

## The Hertsmere Homelessness Strategy, 2008 - 2013

This Action Plan allows for periodic review and evaluation to take place and updates to be made. Much of the initial work within the tasks consists of research and the production of feasibility reports on the proposed schemes. The reports might disclose a general view that a proposed scheme is no longer required or is not feasible, in which case there will be no further progress in implementing it. However, no task will cease without the full consent of Hertsmere Housing Forum.

The research and feasibility assessment phase will be complete by July 2009.

The "When" column will provide information on the completion of the stages in implementing the tasks.

<b>1. Tenant/Potential Tenants of the Private Rented Sector</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
1.1 <u>Task 1:-</u> To facilitate the creation of a pilot "Top-up" fund scheme to meet the difference between Housing Benefit levels and the Local Housing Allowance.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Housing Supply Officer  Homelessness Manager	Agreement for the pilot scheme to be undertaken to be received by 31 December 2008.	Corporate resources	A report to Members on the need for a top-up fund on a pilot basis.  The creation of a top-up fund designed to last for a 12 month period.	More landlords willing to rent their properties to people in receipt of Housing Benefit.  More tenancies successfully sustained.  A firm basis upon which to decide whether to continue the scheme indefinitely.
1.2 <u>Task 2:-</u> To create a Tenancy Liaison Officer post to provide support to households who access the private rented sector through the Bond Scheme. A joint scheme with Watford Borough Council.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Homelessness Manager  Temporary Private Sector Housing Co-	To be in post by September 2008	CLG Homelessness Grant	A Tenancy Liaison Officer to be in post by September 2008.  To work in the borough on Tuesdays and Fridays.	More landlords willing to rent their properties to households accommodated through the Bond Scheme.  Less need for bond monies to be used

	ordinator				because of tenancy problems.  More sustainable tenancies in the private rented sector.
1.3 <u>Task 3:-</u> To research households who are homeless because of the end of a privately rented tenancy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main reasons why the landlord ends the tenancy.</li> <li>Can any prevention measures be undertaken?</li> </ul>	Research and Development Officer  Homelessness Managers	Research exercise to be undertaken between September 2008 and March 2009.	Existing staff budgets	A report showing why the privately rented tenancies have ended among 50 households who are homeless. Research to be drawn from information from both tenants and landlords.	A better understanding of the reasons for homelessness in Hertsmere.  A base upon which to decide on prevention measures.
<b>2. Tenants of Registered Social Landlords in the Borough</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
2.1 <u>Task 4:-</u> To work with our RSL partners to assist in homelessness prevention including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention of rent arrears</li> <li>Assistance for tenants aged 16 and 17.</li> </ul>	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Homelessness Managers  Research and Development Officer  Housing Options Officer  William Sutton Homes  Aldwyck Housing Association	First discussions to take place by October 2008	Existing staff resources	Agreements with RSL partners on additional measures to prevent homelessness using data on tenancy breakdown.	More sustainable tenancies.  An assessment on the amount of further resources which are required.

	The Citizens Advice Bureau.				
<b>3. Young Families</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
3.1 <u>Task 5</u> :- To set up a private sector leasing scheme for privately rented properties and flats over shops in the borough..	Head of Housing and Health  Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Temporary Private Sector Housing Officer  Pathmeads  Paddington Churches Housing Association	Decision on the method by which to implement private sector leasing to be made by December 2008.	Resources for funding private sector leasing – to be agreed.	Well-managed privately rented accommodation with nomination rights for a significant length of time.  Landlords receive a guaranteed income for their properties.	More private landlords willing to allow their properties to be used for Council nominees.  More households in housing need accommodated in the private rented sector for a significant length of time.
3.2 <u>Task 6</u> :- To research the need for, and examine the feasibility of, a second hand furniture store in the borough.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Research and Development Officer  William Sutton Homes  Aldwyck Housing Association  Herts Young Homeless Group  Voluntary organisations in Hertsmere (e.g.	Initial meeting with Nine Lives to take place by November 2008.  Preparation work on a research exercise on furniture need among new tenants, to take place at the time of tenancy sign-up, to be completed by October 2008.	Assessment of need and feasibility – existing staff resources.	A research report on the amount of furniture owned by new tenants when signing up for a tenancy.  A research report on good practice employed in furniture projects.  Assessment of funding sources.  Information required for a bid for funding.  Partnership formed with	A plan to assist new and existing tenants in settling into their homes, thereby increasing the chances of sustaining their tenancies.

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	Working Herts)			an organisation willing to work on the project.	
3.3 <u>Task 7:-</u> To publicise the housing advice service and Choice Based lettings to stakeholders in services to young people e.g. health visitors, Home Start.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Research and Development Officer  Housing Options Officer  Homelessness Managers	Meetings with the following to have taken place by 31 January 2009:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health Visitors</li><li>• Citizens Advice Bureau</li><li>• Home Start</li></ul>	Within existing staff resources.	Meetings with representatives from a range of organisations to inform them of the housing advice service.  Representatives of the organisations can act as consultees on housing issues affecting young families.	Creating methods of reaching young families before their housing circumstances become precarious, and therefore finding ways to prevent homelessness
3.4 <u>Task 8:-</u> To produce a new leaflet on the housing advice service for young families.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Homelessness Managers  Housing Options Officer  Herts Young Homeless Group	To be completed by March 2009.	Within existing staff and publication resources.	A leaflet directed at households who may have “concealed households” living with them who might shortly become homeless. The leaflet will explain housing advice options.	Creating methods of reaching young families before their housing circumstances become precarious, and therefore finding ways to prevent homelessness
3.5 <u>Task 9:-</u> To write to tenants of William Sutton and Aldwyck to inform them of Housing Advice services and options for young families	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Housing Options Officer  William Sutton Homes  Aldwyck Housing Association	To be completed by March 2009	Within existing staff and publication resources.	Distribution of a leaflet directed a households who may have “concealed households” living with them who might shortly become homeless. The leaflet will explain housing advice options.	Creating methods of reaching young families before their housing circumstances become precarious, and therefore finding ways to prevent homelessness.
3.6 <u>Task 10:-</u> To monitor the links between the Housing Register and Homelessness. How many	Research and Development Officer	To be completed by December 2008	Within existing staff resources.	Research report on the following information over a specified period of time:-	Information to show how effective the Housing Register/Choice-Based

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homelessness applicants have been on the housing register?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On what date did they join the Housing Register?</li> <li>Why are they being made homeless</li> </ul>	lettings is in preventing homelessness.
3.7 <u>Task 11:-</u> To examine the possibility of a under-occupation scheme designed to free-up family-sized bedroom accommodation.	<p>Research and Development Officer</p> <p>William Sutton Homes</p> <p>Aldwyck Housing Association</p>	Survey to be collated by December 2008.	<p>Within existing staff resources.</p> <p>Staffing contributions from William Sutton and Aldwyck.</p>	<p>Research report on the number of households under-occupying family-sized homes.</p> <p>Survey of households to assess what accommodation options they would be willing to consider to move to smaller accommodation.</p>	Creation of a larger supply of family-sized accommodation
3.8 <u>Task 12:-</u> To investigate the possibility of a decoration scheme to assist young families when they move on from the LOTS scheme. Other categories within this scheme to be decided.	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager.</p> <p>Aldwyck Housing Association</p> <p>Housing Options Officer</p> <p>Probation Service</p> <p>Working Herts</p>	Feasibility report to be produced by March 2009	<p>Within existing staff resources.</p> <p>Further resources to be discussed.</p>	<p>A report on the possibility of a decoration service for accommodation to which young families are moving. (Possible one room to be decorated).</p> <p>Decision to be made on which categories will be eligible for the scheme.</p>	Swifter move-on arrangements from supported accommodation, thereby freeing up unit for other households in need.
3.9 <u>Task 13:-</u> To investigate the possibility of a supported housing project for young families in the borough	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager</p> <p>Homelessness Team</p>	Feasibility report to be completed by March 2009	<p>Within existing staffing resources</p> <p>Further resources:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting</li> </ul>	A feasibility report on the options for developing a supported housing project for young mothers, either by new development or	<p>Better methods of assisting vulnerable young families.</p> <p>Young families better able</p>

	Aldwyck Housing Association  William Sutton Homes  Herts County Council Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People funding</li> <li>• Social Housing Grant</li> </ul>	through the acquisition of an existing property.	to manage their tenancies.
<b>4. Young People</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
4.1 <u>Task 14:-</u> To examine the possibility of an extension to Townsend House as temporary accommodation for young males.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Affordable Development Co-ordinator  The Planning Team  Irish Centre Housing  Supporting People Team  The Housing Corporation	Feasibility report to be completed by March 2009	<p>Within existing staffing resources</p> <p>Further resources:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People funding</li> <li>• Social Housing Grant</li> </ul>	The first supported housing scheme for young males in Hertsmere.	<p>Avoidance of having to accommodate young males out of the borough.</p> <p>Enabling young males to remain in the borough while receiving a support service, thereby allowing them to maintain contact with their support networks.</p> <p>A gender equality initiative</p>
4.2 <u>Task 15:-</u> To extend the education project on homelessness for young people in schools across the borough.	Homelessness Managers  Housing Options Officer	Ongoing	Within existing staffing resources.	<p>One presentation to be given each year to each new Year Ten intake in four secondary schools in Hertsmere:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hertswood</li> <li>• Bushey Hall</li> </ul>	<p>Increase in awareness of homelessness among young people while they are still at school.</p> <p>Possible increase of awareness of</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bushey Meads</li> <li>• Mount Grace</li> </ul>	homelessness among parents.  A major prevention measure.
4.3 <u>Task 16:-</u> To examine the needs of Care Leavers and any projects which might be undertaken to supplement Hertfordshire County Council's leaving care strategies	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager</p> <p>Homelessness Managers</p> <p>Housing Options Officer</p> <p>Research and Development Officer</p> <p>Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Herts Young Homeless Group</p>	Report to be produced by March 2009	Within existing staffing resources	<p>Research report on recent experience of assisting care leavers and any unmet needs.</p> <p>Information on good practice employed elsewhere.</p>	Improved services to young people leaving local authority care.
4.4 <u>Task 17:-</u> To examine the possibility of a Room to View scheme.	<p>Homelessness Managers</p> <p>Housing Options Officer</p> <p>Research and Development Officer</p> <p>Herts Young Homeless Group</p>	Discussions with HYHG to take place by March 2009.	Within existing staffing resources	Report on the need for and feasibility of a Room to View Scheme in Hertsmere.	Decision on whether to set up a Room to View scheme in Hertsmere.
<b>5. Victims of Domestic Violence</b>					

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<b>Task</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
5.1 <u>Task 18:-</u> To research the need for a Sanctuary Scheme in the borough	Research and Development Officer  Homelessness Managers  The Police  William Sutton Homes  Aldwyck Housing Association	Report to be produced by March 2009	Within existing staffing resources.	Report on the need for and feasibility of a Sanctuary Scheme in Hertsmere. Use of good practice examples used within other local authorities.	Decision as to whether to set up a Sanctuary Scheme in Hertsmere.
5.2 <u>Task 19:-</u> To research the need for any special provision for victims of domestic violence who are aged 16 and 17 who cannot access a mainstream women's refuge.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Research and Development Officer  Housing Options Officer  Herts Young Homeless Group  Hertfordshire County Council  Health Visitors	Report to be produced by June 2009	Within existing staffing resources.	Consultation exercises.  Report on whether any special provision is required for victims of domestic violence who are aged 16 or 17, and what the special provision should consist of.	Decision on whether special provision is required for victims of domestic violence aged 16 or 17.
<b>6. Residents of Temporary Accommodation</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
6.1 <u>Task 20:-</u> To carry out a more	Research and	Report to be produced	Within existing	Regular research reports	A constant picture of the



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<p>extensive study of the use of temporary accommodation:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the main reasons for homelessness. Any preventative measures?</li> <li>• What are the main difficulties experienced in moving on?</li> </ul>	<p>Development Officer Homelessness Managers</p>	<p>twice each year, in January and In July.</p>	<p>staffing resources</p>	<p>on current residents of temporary accommodation including household type, number of children, reasons for homelessness, state of rent account and reasons for arrears.</p>	<p>use of temporary accommodation, enabling a case for resources to be built if required.</p>
<p>6.2 <u>Task 21:-</u> To research the need for any further support for residents of temporary accommodation e.g. money advice, better access to housing options.</p>	<p>Research and Development Officer Housing Options Officer Homelessness Managers Hostel Managers</p>	<p>To be completed by the end of July 2009 on the basis of monitoring data</p>	<p>Within existing staff resources</p>	<p>A set of recommendations to Housing Forum on additional assistance if required.</p>	<p>A lower level of rent arrears among temporary accommodation residents, decreasing the incidence of household being unable to move on to RSL accommodation .</p>
<p><b>7. Special Needs</b></p>					
<p><b>Task</b></p>	<p><b>Who</b></p>	<p><b>When</b></p>	<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p><b>Outputs</b></p>	<p><b>Outcomes</b></p>
<p>7.1 <u>Task 22:-</u> To investigate the need for a generic floating support scheme to assist people who may be at risk from tenancy breakdown, and who may have mild learning disabilities or mental health issues.</p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager Housing Options Officer William Sutton Homes Aldwyck Housing Association Herts Young Homeless Group</p>	<p>To be completed by June 2009</p>	<p>Within existing staffing resources.  If progressed, Supporting People funding.</p>	<p>A report on the need for any further resources for these groups to be presented to Supporting People.</p>	<p>Better tenancy sustainment and fewer evictions from RSL tenancies.</p>
<p>7.2 <u>Task 23:-</u> To work with RSLs with the aim of producing</p>	<p>Housing Needs and Strategy Manager</p>	<p>Discussions with William Sutton and</p>	<p>Within existing staffing resources</p>	<p>A nomination agreement between Hertsmere's</p>	<p>More settled accommodation for ex-</p>

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nomination agreements for ex-offenders and substance misusers.	William Sutton Homes Aldwyck Housing Association	Aldwyck to take place by December 2008.		main RSLs and the Probation Service and Substance Misuse team.	offenders and former substance misuser, decreasing the likelihood of re-offending and continued substance misuse.
<b>8. Single Homeless</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
8.1 <u>Task 24:-</u> Carry out a Rough Sleeper Count	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Communities and Local Government	To be advised.	Within existing resources	An accurate number of rough sleepers on one night in the borough.	Accurate data to be used in the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix and other returns to the Government.
8.2 <u>Task 25:-</u> To examine the possibility of a SOLO scheme	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Research and Development Officer  Paradigm Housing Association	Discussions to be completed with Paradigm Housing by December 2008	Within existing staffing resources.  If progressed, Supporting People	A scheme offering housing and support to single homeless persons, both priority and non-priority.	A housing option for single homeless persons.
<b>9. Owner-occupiers</b>					
<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
9.1 <u>Task 26:-</u> To examine the need for a specialist adviser on mortgage issues, possibly in partnership with Borehamwood Citizens Advice Bureau.	Housing Needs and Strategy Manager  Housing Options Officer  Homelessness	Report to be completed by March 2009	Within existing staffing resources.  Further resources to be discussed.	Research report to show the level of need for a specialist adviser for households experiencing mortgage difficulties.	Decision with Citizens Advice Bureau on facilitate the employment of a specialist adviser.

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	Managers				
	Citizens Advice Bureau				