

Review of Halton's
Homelessness Strategy
2013-2018
September 2015

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Section One: Introduction

Halton’s Homelessness Strategy for the period 2013 to 2018 set out the key challenges, objectives and priorities for tackling homelessness in Halton; this report presents a review of the progress made against the objectives, now that we have reached the mid-point of the strategy period, and also examines some of the challenges we will face over the coming years.

The vision of the Homelessness Strategy is *“to assist and prevent people who are threatened with homelessness in Halton. To provide a community focussed and accessible service to ensure people know where and how they can seek help and assistance to prevent them becoming homeless and receive a quality and confidential housing options service.”*

The aims of the strategy are to:

- Reduce homelessness presentations and acceptances; and
- Increase and improve homelessness prevention and access to housing services.

Displayed in the table below are some key statistics taken from the ‘P1E’ statutory data returns that local authority homelessness services make to Communities & Local Government (CLG). It is evident that although homelessness presentations are increasing (which is most likely due to prevailing economic conditions/welfare reform etc. and will be replicated in many local authority areas), actual acceptances are decreasing alongside a significant increase in homelessness prevention and relief work (i.e. where households are assisted by the local authority to remain in their home or find alternative accommodation).

	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12
Statutory homeless presentations	249	197	168	154
Statutory homeless acceptances	42	46	86	64
Homelessness prevention/relief	798	744	431	492

The individual objectives and corresponding priorities being addressed by the strategy are outlined in the Strategy Action Plan (see Section Four of this report) along with a progress update.

Some of the key achievements already realised through implementation of the Strategy include:

- Housing & Support Gateway in operation;
- Southwark Protocol reviewed;
- Dedicated posts within Housing Solutions – Youth Officer and Mortgage Rescue Scheme/Rent Arrears Officer;
- Housing Solutions leaflets/guides reviewed and updated;
- GIFT initiative (home essential items assistance scheme) extended to 18-35 year-olds (previously ages 18-25);
- Re-configuration of hostel provision;
- Access to suitable accommodation prioritised; and
- Continued provision of a high quality statutory and preventative homelessness service.

Section Two: Homelessness Forum 5th June 2015

The Housing Solutions Team organise an annual Homelessness Forum to bring together the various departments, agencies and organisations involved in preventing and responding to homelessness in Halton.

The most recent event took place on 5th June 2015 and consisted of a series of presentations from key service areas and workshops focussing on some of the prevalent issues facing homelessness in Halton.

The key messages arising out of workshop discussions are outlined below; these themes will provide a steer for some of the homelessness prevention activity over the coming years:

Health and homelessness

- Both mental and physical health need to be considered;
- Drug and alcohol misuse is prevalent within in Halton;
- Benefit sanctions are having an added impact;
- Prevention and early intervention is key;
- A single point of entry would mean people wouldn't have to tell their story again and again;
- Professionals need access to one source of up-to-date information;
- Joint working with healthcare professionals is needed;
- Service users' voices need to be heard (maybe through the use of an advocate);
- Current examples of good practice – drop-in housing advice at the Brooker Centre and sexual health clinics at the YMCA.

Housing and future challenges

- Current challenges relate to benefits, budgeting, rent in advance, the cost of furniture, anti-social behaviour, shortage of properties and professionals being 'overloaded';
- Possible solutions could include buddying/peer support schemes, pre-tenancy workshops, more face-to-face/drop-in services and building more one-bed properties.

Private rented sector and affordability

- Examples of positive experiences in accessing the private rented sector – Bond Guarantee Scheme and Gift Initiative (both Housing Solutions), white goods via United Utilities and Butle Trust, Plus Dane SHAP tenancy support, bonds/financial support from the British Legion;
- Incentivising shared accommodation – networking for potential clients to meet, social media, promotion of positive stories.

Youth homelessness – bridging the gap

- Early intervention before crisis is reached is vital;
- Mediation and educating parents is important;
- Young people need to be aware of the reality of temporary accommodation and myths surrounding being in care need to be dispelled;
- Respite services offering a 'cooling-off' period would be beneficial;
- Agencies need a better understanding/awareness of other agencies and what they do;
- Services need to be tailored to an individual's needs;
- Monthly multi-agency panel meetings would be a good way to deal with complex cases.

Section Three: Future Challenges

Over the remainder of the strategy period, the following challenges will be a priority for the Housing Solutions Team, working in partnership with other council departments and partner organisations:

- Continue to provide a high quality statutory and preventative homelessness service alongside reduced funding levels and increasing presentations (15-20% increase anticipated);
- Work towards achievement of the 'gold standard';
- Prepare for the peer review in January 2016;
- Respond effectively to the implications of various welfare reforms;
- Implement the Youth Strategy;
- Manage the increased pressure created by the recent Supreme Court Judgement relating to the assessment of 'vulnerability' in determining qualification for priority need – it is anticipated that this new ruling will increase the numbers owed a statutory duty and also temporary accommodation placements as a result.
- Meet future challenges and work with Local Authorities across the North West to address asylum and Syrian crisis.

Section Four: Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 Action Plan – September 2015 Update

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness						
Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
1A: Develop and co-ordinate services to deliver a comprehensive approach towards homelessness and prevention	Review/ improve current homelessness prevention using CLG toolkit.	2014	PHO, Health & Social Care Commissioner	Officer time, P1E, CLG Homelessness Grant	Robust framework measuring effectiveness of interventions. Develop and implement the Action Plan recommendations.	Ongoing Implemented Mainstay electronic system to measure agency intervention & outcomes Peer Review will form part of action plan to progress service development.
	Adopt a corporate commitment to reduce and prevent homelessness in which all Local Authority services are involved.	2015 Over strategy period	Merseyside and Cheshire sub-regional groups, Health & Social Care	CLG sub-regional Prevention Fund. P1E	Joint approach to develop and implement quality and cost-effective services across neighbouring authorities.	Complete Sub-regional services developed and implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSNO • PRSO • Mainstay • Pan Merseyside Bond Scheme • Hospital Discharge Protocol • Complex needs team • Case Law literature / statutory letters
	Review mechanisms to introduce meaningful and cost-effective satisfaction and customer experience feedback – including independent facilitation.	Annually Over strategy period	PHO, Policy Officer (Communities)	Officer and staff time, CLG Homelessness Grant	Improve listening and learning from homelessness people to further develop; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community focused service • Procedural practice • Service provision • Accessibility • Integrated partnership approach to improve service delivery. 	Complete Increased community focused service – multi-agency approach i.e. hospital discharge, youth protocol etc. Reviewed and improved procedural practice to meet future trends. Increased drop in advice services across the district to ensure service more accessible. Formulated integrated partnership approach across a number of client group services. Homelessness Forum event formulated to consult with all partner agencies.

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Increase awareness of realistic housing options for agencies working with homeless clients.	Quarterly via regular partnership meetings	PHO Housing Solutions team	Officer and staff time. P1E	Identify gaps and actions from trends and changes, promoting wider public awareness of homelessness and supply and demand for social housing. Improved partnership working with accommodation providers to improve prevention outcomes and comply with contract requirements.	Complete Improved partnership working to tackle the wider context of homelessness. Increased drop in advice sessions within agencies across the district to promote joined up approach and consistency. Contractual reviews conducted on quarterly basis to identify prevention outcomes and good practice.
	Continue to work with Supported Accommodation providers to strengthen prevention outcomes and 'move on' processes.	Over the strategy period	PHO, SDO, Accommodation Providers	Officer time, CLG Prevention Fund, P1E	Develop housing pathways with key partners and client groups that include appropriate accommodation and support to promote independent living.	Complete Scrutiny review of accommodation and support services. Revised services and contracts to promote efficiencies that would offer tailored services to meet identified client needs, i.e. separate units to temporarily house complex needs clients. Pathway plans in place to work with all agencies to promote independent living and sustainable move on for clients.
1B: Develop a marketing plan with partners to raise awareness of the Housing Solutions service to ensure that the homelessness services strive to meet the National	Revise procedures, staff awareness and training to incorporate any policy and legislative changes.	Over the strategy period	PHO, Policy Officer, HST	Officer time, training fund, P1E	Maximise homelessness prevention by 10%.	Ongoing The Housing Solutions Team has continued to utilise all tools available to prevent homelessness. Performance activity monitored quarterly.
	Review best practice and performance to strive towards continual improvement to meet the Gold Standard.	2014/15	Commissioning, PHO, SDO, Policy Officer	Officer time, sub-regional groups	Fully utilise all resources and develop new initiatives to offer choice and prevent future homelessness.	Complete As above.

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
Gold Standard	Deliver a programme of training to promote homelessness prevention and the impact of Localism and Welfare Reform with partners.	Quarterly Over Strategy Period	PHO, Homelessness Forum, Partners	Regular strategic partnership meetings, NHAS	Participate in national benchmarking to improve service planning and ensure cost effectiveness of homelessness services.	Complete Halton regularly involved in sub regional bench marking exercise. Halton also works in partnership with NHAS who will be conducting peer review process.
	Develop Gateway for homeless accommodation and support services.	May 2014	Commissioning, PHO, SDO, Capita	CLG Sub Regional Funding	Increase the number of key agencies accessing homelessness training. Gaining better understanding of the service, the applied processes and priorities.	Complete Homelessness training made available and completed with most agencies. The Housing Solutions team also attend various agencies to outline legal and procedural service changes.
	Develop and implement information recording and evidence base for homelessness.	2014	PHO, SDO, Capita	SP Budget, P1E	Improved data recording and access to develop accelerated process to accommodation and support services. Maximised efficiency of recording systems to collect homeless data to monitor trends that will inform future policy and service development.	Complete Mainstay accommodation and support system implemented in October 2014. All providers registered and fully utilising system, which has reduced level of repeat referrals etc. Homelessness database Capita due to be implemented October 2015.
1C: Promote a range of prevention options, including the GIFT initiative, prevention fund, and mortgage rescue scheme to enable clients to remain within their homes	Review and promote GIFT scheme initiative and make available to clients aged 18-35.	2013/14	PHO HST.	CLG Home Grant. P1E	Increase access to funding to enable homeless clients to take up and sustain new tenancies. 55 applications 2011/12 to increase annually by 5%.	Complete Prevention fund increased to assist clients into sustainable accommodation. 442 Applications 2014/15 achieved.
	Continue the delivery of Mortgage Repossession Prevention Scheme.	Over the strategy period	Commissioning, PHO, MRS Officer	Officer time, SP Budget CLG Homelessness Grant	Undertake advertising campaign to raise awareness of MRS and prevention options. Annual increase in number of households accessing mortgage rescue and advice by 10% to prevent and reduce homelessness.	Ongoing MRS Funding ceased 2014, though HBC continues to successfully assist homeowners. Designated officer attends court hearings and court action group to raise awareness of service provision and options.

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
1D: Respond to and prevent rough sleeping	Review impact of the 'No Second Night out' outreach service.	Annually	PHO, Merseyside sub-regional group Whitechapel	CLG sub-regional, budget, P1E	Reduction in number of new rough sleepers spending 2 nd night on the streets.	Complete Annual rough sleepers count indicates less than 5 clients sleeping rough. NSNO proved very successful in tackling rough sleeping on a sub-regional basis.
	Review operational procedures to ensure they are consistent and clear to all sub-regional authorities.	Quarterly	PHO, Merseyside sub-regional group Whitechapel	Officer time, Merseyside sub-regional budget	Rough sleepers with no local connection are reconnected to services in their local area.	Complete As part of NSNO a reconnection policy in place to ensure rough sleepers are reconnected to their local area.
	Develop and implement services to tackle issues of habitual rough sleepers.	2014	PHO, Health & Social Care, sub-regional partners	Staff time, CLG sub-regional budget	An assertive, personalised approach to target habitual rough sleepers and empower them to access alternative accommodation options.	Complete Pan Merseyside Bond Scheme offers a tailored service to empower rough sleepers into sustainable accommodation.
	Improve pathways through supported accommodation for former rough sleepers.	Over the strategy period	PHO, SDO, Whitechapel	Officer time	Improved move on options from supported hostel accommodation, with a constant review to deliver and achieve positive outcomes.	Ongoing Revised contractual agreements with providers proving successful. The Housing Solutions Officer works with all providers to instigate positive outcomes for all client groups. Focus upon promoting independent living
1E: Manage increased pressure created by Supreme Court ruling regarding vulnerability assessment to determine priority need	Review all Housing Solutions Literature and correspondence to meet legislative requirements.	2015	PHO, HST		Amend all literature to ensure LA fully compliant with legal requirements to meet Statutory duty.	New task, added Sep 2015
	Monitor homelessness trends to ensure temporary accommodation provision is sufficient to meet demands.	2015/16	Commissioners, PHO, Housing Providers		To ensure LA has sufficient temporary accommodation to meet statutory requirements.	New task, added Sep 2015
1F: Develop HBC website portal to reflect homelessness and prevention service options available	Improve access to HBC website page to illustrate homelessness and preventative options and services available.	Dec 2015	PHO, HST, Forum Partners	Officer / agency time	Improve access to homelessness website page to illustrate the range of service options and legislative information to prevent homelessness.	New task, added Sep 2015

Strategic objective 1: Collaborative and integrated approach to commissioning improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
1G: Promote the LA as an Armed Forces Friendly organisation	Publicise Cheshire Covenant commitments through website portal.	Dec 2015	PHO, HST, Cheshire Partners		To promote the level of service provision available to Armed Forces Personnel.	New task, added Sep 2015
	Display the covenant logo within LA offices to show that members of the Armed Forces Community are welcome.	2016	Strategic Partners, RSLs, LA staff			New task, added Sep 2015
1H: Develop a high quality statutory and preventative homelessness service alongside reduced funding cuts	Devise robust community focused approach to reduce and prevent future homelessness.	2015/16	PHO, HST, Policy Officer, Forum partners	Officer time Training budget	Improve access to homelessness services to promote early intervention to fully utilise service options available to prevent homelessness.	New task, added Sep 2015
	Review Homelessness service procedures to prepare for Merseyside Peer Review.	Jan 2016	PHO, HST		Devise itinerary meeting plan for peer reviewing officers to inspect Housing Solutions and homelessness services.	New task, added Sep 2015
	Identify and implement best practice identified from peer review action plan to strive towards Gold Standard Award.	2016	Sub Regional Partners. NHAS PHO, HST Forum Partners	Officer time Training budget	Sub Regional approach to improve homelessness services and register for Gold Standard.	New task, added Sep 2015
1I: Review housing accommodation register and HHT procedures	Arrange for full review of housing register to be completed to ensure the process is fully compliant with legal requirements.	2016	PHO, Commissioner HHT		To review housing register and allocations to determine level of activity and confirm correct proportion of property offers made available to vulnerable and homelessness client groups.	New task, added Sep 2015

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
2A: Ensure that homelessness is recognised as a priority for action within the Health and Wellbeing Board	Present Homelessness Strategy to Health & Wellbeing Board to raise as priority for future action.	2014	Commissioning, PHO, CCG	Officer time	To ensure that Homelessness is identified as a priority and the board have an understanding of future challenges and funding requirements.	Complete Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2018 presented to all relevant management boards. The Homeless Strategy Action Plan review will be further presented in October and November 2015 for approval.
	Attend and contribute to meetings, events and regular performance reports.	Quarterly Performance reports	Commissioning Health & Social Care, PHO, Policy Officer	Officer time within existing resources	Maximise opportunities for joint commissioning to include health, DAAT, probation and key professionals.	Ongoing. Joint commissioning and partnership approach completed with Probation. Some progress made with Health re hospital discharge. Further action required to explore future service options for joint commissioning around Health & Homelessness.
	Review and develop sub-regional hospital discharge policy.	2013/14	PHO, sub-regional partners, Health & Social Care, Policy Officer, Accommodation Providers	Partnership working, Crisis Bid Fund, Merseyside sub-regional budget	Policy offering accelerated process for vulnerable clients discharged from hospital. A cost-effective, timely and proactive approach to reducing crisis-led homelessness and repeat admissions.	Complete Hospital discharge policy devised and implemented. Local service agreement for hospital discharge and mental health in place. Identified supported accommodation units available for clients with complex needs. Complex needs team recruitment underway to offer intense tailored support to vulnerable clients.
	Review and revise protocols and working arrangements with key partners.	2014–2015	PHO, Health, Policy Officer, Key partners	Officer time	More efficient and timely interventions from using a multi-agency approach to achieve positive sustainable outcomes.	Complete As above.

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Develop housing options for substance misuse clients to move on after rehabilitation and ensure they can sustain a tenancy.	2014-2015	PHO Commissioning Managers, HSO, substance misuse services	CLG Homelessness Grant, Health Budget	Effective move on and outreach support process for substance misuse clients to address social issues and reduce repeat homelessness.	Ongoing Some progress made to assist this client group, with designated officer and multi-agency approach to offer flexible and accessible services.
	Review housing options for clients with low to moderate learning difficulties to inform future commissioning of support and appropriate housing.	2015/ 2016	Adult Comm. DM Commissioning, PHO	Officer time, SP & Health budgets	Develop model to provide accommodation and support provision to address the needs of clients with a learning disability and/ or Autism, to empower them to live independently.	To be further developed. Key ring programme implemented 2015.
2B: Develop a business case to formalise a single practice approach to address the housing and health care needs of vulnerable homeless people	Develop a Healthcare pathway that offers an integrated multi-disciplinary approach and is fully inclusive and builds relationships around individuals, between the statutory and non-statutory services engaged in their care	2014/2015	CCG Commissioners, Health & Social Care, PHO, HST	Budget TBC Officer time	A developed model to transform and improve health care and homelessness service outcomes. A pathway that integrates health, and other services around vulnerable people. A process used to review all elements of an individual's care, across housing, social care, mental health, drug & alcohol services and personally, thus allowing the individual to reflect and choose a pathway that is right for them.	To be developed
	Improve health care for patients who cross the boundaries of traditional GP practice areas.	2014/2015	CCG Commissioners, GPs, Health & Social Care, PHO	TBC, officer time, Multi-agency partners	Ensure that patients who are not registered with a GP and those with extensive and complex needs are identified and addressed through a multi-agency response.	Complete As above

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Improve arrangements for health care delivery for vulnerable homeless people.	2014/2015	Health & Homelessness services, key partner agencies	Training budget, officer time	Empower front line staff and homeless officers to work with Public Health and service colleagues to develop a comprehensive and integrated health response to homelessness, configured around a community of need and shared set of standards.	To be developed
	Participate in the Housing Needs Assessment commissioned from Liverpool Public Health Observatory	April 2014	CCG Commissioners PHO, S.R. Partners	Health care budget, officer time	The HNA will identify the health needs of the homeless population and assess whether their needs are being met, with recommendations to improve service provision.	Underway HNA complete, all services need to implement action plan recommendations.
	Collect and record data to support local commissioners and health care partners to shape services around the health needs of the most vulnerable and marginal groups, that are often invisible.	2014/2015	CCG Commissioners, Officers	Budget TBC, officer time	Determine qualitative methods of gathering intelligence on the subject of health experience, homelessness and access to services.	Underway Developed I.T systems in place to record individual client experiences. Further development needed to share data.
2C: How we manage asylum & refugee agenda through North West approach	Not in a position to assist prior to December 2015. Will need to confirm financial position, post spending review contingencies.	2016/17	CEO, LCR Home Office, Serco, RSLs, Sub Regional Partners	Officer time Identify/ agree budget costs	LCR agreement to develop joint planned approach and identify financial and funding commitments.	New task, added Sep 2015
	Future Challenge – In parallel to this the Liverpool City Regional group will work with all Local Authorities across the North West to address challenges faced by Asylum and Syrian crisis.	2016/17	CEO, Home Office, Serco, RSLs, Sub Regional Partners	Officer time Identify/ agree budget costs	Agree sub regional action plan to address the asylum / refugee crisis and work with the designated agencies to facilitate access to Health & Homelessness service provision.	New task, added Sep 2015

Strategic objective 2: Health and homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Develop short / long term options to ensure that the agreed asylum process is applied and the vulnerable client group have access to sustainable health and housing services.	2016/17	LCR Commissioners Serco RSL / PRS	Officer time Identify/ agree budget costs	Address the International crisis. Agree proportional numbers of asylum/refugee acceptances to ensure equal distribution within the LCR boundaries and develop services locally to meet the needs of identified needs.	New task, added Sep 2015

Strategic objective 3: Minimise the impact of welfare reform

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
3A: Agree a joint approach with the Housing Benefits service for the future use of Discretionary Housing Payments to ensure they are used effectively to prevent homelessness and to determine future areas of action	Joint approach to review and monitor future Discretionary Housing Payments with Housing Solutions representative at panel assessments.	April 2014 Over strategy period	PHO, HB Manager	Officer time, DWP budget	Increase the number of approved DHP applications to assist homeless clients into suitable accommodation.	Complete DHP fully utilised, with approximately 95% of applications submitted by Housing Solutions approved.
	Develop financial inclusion strategy, with integrated financial management, budgetary skills and benefit advice.	2014	DM Commissioning, PHO, HB/DWP, key agencies	Officer staff and partner agency time	Improved referral process and access for debt advice and money management to promote financial inclusion.	Ongoing Designated officers within Housing Solutions and CAB. Services make full use of debt management provided by NHAS. Active court advocacy provided to all clients. Further financial and service inclusion required to offer efficient, timely and accessible service and reduce levels of duplication.
3B: Develop under-occupation schemes with housing providers to free up family homes and encourage shared housing	Review & monitor social tenants affected by the under occupation penalties enforced through the welfare reform.	2014 Reviewed quarterly.	PHO, SDO, RPs and partner agencies	Officer and partner agency time. DHP budget	Early intervention and targeted support for households affected by the under-occupation penalties and social rent conversions to prevent homelessness and promote tenancy sustainment.	Ongoing As above, designated officers offering a community focused and accessible service to tackle issues at early stage and avoid crisis led reactive service.
	Consult with housing providers to develop a transfer/ shared housing scheme for clients affected by under-occupation penalties.	April 2014	DM Commissioning , PHO, HHT & housing partners	Officer time, housing budget	Increasing housing provision available to meet future housing needs and encouraged shared housing to reduce homelessness within the district.	To be further developed. All housing providers promoting shared housing, but very little evidence to indicate housing option accessed.
3C: Identify key actions to tackle future welfare reform challenges faced by Local Authority	Develop joint approach to administering DHP awards. Housing Solutions to form part of HB panel to agree process and application approvals.	2016	Housing Benefit Manager, PHO, HST		Improve procedural practice to ensure service decision making is transparent.	New task, added September 2015.

	Develop pre and post tenancy training for clients, to include budget management.	2015/16	Landlord Accreditation Officer. PHO, HST. Partner Agencies.		Raise awareness of positive tenancy management to ensure clients are fully equipped to succeed.	New task, added September 2015.
	Develop incentives for private landlords to encourage involvement.	2015/16	Landlord Accreditation Officer		Develop and implement service options to encourage private landlord to work with LA to offer smooth and efficient rehousing process.	New task, added September 2015.

Strategic objective 4: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
4A: Improve access to housing using the private rented sector and shared housing options	Develop and implement Private Rented Sector Offer policy which relates to new powers within the Localism Act 2011. This will allow the council to discharge full homeless duty into the private rented sector.	April 2014 Reviewed over strategy period	DM Commissioning, PHO, Landlord Accreditation Officer	Within existing resources	Increase supply and choice of housing available to homeless households.	Ongoing
	Develop a housing pathway toolkit to direct homeless clients into the private rented sector and revise procedures and training to incorporate policy change.	April 2014	PHO, HST	Within existing resources	Devise assessment process and measures to encourage and support private landlords to accept homeless households. Offer staff/ agency awareness training of PRSO policy and impact on homelessness services.	Complete PRSO and devised toolkit to fully utilise private rented accommodation to discharge statutory duty complete.
	Produce a report and options analysis to consider the outcomes of landlord surveys and views of PPP to undertake a gaps and options analysis to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of creating a social lettings agency. • Review incentives offered to landlord. • Effectiveness of Bond Guarantee. • Out of area moves where appropriate. 	2014/2015 Over the strategy period	PHO, Landlord, Accreditation Officer, Environmental Health, RPs	Within existing resources DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO	Review analysis of current activity and performance to determine future trends and demand within the private rented sector. Develop social letting agency to facilitate and manage PRS accommodation and reduce future homelessness. Improve advice and support services available to landlords and clients.	To be developed
4B: Improve working with private sector landlords and promote the Bond Guarantee Scheme	Liaise with and support agencies and supported housing providers to identify private sector housing options for vulnerable people.	2013/14 Reviewed over strategy period	PHO, Landlord Accreditation Officer, Accommodation providers	CLG Homelessness Grant, DHP, BGS	Increase accelerated move on process to empower individuals to secure suitable accommodation and reduce dependency upon hostel accommodation provision.	Complete Successful review of accommodation and support contracts promoted service change with all providers to promote and empower individuals to make full use of all options and services available.

Strategic objective 4: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Develop sustainment and prevention roles with private landlords.	Over the strategy period	Landlord Accreditation Officer, Landlord Forum	Within existing resources	Encourage and increase involvement with private landlords to work with the council to address and resolve housing/homelessness.	Ongoing Landlords forum and training sessions offered to encourage landlords to work with LA.
	Develop a multi- agency approach for bringing empty properties back into use. Exploring the potential through initiatives and as funding becomes available with voluntary and community Sector agencies.	Reviewed throughout period of strategy	DM Commissioning, PHO Manager, Environmental Health, HHT, private rented sector	Empty Homes Fund, CLG Homelessness Grant, housing budget	Encourage key partners and agencies to develop financial and option incentives. This will free up housing stock to reduce and prevent future homelessness.	To be developed
	Undertake publicity campaign to raise awareness and inform landlords, letting agents and tenants of services available.	April 2014	Landlord Accreditation Officer, Environmental Health	CLG Homelessness Grant, Cheshire sub-regional prevention fund	Improved advice and support offered to landlords, letting agents and tenants to improve service delivery.	Complete As above. All landlord and tenant literature reviewed and amended. Web based tenancy ready programme available.
	Maintain register of reputable accredited private sector landlords with affordable good quality properties. To publicise using Property Pool Plus as a mechanism for moving within the existing social sector.	Review over strategy period.	Landlord Accreditation Officer, Environmental Health, Landlord Forum	Within existing resources	Encourage and support people to let out their property or rooms. Private rented sector properties advertised on Property Pool Plus scheme to increase housing provision available and prevent homelessness.	Underway. Private rented properties available advertised using PPP,
4C: Consideration for specialised move on accommodation to meet specific client needs	Develop tailored temporary accommodation that is specific for young people to offer supportive and safe environment.	2016/17	Commissioners PHO Housing Providers		LA will offer a varied range of temporary accommodation to meet the specific need of young people.	New task, added September 2015

Strategic objective 4: Improve the provision of a range of housing options and services to reduce homelessness

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Identify dispersed move on accommodation with outreach support specific for victims of abuse.	2016/17	Commissioners PHO Housing Providers		A tailored service that will offer victims of abuse an extended service to assist them into move on accommodation with support. Will promote long term sustainable tenancy management.	New task, added September 2015

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
5A: Develop an effective multi-agency approach to support vulnerable and complex needs households to sustain and secure affordable accommodation to prevent homelessness	Review intelligence which will identify arising needs for vulnerable and complex needs households.	Over the strategy period	DM Commissioning, Adult Comm., PHO, SDO	Within existing resources	Maximise efficiency to deliver a planned approach to respond to the needs of vulnerable clients. Ensure adequate housing and support is made available to address future demands.	Complete Improved service provision and multi-agency approach to meet future demands. Improved data recording systems to identify key changes, priorities and outcomes.
	Work in partnership to develop supported accommodation project for single adults with complex needs and due to be discharged from hospital.	April 2014 Review	PHO, DM Commissioning, Health & Social Care, Whitechapel, YMCA	Budget TBC, officer and agency time	Efficient and timely approach to provide suitable self-contained accommodation and outreach support to address the needs of vulnerable clients.	Complete 3 self-contained supported accommodation units instigated to address hospital discharge and complex needs client groups. Proving successful and raised awareness of service options available.
	Develop complex needs /hospital discharge pathway plan and devise multi agency priority panel to review and monitor complex needs client group.	January 2014	PHO, DM Commissioning, Health & Social Care, Whitechapel	Officer time	Multi agency approach to identify key responsibilities to increase access to suitable accommodation and support for complex needs groups to achieve successful outcomes and prevent repeat homelessness.	Underway Sub-regional approach to tackle complex needs groups approved. Funding agreed and recruitment underway for small team to work across the 6 Authorities and will offer intense tailored support package to this vulnerable client group.
	Amend Allocations policy to ensure that Armed Forces are identified as priority client group.	Over the strategy period	Cheshire sub-regional group, Commissioning, PHO, RP Partners	Within existing resources	Provide integrated and accessible services to ensure priority is given to Armed Forces personnel due to be discharged from service.	Complete Halton forms part of Cheshire Armed Forces Covenant. Armed Forces Personnel/veterans identified as Priority within Allocations Policy. Designated officer within Housing Solutions to offer accelerated service to this client group. Armed Forces Cheshire Group meet quarterly to identify key priorities, funding etc. to improve all relevant services available to aid the transition from the forces to civilian life.

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
5B: Support young people and facilitate the delivery of integrated housing, care and support for young people at risk, care leavers, young offenders and teenage parents	Develop social enterprise opportunities in education, training and employment to meet the needs of single homeless people in Halton.	Over the strategy period	PHO, YPT, HST, training providers	Officer time	Improved partnership working to improve access to training, education and housing services for young people.	Underway Youth Event held May 2015. Youth sub group developed to give young people a voice. Youth Strategy developed and due to be presented for approval.
	Identify lead agencies to seek funding and improve services available for young people.	Over the strategy period	DM Commissioning, PHO, YPT, regional partners/ agencies	Officer time, SP budget	To develop and sustain opportunities for young people to increase skills and prevent future homelessness.	To be developed as part of youth strategy action plan.
	Develop specialised mediation service to work with young people and families.	2014 Over the strategy period	PHO, YPT, partner agencies	Budget TBC, officer time	Improve services for young people and families to work through housing and social issues and promote positive outcomes.	Complete Protocol to be reviewed annually to ensure procedural practice and pathway plans are current to meet changing trends.
	To ensure that all staff working with young people affected by homelessness have the appropriate skills, knowledge and safeguarding training.	2014 Over the strategy period	PHO, homelessness forum members, regional partner agencies	Training budget, officer time	Increase learning and development training opportunities to raise awareness of key safeguarding issues and reporting process.	Complete All safeguarding training made available to all internal and external agencies.
	Review joint (Southwark) protocol with Children's Service and YOT to ensure the council is fully compliant with legal case law judgements and legislation.	2014/15	PHO, YPT, YOT	SP budget, officer time	To improve joint working between services for 16/17 year olds, enabling transition towards independent living with tailored support to reduce repeat homelessness.	To be developed
	Promote young person involvement to fully participate in the delivery of youth service.	2014/ 2015	PHO, YPT, forum members, accommodation providers	S/ P Budget.	To be actively involved with Homeless Forum and identify and deliver effective services for young people.	Complete Homeless Forum and Youth Event to be conducted annually to consult with all partners to update and inform Homelessness Strategy Review and Youth Strategy Action Plans.

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Develop emergency respite accommodation for 16 – 21 year olds to provide multi agency approach to prevent homelessness.		DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, YPT Policy Officer	Budget TBC	A crisis intervention centre made available for young people threatened with homelessness, offering a holistic approach to facilitate them returning back home and preventing homelessness.	To be actioned
5C: Improve partnership working and communication with key agencies, police, probation and housing providers to address the growing housing need for offender	Review current housing policy and procedures to identify gaps in provision and information required from providers to increase housing accommodation for offenders.	2014/ 2015.	PHO, Probation, PPO, Policy, RPs	Within existing resources	Identify and address barriers to increase the availability of housing provision for offenders.	Underway. Resource and joint working in place to tackle offenders. Sub Regional Prison Pathway Plan to be implemented.
	Investigate Registered Providers' reluctance to house Schedule 1 offenders	April 2014.	PHO, SDO, Probation, RPs	Within existing resources	Increase involvement with MAPPA to gain a better understanding of the housing issues faced by offenders.	Ongoing. Sub Regional Approach with regular attendance at Senior Management Board to discuss wider context and future service demands.
	To continue the integrated approach to offender management between criminal justice agencies and Homelessness services.	Over the strategy period	PHO Probation, Cheshire Police RPs	Staff time	To reduce the risks to the community posed by those individuals who are homeless and have a pattern of prolific, drug related offending.	To be developed
5D: Joint partnership working with agencies, police and housing providers to offer options and solutions to victims of domestic abuse to support them to remain within their home	Increase partnership working with domestic abuse services, Police and registered providers to offer a range of rehousing options and solutions to homeless victims of abuse.	Over the strategy period	PHO, SDO DV Co-ordinator Policy officer, DA service providers	Within existing resources	Improve access to suitable accommodation options and improve service delivery to support victims of abuse to prevent homelessness.	Complete Revised service contract resulted in new service provider – Changing Lives. There has been improved service delivery across key priority areas for victims of domestic abuse and the prevention of homelessness.

Strategic objective 5: Increase and improve communication and partnership working

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
	Develop temporary dispersed housing provision to accommodate families with dependent male children and male victims fleeing domestic abuse.	Over the strategy period	DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, DV Co-ordinator, RPs	Budget to be identified.	Increased housing provision for victims of abuse to provide safe accommodation with tailored support.	Complete Homelessness Scrutiny Group identified Domestic Abuse as key priority. This led to refurbishment of refuge, which provides support and accommodation for male and female victims of domestic abuse.
	Work in partnership with Sanctuary Scheme to develop safe security options to facilitate victims of abuse to remain in or return to their homes.	Over the strategy period	DM Commissioning, PHO, SDO, Sanctuary Scheme providers	SP Funding	Reduce the number of male/females becoming homeless due to domestic abuse.	Ongoing As above,
	Improve the substance misuse service response to drug and/or alcohol related domestic abuse.	2014/ 2015	Substance Misuse Service, Domestic Abuse Service, PHO	Budget TBC	The improvement of identification of victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse provided by substance misuse service staff and detailed within homeless assessment.	Ongoing Improved multi agency approach and data sharing has improved the identification of victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse.
	Agree a referral criteria and pathway plan between the substance misuse, domestic abuse and Housing Solutions Services.	April 2014	PHO Commissioner, Substance Misuse Service, Domestic Abuse Service	Within existing resources	To reduce the impact of parental substance misuse and domestic abuse on children and young people.	To be developed

Strategic objective 6: Minimise the use of temporary accommodation by facilitating the supply of secure move-on accommodation

Priority	Action	By when	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes	Progress update / RAG rating (Red = not started, Amber = in progress, Green = complete)
6A: Reduce the use of temporary accommodation (including B&B) to maximise the use of prevention options available to reduce homelessness	Continued achievement of performance -indicator to reduce the use of temporary accommodation.	P1E – over strategy period	PHO HST	Within existing resource.	Reduce homeless levels and dependency upon temporary accommodation services.	Complete Review of service contracts and accommodation procedures has resulted in a robust approach to reducing homelessness. Increased Prevention options and early intervention has reduced the level of dependency upon temporary accommodation.
	Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by 10% annually.	P1E – over strategy period	PHO HST	Within existing resources	Reduced level of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation by fully utilising prevention service options available to reduce homelessness.	Achieved and Ongoing As above
	Deliver sufficient, appropriate temporary accommodation suitable for homeless prevention at crisis point.	2013/2014	PHO, Supported Housing Providers	Within existing resources	Improved prevention assessment process to tackle homeless crisis and developed change in service/accommodation provision to promote prevention solutions, including private rented sector.	Ongoing Prevention assessment revised and Mainstay electronic process reduces level of duplication. Housing Solutions Procedural practice under review to ensure service is fully compliant with legislation. Concerted efforts focused upon PRS involvement, further supported by PRSO
6B: Provide support to improve the management of private rented sector accommodation	Increase attendance at Landlords Forum with devised mechanisms for expert attendance.	2016	LAO, PHO Env Health		Increase level of engagement with private rented sector landlords.	New task, added September 2015.
	Collect and research activity around PRS. Identify scheme take up, good practice, legislative changes and throughput.	2015/16	LAO PHO Commissioner		Increased knowledge of good practice to inform future developments.	New task, added September 2015.
6C: Develop a local quality kite mark which is open and transparent and	Review standards for accreditation alongside other LAs.	2016	LAO PHO Commissioner		Identifying networking and shared practices across LA boundaries to improve incentives to participation.	New task, added September 2015.

Strategic objective 6: Minimise the use of temporary accommodation by facilitating the supply of secure move-on accommodation

can be renewed.	Develop sub regional group to share information and good practice.	2016	LAO PHO Sub-regional partners			New task, added September 2015.
	Develop the council website portal to reflect current local standards and new initiatives.	2016	LAO PHO		Improve easy access to LA service provision with informed changes to legislation and service requirements.	New task, added September 2015.
	Benchmark practice against what other local authorities are doing.	2016	LAO Policy Officer LA partners NHAS		Establish key contacts for professional advice/information regarding PRS and access to wider options and training opportunities.	New task, added September 2015.