



# GREATER NORWICH HOUSING PARTNERSHIP HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2011-2014

## ACTION PLAN

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**FINAL 16 June 2011**

### Strategic Aims

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

### Notes:

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





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**ACTION PLAN**

**STRATEGIC AIM 1: Deliver early intervention to prevent homelessness**

No.	Action	Milestone	Link to Strategic Aims	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes	Progress/ Comments
1A	Enable those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and not in education, training or employment (NEET) to engage in meaningful activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build links and referral routes with voluntary sector, statutory services, DWP, education, IAG and training services.</li> <li>Amend housing options letters to signpost people to volunteering, educational and work</li> </ul>	1,2,3,4	Apr 2012 – Mar 2013  Mar 2013 – Apr 2014	LA Team Leaders  LA Team Leaders	Reduced risk of repeat homelessness.  Wider evidence base available for hostel move on.	



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		<p>based learning, along with employment and training opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree and build links between the proposed Certificate of Merit in Supported Housing and the Home Options move on protocol.</li> </ul>		Apr 2011 – Jul 2011	Steering Group and Space East		Launch could depend on provision of initial funding.
1B	Carry out a review of existing early intervention tools against the main causes of homelessness and review our use of them to learn from successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map tools used against P1E outcomes</li> <li>Map and review tools and services, and benchmark best practice</li> </ul>	1,2,3,4	<p>Sept 2011 - Feb 2012</p> <p>Mar – April 12</p>	<p>LA Team Leaders</p> <p>Steering Group</p>	<p>Tools used meet current needs.</p> <p>Reduction in repeat homelessness.</p>	



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		across the homelessness sector  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement recommended actions from benchmarking report</li> </ul>		May 2012 onwards	LA Team Leaders		
1C	Build on and expand our means of communicating with our customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the NCAN mapping project and any future update of the Space East Housing and Support Directory.</li> <li>Carry out a sample survey of customers after 6 months to see if they have acted on advice and</li> </ul>	2	Led by NCAN  Oct – Nov 2011	LA Team Leaders  LA Team Leaders	Improved partnership working  Strengths and weaknesses of the service established and service improved.	



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		<p>intervention given and, if so, how successful these were.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the results of the survey sample to identify where communication needs to be improved and agree improvement plan.</li> <li>Establish pre-tenancy education schemes across the GNHP, where recent mapping exercise indicates there</li> </ul>		<p>Dec 2011</p> <p>Apr 2011 – Mar 2012</p>	<p>LA Team Leaders</p> <p>Steering Group</p>	<p>Advice services in the sub-region improved and consistency of approach and delivery established.</p> <p>Homelessness prevented through tenancy sustainment.</p> <p>More effective and targeted promotion of options available to customers.</p> <p>Customers are enabled to</p>	<p>This could require additional resources.</p>



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		<p>are gaps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate people about legislative and policy changes, showing them their options in, eg. HB / under-occupation moves</li> </ul>		In response to changes	LA Team Leaders and Steering Group	make informed housing decisions.	This will be co-ordinated with Revenues and Benefits teams.



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**STRATEGIC AIM 2: Placing the customer at the centre of service delivery**

No.	Action	Milestone	Link to Strategic Aims	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes	Progress/ Comments
2A	Increase customer involvement in shaping our services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="680 671 943 1182">• Actively engage with service user groups, Accessing Home Options Group and the Homelessness Forum when developing policy, guidance, surveys and literature.</li> <li data-bbox="680 1230 943 1437">• Continue to develop and carry out annual housing advice</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3.	<p data-bbox="1133 671 1312 735">Apr 2011 onwards</p> <p data-bbox="1133 1222 1312 1286">Feb annually</p>	<p data-bbox="1335 671 1536 959">Steering Group and Team Leaders and Home Options Partnership Manager.</p> <p data-bbox="1335 1222 1536 1286">Team Leaders</p>	<p data-bbox="1570 671 1749 735">Customer satisfaction.</p> <p data-bbox="1570 783 1749 879">Services are relevant and inclusive.</p> <p data-bbox="1570 927 1749 991">Policies are robust.</p>	



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		surveys including 'catch up' mid-year surveys  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commence and develop homelessness customer satisfaction surveys including more detailed and specific surveys within larger temporary housing schemes where required.</li> </ul>		Apr 2011 onwards	Team Leaders		
2B	Improve service delivery based on feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate the outcomes of the customer</li> </ul>	1,2	Apr 2012 and Apr 2013	Steering Group	Responsive and robust Action Plan.	





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		satisfaction surveys and engagement with service user groups into the homelessness strategy action plan annual update.				Ensure clients are enabled to make informed housing decisions.	
2C	Improve communication through the development and delivery of a communication plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with HB teams to communicate with service users in preparing for the changes to HB etc – ‘Awareness campaign’ of changes, and routes for help available</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4	In response to legislation.	Steering Group with HB team leaders.	Range of ways we provide information expanded  Customers and partners receive the necessary information to enable them to make informed	



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent approach and guidance to assessment of Home Options applications where there are rent arrears or a history of anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Consistent approach to communicating decisions to homelessness applicants</li> <li>• Work with district community teams and support agencies to</li> </ul>		<p>Apr – Sept 2011</p> <p>Sept 2011 – Sept 2012</p>	<p>Home Options Managers</p> <p>Team Leaders</p>	<p>choices.</p> <p>Best and consistent practice is adopted across the sub-region.</p> <p>Clearly communicated decisions to customers.</p> <p>Fewer review requests.</p>	



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No.	Action	Milestone	Link to Strategic Aims	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes	Progress/ Comments
		develop innovative ways to promote and advertise services and improve signposting, in relation to hard to reach groups					



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**STRATEGIC AIM 3: Maximising resources and effective partnership working**

No.	Action	Milestone	Link to Strategic Aims	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes	Progress/ Comments
3A	Continue ongoing development of front-line staff of all agencies working with homeless and vulnerably housed people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a structured job shadowing programme across the sector.</li> <li>Promote the opportunity to join the SNC-led training programme to those not already engaged in housing.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4	Apr 2012 – Mar 2013  Sept 2011 then annually	Steering Group.  SNC	<p>Increased awareness and knowledge of partner services.</p> <p>Increased knowledge of housing ad allocations law and practice.</p> <p>Good working relationships across organisations.</p>	These courses are self financing
3B	Actively seek engagement with key services and partners who could assist with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify services that may come into early contact with clients threatened with homelessness</li> </ul>	1,2, 3	Sept 2011 – Mar 2012	Steering Group	Early identification and prevention of homelessness.	



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	homelessness prevention	<p>and develop an engagement plan, considering what works well in other areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop closer links with LSPs, and seek the adoption of homelessness strategy aims into their sustainable community strategies</li> <li>• Actively engage in and contribute to the delivery of county 'client group' strategies (under 4: Strategic Framework)</li> <li>• Work with commissioners and</li> </ul>		<p>Apr 2011 – onwards</p> <p>Apr 2011 onwards</p>	<p>Steering Group</p> <p>Steering Group</p> <p>Steering Group</p>	<p>Value of homelessness prevention services demonstrated.</p> <p>Sustainable housing and holistic solutions for vulnerable 'client groups'</p> <p>Ensure the young person is housed</p>	



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		other housing services to agree, implement and monitor the new Youth Homelessness protocol			and Team Leaders	in suitable accommodation with relevant support	
3C	Share resources across the sub-region and learn from good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a framework for sub-regional use of temporary accommodation.</li> <li>Identify additional opportunities for partners to share time, office space and other resources.</li> <li>Deliver HAALO Action Plan.</li> <li>Act on results from HAALO</li> </ul>	2, 3,	Sept 11 – Mar 2012  Apr 2011 onwards  Apr 2011 – Mar 2012  Jun 2011 – Mar 2012	Housing Options Managers  Steering Group  Housing Options Managers and Team Leaders	VFM and wider availability of resources.  Better use of resources and partnership working.  Consistency of service delivery, VFM and homelessness prevented.	



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		benchmarking exercise.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and highlight opportunities for shared services across the sub-region.</li> <li>• Formulate and agree an approach to discharging the homelessness duty into the private rented sector.</li> </ul>		Apr 2011 onwards  Within 3 months of enactment of the Localism Bill.	Housing Options Managers  Housing Options Managers	Consistency of service delivery, VFM  Consistency of approach. Customers housed appropriately.	
3D	Review Greater Norwich Sub-Regional Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review effectiveness of existing protocol</li> <li>• Make amendments if required.</li> <li>• Set up programme of</li> </ul>		Apr 2011 – Sept 2011	Housing Options Managers	Improved customer experience	



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		on-going refresher training					
3E	Work with strategic partners to maximise the funding opportunities for homelessness services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore other means of maximising funding opportunities including shared services.</li> <li>Contribute to key commissioning mechanisms.</li> </ul>	1,3,4	Sept 2011 onwards	Steering Group and Strategic Leads	Funding opportunities maximised for preventative projects.	
3F	Create a GNHP Homelessness Strategy and action plan for future years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a project team.</li> <li>Agree Project Plan</li> <li>Carry out a homelessness review</li> <li>Implement Project Plan.</li> </ul>	1,2,3 & 4	Oct 2012  Oct 2012  Nov 2012 – Mar 2013	Steering Group	A well-planned and co-ordinated follow on to the previous strategy.	





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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a new Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan.</li> <li>• Monitor quarterly and update existing action plan annually</li> </ul>		<p>Apr 2014</p> <p>Quarterly</p>			



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**STRATEGIC AIM 4: Providing a wide range of sustainable housing solutions to people at risk of being homeless**

No.	Action	Milestone	Link to Strategic Aims	Timescale	Responsibility	Outcomes	Progress/ Comments
4A	Review Home Options policy to maximise use of existing stock through innovative solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Home Options policy to identify most effective approach to downsizing / under-occupation (see 2c above). Compare with successful schemes and innovative approaches.</li> <li>Explore best use of stock in relation to Mutual Exchanges – promote scheme and benefits. Consider making the links to House Exchange more intelligent and</li> </ul>	2, 4	Sept 2011 – Sept 2012  Sept 2012 – Sept 2013	Home Options Managers  Home Options Operational Group	Existing stock used effectively  Mobility of social housing tenants increased.	



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		targeted.					
4B	Improve pathways into housing for customers with accessibility needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make better use of limited resources by working with the home options landlords to ensure the accessibility rating in properties is correct.</li> <li>• Ensure that the accessibility rating of customers is assessed and input on Home Options.</li> <li>• Create a mechanism for the early identification and pre-advertising of forthcoming vacancies of adapted properties</li> </ul>		<p>Apr – Jul 2011</p> <p>Apr – Jul 2011</p> <p>Apr – Jul 2011</p>	<p>Home Options Operational Group</p> <p>Home Options Managers</p> <p>Home Options Operational Group</p>	<p>More accurate linking of those in need to suitable accessible properties.</p> <p>Good use of existing stock.</p> <p>Improved housing outcomes for those with accessibility needs.</p>	
4C	Reduce barriers that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with HAALO to</li> </ul>		Apr 2011	Housing	Contribution	



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	limit access to accommodation.	extend the PPO re-housing scheme across the county  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Home Options policy for 16/17 year olds.</li> </ul>		– Mar 2012  Oct – Dec 2012	Options Managers  Home Options Team Leaders	towards crime reduction.  Increase in housing options	
4D	Improve access to the Private rented sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Home Options to advertise private rented properties</li> <li>Review PSL schemes and their cost effectiveness</li> </ul>	3, 4	Jan 2012 – Jan 2013  Jul – Sep 2013	Home Options Operational group  Steering Group	Increased choice for Home Options applicants.  Improved relationships with private landlords.  Value for money delivered by PSL schemes.	

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



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

Chris Hancock, Housing Strategy Officer, Norwich City Council, Tel 01603 212884.