

## **City Executive Board 13 February 2013 Appendix A**

### **Homelessness Strategy for Oxford 2013-18**

#### **Introduction from Portfolio holder for Housing Cllr. Scott Seamons**

Preventing homelessness is a high priority for Oxford City Council. We recognise that settled housing provides the foundation on which we build our lives.

Our last Homelessness Strategy covered the period 2008-2013. It set out a vision to increase homelessness prevention and reduce the use of temporary accommodation. We have been highly successful in delivering these changes and improvements. However, for all that we have achieved, there are increasing challenges ahead.

The development of our new Homelessness Strategy comes at a time of great change in housing, welfare and social policy. There are continual pressures on housing and an affordability crisis in the City which is likely to increase in future years

Our new Homelessness Strategy is part of a suite of integrated Housing Strategies and Plans that take forward wide ranging housing issues within the City. It is evidence based and has been developed in consultation and partnership with public, partners and stakeholders

The Strategy sets out where we are now and considers the challenges and opportunities that will come forward in the next 5 years.

Above all, it identifies our priorities for future action to ensure we strive towards preventing homelessness as our first priority whilst securing appropriate advice, accommodation and support if crisis occurs.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure people have settled homes which enable them to build settled lives.

#### ***Executive summary***

*Oxford remains one of the least affordable areas of the country for housing. House prices have remained at historical highs in Oxford despite a national trend for a slowdown in the market.*

*There are continued problems of affordability of housing for many Oxford residents. There has been a marked drop in the level of new housing built in the City to just 200 in 2010/11. The amount of new affordable housing built has decreased - as a consequence just 148 in 2010/11. It has been estimated that just under 2,000 new affordable homes are needed every year in Oxford. Demand for private rented accommodation greatly outstrips supply and rents are rising. Levels of homelessness fell between 2004 and 2008 but there are worrying signs now as the effects of the recession and overall environment begin to become apparent, including mortgage repossessions.*

*There are vulnerable households who have specific needs for whom specialist housing and/or support is necessary to enable people attain and retain a settled home. There are considerable challenges for the Council in tackling the ongoing housing crisis, This Strategy identifies our local issues and sets out actions to help address them*

*In developing this Strategy we consulted with public, partners and local stakeholders to listen to their views and concerns. This has helped us in developing a detailed Action Plan to support the Housing Strategy and respond to local needs.*

*Our goals are*

- *Early intervention to prevent homelessness before a crisis point is reached*
- *Provision of appropriate advice, accommodation and support if crisis occurs*
- *Prevention of repeated homelessness to ensure people have settled homes*

### ***The journey ahead 2012-15***

*Much has been achieved since the last Housing Strategy to address our aims. However, with continuing demands and challenging circumstances, much more remains to be done..*

*The magnitude and complexity of the issues that face us in the next 5 years must not be under-estimated. Furthermore, many of the issues facing us are outside the direct control of Oxford City Council*

*Nonetheless we are planning ahead and will work in partnership with others who can help deliver solutions. We have prioritised issues and proposed actions to build on our past success, mitigate the impacts of changing housing markets, social and welfare reform but, above all, prevent homelessness*

### ***Our major challenges include***

- *Demand for housing greatly outstrips supply and this is likely to increase in the future*
- *High housing costs – whether for rent or purchase*
- *Increasing pressures on household incomes in the current and future economic climate – including welfare reform and household debt*
- *Difficulty in meeting needs of households with more complex needs*
- *Increasing problems in accessing private rented and temporary accommodation for homeless and potentially homeless households*
- *Developing solutions to meet gaps in future funding including accommodation based services for former rough sleepers*
- *Improving communications, knowledge and managing expectations*

*Details about how we will deliver our Homelessness Strategy objectives and respond to these pressures are contained within the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. This sets out clear tasks and targets within the following areas of work:*

**During the course of this Homelessness Strategy we plan to:**

**Prevent and Respond to Homelessness**

- *Reduce homelessness caused by parental exclusions*
- *Maximise homelessness preventions through Home Options approach*
- *Introduce Private Sector Offers to meet homelessness duties*
- *Maximise the role of the Home Choice scheme*
- *Increase access to private rented homes*
- *Support and develop services to promote financial inclusion*
- *Develop services for young people*
- *Develop social enterprise opportunities in educations, training and employment*
- *Deliver sufficient, appropriate temporary accommodation or accommodation for homelessness prevention at crisis point*

**Prevent and Respond to Rough Sleeping**

- *Deliver and review the impact of No Second Night Out*
- *Develop services to tackle the issue of entrenched rough sleepers*
- *Improve pathways through supported specialist accommodation for former rough sleepers*
- *Ensure sufficient specialist accommodation and support to meet the needs of single homeless clients in the City*
- *Review anti begging campaigns and messages and support organisations who work to get people off the streets*

**Develop partnerships and communications**

- *Improve data sharing across organisations including mental health*
- *Ensure that homelessness is recognised as a priority for action within the Health and Well Being Board*
- *Work in partnership to develop supported accommodation projects for those with complex needs*
- *Support partnerships which develop pathways to enable people to attain settled homes*
- *Develop and deliver a Communications Plan with more targeted information about homelessness and housing options*
- *Increase awareness of realistic housing options for those people working with potentially homeless clients*
- *Develop more listening and learning from homeless people and service providers*
- *Develop information and evidence bases for homelessness*
- *Review existing and introduce new pre-crisis protocols*

**Deliver excellent homelessness services**

- *Review best practice and seek continuous improvement*
- *Ensure homelessness services strive to meet the national Gold standard (10 local challenges)*
- *Prevent households from becoming homeless*
- *Minimise use of temporary accommodation*
- *Avoid the use of bed and breakfast accommodation – especially for families and 16-17 year olds*
- *Reduce homelessness acceptances*

**All the above are supported by wider actions to deliver the aims of the Homelessness Strategy**

- *Use planning powers and housing enabling role to bring forward new social housing*
- *Develop under-occupation schemes in the social sector to free up family homes*
- *Develop a greater supply of family housing through de-designation of social housing for over 55 year olds*
- *Tackle tenancy fraud to recover social housing for those that need it*
- *Develop empty property strategy to bring homes back into use*
- *Ensure the Allocations Scheme and Annual Lettings Plan supports Homelessness Strategy*
- *Review needs of vulnerable groups such as younger people, older people, BME communities and troubled families in the City*

## **Homelessness**

Not all homeless people live on the street. People may have access to some form of shelter, some of the time but lack a stable, long term, settled home

Rough sleeping is the starkest form of homelessness and is a harmful and risky lifestyle. It is linked to wider social and health issues and living on the streets is likely to increase these problems.

Some people who can't access housing live in improvised dwellings – tents, sheds.

For others, there are frequently moves from one temporary accommodation/shelter to another (eg emergency accommodation, refuges, friends homes, 'sofa surfing') – people with no settled home. There are also many households that share accommodation eg with relatives or live in unsatisfactory housing.

Anyone can become homeless. However, it is possible to identify people who are most likely to become homeless. Groups at risk of homelessness includes young people leaving the care of a local authority, those leaving prison, people suffering from domestic violence, those with a mental health problem, substance misuse, those from troubled families, people on low incomes and those who are in debt. There is a strong overlap between homelessness and deep social exclusion.

Preventing homelessness goes further than the keys to the door. Particularly for vulnerable and young people, there is a need to provide support to help build life skills, independence and the ability to attain and retain a settled home This can reduce both repeated homelessness and admissions to institutional or residential care.

## **People in Oxford**

Just over 150,000 people live in Oxford. There is a relatively young population – it has been estimated that 36% of the population is aged between 15 and 29 years compared to a UK average of 20%. There is a relatively large black and minority ethnic population. Population turnover is high and Oxford is the fourth fastest growing city in the UK.

Oxford is generally a well educated City and there are 32,000 full time students at Universities. However, there are high levels of people without qualifications in some areas

– mainly those areas with high levels of deprivation. Attainment levels of Oxford schoolchildren are relatively low. The proportion of young people in Oxford not in education, employment and training is above that of Oxfordshire. The largest groups of people not in education, employment or training are those that have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are teenage parents or care leavers

Median earnings for full time employees resident in Oxford were £26,507 in 2010 – close to the national average.

Unemployment in Oxford is lower than in England and there is a lower level of working age benefit claimants than the national average. However, this figure is depressed by the student population who are not eligible for some benefits.

Just over 11,000 households on lower incomes claim either full or partial housing benefit to help meet rent payments

### **Housing in Oxford**

There are over 58,000 homes in Oxford

Oxford is one of the most unaffordable places to buy or rent accommodation in the Country. There is a chronic shortage of affordable homes available and accessible for many people in Oxford.

House prices are outside the reach of many people – the mean house price in Oxford in 2010 was £341,296 compared with £240,033 in England as a whole. There are low levels of home ownership in Oxford compared to other areas in South East and England as a whole.

There are high levels of private rented accommodation – 24% of all housing is privately rented in Oxford compared to 12% in England. Private rents are high and increasingly Housing Benefit does not cover the cost of even the lowest rents. Oxford has been identified as the most unaffordable location outside London for private renting

Demand for private rented accommodation is also high – buoyed by a limited supply and high costs of home ownership, and the demand for student accommodation. There were 17,113 full time students with accommodation requirements and 13,862 units of university or college provided accommodation at the University of Oxford and 8,105 students and 4,494 places for accommodation at Oxford Brookes. More student accommodation is being developed now and in future years to help balance the housing market in Oxford.

Oxford City Council owns 7,805 homes and Housing Associations provide a further 3,675 homes in the City. Demand for social rented homes is high – there are over 6,000 people on the housing register. Just 565 properties were let in 2011/12 and less than half of these were family sized accommodation. It is planned that 30% are let to homeless households to whom the Council have accepted a statutory homeless duty. In the social rented sector there is a relative over-supply of accommodation for people over 55 years old and an under supply of 2 bedroomed, and very large (4 bed or larger) family accommodation.

The population of the City is growing. There is little land to develop for new homes in Oxford City. There are relatively few opportunities for developing new homes – including affordable housing - to address the high level of demand for housing.

Oxford City Council uses its planning and housing powers to help rebalance the housing market and develop new affordable housing. This is detailed in the Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012-15. However, the reality is that demand for housing far outstrips supply and this is likely to increase in the future.

### **Homelessness in Oxford**

There can be no doubt that homelessness in Oxford is exacerbated by the lack of supply and access to suitable, settled homes.

Of those being accepted as statutory homeless, the main causes are loss of home due to exclusions from family or friends' homes, relationship breakdown or the loss of a private sector tenancy.

The majority of households accepted as homeless are lone, female parents and young households between 16 and 24 years old. It appears that black and minority ethnic households are over-represented in those accepted as homeless.

The number of people being accepted as homeless has decreased over the last 5 years – from 196 households in 2008 to 120 in 2012. This has been achieved due to more homelessness prevention work by Oxford City Council. 637 households were prevented from becoming homeless in 2011/12. 884 households are supported to gain and retain accommodation in the private rented sector through the Home Choice scheme run by the Council. But new Homechoice tenancies have declined from 200 in 10/11 to 130 in 11/12.

Numbers of homeless people in temporary accommodation have reduced – just 129 households were in temporary accommodation secured by Oxford City Council on 31 March 2012 compared to 496 on 31 March 2008. 83% of households in temporary accommodation on 31 March 2012 were families with dependant children or expected babies. 92% of households in first stage temporary accommodation were in receipt of housing benefits.

Many other groups of people are not deemed to be statutory homeless but still have pressing housing needs and no settled home.

People on low incomes, without regular work, lack of proven track record, previous failed tenancies, mental health or substance misuse are unlikely to meet lettings agents/landlords vetting procedures and so cannot obtain a private tenancy.

Poor discharge planning for ex-offenders and those with mental health needs have been cited as further causes for homelessness amongst these groups. Those with complex needs, addiction, negative behaviour, poor parenting and life skills face particular problems in attaining settled homes and can fall through the net of services and accommodation provided.

Welfare benefit reforms, especially the limiting of Housing Benefit to younger people and effect of benefit cap on larger families will increase risks of homelessness for these groups in the future.

Rough sleeping is a constant issue in Oxford. There are 12 – 15 entrenched rough sleepers on the streets of Oxford on any given night, with 2-3 new people every week. The majority of people sleeping rough are aged between 26 and 49. People on the streets come to Oxford to access homeless services, have family or friends in the area, seek work, may have no access to public resources or are excluded from other accommodation.

More information on statistics quoted in this document and sources can be found in the Evidence Base document available on our website.. There may be variations on the information provided during the course of this Homelessness Strategy as new census data becomes available

### **What we have achieved in last 5 years and where we are now**

There have been many successes in the last 5 years in spite of high housing demand in the City. Nationally, homelessness acceptances increased by 16% in the year ended 31 March 2012. In Oxford there was a 2% reduction. Nationally, there has been a 44% increase in use of bed and breakfast accommodation in the same period. On 31 March 2012, there were no homeless households in bed and breakfast accommodation in Oxford. The use of temporary accommodation has also decreased.

This is an outstanding achievement given the intense housing pressures in Oxford. It has been achieved through the high priority placed on preventing homelessness in the City and the continuing work in delivering homelessness solutions – both directly by the City Council and in partnership with others. A strong network of partnerships and services is in place to support homeless people and those threatened with homelessness.

However, we are not complacent. The challenges ahead are enormous and we continue to review and adapt services and provision to prevent homelessness in the most effective way.

Over the last five years, there has been a reduction in the numbers of households who have become statutory homeless.

This has been achieved by changes in the way Oxford City Council has offered a statutory homelessness service. Five years ago the emphasis was on dealing with people who presented themselves as homeless. Now the priority is on preventing homeless occurring by helping people resolve their housing problems and tackling barriers to obtaining accommodation. The Home Choice scheme has been prominent in securing accommodation in the private rented sector and preventing homelessness. The Lord Mayors Deposit Scheme has also assisted over 150 households in securing accommodation.

The use of temporary accommodation, particularly bed and breakfast, has decreased – improving the quality of life for homeless households and reducing costs to the public purse. In 2012, Oxford City Council began a review of temporary accommodation including seeking new forms of provision with private sector providers and the quality of existing temporary accommodation and support with residents.

An independent review of Oxford City Council homelessness services was undertaken by the Chartered Institute of Housing in 2011 which led to an Action Plan to deliver operational changes to continually improve the homeless service.

Feedback from consultation with the public through the Council's Talkback initiative in 2011 highlighted that there were gaps in general public knowledge and awareness of the work being undertaken in the City to prevent homelessness.

In July 2012, the No Second Night Out initiative was launched in Oxford. Fundamentally, the scheme hopes to prevent a second night on the streets for those sleeping rough. Behind the scenes, street outreach services have been re-configured to meet the new scheme and changes made to arrangements in hostels. The impacts of this including concerns about lack of direct access is planned to start 6 months after the scheme was introduced i.e. in early 2013.

Entrenched rough sleepers do not respond to traditional methods of re-settlement with repeated homelessness and returning back to the streets. Specific responses are needed for this client group – who often have complex problems including substance misuse and mental health issues.

There are a wide range of services and accommodation for homeless people in Oxford – provided by a range of organisations with different funding streams. Investment was secured for homeless hostels and changes made to services in hostels and the advice and training services operated by Crisis at the Old Fire Station.

There is strong partnership working and groups such as Oxford Register of Affordable Housing, Families At Risk of Homelessness, Tenants at Risk, Accommodation Panel, Joint Housing Team, Single Homelessness Team. Pre eviction protocols have been agreed between organisations to prevent homelessness and have been largely successful. There has been an increased focus on education and training, to provide more holistic assistance, with the aim of helping clients in the longer term, thus preventing them going through a 'revolving door' and back to homelessness again. There is strong joint work operationally between Children's Social Care and Oxford City Council to ensure that young people are appropriately supported if they are homeless; families are supported if they are homeless or families are supported to look after children at home.

A fundamental review of homeless services supported through the Supporting People programme started in 2011/12. This continues to develop options and solutions to deliver a £500,000 saving from the £2.3 million countywide funding for homelessness through the scheme. Additionally, in 2012, Oxfordshire County Council implemented changes to governance and administration of the Supporting People Programme.

The City Council will continue to work pro-actively to improve the quality and access to private rented accommodation through licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation and other initiatives. Surveys of private landlords and tenants are being undertaken in 2012-13..

A Homelessness Review was undertaken in 2012 to inform the new Homelessness Strategy including development of a robust evidence base and review of homelessness issue and services with providers. This identified some gaps in provision including the fact that there is no mediation service and rent deposit schemes are not available to everyone. In relation to specialist groups it was felt that there is a lack of alternatives for people who do not want to enter hostel and other supported housing pathways to secure homes, lack of direct access and self contained accommodation for those with mental health needs, more single person accommodation needed, lack of discharge accommodation and



supported lodgings, services for persons with alcohol or drug addictions and those with dogs. Information from this review has helped shape this Consultation Document.

Details of services for homeless people can be found in Homelessness Survival Guide  
The Homelessness Review 2012 and Evidence Base is available on our website?

### **Future threats and opportunities**

We are witnessing fundamental changes in the housing market, housing, social and welfare reform. The successes of the last 5 years will be ever more difficult to replicate in the years ahead.

#### **Access to housing**

The goal of home ownership is increasingly out of reach for future generations. The global banking crisis has had a structural impact on the mortgage market. The availability of mortgage lending supported high demand for home purchase and was instrumental in the doubling house prices nationally between 2001-2006. It contrasts sharply with the availability of new loans and the difficulties for households in raising larger deposits to buy houses.

There are few new housing developments being brought forward in Oxford – including social housing. Whilst Oxford City Council is developing schemes for the future, including new council housing, there is an immediate issue with lack of additional new affordable housing being brought forward. Just 10 units of new social rented housing for families will be brought forward in 2012/13, and there are few completions planned until 2015.

The impact of this has been more demand on the private rented sector and this will continue to dominate the homelessness and housing agenda in future years.

Market demand is so high that low to middle income households in Oxford are increasingly priced out of the market – even where housing benefit is payable to households, as the cap on the maximum rent levels is increasing much lower rates than growth in market rents. There are worrying signs that landlords will not join the Home Choice scheme as a consequence. Where they do, Oxford City Council will be faced with the increasing problems of meeting the gap between the rent demanded and the household's ability to meet the cost. The new powers provided to allow Councils to discharge their homelessness duty within the private rented sector will be used appropriately in Oxford to meet the needs of homeless households. However, they do not redress the issue of supply and demand or tackle the affordability crisis for homeless people and the wider population. Various organisations – statutory and voluntary – seek accommodation in the private rented sector for clients and the impacts will go beyond the needs of statutory homeless clients. Lack of move on accommodation for those in hostels and transitional accommodation will mean that supported housing may not be made available for people that need it. This is a major challenge for Oxford City Council and residents alike.

The lack of available, affordable homes in the City may well lead to increasing use made of properties outside of Oxford.

Oxford City Council successfully re-financed its Housing Revenue Account to meet Government policy changes, borrowing some £200m. The majority of this funding had to

be paid to Government as a one-off settlement in lieu of an annual payment, but there remains some capacity to invest in new social housing and our existing housing stock. The Council is already committed to developing 112 new homes in the period to 2015, and has secured a funding contribution through grant support from the Homes and Communities Agency. However, further development does depend on restraining arrears and other costs where we expect increasing pressure. In addition, the re-invigorated Right to Buy may lead to the loss of existing social housing which may not be readily replaced given the lack of development opportunities.

There are also changes taking place in social housing – for both Housing Associations and the Council. New social housing may be let on Affordable Rent levels (up to 80% of market value) and on Flexible (fixed term) tenancies. The Council adopted a Tenancy Strategy in 2012 and will seek to influence Registered Providers in the City to follow their lead to ensure that social housing offers people settled homes at reasonable rent levels.

### **Welfare reform and household income**

Planned national welfare benefit changes will have a negative impact on lower income households. Welfare spending is planned to reduce by £18bn by 2014-15 including housing and council tax plus other welfare benefits and national debate suggests that further reductions could come forward for the future. This has a significant impact on those people on who are partially or totally dependant on benefits for their household income.

Major changes are taking place to Housing Benefits. Young people are particularly affected with the single room rent restrictions on benefit paid being extended from those under 25 to those under 35 years old. This could lead to a need for more shared accommodation – which is already in high demand in Oxford as a University City. Debate is under way on the potential to the ending of Housing Benefit for those under 25 in the longer term. Over accommodation rules within the social rented sector and housing benefit non-dependant charges may mean families cannot offer a spare room to a family member or friend who is homeless. This could be either because they have needed to move to a smaller property and there is no spare bedroom or because they cannot financially afford to accommodate anyone. These regulations will also impact on families who foster children and could again impact on homelessness amongst younger people. Larger families will lose benefits as a result of a cap on total level of benefits paid to one household. Changes to the assessment of benefits for disabled people are likely to negatively affect some households. It is important to recognise that housing benefit changes affect those who claim the benefit due to low incomes and not just those not in work.

The plans to introduce Universal Credit and payments directly to claimants, monthly in arrears is likely to have an adverse impact on household income, budgeting, debt and potentially put households at greater risk of homelessness. Currently Council and social landlords receive rental payments direct from Government. Oxford is part of a Demonstration Project to identify issues related to the direct payment of housing benefit to social tenants. However, this will ultimately impact on all non pensioner households in receipt of benefits. It is likely to have a detrimental effect on accessing private rented housing where landlords require rent in advance – certainly not rent paid in arrears.

Interest rates are at historic lows but any changes would impact both on owner occupiers and landlords who are likely to pass costs onto tenants.

Given the above and general constraint on incomes, individual and household debt is likely to be an increasing problem for the future. Mortgage repossessions have been lower than national averages in Oxford but there were worrying signs in 2012 that this is increasing.

## **Public sector policy and finance**

A wide variety of policy changes will impact on the Homelessness Strategy

The Localism Act offers flexibilities for local authorities to discharge their homelessness responsibilities by securing a good quality, well managed, affordable private rented home. Oxford City Council has already had major successes in working with the private rented sector but as discussed elsewhere, the issues of supply and demand together with affordability are not being addressed within Government policy framework. The sustainability of the Council's work with private rented sector through Home Choice is in question given the unrelenting demand for and escalating rent levels in private rented homes in Oxford.

The Review of Allocations Scheme in Oxford and elsewhere will have an impact on who is being housed and hence homelessness. The stark reality is that the overwhelming majority of people on the Housing Register may never be offered a council or housing association home. Groups to whom Council's will award reasonable preference in allocating social housing is outlined within national policy and now includes ex military personnel. The City Council already recognises a local connection in assessing ex-military personnel and provides tailored information on housing choices for personnel. This preference will be further considered as part of the Allocations Scheme Review in 2013. A national debate has been launched to question whether younger people under 25 should be able to access social housing.

Where households are successful in obtaining a council or housing association home this may be on a higher rent than existing tenants – either as a consequence of new homes at Affordable Rents, or as a condition of grant funding through the Homes and Communities Agency or through the Pay to Stay proposals. The latter plans to produce an income threshold over which social tenants will pay higher costs than neighbours on lower incomes. Government policy is also challenging whether new social tenants should be offered a secure 'tenancy for life.'

The Health and Social Care Act abolishes Primary Care Trusts from April 2013. These are replaced by GP Consortiums who will be responsible for commissioning most health care. New Health and Well Being Boards are being set up to oversee the quality of services, represent the views of local people and draw up a Health and Well Being Strategy – building on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments.

The Comprehensive Spending Review (2010) set out a national reduction of 28% on local authority budgets over the following 3 years. Oxford City Council has identified the necessary budget savings but there is still pressure to achieve planned savings and the outlook is continued austerity.

The Homelessness Prevention Payment from the Department of Communities and Local Government is not guaranteed in the future. This Fund supports £1 million expenditure on preventing homelessness in Oxford – predominantly on rough sleeping and services for single non-statutory homeless persons.

Supporting People funding for homelessness is being cut and savings of £500,000 need to be achieved. This will provide huge challenges and may mean the loss of specialist accommodation based solutions in Oxford for homeless people. This will also put more pressure on other housing which is in high demand. Furthermore, gaps in the market could lead to unregulated supported housing with risk to clients.

The Supporting People funding is no longer ring-fenced so can be spent on non housing support issues. In 2012, Oxfordshire County Council proposed changes to governance and administration in Supporting People funding which reflect this. The implementation of changes may have consequences for housing related support and will need to be carefully monitored.

In 2012, the Government delivered it's report 'Every Contact Counts' and launched 10 local challenges (the Gold Standard) for local housing authorities such as Oxford City in homelessness prevention – incorporating a range of directly provided services, corporate commitment and partnership working to prevent homelessness

**Our priorities to tackle homelessness and the issues identified in the Homelessness Strategy are included in the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2013**

### **More information and background documents**

#### **Ten Local Authority Challenges or Gold Standard**

- 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 affective 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 sector offer for all client group, including advice and support for both client 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 changing needs**
- 9. Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 years old in bed and breakfast accommodation**
- 10. Not place any families in bed and breakfast accommodation unless it is an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks**

***Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness August 2012  
– second Ministerial Working Group report***

Corporate Plan  
Housing Strategy 2012-15 and Action Plan  
Homelessness Evidence Base 2012  
Homelessness Review 2012  
Homelessness Survival Guide

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