of the factors that impact the likelihood of homelessness and the wider effects homelessness has on the health, wellbeing and prosperity of individuals and communities. The actions within the strategy seek to address these issues through a holistic approach.
6. Action Plan

6.1. A draft Action Plan (Appendix B) sets out how and when each action relative to South Norfolk will be delivered and who will be responsible for each action. The Action Plan aims to address the challenges laid out through actions related to each of the four priorities:

- **Targeting our resources at those who are most at risk of homelessness** - within a South Norfolk context this includes supporting our early help partners, supporting people into employment to prevent homelessness and working to address the links between mental health and wellbeing and homelessness.

- **Helping people find affordable, safe good quality housing** - by providing training to private sector landlords to improve the capacity of the private rented sector, delivering the affordable housing policy set out in the local plan and reviewing the home options scheme to ensure customers are able to secure housing that meets their needs.

- **Working together better with partners, so that we can work in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness** - within a South Norfolk context this includes: evaluating the effectiveness of move on contracts; updating our website to enable partners and customers to access information easily; and developing a protocol in partnership with social housing providers to reduce the likelihood of eviction. Within the wider Greater Norwich context this will involve: working to promote better access to health service for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness; analysing the gaps in homelessness prevention education; districts working together on bids for funding that helps towards preventing homelessness; and strengthening the evidence base of the health needs of people who are homeless.

- **Helping people develop independent living skills, maintain or regain their independence to reduce the risk of someone becoming homeless in the future** - by assisting owners, tenant and landlords to make adaptations or find suitable alternative accommodation; reviewing Integrated Early Intervention Services to assess the impact on reducing
demand on acute services; and working with South Norfolk CCG to develop and deliver an enhanced service to assist people affected by dementia to live independently in their home.

6.2. In addition officers will be working with colleagues in Norwich and Broadland to deliver those actions identified as needing a Greater Norwich Homelessness Partnership (GNHP) response.

6.3. The Action Plan focusses on the outcomes that will be delivered against each of the action points from the draft Strategy. Members will note it is currently in draft format in order to take the views of Policy Committee Members into account prior to seeking Cabinet approval for the Strategy itself.

7. Proposals

7.1. Members are also asked to consider the Joint Homelessness Strategy and recommend to Cabinet that it is adopted subject to minor amendments.

7.2. Members also are asked to comment and feed into the attached draft South Norfolk Action Plan for Homelessness so that any amendments agreed can be incorporated.

8. Risks and Implications arising

8.1. Financial – no direct implications in creating the Strategy, but the Council’s expenditure, decided within the annual budget-setting process, will provide the opportunity to fund in innovative ways while taking account of resources available.

8.2. Environmental – none identified.
8.3. Equalities – the Strategy seeks to help people who are disadvantaged, thereby improving their opportunities.

8.4. Crime reduction – early interventions and addressing individuals support needs and wider societal needs through work with key stakeholders and service providers should reduce the amount of crime.

8.5. Risks – none identified.

9. Recommendation

9.1. That the Committee comments on the attached draft Homelessness Action Plan for South Norfolk and considers any possible amendments.

9.2. That the Committee recommends to Cabinet that the Joint Homelessness Strategy be adopted.
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

Appendix A

Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

Version 151123
## Section 1: Introduction

## Section 2: Context and purpose
What do we mean by homelessness?

## Section 3: Where do we want to be?

## Section 4: How will we get there?

## Section 5: Strategic framework for the strategy

### 5.1 Our role in health and wellbeing

### 5.2 Key national policy changes since the last strategy

### 5.3 What did the homelessness review tell us?

### 5.4 Non-statutory homelessness prevention 2008-13

### 5.5 Key homelessness challenges

## Section 6: Development of the strategy

## Section 7: Key achievements from the last strategy

## Section 8: How will we know?

## Section 9: Glossary of terms
1. Introduction

This document sets out a new collaborative approach to tackling homelessness in Greater Norwich over the next five years; bringing together local authority partners, housing agencies and health organisations in a new strategy.

The strategy sets out to protect everyone at risk of homelessness in the Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk council areas.

An early help approach has been shown to prevent homelessness. Together we can expand on this approach, not only to prevent homelessness but also to achieve wider outcomes such as improved health and wellbeing, and better job opportunities. Taking support opportunities is important in helping young people and families to achieve more along their pathway in life. There is a huge opportunity for partners to deliver services in different, co-ordinated ways so that a ‘no wrong door’ approach delivers outcomes that meet customer needs.

This strategy builds on a range of early intervention measures addressing the wide reaching causes of homelessness as the planning and commissioning of effective healthcare services is viewed as a crucial element in providing effective support. It has involved partnership working with health and social care commissioners, Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust, and NHS City Reach.

Each local authority has its own actions within the overall strategy to address specific needs and a number of joint actions because Greater Norwich is a hub for employment, healthcare and homelessness services, so a joined up approach involving a range of agencies is needed to collectively tackle homelessness issues across the whole area.
1.1 Purpose of this document

Context

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires Local Authorities to produce a homelessness strategy that applies to everyone at risk of homelessness, not just people who may fall within a priority need group for the purposes of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

A new strategy is needed that is relevant to the needs of the three councils in the Greater Norwich area: Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk.

Work started on the formation of a strategy in January 2014 through the project team, which will be responsible for the formation and delivery of the strategy. Its membership comprises the following organisations:

- Broadland District Council
- Norwich City Council
- South Norfolk Council
- Local Clinical Commissioning Groups
- City Reach NHS

1.2 Data sources in the formulation of the strategy

The project group considered the following during the preparation of the draft homelessness strategy:

- homelessness review, trends and issues, both quantitative and qualitative;
- national and local policy, current and proposed;
- analysis of the outcomes of the previous Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2011-14
- In South Norfolk partner organisations and internal team members were invited to share their thoughts on recent achievements, challenges for the future and suggestions for future actions during a number of drop in sessions in early September
2. Context and purpose

What do we mean by homelessness?

Definition of homelessness for the purpose of this strategy:

Those households who are defined as statutorily homeless within the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002. These are likely to be families with dependent children, pregnant women and adults who are assessed as vulnerable. (This definition of homelessness is relatively narrow and does not constitute the majority of homelessness cases).

Those households who do not fall into the above categories (sometimes called ‘non-statutory’ homeless) and are likely to be single or couples (with no dependents) who are either sleeping rough, living in supported accommodation or are deemed as “hidden homeless” and are typically sleeping on friends or family member’s sofas as a temporary stop gap measure.

2.1 Coverage
This strategy covers the three district authority areas of greater Norwich including: Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk. This is the third consecutive sub-regional homelessness strategy.

2.2 Statutory requirement
The Homelessness Act 2002 imposes a duty on local housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review in their area and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on its results at least every five years.

A homelessness strategy is defined in Homelessness Act 2002 s3(1) as one formulated in order to:

a) prevent homelessness in an authority’s area;
b) secure accommodation is and will be available in that area for people who are or may become homeless; and
c) provide support for such people or those who have been homeless and need support to prevent it recurring.
3. Where do we want to be?

Our vision:

“Greater Norwich is a place where agencies work together to support people who are, or may become homeless. Helping people to take control of their own circumstances earlier and stopping them from becoming homeless will be our main aim. This will provide people with a firm platform where their health and wellbeing, employment or training opportunities are either maintained or improved.”

We aim to do this by focusing on these priorities:

- targeting our resources at those people who are most at risk of homelessness.
- helping people find affordable, safe, good quality housing.
- working better together with partners, so that we can work in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness.
- helping people develop independent living skills, maintain or regain their independence to reduce the risk of someone becoming homeless in the future.

4. How will we get there?

The following priorities and supporting actions are drawn from the findings of the greater Norwich homelessness review and consultation exercise with stakeholders.

Priority one: Target our resources at those people who are most at risk of homelessness
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

a. Seek earlier and more cost effective interventions through effective partnership working.
b. Use Systems Thinking to continue to analyse demand on the service and respond flexibly to changing needs.
c. Explore opportunities for joint commissioning of services across disciplines.

**Norwich Actions**

a. Improve data collection so we can capture ‘real’ time measures of homelessness.
b. Carry out a dip sampling exercise to measure effectiveness of prevention measures.
c. Increase the numbers of people at risk of homelessness to stay in their own homes through increased tenancy enforcement/relations with landlords in the private rented sector.
d. Work with our partners in Children Services to improve pathways for young people leaving care.

**South Norfolk Actions**

a. Provide training and support for partners in the Early Help Hub ensuring that an appropriate level of multi-agency support is available to customers at an early stage to reduce the risk of financial difficulty leading to homelessness.
b. Increase the opportunities for customers who are unemployed to enter or regain employment at the earliest point to prevent homelessness by reviewing commissioned services outcomes and ensuring service level agreements are fit for purpose.
c. Introduce a housing pathway for mental health clinicians.

Priority two: Helping people find affordable, safe, good quality housing.

**Broadland Actions**

a. Monitor the effectiveness of the Broadland District Council private sector leasing service and explore opportunities to further develop the service.
b. Increase access to supported provision for Broadland clients.
### Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority three: Working better together with partners, so that we can work in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greater Norwich Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Work to promote better access to health services for people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Conduct a gap analysis of homelessness prevention education delivered through schools, colleges and youth organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Where appropriate, we will work together on bids for funding that help towards the prevention of homelessness.</td>
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### Norwich Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Explore the need for a lodgings scheme for people with low support needs.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. Increase the number of private landlords willing to let to households who are in receipt of housing benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Consider the feasibility of a cashless bond scheme for deposits in the private rented sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Introduce the ‘gold standard’ for housing advice services.</td>
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### South Norfolk Actions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Provide training to private sector landlords to improve the capacity of the private rented sector to meet housing need.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. Deliver the Affordable Housing policy set out in the local plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Review the Home Options scheme to ensure customers are able to secure housing that meets their needs.</td>
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**d. Develop a stronger evidence base of the health needs of people who are homeless.**

### Broadland Actions

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Improve access to education, training and employment for clients in housing difficulty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Work with our statutory and voluntary sector partners to protect vulnerable people including young people and victims of domestic abuse from crime, to be safe and secure in their homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Continue to place emphasis on early intervention in order to prevent homelessness whenever possible.</td>
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### Norwich Actions

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Create a simple web based platform where our partners from statutory and voluntary sectors can share information and good practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Make best use of Norwich City Council stock through increased supported provision through partnership and lease arrangements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Identify the pathway to homelessness of ‘chaotic’ individuals and seek to map and address this through increased partnership working.</td>
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### South Norfolk Actions

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Evaluate the effectiveness of our “move on” contracts and act upon any recommendations arising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Review and update our website to enable partners and customers to easily access the information and to contact us where necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Develop a protocol in partnership with housing providers to reduce the likelihood of evictions from social housing.</td>
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**Priority four: Helping people develop independent living skills, maintain or regain their independence to reduce the risk of someone becoming homeless in the future.**

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### Broadland Actions

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<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. We will support the development, implementation and review of multi-agency strategies and protocols which seek to address homelessness in a joined up manner.¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Where appropriate seek a county-wide or sub-regional approach to funding bids, allocations and scheme support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Strengthen partnerships and communication to improve pathways into accommodation which best meets client needs and to ensure services are in place so that that person is adequately supported and engaged moving forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Monitor and analyse sustainability outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Support and promote initiatives which take a community approach to developing solutions to issues predominantly facing vulnerable people in Broadland.</td>
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### Norwich Actions

<table>
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<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Support LEAP to ensure long term viability of the project and a community interest company to offer opportunities to clients.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Seek partnership arrangement between Children services and Let NCC to address housing issues for intentionally homeless families and break the chain of causation.</td>
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### South Norfolk Actions

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Where properties do not meet customer need assist the owners, tenants and landlords to make adaptations or find alternative, suitable accommodation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review Integrated Early Intervention services such as Care &amp; Repair and Handyperson to assess the impact they are having on reducing demand on acute services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. In partnership with the CCG develop and deliver an enhanced service to assist people affected by Dementia to live</td>
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</table>

¹ For example the North Norfolk Youth Homelessness Protocol and the Intentionally homeless families protocol.

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industries at home.

5. Strategic framework for the strategy

- Broadland corporate plan
- Norwich corporate plan
- South Norfolk corporate plan

- Broadland housing strategy
- Norwich housing strategy
- South Norfolk housing strategy

- Greater Norwich homelessness strategy 2015-20

- Greater Norwich single homelessness strategy 2015-20

- Broadland action plans
- Norwich action plans
- South Norfolk action plans
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

Links to other relevant strategic documents

- Norfolk Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy
- Norfolk Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- operational plans of the three Clinical Commissioning Groups (North Norfolk, Norwich and South Norfolk CCGs) that cover the greater Norwich area
- South Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy

5.1 Our role in health and wellbeing

All local authorities (county and district) have a general statutory duty to protect and improve health and wellbeing and to tackle inequalities and the ‘social determinants’ of health – that is, those aspects of people’s social and economic condition that impacts on their health. Extending far beyond social care from education to housing, economic development to leisure services, planning to trading standards, they all have a significant impact on people’s health.2

In particular District authorities have a significant function and role in helping improve people’s health and wellbeing through the homeless prevention work we do. Examples of these activities include:

- the function of our housing options teams in helping vulnerable people find (or keep) safe and secure good quality housing,
- direct provision of permanent and temporary housing including, employment and training services such as LEAP,
- direct and joint commissioning of services to help reach out to vulnerable people who are either young, rough sleeping or fleeing domestic abuse.
- helping troubled families through our family intervention projects,
- helping people stay in their own homes through grants and adaptions to help them live more independently,

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2 Page 3, “A Councillor’s guide to the health system” (Local Government Association, May, 2014)
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

- improving the quality of private sector housing for people,
- developing protocols with statutory and voluntary providers such as the:
  - Homeless person’s hospital discharge protocol
  - Hostel eviction protocol (“Off the street”)
  - Joint Protocol to address the needs of homeless young people in Norfolk
- the continued refreshment of the JSNA so that it remains relevant and highlights the impact our work in improving people’s health and wellbeing.

The above activities are just some of the work that we do that has a direct or indirect impact on a person’s health and wellbeing and can show savings to the overall health budget. A recent study showed that “the annual cost of unscheduled care for homeless patients is 8 times that of the housed population.” Despite this expenditure the average age of death of a homeless patient is 47. In comparison to the housed population, the homeless are five times more likely to present at A&E, are admitted 3.2 times more frequently and stay 3 times as long.

5.2 Key national policy changes since the last strategy

A number of key national policy changes have been introduced since the last strategy. The following section attempts to draw some of the main policy changes that have had a direct or indirect effect on homelessness in greater Norwich.

5.2.1 Coalition government housing strategy

In November 2011, the Coalition government released their Housing strategy, *Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England*. The document acknowledged the challenges posed by homelessness, in particular rising statutory homelessness and rough sleeping.

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3 Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Taskforce, DOH, Inclusion Health- Evidence Pack 2010
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

The Coalition government then formed a Ministerial Working Group and published “Making every contact count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness.” The aim of the paper was to make sure every contact local agencies make with vulnerable people and families makes a positive impact on their lives by:

- tackling troubled childhoods and adolescence
- improving health
- reducing involvement in crime
- improving skills; employment; and financial advice
- pioneering social funding for homelessness

The paper also set ten local challenges that “should lead to all local homelessness teams delivering a gold standard service. The ten local challenges are:

1. Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. Offer a Housing Options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients
4. Adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
5. Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support
6. Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords
7. Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs
9. Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
10. Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks

5.2.2 Localism Act 2011

The purpose of the Act was to shift power from the state to local communities by:
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

- lifting the burden of bureaucracy
- empowering communities to do things their way
- increase local control of public finances
- diversifying the supply of public services
- opening up government to public scrutiny
- strengthening accountability to local people.\(^5\)

5.2.3 Welfare reform

Against a background of financial constraints the coalition government introduced a number of changes through the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Some of these changes were the biggest seen since the introduction of the Welfare state in the 1940s, and include:

- measures to simplify the system
- more stringent rules and eligibility criteria
- stricter sanctions
- making work pay
- more frequent benefit entitlement assessments
- benefit rate freezes
- caps to some benefits
- loss of benefit uprating linked to actual costs
- increase in a range of deductions made to benefits
- new payment methods
- localisation of the social fund

5.2.4 Reduction in the value of working-age benefits

A significant number of the changes brought about by the Welfare Reform Act 2012 were made to reduce the value of working-age benefits for people who are on low incomes. These measures include:

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- restricting the annual uprating of working age benefits to 1%
- introduction of the shared accommodation room rate for under 35s (this previously applied to under 25s)
- lowering the rates for Local Housing allowance (LHA)
- the Benefits Cap (60-70 families were affected by this in Norwich as of September 2013 by an average of £59.52 per week)
- means testing Child Benefit
- limiting contribution-based Employment Support Allowance
- the Social Sector Size Criteria (SSSC)
- replacing Council Tax Benefit (CTB) with Council Tax Support (CTS)
- restrictions on Working Tax Credits
- raising the deduction rate for non-dependents

Some of the above reductions have placed people in greater Norwich at further risk of homelessness. Research published by the DWP\(^6\) in 2014 showed that people affected by these reductions were spending less on essential household items, or moving to cheaper accommodation in alternative areas. This research is supported by the increase in the number of people accessing Norwich Foodbank. In October 2013, Norwich Foodbank reported a 67.29% increase (from 1,489 to 2,491) in the number of food vouchers issued during the same period the previous year.

5.2.5 Post July 2015 Budget\(^7\)

Since the July 2015 Budget there have been further changes introduced that will lead to a reduction in the value of working age benefits for a larger number of households than ever before; this follows on from the above changes and will be introduced either through the Welfare and Work Bill or by Statutory Instrument. Some of these changes include:

- removal of housing benefit to childless 18-21 year olds who are not working\(^8\)
- the Benefit Cap lowered to £20,000 per year or £384.62 per week for families, £13,400 per year or £257.69 per week for single persons
- freeze of certain social security benefits and tax credits for four tax years

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\(^6\) The Benefit Cap: Public Perceptions and Pre-implementation Effects (DWP, 2014)

\(^7\) Benefit changes and distributional analysis (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2015).

\(^8\) Certain exemptions will apply.
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

- removal of tax credit/universal credit entitlement for third and subsequent children from April 2017
- large reduction in how much families can earn before tax credits/Universal Credits start to be withdrawn (Tax credits start to be withdrawn once family earnings go above £3,850 rather than £6,420)
- abolition of work related activity group (WRAG) premium in Employment Support Allowance (ESA) for new claimants (nationally, this equates to around a fifth of all ESA claimants who receive the £29 a week premium)\(^9\)
- changing support for mortgage interest from benefit to loan
- English social rents: cut in cash terms by 1% per year for 4 years (likely to have a negative impact on the building of new affordable homes)

5.2.6 Likely effect of July 2015 Budget on homelessness

With the exception of the reduction in social rents all of the above measures are likely to see increasing pressure on household budgets and potentially placing them at risk of homelessness. The next section highlights some of the main points we believe may have a direct impact on levels of homelessness in greater Norwich.

5.2.7 Removal of housing benefit for 18-21 year olds

It is unclear who will be exempt from this change. It is likely that a number of young people who do not meet thresholds of care (because they are over 17) will become homeless as a result, with no ability to claim help with their housing costs if they are unable to return home. It is also likely that when a young person has a break in their housing benefit claim that they will find themselves unable to claim help with their housing costs in the future.

5.2.8 Benefit Cap

The aim of the cap is to help incentivise families into work instead of relying on benefits. As with the previous cap it will hit housing benefit first as a total of household benefit income. It is likely to impact upon a number of families, especially those who have three or more children who live in the private and social rented sector. As a result it is likely that we will see more families become homeless if they fail to find work or are unable to move into cheaper accommodation. Some of this impact may be temporarily

\(^9\) Benefit changes and distributional analysis (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2015).

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mitigated by Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), but this is only a temporary stop gap measure to help people in financial
distress.

5.2.9 Freeze to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates

The plan to freeze LHA rates over the next four years to 2019 will mean that more private sector housing will become unaffordable
for people accessing private sector housing who are in receipt of benefits. It is very likely that those households struggling to meet
rent shortfalls will face higher arrears and a greater risk of eviction. The ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies is one of the
leading causes of homelessness in the country as a whole and in greater Norwich. There may be some short term help in the form
of DHP but again this will only help temporarily protect households already in the sector. The Institute for Fiscal Studies have stated
that this is equivalent to a 5% cut. Oxford Economics (in 2013) have predicted that private rented sector rents will rise by 39% from
2013-20 (across England). This will mean that increasingly the private rented sector will become unaffordable for people in receipt
of LHA and will also prevent households accessing this sector.

5.2.10 Abolition of ESA WRAG premium

The following figures (as of November 2014) from the DWP show the number of ESA claimants who are in the WRAG premium
group within greater Norwich. These people who are in receipt of ESA WRAG premium will not be affected until there is a break in
their claim. Any new claimants or applicants waiting to be assessed from April 2017 will no longer be able to receive this premium.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local authority</th>
<th>Caseload</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>To be assessed</th>
<th>WRAG</th>
<th>Support group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>1,480</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>3,570</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>1,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>1,480</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This cut is likely to have a negative impact on people who need extra income to help with their health condition (such as heating
and transport costs) so they can live as independently as possible. The result will be that people in receipt of ESA will be expected
to manage on the same level of benefit as their counterparts on JSA placing greater pressure on their household budgets and
putting them more at risk of homelessness.

5.2.11 Legal aid changes
The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment Act 2012 was introduced on 1st April 2013. The main aim of the Act was to reduce the legal aid bill by £350m a year in England and Wales. The Act removed funding for a number of areas of civil law including some debt, housing and benefit issues. Legal aid is still only available for debt and housing matters where someone’s home is at immediate risk; according to Norfolk Community Law Service “The East of England has lost approximately £3.3m worth of legal aid funding per year for social welfare advice.” Shelter (Norwich), have reported that before the cuts they were able to offer more holistic, preventative advice to clients, especially around ongoing housing and general benefit issues. Now clients can only be supported where their home is at immediate risk. There are also issues around people who fall outside the qualifying criteria for legal aid and may be earning too much but are unable to fund the costs of professional representation in Court. Nationally, it has been reported that there has been increasing evidence of individuals representing themselves leading to delays in court business overall.

5.2.12 Health and social care reform

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced some of the biggest changes to the NHS since its introduction in 1948. The main focuses of the changes are around:

- structure
- accountabilities
- funding arrangements
- working arrangements

This led to:

- The Secretary of State no longer having a duty to provide health services through the NHS
- Strategic Health Authorities being abolished and replaced by a National Commissioning Board and a new body called Public Health England

Primary Care Trusts were abolished and replaced by:

- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) that are now responsible for commissioning most health services
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

- Local Authorities (Councils) taking a larger role in public health promotion requiring each local authority to undertake a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) before April 2013 and creating Health and Wellbeing Boards.

At a local level this led to the creation of:

- a Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Board (including the leaders of all of the district Councils of Norfolk & Waveney)
- transfer of public health and health improvement functions from the now defunct Primary Care Trust
- expansion of the (Upper tier authority) scope of the current health and social care scrutiny function; and
- the establishment of a local Healthwatch
- five CCGs in Norfolk: Norwich, West Norfolk, North Norfolk, South Norfolk and Health East (covering Gt Yarmouth and Waveney).
- within the greater Norwich area there are three CCGs namely: North Norfolk, Norwich and South Norfolk.

This major change saw 80% (£1.3bn) of the NHS Norfolk budget transfer to the five CCGs who will spend the majority\(^\text{10}\) of NHS funding for their local residents. The expectation of the Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Board is to require the CCGs to co-operate with the Board, and write commissioning plans which take account of the evidence of the JSNA and the priorities of the Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Strategy.\(^\text{11}\)

5.2.13 Health and Wellbeing

The three greater Norwich Councils recognise the significance of the links between health and homelessness particularly amongst single homeless people and the effect it has on families. We also recognise that we need to work together to achieve better outcomes for people who are affected by homelessness and ill-health. We know that if someone becomes homeless they are likely to “suffer significant health inequalities in comparison with people in more secure accommodation, in terms of both their health status and their ability to access health services…many health and social care professionals in the NHS, local authority services, the third sector, prisons and elsewhere have homeless people on their caseload.”\(^\text{12}\) We also recognise the direct relationship an

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\(^{10}\) With the exception of some services such as dentistry and

\(^{11}\) Cabinet, 23\(^{\text{rd}}\) January 2012, Item 12, NHS Reforms and Norfolk County Council Next steps towards establishing a Health and Wellbeing Board, and implications of legislation for scrutiny and Local HealthWatch.

\(^{12}\) Improving health care for homeless people, Section B The Homeless Health learning pathway, (The Queen’s Nursing Institute)

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individual’s physical and mental wellbeing can have on their own housing situation if their health needs are not met. We know from research published by Crisis\textsuperscript{13} in July 2013 (for single homeless people):

- the average age of death for homeless people is 47
- up to 70% of homeless people have mental health issues
- around a third will have a history of problematic substance misuse
- homeless people are 40 times less likely to be registered with a GP compared to the general public
- homeless people are 13 times more likely to be a victim of violence.

5.2.14 Domestic Abuse

There have been considerable legislative changes between 2010 and 2014 which address the issue of domestic abuse and its negative impacts. This increases awareness of the issue.

It is a continual challenge to understand the true level of those affected by domestic abuse, and the impact that this has on homelessness.

The introduction of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing and the DASH assessment form means that our approach to dealing with customers is more consistent and offers an opportunity for us to do effective action planning with the individual. This also helps the customer to measure their own risk levels, and minimise them. Locally we have seen a bigger commitment to MARAC and taking on the advice of Safelives to ensure that it is the most effective service we can have. We are looking much more closely at risks, which helps to build a robust action plan for the customer. There is a much broader attendance group, and as a result-the outcomes are much stronger and more sustainable. This ensures that homelessness is prevented and repeated victimisation is being reduced.

5.2.15 The introduction of the Social Sector Size Criteria (SSSC)

The introduction of the SSSC (opponents call it Bedroom Tax) was brought about primarily to reduce expenditure on Housing Benefit and to reduce under-occupation in the social sector. The scheme reduces Housing Benefit for social tenants (of working

\textsuperscript{13} Homelessness briefing, (CRISIS, July 2013)
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...age) with more bedrooms than their household requires. Those people affected have had their Housing Benefit reduced by 14 per cent for one spare bedroom and 25 per cent for two or more spare bedrooms. As of May 2014, 3,667 households were affected by SSSC in greater Norwich; the majority of those households have seen their benefit reduced by £10-15 per week. One of the main issues for people affected by this is that there are not enough ‘smaller’ homes available for them to downsize into leading to households being faced with cutting back on essential household items so they can make up the shortfall in their rental payments.

5.2.16 Incentivising Right to Buy

In October 2011, the Coalition government announced that they wanted to “raise Right to Buy discounts which will make the scheme attractive again and rejuvenate the housing stock.” Since this announcement in April 2012 the government increased the maximum cap on the discount to £70k. This maximum cap is being raised on an annual basis by CPI from April 2015. It is likely that these rises in discounts will mean that more Council houses are sold in Norwich. Over the five year period between 2008/09 and 2012/13 a further 230 homes were sold through Right to Buy. A further increase in the number of council homes sold could mean that the safety net of social housing is diminished further (especially for homeless people) if housing providers are not able to replace all of the homes (on a like for like basis) sold through right to buy.

5.2.17 Ending of mortgage rescue

The Mortgage Rescue Scheme was designed to support vulnerable owner-occupiers at risk of repossession to remain in their home. Since its inception in 2009 there have been 76 successful mortgage rescues in greater Norwich (Broadland 45, Norwich 17 and South Norfolk 14). There were a number of unsuccessful applications due to non-engagement from the owner, costly repairs and properties’ value being above the scheme’s cap. As of April 2014, the government brought the scheme to an end which could mean more people become homeless in the future.

5.2.18 Interest-only mortgages

There is some concern that homeowners who took out interest only mortgages in the late 80s and 90s will struggle to find the necessary funds to repay the capital element of their mortgage when their mortgage term comes to an end. The Financial Conduct Authority estimates around 260,000 homeowners (10% of cases) whose mortgage matures before 2020 do not have a strategy in place to repay their mortgage at the end of its term.

14 May 2014, DWP Stat Xplorer (DWP).
15 We know that some of these cases have since been affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax)
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

5.2.19 Discretionary housing payments (DHP)
DHP’s have been used since 2001 to help low-income households who rent their homes meet their housing costs (in the short term). Since the advent of the Welfare Reform Act in 2012 they have been used to mitigate the effects of the reduction in welfare benefits. Cuts introduced mean that households have been left with gaps between their rent and housing benefit. The Government has increased the level of DHP funding to local housing authorities since June 2010 as a means of mitigating the effects of changes to housing support as part of the wider reform agenda. However, in 2015 the Government announced cuts to the DHP budget from £165m (in 2014/15) to £125m in 2015/16. Locally the DHP budgets for the three greater Norwich Councils for 2015/16 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>£76,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>£365,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>£107,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2013/14 the majority of the DHP budget in greater Norwich was spent on mitigating the effects of the SSSC. In Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk, 64%, 71% and 48% was spent respectively on this welfare reform alone out of the total spend of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>£60,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>£347,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>£143,468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The risk in terms of homelessness in greater Norwich for the future is that if there are further cuts to this budget alongside the lack of available housing that people can downsize into could mean that more people are not able to meet the gap between their rent and shortfall in housing benefit.

5.3 What did the homelessness review tell us?

Young people
There has been an increase in young people becoming homeless and being seen in services that do not traditionally house young people. These young people are more likely to have experienced the care system and/or have faced parental eviction. A recent

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16 HB Circular S1/2015 (DWP, 2015)
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study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies\(^{17}\) suggested that young people were the hardest hit by the recent recession in terms of job prospects when compared to other older age groups. During the period 2008 to 2013, young people aged 16-24 are the most disproportionately affected age group when it comes to all statutory homelessness acceptances in the sub-region:

- Broadland: 35%
- Norwich: 38%
- South Norfolk: 33%

YMCA Norfolk reported in November 2013 that 12 clients received benefit sanctions ranging from 4 to 13 weeks in severity. The majority of their clients were given sanctions for missing appointments or as in one case failure to attend an appointment because they were ill and not providing sick certificates. The majority of clients were forced to apply for hardship loans from the DWP and in some cases they received 40% of their normal benefit payments.

In early 2014, Norfolk County Council’s Children Services launched an improvement plan and is looking to introduce a number of improvements to the services it provides. The improvement plan highlighted that Norfolk has one of the highest rates of “looked after children”\(^{18}\) in the country. As of September 2015 the number of looked after children stood at 1,056. Nationally, there is strong evidence of links between homelessness and young people who have experienced the care system. Over the next three years the County Council are looking to reduce the number of “looked after children” by 300. It is imperative that the three Councils in greater Norwich work closely with Children Services to help the transition from care to independent living.

We also understand that there are a number of young people who are on the ‘edge of care’ who either may be hidden homeless (sofa) or living in supported accommodation within greater Norwich who do not meet the criteria for Children Services. We need to identify them to help make sure that their needs are met.

Children services housing advisor partnership agreement
In 2015 a post was created within Children services to provide a specialist officer who could offer a full range of housing options and advice to Norfolk County Council staff and clients. The post (which initially is for one year) is hoped to provide better outcomes for young people and improved partnership working between district councils and Norfolk County Council.

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\(^{17}\) Living standards, Poverty and Inequality in the UK: 2014 (Institute for Fiscal Studies)

\(^{18}\) A Looked after Child is a child who is accommodated under s20 of the Children Act, subject to a care order under s31 of the Act or who is remanded to the care of the local authority.
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5.3.1 Closure of Social Work Practice at Mancroft Advice Project (MAP)
It was announced in May 2015 that the Social Work Practice based at MAP in Norwich was due to close in September 2015 with the service being brought back in-house to Norfolk County Council Children Services. The practice based in Norwich is the busiest out of all the social work teams in Norfolk. The service specialises in helping young people aged 16 and 17 years in finding care, support and housing solutions. Since the inception of the service in September 2012 it has seen 159 young people, 138 of whom have been prevented becoming homeless. Norfolk County Council will still have a duty to provide this service but it is likely that both Norwich City and South Norfolk councils will see increased numbers of young people approaching their services.

5.3.2 Single homelessness and rough sleeping
There has been an increase of numbers of rough sleepers seen on the streets of Norwich; this reflects what is being seen nationally.

- Over the past two years (12/13 and 13/14) the most common housing status of a person seeking housing advice at Norwich City Council is No Fixed Abode (NFA). This category is likely to include people who are sofa surfing, sleeping rough or living at friends/relatives.

- Increase in numbers of people being seen by homelessness services who are affected by sanctions to their benefit entitlement.

- Increase in the number of people being excluded from services because their needs are too high and complex.

5.3.3 Access to social housing
In July 2014, a report conducted by the DWP, Evaluation of Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy: interim report, found that the SSSC (Social Sector Size Criteria or Bedroom tax) has had a significant impact on social housing waiting lists. The main impact has been around affordability because households claiming help with their housing costs will only be paid according to the number of bedrooms they need. This means that people are accepting larger properties and having to make up the short fall in their weekly rent meaning there is greater pressure on smaller bedroom homes. In particular that single people are finding it increasingly difficult to find one bedroom homes. A recent supported housing audit carried out in May 2014 in greater Norwich found that of those 140 people who were ready to move on, 46 were waiting for social housing.

19 Quarterly report Jan-Mar 2015, (Social work practice, MAP)
20 MOPP (Move on plans protocol) Hostel audit, Norwich City Council, May 2014
5.3.4 Role of housing associations in preventing homelessness

Housing associations are providing an increasing number of homes to rent (and buy) in greater Norwich. As of 2011 there were 13,092 housing association tenancies in greater Norwich; a 28% increase from 2001\(^{21}\). These providers offer a wide range of services that help sustain their tenants in their homes including:

- tenancy support
- financial inclusion services
- tackling worklessness
- family support services (mediation)

5.3.5 Private rented sector (PRS), local housing allowance and housing benefit

The number of possession claims made by landlords has not kept pace with the extensive growth in the private rented sector market in greater Norwich, however one in five of all homelessness contacts at City Hall are from people who are living in the private rented sector.

When the Census was carried out in 2011 there were 5,532 family households (including lone parents) living in the private rented sector with dependent children in greater Norwich, compared to 2,532 in the 2001 Census. Whilst there has been considerable growth in the private rented sector overall, this growth shows families that are unable to buy homes or gain access to the affordable housing sector. Using DWP data we know that as of May 2011, 43% (2,341) of the above households were obtaining help with their housing costs through local housing allowance. There is the potential that if landlords choose to stop letting to families in receipt of benefits that there is increased statutory homelessness in the future and extra pressure may be placed on social housing waiting lists.

From 2011, the Coalition government introduced as part of a number of reforms that reduced Local Housing Allowance (LHA) from the 50\(^{th}\) percentile in a Broad Market Rental Area to the 30\(^{th}\) percentile of BMRA rents in a local area. There is evidence in Norwich that there has been a 6% reduction (from May 12 to May 14) in the numbers of households in receipt of LHA.\(^{22}\) Numbers of people in receipt of LHA in Broadland and South Norfolk have remained stable. Representatives of private landlords (the Residential

\(^{21}\) Tenure by household composition, DC4101EW (ONS,2011).
\(^{22}\) DWP, Stat Xplorer.
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Landlords Association (RLA)) gave evidence to a DWP study\(^{23}\) that landlords in the PRS were becoming increasingly reluctant to let to HB recipients. The RLA reported that since there had been a reduction in LHA they had seen an increase in arrears.

In comparison, over the past five years (May 09 and May 14) the number of housing benefit claimants as a whole (including the social rented sector) in greater Norwich has increased by nearly 9%.

Over the same time period there has been a considerable increase (76%, from 1,291 to 2,199) in the number of people who are working and claiming LHA in greater Norwich. This suggests that rents may be increasing and/or people need LHA to top up the low wages they receive.

5.3.6 Mortgage repossessions
Since the national peak in mortgage repossessions in 2008 we have seen considerable falls in the level of mortgage possession claims in the UK. The first quarter of 2014 (January to March) represented the lowest figure in over a decade. The main reasons for this are:

- lower interest rates
- relatively lower levels of unemployment compared to previous recessionary periods
- introduction of the Mortgage Pre-action Protocol (MPAP) which led to more proactive approaches to dealing with mortgage arrears between lenders, consumers and courts
- introduction of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme

Despite the above factors, (using Ministry of Justice calculations\(^{24}\)) we can estimate that in 2008-12 (in greater Norwich) there were between 300 to 470 homes repossessed by county court bailiffs. As previously mentioned there are concerns that if there is a return to unsustainable lending by mortgage companies, rising interest rates, capital shortages on interest only mortgages coming to an end, and the removal of the mortgage rescue scheme, we could see an increase in the numbers of homeowners at risk of losing their home.

5.3.7 Statutory homelessness
In the sub-region there was a peak in the numbers of people accepted (337 out of 667 applications) as being homeless and in priority need in 2011/12.

\(^{23}\) Monitoring the impact of changes to the Local Housing Allowance system of Housing Benefit (DWP, 2013)
\(^{24}\) Page 9, Mortgage and Landlord possession statistics quarterly January to March 2014 (Ministry of Justice, 2014)
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Nationally since 2004 there has been a downward trend in the use of temporary accommodation; December 2011 marked the end to this downward trend. Locally, all three councils saw rises in their use of temporary accommodation (at the end of each quarter) during the following year. Since then both Norwich and South Norfolk have seen their levels drop whilst there has continued to be an upward trend in Broadland’s figures up until the end of 2013. The trend in Broadland can be attributed to a number of factors including:

- lack of availability of affordable social (including new build) and private accommodation;
- prohibitive travel costs because of the rural nature of the district;
- lack of available supported housing schemes in the district;
- high rate of domestic abuse presentations.

With the above factors combined this can mean for someone who cannot remain in their own home, moving them on is very difficult.

5.4 Non-statutory homelessness prevention 2008-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broadland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over the five year period Broadland has recorded <strong>1,522</strong> cases of where homelessness was either prevented or relieved outside of the statutory homelessness framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of these <strong>1,522</strong> cases, <strong>908</strong> (59.65%) were preventions and <strong>614</strong> (40.34%) were cases of relief. In 2012/13, the English average was 90% and 10% respectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of the <strong>908</strong> prevention cases <strong>517</strong> (56.93%) households were assisted to remain in their own home. In 2012/13, the English average was 52%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most common tool used to help people remain in their own home was through advice and mortgage rescue interventions. This tool accounts for <strong>114</strong>, (23%) of these <strong>517</strong> cases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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25 In 2014/15 five mortgage rescues took place.

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**Norwich**

Over the five year period Norwich has recorded 3,071 cases where homelessness was either prevented or relieved outside of the statutory homelessness framework.

Of these 3,071 cases, 2,640 (85.96%) were preventions and 431 (14.03%) were cases of relief. In 2012/13, the English average was 90% and 10% respectively.

Of the 2,640 prevention cases 431 (16.32%) households were assisted to remain in their own home. In 2012/13, the English average was 52%.

The most common tool used to help people remain in their own home was through providing other assistance like landlord/tenant negotiation. This tool accounts for 53, (21.99%) of these 241 cases. The next most was the use of homeless prevention fund payments. This tool accounts for 48, (19.91%) of these cases.

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**South Norfolk**

Over the five year period South Norfolk has recorded 1,722 cases of where homelessness was either prevented or relieved outside of the statutory homelessness framework.

Of these 1,722 cases, 1,553 (90.18%) were preventions and 169 (9.81%) were cases of relief. In 2012/13, the English average was 90% and 10% respectively.

Of the prevention 1,722 cases 428 (24.85%) households were assisted to remain in their own home. In 2012/13, the English average was 52%.
In 2009-13 the most common tool used to help people remain in their own home was through debt advice, this accounted for 220 (72.13%) of these 305 cases. The next most common tool used was crisis intervention, this accounted for 24, (7.86%) of these cases.

### 5.5 Key homelessness challenges

In 2003 the then government released a paper ‘More than a Roof – a new approach to tackling homelessness.’ It recognised that the causes of homelessness were wide reaching and may not be down to one single reason. Some of the key causes where recognised as:

- Lack of affordable housing
- State of the housing market
- Personal issues with the individual or their family

With the lack of affordable housing being built in the last three decades there have been an increasing number of people living in the private rented sector to a higher level than ever before. This has meant that more households are not able to enjoy the same level of tenure security that other types of housing such as social and in some cases home ownership. It has also meant that due to this demand, rents in the private rented sector have also risen making it especially difficult for those households that need help with their housing costs.

There is strong evidence that people leaving institutions such as prison, hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, and young people leaving care are still vulnerable to social exclusion that can often lead to homelessness. All homelessness services in Greater Norwich have evidence of people from these backgrounds seeking our help.

#### 5.5.1 Broadland

Some of the key homelessness challenges in Broadland are:

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26 Breakdown of 2008/09 figures for how households were assisted to remain in their home are incorrect.
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- funding cuts to partner agencies;
- the ending of the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme is likely to make it harder to prevent homelessness;
- the maturation of many interest only mortgages will have a disproportionate effect in Broadland due to the high rate of owner occupation and the typically older age demographic;
- addressing issues with particularly vulnerable homeless people;
- access to supported housing provision and effective move on options to remedy silting up of this provision;
- older people: asset rich and income poor; fuel poverty; isolation; support and care needs; under occupation and upkeep of properties; and vulnerability to crime;
- young people including care leavers (addressing chronic undersupply of acceptable and affordable accommodation for low income singles);
- helping young people address influencing factors for becoming and remaining Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET); accessing education, services and support; rural transport;
- improving relationships with partners including Children's Services; and
- changes to legal provision for domestic abuse cases is of particular concern due to our high number of presentations.

5.5.2 Norwich

Some of the key homelessness challenges in Norwich are:

- increasing pressure on front line services such as supported accommodation at a time when funding and resources are being reduced;
- the impact of restriction to access welfare benefits and housing, causing real hardship to families and individuals. For example, we have seen an increase in the number of people who have no recourse to public funds who are fleeing domestic abuse;
- lack of provision for particularly chaotic and multiple need clients;
- increasing numbers of rough sleepers on our streets (mirroring national increases);
- increase in youth homelessness caused by family breakdown and economic hardship through unemployment and welfare sanctions;
- closure of Social Work Practice at MAP in Norwich will increase pressure on front line services;
- increase in the number of landlords willing to let to people who need help with their housing costs through housing benefit;
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- further depletion of affordable housing stock through increased discounts through Right to Buy;
- increasing numbers of families claiming housing benefit with dependent children living in the private rented sector;
- potential increase in youth homelessness when young people (aged 21 and under) are restricted from claiming certain welfare benefits such as LHA or housing benefit;
- economic pressure on working age households’ income who are affected by the SSSC (or opponents call it bedroom tax) who are unable to ‘downsize’ to smaller properties.

5.5.3 South Norfolk

Some of the key homelessness challenges in South Norfolk are:
- the risk of unemployment is a significant consideration to customers - the impact of losing income gained via employment can quickly result in homelessness;
- increasing use of the private rented sector to meet local housing need;
- understanding our homeless customers and their journey is limited, we do not have proper understanding of what it means to be homeless in Greater Norwich and the impact on the health and wellbeing of an individual and on other services;
- children and young people are particularly vulnerable to experiencing homelessness - finding the most appropriate way to meet these complex and specific needs is our key challenge in assisting this group;
- addressing the use of B&B to accommodate homeless households and to improve the quality and reduce the cost of the temporary accommodation service;
- ensuring customers in temporary accommodation have their support needs met;
- South Norfolk is a large and rural district - transport links, lack of telephone signal and broadband connection can make it difficult for people to contact the Council;
- to work with partners so the risk of homelessness is identified at an early stage and;
- to ensure that customers receive support appropriate for them, to regain their independence at the earliest opportunity;
- South Norfolk have an increasingly ageing population and our challenge is helping them to remain independent in their own home, in a sustainable way;
- there is a shortage of homes, of varying size, across all tenures, particularly in rural areas;
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- maintaining a properly regulated private rented sector where landlords are encouraged and supported to provide good quality homes to local residents;
- homeless people and those at significant risk of homelessness are less likely to access health care.

6. Development of the strategy

To create this strategy, a working group of lead officers from the three local authorities, a representative from the health sector, and a representative from local clinical commissioning groups was formed.

The project group considered the following during the preparation of the draft homelessness strategy:

- homelessness review, trends and issues, both quantitative and qualitative which was developed in 2013 and 14;
- national and local policy, current and proposed;
- feedback and suggestions from the Greater Norwich Homelessness Forum;
- feedback from a stakeholders consultation conference;
- analysis of the outcomes of the previous Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2011-14;
- in South Norfolk partner organisations and internal team members were invited to share their thoughts on recent achievements, challenges for the future and suggestions for future actions during a number of drop in sessions in September 2014.

The Homelessness strategy and action plan were subject to formal consultation between November 2014 and January 2015 for 12 weeks, during which comments were invited from stakeholders and the general public. The working group considered these responses and amended the strategy and action plan where appropriate. A response to the consultation was completed and is available in the appendix of this strategy.
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

Inspiration for the framework of this strategy was drawn from Homeless Link’s document, “A place to Call Your Home; Take a step, help end homelessness”. This document takes a holistic look at homelessness, considering the wider impacts that being without a home can have on an individual and recognises that these wider impacts come at a high cost – both to the individual and to services which seek to minimise the effects of being homeless. Ultimately it is our aim to reduce the chances of this occurring in the first place – prevention is at the heart of the strategy; by using early help approaches we will prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place and where this is not possible we will strive to reduce the likelihood that individuals will suffer long term effects of being homeless.

7. Key achievements from the last strategy

Some of the shared greater Norwich achievements are:

- we refreshed our greater Norwich sub-regional protocol for homeless households with joint training completed;
- introduction of a hostel eviction protocol (‘Off the Street’).

7.1 Broadland

Some of the key achievements in Broadland since the last strategy are:

- we realised the highest level of social development in the past 10 years with over 100 units coming on stream in 2014;
- Forward Court, a purpose built supported housing scheme for 7 young people with low to medium support needs, was opened in summer 2014. This is the only provision of its kind in the Broadland area and has taken many years to secure;
- a Hostels Review project was undertaken. This identified existing supported accommodation projects in the County available to Broadland residents. A detailed Hostels Directory was created. This process has led to new and improved relationships with our voluntary sector partners and has significantly improved access to the limited local supported housing placements for our clients;
- representing the County’s local housing authorities inputting into the development of the new leaving care service;
- introduction of a Private Sector Liaison post leading to improvement of Private Sector Leased stock and increase in stock size. Better quality, suitable temporary accommodation options for single people and families has resulted;
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

- the development of the 'Choices' training scheme for young clients. The course includes formal English and Maths qualifications, employability and employment related certificates, life skills including budgeting and cookery and tenancy management skills;
- we have developed a robust and effective homelessness prevention approach to mortgage arrears by building strong and effective relationships with lenders; offering in-house, specialist debt advice and finding innovative and collaborative solutions to individual households circumstances;
- systems review of the housing service completed which sought to remove wasteful activity and improve client experiences. This is an ongoing process. Benefits to date include:
  o increased customer satisfaction with the service
  o every client approaching the service receives a comprehensive housing options service
  o responsive, demand-informed commissioning of services
  o co-location of allied professionals within the housing service including welfare and debt advice, and domestic abuse specialist support, alongside the Operational Partnership Team, Norfolk Family Focus within the Broadland Early Help hub
  o careful matching of clients to properties makes best use of limited stock and best meets household needs by taking into account factors such as access to education, employment and support
  o review of the ‘priority’ and ‘no priority’ rent deposit schemes resulting in improved collection rates and therefore greater recycling of funds benefiting more clients. We have introduced a grant pot for clients who are able to afford privately rented accommodation but would not be able to afford to repay a loan for the rent in advance and damage deposit costs;
  o ongoing sheltered housing review looking specifically at older clients with a support need and their route through the system
  o ongoing systems review of temporary accommodation.

7.2 Norwich

Some of the key achievements in Norwich since the last strategy are:

- introduced a move-on protocol for young people leaving Children Services care;
- increasing the accessibility of our specialist housing advice services. This has ensured that we are able to provide more specialist advice, help more people and prevent more homelessness than ever before;
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

- expanding our LEAP initiative to address education, accommodation and employment for hostel occupants and ensure a through flow of hostel provision. The project has developed to include GOALS training, peer mentoring services and a community interest company;
- increasing the size of our NCC private sector leasing scheme to help more homeless applicants into accommodation;
- Introduction of a hostel eviction protocol (‘Off the street’);
- focussing our Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to ensure resources are focused on those in most need;
- restructured our housing options service to ensure that specialist advice is available for all clients at first point of contact;
- highlighting the high profile issue of street begging and false perception that this is linked to rough sleeping. As a result a successful ‘Alternative Giving’ campaign was run in December 2013 in partnership with the police and voluntary agencies;
- produced an updated information leaflet and map of services for rough sleepers;
- Co-ordinating a severe weather provision for rough sleepers at times of extreme weather;
- introduced a joint protocol between the council and Children’s Services around families threatened with homelessness;
- working in partnership with St Martins Housing Trust to provide housing for people who need long term supported accommodation because of their frailty and experience of homelessness;
- reviewed our contractual arrangements with agencies who lease Norwich City Council properties, to ensure that the services fit with our overall strategic needs and priorities.

7.3 South Norfolk

Some of the key achievements in South Norfolk since the last strategy are:

- during a time when presentations to the Council for assistance have increased, we have kept preventions and homelessness applications at a stable level by investing time to work with customers at an early stage to prevent their circumstances worsening;
- working closely with SOLO housing, we have built on the success of the lodgings scheme we fund and SOLO have increased the number of landlords engaged in the process, enabling more people to benefit;
- we have introduced a bond scheme, to assist customers who access the private rented sector to meet their housing requirements;
- since 2012 we have been building on our bespoke choice based lettings system, and have tailored it to meet local need more effectively.
Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2015-20

- we have utilised income from the Single Homelessness Prevention Fund, to enable us to be more innovative and creative in finding solutions to avert crisis;
- we are part of a local authority and Children Services partnership with YMCA who deliver Nightstop Plus; this provides short term emergency accommodation for young people with volunteer hosts in a supportive family environment, while family mediation and/or other housing solutions are explored;
- we have access to supported lodgings that are specifically for young people, provided and managed by YMCA;
- we ensure that homeless households moving into temporary accommodation in the area are given a support plan to identify other needs which help that individual or family get on in life, such as in employment and training, and/or health and wellbeing;
- our house build programme is flexible, allowing us to meet local need. In recent times the increased need for 1 bedroom properties has been met through effective negotiation and planning.
- we have introduced a local connection to the area by virtue of employment and provision of or need for care and support. This offers opportunities for growth in the district by encouraging skilled workers into the area to support business. Enabling people to move based on care need allows people to access the support they need without reliance on public services or those which come at a high cost to them and to services;
- we have restructured our services to ensure that specialist advice is available for all customers when they request it and at the earliest opportunity. We have increased accessibility of specialist housing advice services, which has ensured that we are able to provide appropriate and holistic advice, help more people and prevent more homelessness than ever before;
- we continue to work closely with our Revenues and Benefits team to provide a more unified service for customers help with their rent. All parties (including the customer) agree to work together to secure the temporary funding necessary for stability through Discretionary Housing Payments while we provide the debt and housing advice required. This approach ensures that the customer progresses in terms of debt and/or alternative housing for the duration of the DHP award rather than reaching the end of the award and being no further on;
- continuing to deliver increasing numbers of affordable homes year on year. Whilst identifying changing demand and meeting it, by working with developers to ensure that the homes built are addressing needs in the district.
8. How will we know?

Monitoring

We will review this homelessness strategy annually with our partners to make sure that we have a proactive approach to preventing homelessness so that it is responsive to emerging needs.

The actions in this strategy will also be reviewed annually to measure progress, and where required we will revise the challenges and actions to ensure the continued relevance of the document.
9. Glossary of terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Benefit cap</td>
<td>Limit on the total amount of certain benefits you can get if you are working age. The benefit cap affects those households getting housing benefit or Universal Credit. If the cap affects the household; housing benefit or Universal Credit is reduced.</td>
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<td>Broad rental market area (BRMA)</td>
<td>The BRMA is an area defined by the Valuation Office Agency and is an area of residential accommodation within which a person could move and still have access to similar services of a similar standard. Each BRMA has its own set of LHA rates. Your postcode defines which BRMA in which you live.</td>
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<td>Choice based lettings (CBL)</td>
<td>Choice based lettings gives a household the chance to apply for empty council and housing association properties that the council or housing association advertises (Currently Norwich and South Norfolk Council’s operate this system).</td>
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<td>Clinical commissioning group</td>
<td>Clinical commissioning groups are responsible for implementing the commissioning roles as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012.</td>
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<td>Consumer price index (CPI)</td>
<td>A measure of changes in the purchasing-power of a currency and the rate of inflation. The consumer price index expresses the current prices of a basket of goods and services in terms of the prices during the same period in a previous year, to show effect of inflation on purchasing power.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DASH (Domestic abuse, stalking and harassment and honour based violence risk identification, assessment and management model)</td>
<td>Common checklist for identifying and assessing risk for use by practitioners.</td>
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<td>Discretionary housing payments (DHP)</td>
<td>Local housing authorities have the ability to authorise DHP to those who may require some financial assistance in order to meet their housing costs.</td>
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<td>Family intervention project (FIP)</td>
<td>Way of working that has been found effective for improving a range of family functioning issues including anti-social behaviour, non-attendance in education and worklessness.</td>
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<td>Health and Wellbeing</td>
<td>Statutory bodies introduced in England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. According to the</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boards</td>
<td>Act, each upper-tier local authority in England is required to form a Health and Wellbeing Board as a committee of that authority.</td>
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<td>House of multiple occupation (HMO)</td>
<td>A HMO is an entire house or flat which is let to 3 or more tenants who form 2 or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet.</td>
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<td>Joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA)</td>
<td>The means by which CCGs and local authorities describe the future health, care and wellbeing needs of the local populations and to identify the strategic direction of service delivery to meet those needs.</td>
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<td>Let NCC</td>
<td>Norwich City Council’s private sector leasing scheme.</td>
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<td>Local housing allowance (LHA)</td>
<td>Local housing allowance is housing benefit that helps pay the rent if you rent from a private landlord.</td>
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<td>Looked after children</td>
<td>Looked After - a provision made under the Children’s Act 1989 in England and Wales, whereby a local authority / Health and Social Care Trust has obligations to provide for, or share, the care of a child or young person under 16 years of age where parent(s) or guardian(s) for whatever reason are prevented from providing them with a suitable accommodation or care. A child is ‘looked after’ if he or she is provided with accommodation.</td>
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<td>Multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC)</td>
<td>A MARAC is a risk management meeting where professionals share information on high risk cases of domestic violence and abuse and put in place a risk management plan.</td>
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<td>Norwich, Learning Education Accommodation Project (LEAP)</td>
<td>LEAP is an organisation comprised of a partnership with St Martins Housing Trust and Norwich City Council that helps empower people who face homelessness to live a fulfilling life of their choice by providing Independent accommodation and supporting them towards employment.</td>
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<td>Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)</td>
<td>A young person who is no longer in the education system and who is not working or being trained for work.</td>
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<td>No fixed abode (NFA)</td>
<td>A person having no permanent residence.</td>
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<td>SafeLives</td>
<td>SafeLives, is a national charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse. Previously called Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (Caada), we chose our new name because we’re here for one simple reason: to make sure all families are safe.</td>
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<td>Sofa surfing</td>
<td>Staying temporarily with various friends and relatives while attempting to find permanent accommodation.</td>
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<td>Supported lodgings</td>
<td>Supported Lodgings is an accommodation scheme for vulnerable young people aged 16-24 across</td>
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<td>Norfolk. Supported Lodgings provides young people who find themselves with nowhere to live and little to no support network, with a safe, supportive place to stay in the homes of local people.</td>
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<td>Severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP)</td>
<td>People sleeping rough in Norwich can access emergency accommodation and support during periods of exceptionally cold weather through the SWEP. This is activated by a temperature of zero degrees Celsius or lower forecast for at least three consecutive nights.</td>
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<td>Priority</td>
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<td>Priority 1: Target resources to those people who are most at risk of homelessness</td>
<td>Provide training and support for partners in the Early Help Hub ensuring that an appropriate level of multi-agency support is available to customers at an early stage to reduce the risk of financial difficulty leading to homelessness</td>
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<td>Implement and monitor the effectiveness of information sharing protocols with all early help partners to promote the sharing of information</td>
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<td>Formulate multi-agency working processes through the delivery and facilitation of Early Intervention Panels providing a forum for sharing of information relating to specific cases where children and young people and families may need additional support</td>
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<td>Review temporary accommodation provision to ensure that this is fit for purpose and most cost effective for the district</td>
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<td>Early Help Hub ensuring that an appropriate level of multi-agency support is available to customers at an early stage to reduce the risk of financial difficulty leading to homelessness.</td>
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<td>Review Service Level Agreements with advice and guidance services to provide an increased emphasis on prevention outcomes</td>
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<td>Introduce a housing pathway for clinicians and customers for mental health and learning difficulties.</td>
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<td>Link the pathway with provision for residents with learning difficulties and dementia to enable it to provide a holistic single Mental Health and Learning Difficulties Pathway</td>
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<td>Priority 2: Helping people find affordable, safe, good quality housing</td>
<td>Provide training to private sector landlords to improve the capacity of the private rented sector to meet housing need</td>
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<td>Deliver the Affordable Housing policy set out in the local plan</td>
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<td>Conduct a review of Housing Options in December 2015 and make improvements to the service based on the learning from this review</td>
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<td>Review the Home Options scheme to ensure customers are able to secure housing that meets their needs</td>
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<td>Review temporary accommodation provision to ensure that this is fit for purpose and most cost effective for the district</td>
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<td>Priority 3: Working better together with partners, so that we can work in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness.</td>
<td>Work to promote better access to health services for people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness (Greater Norwich action)</td>
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<td>Produce literature to be made available within bed and breakfast temporary accommodation giving information to residents on health provision locally.</td>
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<td>Conduct a gap analysis of homelessness prevention education delivered through schools, colleges and youth organisations (Greater Norwich Action)</td>
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<td>Where appropriate, we will work together on bids for funding that help towards the prevention of homelessness (Greater Norwich Action)</td>
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<td>Develop a stronger evidence base of the health needs of people who are homeless (Greater Norwich Action)</td>
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<td>Evaluate the effectiveness of our &quot;move on&quot; contracts and act upon any recommendations arising.</td>
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<td>Work with support providers to aid the development of tenancy awareness programmes to help ensure that people moving into homes are tenancy ready.</td>
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<td>Review and update our website to enable partners and customers to easily access the information and to contact us where necessary.</td>
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<td>Develop a protocol in partnership with housing providers to reduce the likelihood of evictions from social housing.</td>
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<td>Establish a forum for South Norfolk housing providers</td>
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<td>Priority 4: Helping people develop independent living skills, maintain or regain their independence to reduce the risk of someone becoming homeless in the future.</td>
<td>Where properties do not meet customer need, assist the owners, tenants and landlords to make adaptations or find alternative, suitable accommodation.</td>
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<td>Review Integrated Early Intervention services such as Care &amp; Repair and Handyperson to assess the impact they are having on reducing demand on acute services.</td>
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<td>Conduct a cost benefit analysis of these services to establish the financial impact that measures to improve independence have had on wider services.</td>
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<td>In partnership with the CCG develop and deliver an enhanced service to assist people affected by Dementia to live independently at home.</td>
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