Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2013-2018

This Action Plan is a tool for delivering our Homelessness Strategy by determining clear actions, performance targets, responsibilities, resources and monitoring arrangements. Also included within this Plan are actions tackling wider housing and support issues which will be taken forward via other Strategies. It has an early focus – concentrating on actions to be achieved in the first 12-18 months of the Strategy. This is considered appropriate given current uncertainties with the outcome of some reviews, projects and impact of new national policy. The Action Plan will be reviewed after the first full year (to 31 March 2014) and revised targets will be set at this stage for later years.

Through robust monitoring we will ensure that our targets are effectively planned, continually delivered and regularly refreshed. The action plan targets will be subject to our established performance management and business planning cycle.

Responsibility for monitoring the Action Plan is as follows:

Level	Frequency	Responsibility
City Executive Board	Annual	Annual review on progress and to determine further actions needed to deliver the plan.
Scrutiny - Housing Panel	As per work programme	Review *key performance indicators and statistics showing trends*, progress to date
Corporate Performance Monitoring – Housing Board	Quarterly	Review progress of the complete plan and consider any shifts in resources to tackle under/over performance and corrective action needed
Managers	Quarterly	Discuss with relevant team leaders to review progress and resolve any barriers to delivery. To be referred to Departmental Monitoring if unable to resolve.
Team	Quarterly	Meet with team members to review progress on action plans and where possible remove barriers to delivery. Refer to managers if unable to resolve
Individual	6 monthly appraisals and regular one to one meetings	Priorities set in appraisals and review meetings. Review progress and barriers and develop individual solutions to remove barriers.

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO HOMELESSNESS

GOAL	KEY ACTIONS/MILESTONES	TIMESCALE	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITy
Reduce homelessness caused by parental exclusions	Review homeless mediation services provided by suitably trained and skilled independent mediators with specialist relationship breakdown expertise to ensure maximum effectiveness	Sept 2013	OCC mainstream Homeless Prevention budgets	Options Manager
	Develop and introduce re-housing plans with parents and children	June 2013	Existing resources	Options Manager
	Ensure revised allocations scheme supports homeless prevention initiatives does not provide incentives for parental exclusions	By Sept 2013	Existing resources	Allocations Manager

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Maximise homelessness prevention and best use of resources	Develop a case ownership approach to homeless prevention casework in the Council's Options Team	June 2013	Within existing resources	Options Manager
	Adopt policy relating to the new power (in the Localism Act) to discharge full homeless duties into the PRS – Private Sector Offer	February 2013 (CEB)	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Manager
	Revise procedures and staff awareness/training to incorporate any policy change	April 2013	Within existing resources	Options Manager
	Monitor progress

(see also linking actions re: Home Choice and role of private rented sector) | Ongoing | Within existing resources | Options Manager |

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Maximise the role of Home Choice	Produce report and options analysis considering the outcomes of landlord surveys and views of Home Choice to review scope of the scheme and analysis of current activity and performance. Undertake a gaps and options analysis including: ‣ Review possibility of creating a social lettings agency ‣ Review extension of deposit schemes ‣ Review incentives offered to landlords ‣ Review advice and support offered to landlords and clients ‣ Out of area moves where appropriate	December 2013	Within existing resources	Private Rented Team Manager
Increase access to private rented sector homes	Building on above and through targeted communications, encourage and support people who don't currently see themselves as landlords but may be prepared to let out property or rooms.	Dec 2013	Within existing resources	Private Rented Team Manager
	Undertake awareness and publicity campaigns through press releases, website, newsletters and targeted approaches e. g. owners of empty homes	Sept 2013	Within existing resources	Private Rented Team Manager supported by Strategy and Enabling team

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Support and develop services to promote financial inclusion	Support development of Oxford City Financial Inclusion Strategy, with integrated financial management, budgetary skills and benefit advice	Ongoing and by April 2014	Within existing resources	**Head of Policy**/Head of Housing
	Review awareness and role and working with Credit Unions	By Sept 2013	Within existing resources	Head of Housing/**Head of Customer Services** supported by Housing Needs Manager, Strategy and Enabling Manager, Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager, Housing Benefit Manager and Rents Manager
	Prepare report and review lessons learnt from Demonstration Projects for Universal Credit. Implement any new working practices	By Dec 2013	Within existing resources	
	Improved referrals and access for debt advice and money management follow review of role of advice agencies (outcome of linked Housing Strategy target due Sept 2013)	By Dec 2013	Within existing resources	
	Develop plans to target large families who are likely to be impacted by welfare changes including the Benefit Cap and those affected by under-occupation changes	Plan by Apr 2013	Plan developed within existing resources	**Head of Housing**
	Implement plan and monitor progress	Ongoing with review as at end March 2014	Resources to deliver to be identified in plan and agreed before implementation	Housing Needs Manager/Landlord Services Manager

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Develop services for young people	To scope, identify opportunities and to develop a plan to improve education and awareness of housing options for young people	Subject to inclusion in JHT workplan	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Manager – but to be developed and delivered through Joint Housing Team with Oxfordshire County Council
	Implementation of plan dependant on resources available – but to commence in Jan 2013 and further detail to be included in revised Action Plan	Jan 2013 start Q1 2014/15 review	Jan 2013 start Q1 2014/15 review	
	Develop a plan to provide awareness and assistance in securing shared accommodation/ Lodger schemes	Dec 2013 Jan 2013 start Q1 2014/15 review	Jan 2013 start Q1 2014/15 review	
	Review options for step down accommodation for young persons needing to move on (gaps around 19-21 year olds)	By April 2014	Within existing resources	Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager with partners
Develop social enterprise opportunities in education, training and employment to meet the needs of single homeless people in the City	Work with partners including ASPIRE, Crisis Skylight Café and OFS to identify, develop and sustain employment opportunities for homeless and vulnerable people	Nov 13	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Manager
	Develop schemes and identify lead agencies to seek funding and take forward with regard to mentoring	Feb 14		

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| Deliver sufficient, appropriate temporary accommodation or accommodation suitable for homelessness prevention at crisis point | Review and /or implement new crisis accommodation solutions including with private sector | April 13 | To be determined | Housing Needs Manager |
| | (Dependant on above action) Review existing services and providers, review need for changes to service provision | Sept 13 | | |

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO ROUGH SLEEPING

GOALS	KEY ACTIONS/MILESTONES	TIMESCALE	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY
Deliver and review impact of Ns Second Night Out	Reduction in number of new rough sleepers spending 2nd night on the streets. Review NSNO after six months of operation to ensure operational procedures are smooth and clear to all agencies. Review any procedures necessary and communicate to partners Rough sleepers with no local connection are reconnected to services in their local area.	Ongoing – measure by PI By June 2012 Ongoing	Within existing resources Within existing resources Within existing resources Within existing external contract	**Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager** – and through external service provider
Develop services to tackle the issue of entrenched rough sleepers	Implement plans to tackle entrenched rough sleeping to cover:- • Assertive outreach • Tasking and targeting • Personalised approaches • Meaningful activity • Alternative accommodation options	As detailed in plan	Within existing resources	**Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager** and with partners

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Improve pathways through supported, specialist accommodation for former rough sleeper	MOPPs redeveloped to provide data on gaps in move-on options. Move-on options from hostels constantly reviewed to find on-going solutions	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Manager with partners
Ensure sufficient specialist accommodation and support to meet needs of single homeless clients in Oxford City	Full review of rough sleeping/ homeless pathway, including specialist accommodation, with Oxfordshire County Council – including City Council needs to be clearly represented in Supporting People Review Establish full data set on hostels baselines, and data to provide info on gaps in services. Identify and develop all options (and impacts) of any re-modelling of services Implement outcome of review	Review complete Sept 2013 Implementation for April 2014 start Freparation work from Jan 14 or as identified by review	Review within existing resources which will identify resource issues for the future	Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager
Review anti-begging campaigns and messages support organisations who work to get people off the streets	Evaluate scope, impact and outcomes of anti-begging campaign in 2012 including review of local research Learn from experience in developing any 2013 campaign	By April 2013	Within existing resources	Rough sleeping and single homelessness manager

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DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS

GOALS	KEY ACTIONS/MILESTONES	TIMESCALE	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY

Improved data sharing across services including mental health	Review data sharing protocols) Develop the CHAIN system and joint database	by Sept 12 Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager with partners
Ensure that Homelessness is recognised as a priority for action within the Health and Well Being Board	Contribute to meetings, events and regular reports to Health and Well Being Board Identify opportunities for joint commissioning including with Health, DAAT, probation Work in partnership to develop supported accommodation projects for single adults with very high and complex needs (including people with undiagnosed mental health problems and personality disorders	Ongoing By Dec 13	Within existing resources Within existing resources	Housing Needs Manager/Strategy and Enabling Manager Housing Needs Manager
Support partnerships which develop effective pathways to enable people to turn their lives around and attain settled homes including adequate housing support when needed	Ensure engagement and involvement in County wide housing and support programmes including • Young People • Homelessness • Supported to Independent Living (SIL) • Victims of Domestic Violence • Floating support	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Managers

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Develop and deliver Communications Plan with more targeted information about homelessness and housing options	Annual review of housing communications plan to identify gaps and actions arising from trends and changes and wider public awareness of homelessness, supply and demand for social housing, awareness campaigns including in schools and education, reviewing new ways of engagement) Produce new information as detailed in Annual Plan Produce new/updated information Review new methods of communication e.g. social media Undertake campaigns	Annual review be Dec each year Updating information and campaigns within following financial year as detailed in plan	Within existing resources	Strategy & Enabling Manager : Service Managers Strategy & Enabling Manager as identified in plan
Increase awareness of realistic housing options for those people working with potentially homeless clients	Disseminate regular information Continue joint training and awareness across agencies Deliver messages to partnership groups and through Induction schemes	As above Via regular partnership meetings and special events	Existing resources	Housing Needs Managers
Develop more listening and learning from homelessness people and service users	Review mechanisms to introduce meaningful and cost effective satisfaction and customer experience feedback – including independent facilitation	Nov 2013	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Manager

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Develop information and evidence bases for homelessness	Review and maximise efficiency of recording systems to consider secondary causes and effective equalities monitoring	By June 13	Within existing resources	Options Manager
	Monitor and review information and trends to inform future policy and service development Annual review of Evidence Base and publicise on website	By Oct 13	Within existing resources	Strategy and Enabling Manager

Review of existing and introduce new pre-crisis protocols	1. Enter into preventative pre-possession agreements with RPs and OCC Landlord Services – including for Flexible Tenancies and supported housing	Dec 13	Within existing resources	Options Manager
	2. Develop sustainment and prevention roles with Private Landlords especially Home Choice Landlords	Dec 13		Options Manager/Private Rented Manager
	3. Work with prison homelessness officers to build on existing pre-release services to ensure ex-offenders are able to make homelessness applications and access advice services prior to release	Apr 13		Options Manager
	4. Review and improve effectiveness of hospital discharge protocols	Aug 13		Options Manager

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DELIVER EXCELLENT HOMELESSSNESS SERVICES

GOAL	KEY ACTIONS/MILESTONES	TIMESCALE	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITy
Review best practice and seek continual improvement	Evaluate local services against Government 'Developing Homelessness Strategies: Local Authority Toolkit' issued in December 2012 Ensure homelessness services strive to meet the national Gold Standard (10 local challenges)	By Dec 13	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Manager
	Investigate potential to bid for external expertise in developing partnerships in homelessness by May 2013 If successful support reviews and implement any changes	Review by Oct 13	Subject to successful bid	Options Manager
Review performance and cost effectiveness of homelessness services	Participate in national benchmarking schemes Provide data Review results Bring forward recommendations to improve via service planning and review of Homelessness Strategy targets	Sept 13 Jan 14 April 14	Within existing resources	**Housing Needs Manager/** Finance Manager/ Strategy and Enabling Manager

We have also set challenging goals and targets to support our Homelessness Strategy aims and to ensure we provide excellent homelessness services

GOAL	TARGET	Measurement	Priority link
Prevent households from becoming homeless	Baseline = 637 in 2011/12 Target = 540	**Quarterly**	Preventing homelessness
Provide tenancy deposits	Baseline = Home Choice – 131 LMDGS	**Quarterly**	Preventing

	Target = Home Choice – 130		homelessness
Maintain reduced levels of homeless acceptances	Baseline = 120 Target = 120	**Quarterly**	Preventing homelessness
Number of households in temporary accommodation)snapshot)	Baseline = 129 2011/12 Target = 120	**Monthly**	Responding to homelessness
Number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation (snapshot)	Baseline = 0 – 2011/12 Target = 0	**Monthly**	Responding to homelessness
Number of 16.17 years old in bed and breakfast accommodation (snapshot)	Baseline = 0 (2011/12) Target = 0	**Monthly**	Responding to homelessness

WIDER ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

Supporting Goal	Supporting Strategy, Policy	Lead
Use planning powers and the housing enabling role to bring forward new social housing and ensure that Universities make provision for student accommodation	Housing Strategy Relevant Planning SPD	OCC – S&E and Planning
Develop schemes to tackle under-occupation in social sector to free up family homes	Housing Strategy	OCC – HNT and landlord services
Tackle Tenancy Fraud to recover social housing for those in need of it	Housing Strategy Fraud Policy	OCC – Fraud Team
Develop Empty Property Strategy to bring homes into use	Housing Strategy Empty Homes Strategy	OCC – S&Eto be reviewed in 2013
Ensure Allocations Scheme compliments the Homelessness Strategy by assisting with the prevention of homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation for homeless households	Allocations Scheme	OCC – tHNT o be reviewed in 2013
Ensure balance between all housing applicants, homeless households and those moving on from supported housing	Annual Lettings Plan	OCC – Housing Needs Team
Greater supply of family housing through de-designation of accommodation	Council Housing Policy/Business	OCC – landlord

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for households over 55 years old	Plan?	services
Review needs of vulnerable groups such as younger people, older people, BME communities and troubled families/families in difficulty	Revised Housing Strategy 2013	OCC – S&E - 2013

Where actions are necessary across Oxford City Council and wider partnerships **– bold** identifies Lead Officer