



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2010

DERBY CITY

DRAFT

Forward

Since the publication of Derby's first Homelessness Strategy in 2003, we have seen dramatic improvements in the city's response to homelessness: The number of households accepted as homeless has fallen by over 75%, repeat homelessness has been eradicated almost entirely, while the effectiveness with which we respond to households that do become homeless has also improved.

But there is still much to do. Against a backdrop of economic downturn, tightening funding streams and greater personal indebtedness, the challenge ahead is likely to continue unabated.

The response to this challenge will be based on the same core principle as that which underpinned our earlier achievements - effective partnership working in the prevention of homelessness.

But in order to ensure our actions continue to be up-to-date and successful, they should be based on a detailed, coherent and intelligent strategy. And this is what this document provides - a robust framework to achieve further reductions in the numbers of people who are threatened with homelessness, while ensuring that those who actually do become homeless are helped into stable and settled accommodation as soon as possible.

Derby's Homelessness Strategy 2010-2014 is being published in an uncertain time, both economically and politically. The economy is tentatively emerging from recession though the impacts of the recession are still reverberating through society. Meanwhile, we have recently seen formed a new national coalition government with a programme of financial cuts to implement. The effect of these changes on future available resources and on service demands is still largely unknown, but with a new 'age of austerity' now upon us, the need for focused and effective action is even more critical.

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Introduction

- i) Derby City Council published its first Homelessness Strategy in July 2003 and has now produced this Homelessness Strategy 2010 -14, following a further review, comprehensive analysis and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.
- ii) The Derby City Homelessness Review was completed in 2010 and provides a comprehensive understanding of homelessness in Derby. It identifies not only what has worked successfully in the past, but also the key issues and gaps in service provision that are currently in evidence¹.
- iii) Building on the findings of the review, the purpose of this strategy is to assess the scale of the challenge facing us, the level of resources available to meet the challenge, and to provide a clear framework for future action.
- iv) The strategy therefore sets out our vision, key objectives and detailed actions - for increasing prevention measures, improving services and reducing homelessness in Derby over the next five years.
- v) In formulating this strategy, the Council recognises that the problems and causes of homelessness are frequently much more far-reaching than simply 'bricks and mortar' issues. Relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol misuse, mental health and violence can all contribute to making households homeless. Similarly, many people that are susceptible to homelessness have multiple needs that extend beyond the basic need for a home, and it is not possible for the Council to meet all of those needs in isolation.
- vi) Consequently, homelessness services are delivered by a range of providers and partnership working is crucial to achieving the objectives set out in this document.
- vi) This strategy should therefore be seen as a multi agency document between the Council and all of the partner agencies that are involved in tackling homelessness in the city.
- vii) It covers the period 2010-11 to 2014-2015 and will be monitored and reviewed via the HLG² plus group as well as through the Council's performance management systems.

¹ The findings of the Homelessness Review underpin many of the propositions in this strategy. It is therefore referred to frequently in the text and should be seen as a supporting or complementary document. It will be available online from October 2010

² HLG is the Hostels Liaison Group - a registered charity which provides training, information and support services to organisations working with homeless people

SECTION 1 – THE LEGAL AND CORPORATE CONTEXT

1.1 The Nature of Homelessness and the Need for Action

- 1.1.1 Homelessness is the most extreme form of housing need, and has been described as ‘one of the most distressing and visible of social problems’.³
- 1.1.2 But clearly, homelessness is not just about housing – there are huge disparities between the health of homeless people compared to the health of the general population. While frequently, homeless people display mental and physical health problems co-current with substance mis-use.
- 1.1.3 Homelessness also damages people's capability - through loss of skills, through a loss of focus on employment and through damage to their resilience, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- 1.1.4 In preventing and alleviating homelessness therefore, we are helping individuals not only to sustain stable accommodation but to restore their health and self belief and be in a position to make a genuine contribution to society.
- 1.1.5 Consequently, tackling homelessness not only benefits the well-being of the homeless person themselves but also benefits their families, friends and the community as a whole.
- 1.1.6 Locally, a recent review of homelessness in Derby by the Community Commission described it as follows:

*Homelessness is a ‘wicked’ issue. It ranges from the very visual street homeless to the hidden problems of overcrowded families and sofa surfing*⁴

- 1.1.7 The political and social imperative for tackling homelessness at local level is further reinforced by legislation, which requires all local authorities to develop up-to-date homelessness strategies.

1.2 Legal framework

- 1.2.1 A local authority's duty to homeless people is contained within Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002. The 2002 Act enhanced the rights of homeless people by extending the categories of ‘priority need’ to certain groups not covered by the Housing Act 1996. These

³ Quoted from the Chartered Institute of Housing Website at:
<http://www.cih.org/publications/pub129.htm>

⁴ Community Commission, November 2009, Derby City Council

include⁵:

- 16 and 17 year olds (except relevant children)
- care leavers aged 18 to 21 who are former relevant children
- people who are vulnerable as a result of fleeing violence (or threats of violence)
- people who are vulnerable as a result of spending time in the armed forces, serving time in prison or a care background.

1.2.2 This act also requires local authorities to develop homelessness strategies which include actions that:

- a) Prevent homelessness;
- b) Ensure there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are or may become homeless;
- c) Ensure there is satisfactory support for people who are, or may become homeless, or need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.

1.2.3 Government has supplemented this legislation with evolving guidance and a number of further policy initiatives. These are discussed in outline on pages 10-11 and in more detail in the Homelessness Review, pages 7-9.

1.3 **Corporate links**

1.3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2010-2011 sets out how the Council will manage its performance and resources to ensure delivery of its overarching vision which is: 'To create a City for all, through strong leadership and excellent customer focused services'⁶:

1.3.2 The Plan is closely linked to Derby City Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) known as its *2020 Vision*. In fact the Corporate Plan can be viewed as the Council's contribution as a key partner to the SCS.

1.3.3 Derby City Partnership (DCP) is an alliance of organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Its long term plan is to improve the quality of life for everyone in Derby and in doing so it aims that by 2020 Derby will be:

⁵ 16 to 17 year olds and care leavers have automatic 'priority need'. All other groups are considered case by case against the 'test of vulnerability'

⁶ Derby's Corporate Plan can be found at: <http://www.derby.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6DC11E55-729B-411A-9680-C6164E5A5040/0/CorporatePlan201011.pdf>

‘...a place where people of all ages and from all walks of life will feel that they belong [to Derby] and that Derby offers them everything they need; for work, education, housing, leisure and a safe, healthy lifestyle.’⁷

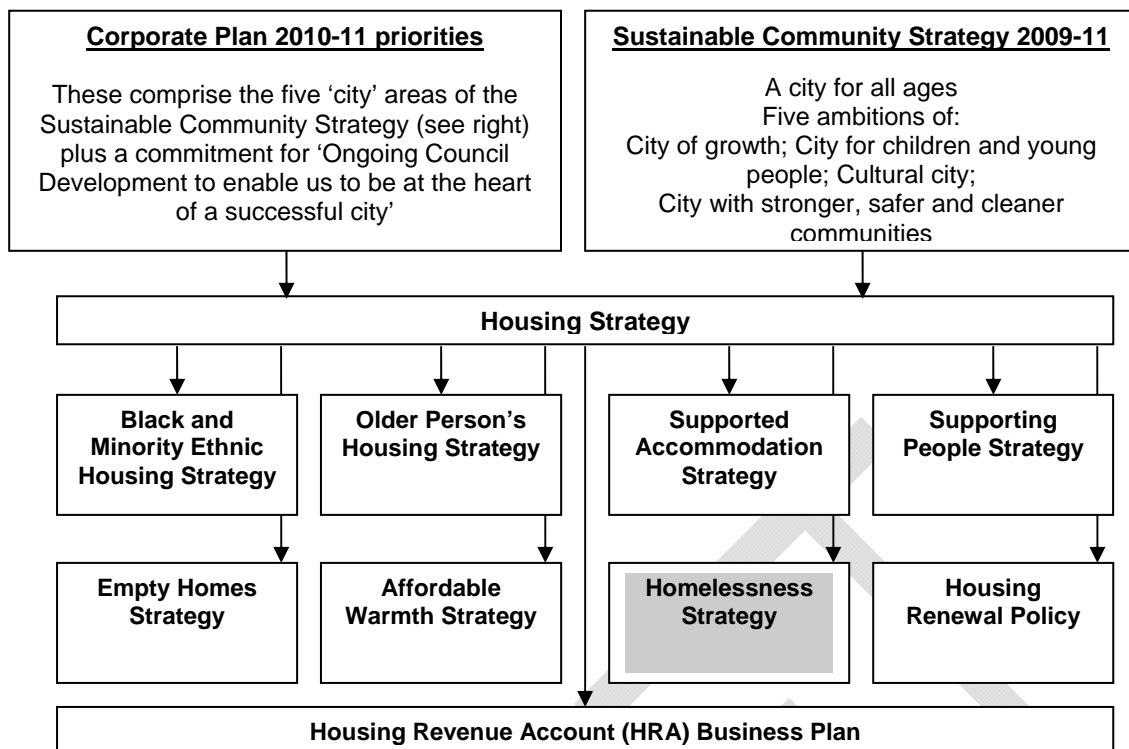
1.3.4 The Corporate Plan for 2010-2011 shares the five main priority areas of the SCS (known as the five ‘cities’) along with an added objective regarding Council performance. The six Corporate Plan objectives are therefore:

1. A City that builds a brighter future for Children and Young People who enjoy a healthy, safe and happy childhood, with the opportunity to achieve their full potential.
2. A City of Growth, opportunity and innovation, a thriving and attractive city for all, with an environment that we will sustain and protect for future generations.
3. A City with Stronger, Safer and Cleaner Communities where everyone feels safe and confident in their daily lives.
4. A significant Cultural City that inspires, engages and celebrates diversity.
5. A Healthy City where people enjoy long, healthy and independent lives.
6. Ongoing Council development to enable us to be at the heart of a successful city.

1.3.5 Clearly, tackling homelessness and enabling vulnerable adults to live safe, clean and independent lives feeds into a number of the city areas, particularly a *City with Stronger, Safer and Cleaner Communities* and a *Healthy City*.

1.3.6 In fact at local level there are a suite of policies, plans and strategies that contribute toward our corporate priorities. The Homelessness Strategy’s place in this ‘suite’ is shown below:

⁷ The Sustainable Community Strategy can be found on the Derby City Partnership website at: www.derbycitypartnership.co.uk



1.3.7 The 'action plan' for achieving the aims of the SCS is contained in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) which lists a number of specific targets. Those to which the broader homelessness agenda are linked are as follows:

- NI 2 People feeling they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI 32 Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- NI 117 Number 16-18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment
- NI 141 Number of vulnerable people living independently
- NI 154 Number of homes provided

1.3.8 The Council's additional objective to 'be at the heart of a successful city' has five sub-objectives regarding efficiency, value for money, management, performance and service delivery. The vision for this homelessness strategy stresses the need for continuous improvement of services and as such ties in well with this objective – see page 26. Similarly, the 'corporate fit' of the more specific priorities and aims of the strategy are discussed in more detail on pages 35-37.

SECTION 2: HOMELESSNESS IN DERBY – THE CURRENT SCENARIO

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 In order to assess how best to tackle homelessness in the forthcoming years it is essential to take stock of the current situation and consider what can be learnt from our experience of the preceding years.
- 2.1.2 This exercise has been undertaken to a large extent in the Homelessness Review 2010, and it is not intended to repeat the analysis of the review here. Rather the strategy is a response to the findings of the review and the two documents should be read in conjunction with one another.
- 2.1.3 This section does however provide a summary of the main findings of the review and outlines:
- Major changes since 2003 to the broader context in which homelessness services are delivered
 - What we have achieved
 - Further key learning points from the Review
 - Current levels of homelessness in Derby

2.2 MAJOR CHANGES SINCE THE LAST STRATEGY

- 2.2.1 Since our last strategy in 2003, we have continued to refocus homelessness activity and services in Derby. This action has been taken in response to the changing profile of demand for homelessness services from the various end-user groups, and changes to the broader context in which delivery takes place. The key changes are summarised below and include factors such as demographics, resources, the economic and financial environment, as well as evolving government guidance.

(For a more detailed discussion of these changes please see the review pages 7 - 19)

Government Guidance and the Political/Legal Framework

- 2.2.2 The Government has supplemented primary legislation with continuing guidance to local authorities and a number of further policy initiatives.
- 2.2.3 This guidance and initiatives are set out in various policy documents, the main ones being:

- *Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes; Changing Lives – A Strategy for Tackling Homelessness (2005)*; which details the governments national homelessness strategy
- *Tackling Homelessness: Housing Associations and Local Authorities Working in Partnership (2006)* which provides a blue-print for joint working between local Councils and RSLs
- *Independence and Opportunity (2007)* outlines how the Supporting People programme helps to reduce homelessness by providing support to enable households to remain in their own homes, and offering invaluable support services to other vulnerable groups.
- *No One Left Out – Communities Ending Rough Sleeping (2008)* which sets out a series of measures for eliminating rough sleeping

2.2.4 The objective of these and related initiatives⁸ was to tackle the homelessness problem more comprehensively and robustly through:

- preventing homelessness
- tackling the wider causes and symptoms of homelessness
- providing support for vulnerable people
- reducing the use of B&B and other types of temporary accommodation
- providing more settled homes
- promoting partnership working
- increasing access to the private sector

They have provided prescriptive guidance, and in some cases a statutory obligation for local authorities, RSL's and other partners to engage homelessness with an increasing focus and effectiveness.

Demographic Changes

2.2.5 Variations in demography can affect the demand on homelessness services in a number of different ways:

Volume and composition of household units.

2.2.6 Due to a number of cultural and economic factors that are evident both nationally and in Derby, the total number of households is increasing, while the average size of these households is decreasing.

2.2.7 This trend impacts directly on the numbers of households presenting themselves as homeless, and on the demand for affordable accommodation, particularly single person and two bed accommodation.

⁸ Initiatives relating specifically to homelessness are also informed by a wider range of initiatives and strategies relating to areas such as health and social care

Migration

- 2.2.8 Derby has been subject to a net increase in its population size since 2003, with much of the increase being accounted for by inward migration. This has resulted in more demand on the housing stock and more pressure on homelessness advice services.
- 2.2.9 Many migrants are from BME communities, arriving via the asylum dispersal system; or as working migrants, predominantly from Eastern Europe. A sizeable minority have also simply moved to Derby from other parts of the UK.
- 2.2.10 These changes can impact on the demand for and delivery of homelessness services in a number of ways, which are discussed in more detail in the review, page 11.

Economic and financial context

- 2.2.11 There are a broad number of factors in this category which have impacted directly or indirectly on the incidence of homelessness and the resources available to address it. The main ones are as follows:

The Housing Market.

- 2.2.12 The rapid increase in house prices since 2003 has reduced accessibility to the owner-occupied sector, with 'knock on' effects on the demand for private renting and social housing.
- 2.2.13 Although more recently there has been a levelling off in house prices, the general lack of credit and mortgage availability results in owner occupation remaining an unaffordable option for the majority of households seeking to enter that tenure.
- 2.2.14 This downturn in the housing market has also impacted on the shared ownership model. Households, even if able to participate in these schemes are increasingly unwilling to due to uncertainly over future price falls and the risk of negative equity.
- 2.2.15 Problems of housing supply are also exacerbated by the well documented downturn in new house building⁹ which has affected both the private and the social housing sectors.

⁹ See for example: *House-building to hit lowest levels since 1923 as housing waiting lists hit record high* at <http://www.24dash.com/news/Housing/>

Recession

- 2.2.16 In addition to the impact on the housing market, recession also has a detrimental effect on personal income, job security, and debt levels – all of which can result in the loss of a home.
- 2.2.17 The downturn also affects funding to service providers in a number of ways. For example, fee income to local authorities is reduced as the number of planning; building control and license applications etc, all fall. S106 investment is greatly reduced. And taxable income and receipts to central Government also fall, which in turn has a ‘knock-on’ effect on the grant funding and other income streams available to both local authorities and voluntary and non-statutory agencies.
- 2.2.18 All of these factors contribute to a scenario where funding is ‘tight’ and resources available for delivering homelessness services are stretched.

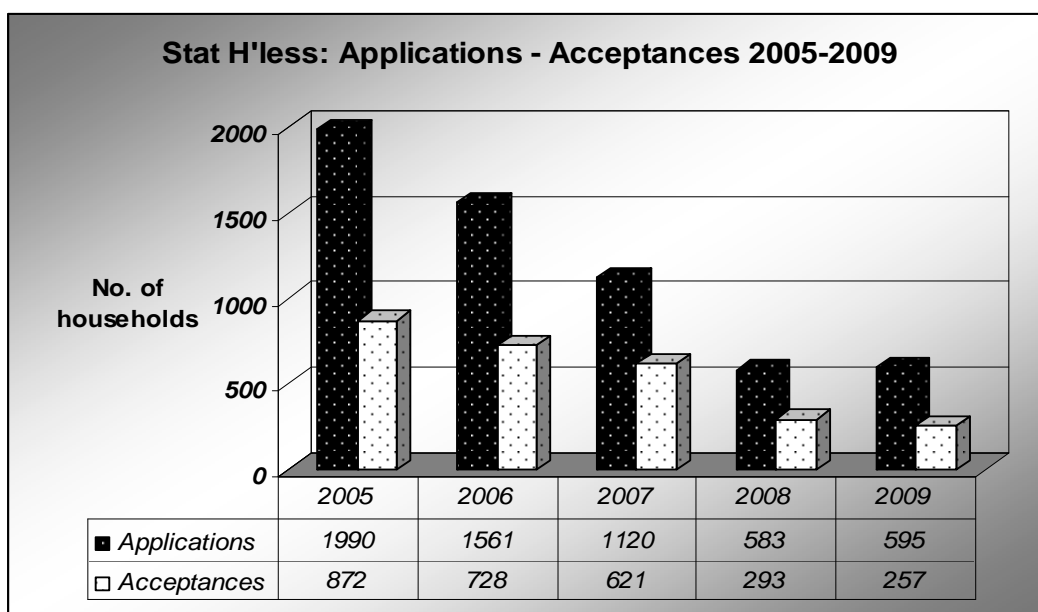
2.3 **WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED**

Overview

- 2.3.1 The above mentioned changes have represented increasing challenges for service delivery in Derby. But the partnership of organisations delivering homelessness services in Derby have responded with considerable success – and an account of these successes and achievements highlights ‘what works’ and therefore helps to inform our planning for the future.

✓ Levels of Statutory Homelessness

- 2.3.2 The key change in the preceding period has been a shift from reactive measures at ‘crisis point’ to a focus on early intervention and prevention.
- 2.3.3 These new preventative measures have yielded substantial results in reducing the number of applications and acceptances year on year, as illustrated below:



2.3.4 During the five years to 2009 both application and acceptance levels have fallen by over 70%, while repeat homelessness has been eliminated almost entirely. The major changes to facilities, structures and policies that have helped bring this about are detailed below.

✓ Amendments to the Allocations Policy

2.3.5 The allocations policy was amended in 2007, with a key aim being to prevent people from becoming statutorily homeless.

2.3.6 These amendments now enable applicants from certain susceptible groups to secure accommodation through Derby Homefinder rather than approach as homeless.

2.3.7 These changes were further reinforced by the staffing changes described below and further measures to prevent homelessness, including:

- a) Providing potential applicants with more comprehensive and focused advice about alternative housing options
- b) Encouraging and supporting – where appropriate - potential applicants to remain in their existing accommodation pending a move.
- c) Facilitating greater ease of access to mainstream housing from hostels and refuges.

Another review of the Allocations Policy is now underway, with additional changes likely to be implemented from Autumn 2010

✓ Housing Options Centre - Revised Structure and Refurbishment

2.3.8 To support the prevention agenda and better serve the changing profile of demand and expectations on homelessness services, key changes to the staffing structure were made in 2006. These included the creation of eight housing advisor posts, and the new appointment or redesignation of officers specialising in Community Safety, Domestic Violence, and Housing Benefits liaison.

2.3.9 This restructure was accompanied by a refurbishment of the Housing Options Centre reception and a revision of procedures for dealing with enquiries. These changes were implemented in 2006 following extensive customer consultation.

✓ Additional measures to prevent youth homelessness

2.3.10 A mediation service was set up in 2005, and was expanded in 2008/09 to provide cognitive behaviour therapy for crash pads residents.

2.3.11 The Crash Pads facility opened in November 2009 and is run in partnership with the YMCA/CYP/YOS/HOC. It provides respite accommodation for 16-17 year olds for typically 2-8 weeks while mediation ensues. It is based at the YMCA campus and provides five units.

✓ Accessing the private sector

Bond Assurance and Rent in Advance

2.3.12 In common with many other local authorities, loss of housing stock through 'right to buy' coupled with an insufficient rate of building from Registered Social Landlords has resulted in a serious shortfall of social housing in Derby.

2.3.13 It has therefore been crucial to access additional housing in the private sector. Derby's main mechanism for doing this is through the bond assurance / rent in advance scheme. Between 07-08 and 09-10 this mechanism resulted in 387 units of accommodation being occupied by social housing tenants.

Empty Homes

2.3.14 Additional access to the private sector has been achieved through the Council's Empty Homes Strategy, which has provided the framework for our corporate drive to return vacant private sector residential properties back into use. Between 06-07 and 09-10 this initiative has seen the return

to use of over 400 dwellings¹⁰, including over £3million worth of stock through a renovation loan scheme.

- 2.1.15 Although many of these 'returned-to-use' dwellings provide social lets, a substantial number are reused for owner-occupation or private renting. While this contributes to housing supply in these tenures, it does not directly provide substantial additional social housing.
- 2.3.16 To address this situation and provide improved rates of procurement of properties directly for social renting, the Empty Homes Service has led on the development of private sector leasing (PSL). More recently it has taken this initiative significantly further through the development of a 'Local Lettings Agency' (LLA). This new initiative is being progressed in partnership with the Decent and Safe Homes (DASH) Project and other HMA partners and is supported by Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership funding. The LLA will be launched officially in October 2010 and is expected to yield over 100 dwellings for social renting by 2011-12.
- ✓ Milestone House
- 2.3.17 This is a new facility providing holistic assessment and support services for single persons over 18yrs and childless couples, that are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It comprises the single point of entry assessment service, and 35 emergency bed spaces. It is owned and managed by the City Council with Derwentio Housing Trust providing the support service for residents staying in the emergency accommodation.
- 2.3.18 Opening in 2008, it is a £2.2 million scheme jointly funded by Communities and Local Government, the European Urban 2 fund and through the City Council's facilitation fund.
- 2.3.19 It makes referrals to other hostel provision in the city and provides access to a community psychiatric nurse, and alcohol, drug and other treatment services. It also makes referrals to other agencies that can assist with access to training, education and employment.
- 2.3.20 The innovative approaches at Milestone House are now widely recognised, and as such the scheme was a finalist in the category of 'Meeting The Needs Of Vulnerable People' at the 2008 UK Housing Awards.

¹⁰ This is according to the counting methodology prescribed by DCLG and the Audit Commission. It includes demolitions, and in some cases dwellings which have also received a bond. It cannot therefore be considered a precise indicator of net additions to the housing stock.

✓ Centenary House

- 2.3.21 Increasing awareness around 2003-04 of the need for additional specialist provision for persons with alcohol dependency resulted in a successful bid to ODPM (now DCLG) for the development of an alcohol dependency unit.
- 2.3.22 This facility is based at centenary house and is managed by English Churches Housing Association. It opened in 2005 and offers a service to six former rough sleepers who had a long history of chaotic alcohol abuse.
- 2.3.23 Residents are able to carry on drinking in a 'managed' way and as a result rough sleeping in Derby has fallen markedly, while ASB on the streets has also substantially reduced.
- 2.3.24 DCLG and other agencies regularly bring visitors to the project, highlighting it as a 'beacon of good practice'. Furthermore, and in recognition of its success, the project won a Community Care award in 2005 for services in the 'drug & alcohol' category.
- 2.3.25 An additional service to complement the work at Centenary is the new move-on facility at Newstead House. This comprises a block of semi-independent living flats and provides a 'half way' stage towards independent living. From this facility residents can return to the community in a planned and supported way.

✓ Family Intervention Projects (FIPs)

- 2.3.26 These projects work to turn around the behaviour of the families engaging in ASB or youth crime and reduce their impact on the community. In so doing, they bring stability to families' lives, improve opportunities for children and prevent homelessness.
- 2.3.27 The ASB FIP has been operational since November 2007 while the Youth Crime FIP was set up in 2009. Since their inception the FIPs have taken over 50 referrals, in which 92% of families in ASB FIPs have reduced levels of ASB, with 65% eliminating it altogether. 75% of individuals in the Crime FIPs have reduced their crime levels with 50% eliminating it altogether.

✓ Partnership working in the provision of high quality advice services

- 2.3.28 In 2008 a new integrated advice centre for Derby was created by a pioneering partnership between the merged Derby Law Centre and Derby Citizens Advice, Derby Advice, and Derbyshire Housing Aid. The Community Legal Advice Centre (CLAC) provides access to quality

assured advice across all categories of Social Welfare law including housing law, benefit advice and money advice.

- 2.3.29 Derby's CLAC was one of the first to be established in the country and has seen more clients than any other CLAC nationwide (10,466 clients in 2009-2010).

The Legal Services Commission has stated that this partnership arrangement in Derby is the most successful model of its kind and is looking to promote it nationally as an exemplar of good practice.

2.4 FURTHER KEY LEARNING POINTS FROM THE REVIEW

- 2.4.1 Derby's Homelessness Review 2010 provided a very detailed and comprehensive analysis of homelessness in Derby. In addition to the successes outlined above, this analysis has provided a number of additional key learning points to further inform the strategy. These can be summarised as follows:

Causes of homelessness

- 2.4.2
- a) The main cause of homelessness has become 'eviction' by parents/relatives/friends. This has replaced domestic violence as the primary cause and accounts for over 40% of all cases.
 - b) The 2nd largest cause is 'Termination of Assured Short hold Tenancy'.
 - c) Perhaps contrary to expectations, repossession due to mortgage arrears remains a small and falling factor, accounting for less than 4% of cases. See page 20 for further discussion on this.

Levels of statutory homelessness

- 2.4.3 The number of homeless acceptances has been decreasing each year – this phenomenon being analysed in more detail on page 14.

- 2.4.4 But although statutory levels of homelessness are reducing, there remain high levels of demand for housing provision and advice. This point is discussed in more detail in the section on 'Current Levels of Homelessness', on page 23.

Repeat homelessness

- 2.4.5 This has been eliminated almost entirely, falling from sixty households in 2005 to three in 2009. This is the result of an increased focus on sustainable housing solutions and increased tenancy support measures.

The incidence of homelessness

Age Profile

- 2.4.6
- a) Younger age groups remaining the most susceptible to homelessness. The age ranges 16-24 and 25-44 have comprised over 90% of all cases in the last four consecutive years.
 - b) Within this range there is an increasing proportion in the upper tier, reflecting greater levels of family breakdown and reducing average household size.

Household type

- 2.4.7
- a) Single parents remain the most vulnerable group to becoming statutorily homeless, comprising in excess of half of the total throughout the previous five years
 - b) Couples with dependent children are the second largest group consistently accounting for over one quarter of the total.

Ethnicity

- 2.4.8
- a) 'White British' comprise around 70% of all homeless.
 - b) BME groups are proportionally over represented. That is, BME groups (defined as all ethnic groups other than white British) comprise less than 20% of Derby's population¹¹ but around 30% of its homeless. This over representation continues the long term trend in Derby and matches the national picture

Successfully Resourcing Homelessness Initiatives

- 2.4.9
- The provision of...
- a) new dedicated staff to tackle the root causes of homelessness, and,
 - b) bespoke facilities to meet the needs of groups with acute or specialist requirements

...are measures that are proven to work.

- 2.4.10
- For example, domestic violence (DV) was the primary cause of homelessness in 2003 accounting for over 300 cases p.a. - 23% of all cases. Following the appointment of a DV caseworker this figure had fallen by 2009 to 2.7% of the total, just seven cases.

¹¹ Derby's BME population as measured by the Office for National Statistics shows a rise from 15.7% in 2001 to 18.1% in 2006 (based on 'mid-year estimates'). The figure is believed to have increased further between 2007 and 2010.

- 2.4.11 Similarly, consider the case of Centenary house. The development of an alcohol dependency unit at this site in 2005 has contributed to a substantial reduction in recorded rough sleeping in Derby and has also reduced the incidence of ASB on the streets.

Mortgage Repossessions

- 2.4.12 Given the economic downturn, there had been anticipation of a rise in homeless cases due to repossessions and also rent arrears. This has not yet materialised, in part due to the large number financial and legal measures in place to prevent repossession, including:
- New Government guidance to financial institutions which slows down or stops the repossession process – the so called ‘pre-court action protocol’¹²
 - Mortgage Rescue Scheme
 - DHA court desk – which intervenes at possession hearings on behalf of the homeowner
 - The new post of Financial Inclusion Officer based at HOC
 - Homelessness prevention fund
 - Repossession loan scheme
 - There are also a large number of other organisations providing debt advice through the CLAC, which comprises Derby Citizens Advice & Law Centre, DHA and Derby Advice
- 2.4.13 The extent to which all of these measures will be maintained in the current financial and funding climate has yet to be determined.

Temporary Accommodation (TA)

- 2.4.14 The number of households in TA has been greatly reduced, from 74 in 2006 to 33 in 2009. This is due to the following reasons:
- a) Particularly since 2007 there has been an increase in the number of allocations in permanent accommodation, reducing our reliance on TA. This figure has risen from 1214 allocations in 2007-08 to 1442 placements in 2009-10.
 - b) The delayed eviction scheme between 2008-09 reduced the numbers of UKBA households presenting as homeless.
 - c) As part of our goal of reducing use of TA we have improved turn-around times. This means that households placed in TA are moved on more quickly and void properties are occupied more quickly.

¹² See: www.justice.gov.uk/civil/procrules_fin/menus/protocol.htm

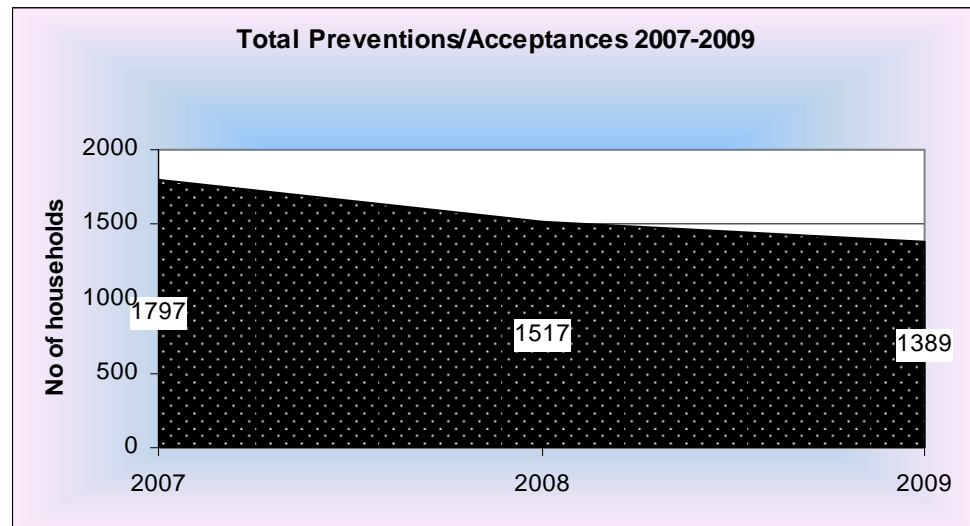
Foreign Nationals and Eastern European Migrants

- 2.4.15 There has been much media and public attention given to the impact of foreign nationals seeking residence in Britain, particularly with regard to economic migrants from Eastern Europe and the so called 'A10' accession countries.
- 2.4.16 The records show that between 2007 and 2009 there has been an increase in the number and proportions of foreign nationals presenting as homeless. But this is predominantly due to inward migration and dispersals by UKBA and does not include a high proportion of A10 nationals.
- 2.4.17 However there are two important caveats to this observation:
- Although A10 nationals are not presenting as homeless, they are in many instances (particularly in the case of workers) eligible for accommodation through the normal allocations route and so are accessing housing services on this basis.
 - There remains a small but persistent group of households, including eastern European migrants and failed asylum seekers, with no legal recourse to public funds. These households are at danger of destitution and at present reliant solely on charitable support. A more coherent and resourced response is essential to prevent further hardship.

2.5 **CURRENT LEVELS OF HOMELESSNESS IN DERBY**

- 2.5.1 There were 257 households accepted as statutorily homeless in 2009, falling slightly from 293 in 2008. However, these figures do not 'paint the whole picture' as to the homeless situation in Derby as they do not always take fully into account the following factors:
1. The 'hidden homeless' – which includes groups such as those living in overcrowded or unsuitable occupation, 'sofa-surfers', concealed 2nd households, rough sleepers, and other 'non-priority need' groups that may not have been formally registered as homeless with the authorities
 2. Those accepted as homeless in previous years who then 'make their own arrangements' or simply disappear, with it never being made clear whether and when their situation was resolved
 3. And crucially, the large numbers of households that would otherwise have become homeless were it not for preventative actions by the Council and its partners.
- 2.5.2 Consequently, it is impossible to establish the precise number of homeless households present in Derby at any one particular time.

2.5.3 But what we can measure is the 'flow' of homelessness - that is, the numbers recorded as newly homeless year on year (both statutory and non-statutory), added to those threatened with homelessness that early preventative action has managed to avert. Taking these factors together gives a measure of the number of households either becoming or threatened with homelessness. It therefore provides a good indication of the demand for service provision.



2.5.4 The data shows a continued high level of demand on homelessness services throughout the last three years. Although there is a slight fall in the absolute numbers recorded this does not represent a fall in the demand for service for a number of reasons:

- Prevention is far more resource and staff-intensive than reactive action. Therefore the increase in the number of prevention cases (from 778 in 2007 to 893 in 2009) represents an increased demand for service provision
- Many of the persons applying for housing support are presenting with multiple needs of increasing complexity and acuity. This translates into an increasing level of recourses to be able to respond appropriately.
- The figures do not show many of the hidden homeless – particularly those deemed not to be in priority need for whom the authorities have a lesser duty.
- That there are still insufficient resources to cope with demand levels is further evidenced by the number of 'turn-aways' at Milestone House –in some cases as many as 16 persons have been turned away on a single night due to lack of beds.

Currently then, there remains a high level of demand for services and a continuing strain on limited resources.

Predicting future levels of Homelessness

- 2.5.5 The difficulties of quantifying precisely current levels of need are magnified when it come to predicting future needs. But the current socio-economic and demographic context suggests that there will be further difficulties for many households trying to access good quality affordable housing, especially as the impacts of the recession and funding cuts filter through.
- 2.5.6 Furthermore, loss of local authority housing stock through 'right to buy' coupled with an insufficient rate of new builds across sectors is only likely to exacerbate the mis-match between the supply and demand for housing.
- 2.5.7 Having consulted stakeholders as well as undertaking some detailed analysis of homelessness data, there are a number of additional areas that are significant in terms of future trends in homelessness and housing needs. Of most significance, we are concerned about:
- a) The potential increase in the numbers of young people who will approach the service, because they cannot afford to access their own housing unassisted.
 - b) The increasing numbers who may approach if national initiatives to prevent mortgage repossession are curtailed. (Such as funding for mortgage rescue schemes and repossession loan funds). There is also the parallel situation where tenants have lost their homes due to their buy-to-let landlords being repossessed
 - c) Specific vulnerable clients who need a package of support when leaving institutions and to then sustain tenancies.
 - d) The continuing lack of provision, both now and in the foreseeable future, for any funding or changes in legislation for housing migrant workers / failed asylum seekers and others with no recourse to public funds.

Resources – Current and Future levels

- 2.5.8 There are currently just over 20,000 units of social housing in Derby, comprising 13,500 units of Council stock and 6,500 units of RSL stock.
- 2.5.9 Specialist accommodation such as hostels, refuges and supported accommodation are provided to meet the needs of specific vulnerable groups and are invariably supported by SP funding.

- 2.5.10 In addition to physical resources there are a number of agencies and organisations across the statutory and non-statutory sector which provide advice, assistance and other support to homeless households or those at risk of homelessness.
- 2.5.11 For more detail on the full scope of physical resources and other support services see the review pages 44-49
- 2.5.12 The extent to which the future level of resources can be maintained or expanded is in some doubt in the current climate. This point is discussed in more detail in paragraph 2.5.7 above and in the 'Key Challenges' commentary on pages 26-27.
- 2.5.13 But despite these and other uncertainties, Derby will continue to operate as effectively as possible in the prevention and alleviation of homelessness. The next sections set out in detail how this will be achieved.

SECTION 3: VISION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

3.1 OUR VISION

Overview

- 3.1.1 As discussed in section one, the Council and its partners have a duty to address the key causes of homelessness and respond appropriately and effectively. In order to provide focus for this work we have developed the following long term vision:
- 3.1.2 *Derby City Council, through joint working with a range of partner organisations, will strive to continuously improve its effectiveness in the prevention and alleviation of homelessness. The focus will continue to be on proactive intervention – identifying those at risk of homelessness at an early stage and acting to prevent it wherever possible. But where homelessness does arise, we will provide people with appropriate housing, care and support, with a clear pathway towards stable and independent living.*
- 3.1.3 Essentially then, there are two main elements to our vision: to reduce the incidence of homelessness more effectively, and where it does occur, to minimise its duration and impact on those experiencing it.
- 3.1.4 The vision leads on to a number of strategic priorities, supporting goals and specific actions. But in setting these out it is crucial to be mindful of the potential barriers there are to overcome. These are discussed in more detail below.

3.2 KEY CHALLENGES LOOKING FORWARD

- 3.2.1 In addition to the issues raised page 24, there are a number of other areas which may impact on both the demand for and supply of homelessness services and on our capacity to fulfil our vision as comprehensively as we would like.

These include:

 Funding and financial issues

- 3.2.2 The Supporting People service provides the bulk of funding for accommodation and support services for those susceptible to

homelessness and other vulnerable groups. The programme in Derby has historically received about £10m per annum, with this funding being provided as a separate grant. However, since 2009/10 it has been named an 'unringfenced' grant within the Area Based Grant, while from 2010-11 it is not separately identified at all but entirely subject to local discretion.

3.2.3 The way SP funding has fallen over the years is also illustrated by reference to the fact that the cash allocation in 09-10 was 2.5% lower than in 2003, amounting to a real terms decrease of more than 10%. Similarly, the homelessness grant - the main fund for prevention activities - will also move to an area based grant from 2011. *The loss of ring-fencing for these two crucial funding streams threatens to exacerbate cuts already absorbed and represents a real challenge to the future provision of homelessness services.*

3.2.4 Funding from the Council's own resources will also be stretched in the current economic climate as of course will those of key partner organisations in all sectors.

Physical Resources

3.2.5 Despite national initiatives in areas such as rough sleeping, and the broader provisions of the Homelessness Act 2002, there are still many homeless households for whom temporary accommodation cannot be found on the day that they lose their previous accommodation. This is illustrated in Derby by the numbers of 'turn ways' at Milestone house (see page 24). Increasing the supply of this and other types of specialist accommodation will remain a challenge in the next five years.

3.2.6 There are also likely to be continuing resource issues in relation to drugs/alcohol/mental ill health treatment.

Political changes.

3.2.7 We now have in place a new national coalition government and a new partnership at local level. The new government's stance on the homelessness agenda is as yet unknown, while at local level it is essential to gain member support for effective delivery.

Migration

3.2.8 This poses another unknown and has been alluded to above on pages 12 and 27. Another factor here is that A2 workers will become eligible for statutory assistance after having been resident in the UK for the

prescribed amount of time, potentially placing an additional strain on already stretched services.

- 3.2.9 It is also far from clear to what extent there will be further UKBA dispersals in Derby.

✚ Housing benefit.

- 3.2.10 A key issue in relation to access to settled housing concerns the change from housing benefit (HB) to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) system. The LHA was put in place in 2008 with the intention to give tenants more control over their choice of homes.
- 3.2.11 But there are concerns about the effect of the new scheme, particularly given that further amendments made to the regulations in January 2009 (to 'Broad Rental Market Areas') are yet to be fully seen. In this regard Shelter has made the following observation:

"Shelter is monitoring the scheme, and notes that there are significant discrepancies in affordability across the country, and that in some areas, fewer properties are available to benefit claimants than was hoped, reducing the choice they are offered."

www.shelter.org.uk/researchbriefings

- 3.2.12 It is also more difficult under this scheme to get rent paid directly to landlords, and this can create additional problems for people likely to have problems managing their finances.
- 3.2.13 Both issues may affect our strategic objective of increasing access to the private rented sector and there remains uncertainty as to what, if anything, the national response will be in terms of policy amendments.

3.3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 3.3.1 The vision naturally leads on to a set of over-arching strategic priorities, which have been formulated bearing in mind not only our local concern but also the regional agenda and government guidance.
- 3.3.2 The four strategic priorities are listed below and are supplemented by a number of 'supporting goals' which serve to pinpoint more precisely what the priorities entail.
- 3.3.3 In some areas there is also a case for further research and investigation before deciding on a definitive course of action. These areas are also

listed below, following the actions.

3.3.4 Strategic Priority A: Continue to improve on the progress made to date in preventing and reducing homelessness.

Overview

3.3.5 The prevention agenda is at the heart of this strategy. Early intervention before the 'crisis point' is reached is immeasurably preferable to dealing reactively to a situation in which the household has already lost its home.

3.3.6 And the key to successful prevention is an in depth understanding of the prime drivers of homelessness, with remedial action tailored to suit.

3.3.7 As previously mentioned, in the last five years Derby has had considerable success in reducing homelessness levels through effective prevention measures. The challenge now is to build on this success in further reducing numbers. We will do this by pursuing the following goals:

Supporting Goals

- 3.3.8
1. Understanding, anticipating and tackling the primary causes of homelessness
 2. Further reducing or eliminating repeat homelessness and rough sleeping
 3. Improving measures to tackle youth homelessness

3.3.9 We will achieve these goals by undertaking the following actions:

Specific Actions

1. Undertake rough sleeper 'Street Audits' on a six weekly basis
2. Provide individual plans for each rough sleeper. These will identify appropriate and explicit actions to respond to the situation - actions to be undertaken by both the individual themselves and each supporting agency that is involved
3. Develop a full time outreach team to address rough sleeping
4. Complete the review of the allocations policy and implement necessary changes
5. Invite an elected member to be Homelessness Champion to drive forward the agenda
6. Reduce rough sleeping to as close as possible to zero by 2012-13
7. Increase the number of homelessness preventions successfully achieved year on year through continued use of the Homelessness

Prevention Fund and maximising the use of discretionary housing payments

8. Meet the departmental targets for the number of homeless households (per thousand households) where Council intervention resolved their situation to 12 per thousand.
9. Reduce the number of homelessness acceptances year on year to 250 p.a. by 2012-13
10. Develop a 'reconnections' policy for those presenting with no local connection.
11. Make home visits in *all* cases where homelessness is threatened due to relationship breakdown and 'family eviction'.
12. Offer a housing options interview for all those approaching HOC for the first time.

3.3.10 *Further Research and Investigation*

1. Examine and evaluate the reason for and numbers of 'turn-aways' at Milestone House in order to find an innovative solution.

Please note these actions are repeated in the table on pages 38-44 which also indicates timelines for completion and the accountable officers.

3.3.11 **Strategic Priority B: Support vulnerable homeless people and specialist needs groups to access suitable, settled and stable accommodation**

Overview

- 3.3.12 The availability of accommodation of a suitable quantity, quality and type is essential to meet the demands made by the various client groups that become homeless.
- 3.3.13 We provide access to accommodation of three different types: temporary, 'move-on', or permanent, and the type provided in any particular case will depend on the circumstances of the household, including whether they have any specialist needs.
- 3.3.14 The objective is to enable every household to have access to stable and permanent accommodation, reducing the use of temporary accommodation wherever possible. But often placing households in TA is necessary pending a long term solution. Move on accommodation is similarly necessary in many cases where an 'intermediate step' between TA and permanent housing is required.

Supporting Goals

3.3.15 Our goals in this area are as follows:

- a) Expand housing options by maximising the use of the existing social housing stock.
- b) Work more closely with the private sector to increase housing availability and choice
- c) Reduce the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation such as B&B, particularly for groups such as families with dependent children and 16-17 year olds.
- d) Increase the provision of specialist accommodation for those with multiple or complex needs.
- e) Improve availability and access to emergency accommodation including hostels, refugees and night shelters.

Specific Actions

3.3.16 We will achieve these goals by undertaking the following actions:

1. Secure continued funding for the DV worker
2. Expand mediation services for landlord/tenant disputes and for where family and friends are no longer able/willing to accommodate
3. Complete the preparation of a 'welcome pack' for foreign nationals and distribute widely.
4. To help tackle homelessness caused by non-registered migrant workers being unable to access public funds, report to the Gang and Licensing Authority all employers known to have breached registration requirements.
5. Supported by amendments to the allocations policy, further improve our management of TA to reduce its use and reduce the use of B&B
6. Improve clarity of and access to relevant information and sign posting – particularly for those emergency cases where persons become homeless 'out of hours' and have no previous experience of the system.
7. Meet the departmental target for the number of households living in Temporary Accommodation. Target: reduce to 30 by 2012-13
8. Meet the departmental target for the number of people placed in bed and breakfast accommodation' Target: reduce to 2 by 2012-13
9. Develop six new properties to provide accommodation and training facilities for care leavers.

Further Research and Investigation

3.3.17 10. Explore the possibility of setting up a destitution fund or an alternative

response to destitute migrants with no access to public funds
11. Investigate supported accommodation provision for persons with both care needs and alcohol mis-use issues.

3.3.18 Strategic Priority C: Integrate housing support more closely with other support services in order to tackle social and financial exclusion and promote long term sustainable solutions

Overview

- 3.3.19 Homelessness is of course not about bricks and mortar alone, and the causes of homelessness can be complex. Consequently, in preventing or alleviating homelessness, the key to achieving a long term sustainable solution frequently lies in resolving a far wider range of issues than just the provision of accommodation.
- 3.3.20 These issues may relate to health, relationships, finance, employment or education/training, while the individual may also have emotional, psychological and/or spiritual support needs. Addressing these concerns holistically is therefore crucial to achieving a sustainable outcome.
- 3.3.21 This is a theme that has already begun to be taken up in Derby through the 'Enhanced Housing Options' process. This is an innovative case management approach aimed at providing a wider range of guidance on the issues specified above and more broadly on independent living skills. It can also include areas such as tenancy sustainment and income and money management.

Supporting Goals

- 3.3.22 Our goals in this area are as follows:
- a) Provide a more holistic service to persons at risk of homelessness
 - b) Broaden measures to promote financial inclusion
 - c) Improve links and referrals to services relating to health, employment education and training, and also emotional, psychological and spiritual well-being
 - d) Strengthen and expand tenancy sustainment measures

Specific Actions

- 3.3.23 We will achieve these goals by undertaking the following actions:
- 1. Increase financial advice and support to prevent homelessness

caused by debt and financial issues. This will include increased referrals and signposting to the Derby CLAC, and direct support through the prevention fund, the repossession fund, and the mortgage rescue scheme

2. Meet the departmental target for the number of single homeless people supported to access education, employment and training. Target: increase to 80 by 2012-13
3. Develop a written protocol outlining the 'steps from homelessness to settled accommodation'. This will include an assessment of the full range of support needs of the household, along with a specification of which agency will deliver on them and at what stage in the process.
4. Agree a protocol with benefits to fast-track HB for those threatened with homelessness

Further Research and Investigation

- 3.3.24 5. Examine and research the viability of adopting a system of online alerts to social housing providers regarding for example: benefit suspension, claim processing or problems obtaining information. This would enable earlier intervention in respect of rent arrears or other tenancy problems and so reduce action to evict tenants.

3.3.25 **Strategic Priority D: Further strengthen partnership working and the co-ordination of services so that Derby can meet its objectives with greater efficiency and effectiveness**

Overview

- 3.3.26 Partnership working is fundamental to this Homelessness Strategy. Many people have multiple needs that extend beyond the basic need for a home, and it is not possible for the Council to meet those needs in isolation. It is therefore essential to work in partnership in order to prevent homelessness and offer sustainable housing solutions. (Appendix A illustrates successful partnership working involving a number of different agencies)

- 3.3.27 The Council has worked closely with its partners throughout the city to develop this strategy. In order to build on previous success it is essential that partner agencies continue to work closely with the Council to assist in its delivery and monitor progress.

Supporting Goals

- 3.3.28 Our goals in this area are as follows:

- a) Increase our joint-working with partners in housing support and care to further improve services and provide additional accommodation to meet the needs of vulnerable households.
- b) Improve links with primary care services and review the provision of day centre facilities
- c) Investigate the possibility of cross boundary working with neighbouring LA's.
- d) Improving our joint working with CYP in accessing additional affordable accommodation for client groups at risk of losing their homes due to crime or ASB (those addressed through the FIPs). This will help to ensure suitable accommodation for this group is provided and they are not placed into B&B if deemed intentionally homeless

Specific Actions

3.3.29 We will achieve these goals by undertaking the following actions:

- 1. Work more closely with the CSP in provision of additional services for homeless persons with alcohol dependency
- 2. Continue to develop the PRS alongside partners. This will include maintaining £65,000 funding for the acquisition of units via the bond scheme and procuring 100 properties by 2012 via the new social lettings agency
- 3. Increase use of the private rented sector - via joint working on the social lettings agency
- 4. Increase use of the private rented sector – via the bond scheme and rent in advance
- 5. Fully implement a cross boundary CBL to expand access and choice of social housing
- 6. Improve access to information and advice services through HOAMS (Housing Options Advice Management System).
- 7. Develop a common exclusions policy signed up to by all providers
- 8. Develop a complex case panel to coordinate a response to the needs of client groups with multiple and complex needs
- 9. Negotiate with providers to put all 2nd stage accommodation through SPE
- 10. Arrange training for the service providers in the new allocations policy

Further Research and Investigation

3.3.30 Examine the feasibility of joining the Erewash credit union in a partnering arrangement.

3.3.31 All the actions listed under these four over-arching priorities are repeated

in the action plan in section four, where timescales, resources and accountable officers are also specified.

3.4 **CONCLUSION: THE BENEFITS OF A SUCCESSFUL HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY AND THE CASE FOR PREVENTION**

Community and Corporate Benefits

- 3.4.1 As discussed on pages 7-10, a successful homelessness strategy makes a direct contribution to our corporate goals, particularly those relating to health, inclusion, and active citizenship. And because high levels of homelessness (and an inadequate response to it) reflect detrimentally on the city, an efficient and effective homelessness service also directly ties in with our key organisational goal of improving support services and managing Derby's reputation.

Value for money

- 3.4.2 In principle there are two ways of approaching homelessness – tackling the situation after it has arisen, or focusing on prevention (or a combination of both).
- 3.4.3 The University of Heriot-Watt published research in 2007 that demonstrated that preventing homelessness can save money when compared to the cost of helping someone who is already homeless. For example:
- The cost per person of successful mediation (estimated at £600) is around 9 times less expensive than providing alternate settled accommodation.
 - The costs of home visits are estimated to be 3.5 times less expensive than providing alternate settled accommodation. This based on the running costs of around £15,000 per annum, assuming 50% of a case officers' time.
 - Advice on housing options (e.g. resolving Housing Benefit problems, rent or service charge arrears, negotiation/legal advocacy) is estimated at around 9 times less expensive than providing alternate settled accommodation.
 - The costs of a rent deposit scheme are estimated to be 8.5 times less than the costs of providing accommodation under the main homelessness duty. This based on the assumption of an average

of £800 per case with re-payment of 25% of deposits awarded. (In Derby the average deposit is half of this figure, around £400 per property)

- The cost of operating a rent bond scheme is 37 times less the average cost of providing accommodation under the main homelessness duty. This based on the assumption that the average claim rate of bonds at 10% per annum.
- The sanctuary scheme represents a saving of 5.5 times the costs of providing accommodation under the main homelessness duty.

3.4.4 These savings are summarised in the table below;

| Value for Money Ranking | Prevention Measure | Savings compared to cost of meeting main homelessness duty |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1 | Rent bond scheme | 37 x |
| 2 | Advice on housing options | 9 x |
| 3 | Mediation | 9 x |
| 4 | Rent deposit scheme | 8.5 x |
| 5 | Sanctuary scheme | 5.5 x |
| 7 | Home visits | 3.5 x |

3.4.5 **The risks of cutting funding for the prevention of homelessness**

- Performance – Clearly, a reduction in funding will affect the ability to achieve homelessness targets and this could result in an increase in homelessness levels.
- Corporate image - cutting funding for preventing homelessness can generate negative publicity and could portray the Council as an organisation that doesn't care sufficiently about vulnerable and marginalized people.
- Economic – preventing homelessness saves money when compared to the cost of providing temporary accommodation and re-housing into alternative accommodation, as demonstrated above. Therefore, cutting funding for preventing homelessness might achieve short-term savings but could cost a considerable greater amount in the medium/long-term. This will be seen not only in the provision of accommodation for those that become homeless, but also through greater demands for service provision from other areas such as social

services, the police, the NHS etc

- Environmental – There is likely to be an increase in the number of people sleeping on the streets. Other street activities such as begging, drinking, and prostitution are also likely to increase. All which is undesirable in city centres and potentially off-putting to people thinking of visiting and/or businesses intending invest in the area.
- Legal - Local authorities have a duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to prevent homelessness. Reduction in funding could have a detrimental impact on the local authority to satisfactorily fulfil this duty. A reduction in funding for tools to prevent homeless will result in an increased number of people being owed the full housing duty.

3.4.6 In summary, reducing the budget for the homelessness might appear to be a saving, but it could actually incur more costs than it saves. Continuing to adequately resource homelessness prevention initiatives will result in cost savings for the Council in the long term.

4 **SECTION 4: ACTION PLAN**

- 4.1 The following tabulated Action Plan brings together all the key actions identified in the preceding section, while also identifying which officer or department is responsible, by when the action will be achieved, and how it will be resourced.
- 4.2 It represents ‘the bottom line’ – how in practice specific actions will be undertaken in order to achieve our strategic objectives and improve homelessness services in the city.
- 4.3 It should be noted that the action plan for the homelessness strategy also has direct links with related actions plans such as those relating to our Move-on Plans Protocol (MOPP), and our Temporary Accommodation strategy

Monitoring and Review

- 4.4 It is, by definition, not a description of a rigid progression but is subject to constant review in light of the changing circumstances in which services are delivered. And as previously discussed in more detail, it is worth repeating that the national comprehensive spending review planned for this autumn may impact significantly on the resources available to implement these actions.
- 4.5 However, irrespective of resource issues, effective monitoring of the strategy’s action is essential to ensure achievements against targets and the continuing relevance of actions taken.
- 4.6 Consequently, a Steering Group under the remit of the director of housing and advice services will continue to convene as a Monitoring and Review Group. The group should comprise staff from the council but also from other agencies with an interest in homelessness to contribute expertise from their own specialised fields.

ACTION PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITY A: CONTINUALLY IMPROVE MEASURES TO PREVENT AND REDUCE HOMELESSNESS

| Action | Outcome | Lead officer or organisation | Resource implications | Target date |
|--|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| A1: Carry out rough sleeper Street Audits on a six weekly basis | A more comprehensive knowledge of the extent and nature of rough sleeping in Derby. | Glyn Hawkes | Existing budgets | Sep 2010 |
| A2: Provide individual plans for each rough sleeper which identifies exactly what each agency needs to do and what the individual themselves need to do to address the issues | More effective and 'joined-up' action to help people off the streets | Glyn Hawkes | Existing budgets | Mar 2012 |
| A3: Develop a full time outreach team to address rough sleeping | The establishment of a rough sleeping outreach team | Glyn Hawkes | To be determined | Mar 2012 |
| A4: Complete the review of the allocations policy and implement necessary changes | A revised allocations policy in place that is more effective at preventing and reducing homelessness. | Kim Morgan | Existing budgets | Dec 2010 |
| A5: Invite an elected member to be 'Homelessness Champion'. Implement as soon as practicable. | Have in place an elected member to be Homelessness Champion to drive forward the homelessness agenda. | Mark Menzies | Existing budgets | Oct 2010 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| A6: Meet the departmental targets for the number of people sleeping rough on a single night. | Rough sleeping to be as close to zero as possible. | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Target: reduce to zero by 2012-13 |
| A7: Meet the departmental targets for homelessness prevention. | Reduced homelessness levels through continued use of the Homelessness Prevention Fund and maximising the use of discretionary housing payments | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Targets: 2011: 1300 2012: 1400 2013: 1500 |
| A8: Meet the departmental targets for the number of homeless households (per thousand households) where Council intervention resolved their situation. | Reduced homelessness levels by resolving cases where households have become homeless | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | 12 p.a. in 2010-11 |
| A9: Meet the departmental targets for the number of homelessness acceptances. | Reduced overall levels of households becoming statutorily homelessness | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Target: reduce year on year to 250 p.a. by 2012-13 |
| A10: Develop a 'reconnections' policy for those presenting as homeless with no local connection. | Reduced levels of stat homeless for persons without a local connection | Matt Palmer | Existing Resources | Mar 2012 |
| A11: Make home visits in all cases where homelessness is threatened due to relationship breakdown and 'family eviction'. | Reduced levels of homelessness from what are currently our primary causes | Trisha Thomas / Matt Palmer | Existing Resources | Dec 2010 |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------|--|----------|
| A12: Offer a housing options interview for all those approaching HOC for the first time | Increased efficiency in case appraisal an assessment | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Dec 2011 |
| <i>Further Research and Investigation</i> | | | | |
| A13: Examine and evaluate the reason for and numbers of 'turn aways' at SPE in order to find an innovative solution | Reduced levels of turn-aways at SPE and other hostels | Matt Palmer / Lisa Callow | To be determined subject to the findings | Mar 2011 |

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY B: SUPPORT VULNERABLE HOMELESS PEOPLE AND SPECIALIST NEEDS GROUPS
TO ACCESS SUITABLE AND STABLE ACCOMMODATION**

| | | | | |
|--|--|--------------|--------------------|----------|
| B1: Secure continued funding for the DV worker | Maintain provision of this important service | Lisa Callow | To be determined | Mar 2011 |
| B2: Expand mediation services for landlord/tenant disputes and for where family and friends are no longer able/willing to accommodate | Prevention measures improved for households threatened with homelessness | Glyn Hawkes | To be determined | Mar 2012 |
| B3: Complete the preparation of a 'welcome pack' for foreign nationals and distribute widely. | Improve access to services and signposting to relevant support agencies | Yasmin Fazil | Existing Resources | Oct 2010 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| B4: Report to the Gang and Licensing Authority all employers who have breached requirements to register migrant workers | To help tackle homelessness caused by non-registered migrant workers being unable to access public funds | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Dec 2010 |
| B5: Improve clarity of and access to pertinent information and sign posting – particularly for those emergency cases where persons become homeless 'out of hours' and have no previous experience of the system. | Those becoming emergency homeless out of hours have greater ease of access to relevant & appropriate information. | Trisha Thomas | Existing Resources | Mar 2011 |
| B6: Develop six new properties to provide accommodation and training facilities for care leavers. | Provision of additional facilities for this client group | Glynis Hawkes | Co-location Fund | Dec 2010 |
| B6: Meet the departmental targets for the number of households living in Temporary Accommodation. | Improved efficiency in the use & management of temporary accommodation | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Target: reduce to 30 by 2012-13 |
| B7: Meet the departmental targets for the number of people placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. | Improved efficiency in the use & management of temporary accommodation | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Target: reduce to 2 by 2012-13 |
| <i>Further Research and Investigation</i> B8: Explore the possibility of setting up a destitution fund or an alternative response to destitute migrants with no access to public funds. | A report detailing the different approaches at other LA's with recommendations for Derby. | Matt Palmer / Glyn Hawkes | Report from existing budgets. Implementation subject to resources | Report by July 2011 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|-------------|--------------------|----------|
| B9: Investigate supported accommodation provision for persons with both care needs and alcohol mis-use issues. | Improved provision of supported accommodation for this client group | Matt Palmer | Existing Resources | Mar 2014 |
|---|---|-------------|--------------------|----------|

STRATEGIC PRIORITY C: INTEGRATE HOUSING SUPPORT MORE CLOSELY WITH OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES IN ORDER TO TACKLE SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL EXCLUSION AND PROMOTE LONG TERM SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

| | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| C1: Increase financial support and advice to prevent 'debt-caused' homelessness - through prevention fund/repossession fund/mortgage rescue and new innovative solutions | Reduced levels of Homelessness through prevention | Trisha Thomas | Existing Resources | Mar 2011 |
| C2: Meet the departmental targets for the number of number of single homeless people supported to access education, employment and training. | Reduced levels of homelessness due to measures to support financial and social inclusion | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Target: increase to 80 by 2012-13 |
| C3: Develop a written protocol outlining the 'steps from homelessness to settled accommodation'. To include an assessment of the full range of support needs of the household, along with a specification of which agency will deliver on them and at what stage in the process. | Reduced levels of homelessness due to improved integration of support services and consequent greater effectiveness in achieving thorough and sustainable outcomes | Lisa Callow / Trisha Thomas | Existing Resources | Mar 2011 |

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------|--|----------|
| C4: Agree protocol with benefits to fast-track HB for those threatened with homelessness | Improved access to the private rented sector by avoiding the disincentive of delays with HB. | Lisa Callow | Existing Resources | Mar 2011 |
| C5: Commence on-site GP support at Milestone House | The provision of specialist medical support for service users with alcohol mis-use issues. | Matt Palmer | Existing resources | Oct 2010 |
| <i>Further Research and Investigation</i> C6: Examine and research the viability of adopting a system of online alerts to social housing providers regarding for example: benefit suspension, claim processing or problems obtaining information | The enablement of earlier intervention in respect of rent arrears or other tenancy problems leading to a reduction in actions to evict tenants | Matt Palmer | Research: Existing Resources Implementation TBC | Dec 2010 |

STRATEGIC PRIORITY D: FURTHER STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND THE CO-ORDINATION OF SERVICES SO THAT DERBY CAN MEET ITS OBJECTIVES WITH GREATER EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

| | | | | |
|--|---|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| D1: Work more closely with the CSP in provision of additional services for homeless persons with alcohol dependency | Open six additional units of accommodation at Centenary house | Glyn Hawkes | Existing budgets | Sep 2010 |
| D2: Continue to develop the PRS alongside partners: 1) Maintain £65,000 funding for the acquisition of units via the bond/rent in advance scheme | Additional units of private sector accommodation accessed to meet the | 1) Lisa Callow 2) Linda | 1) Existing budgets | 1) Ongoing 2) 25 units |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <p>2) Meet the property targets set by DASH for the Local Lettings Agency. (Targets are for across the HMA, not just for Derby city)</p> <p>3) Assemble a landlord advice and info pack in order to forge greater links with private landlords.</p> | housing needs of vulnerable groups including those susceptible to homelessness | <p>Selvey</p> <p>3) Trisha Thomas</p> | <p>2) Existing budgets</p> <p>3) Existing budgets</p> | <p>by Feb 2011;</p> <p>100 units by Feb 2012</p> <p>3) Mar 2011</p> |
| D3: Fully implement a cross boundary CBL | Expanded access to and choice of social housing | Kim Morgan | TBC | Mar 2012 |
| D4: Further develop access to information, advice and a holistic range of support services through HOAMS. | Improved availability and accessibility of assistance and support | Matt Palmer | Existing Resources | Dec 2010 |
| D5: Develop a common exclusions policy signed up to by all providers | Improved consistency and joined up working in respect of exclusions | Matt Palmer / Stephe Astbury | Existing Resources | Dec 2010 |
| D6: Develop a complex case panel to coordinate a response to the needs of client groups with multiple and complex needs | The provision of a coordinated response to the increasing numbers of clients in these groups | Matt Palmer | Existing Resources | Mar 2011 |
| D7: Negotiate with providers to put all 2nd stage accommodation through SPE | Improved coordination for all single person and childless couple households` | Matt Palmer | Existing Resources | Mar 2013 |
| D8: Arrange training for the service providers in the new allocations policy | To ensure consistency of approach and accuracy of information disseminated to service providers and service users | Kim Morgan | Existing Resources | Mar 2011 |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------|-----|----------|
| <i>Further Research and Investigation</i> | | | | |
| D9: Examine the feasibility of joining the Erewash credit union in a partnering arrangement | To develop an additional facility to ease debt and therefore prevent maintain financial exclusion | Trisha Thomas | TBC | Mar 2012 |

APPENDIX A: Case Study – Partnership Working

History

Mr X was a rough sleeper and alcohol abuser who suffered physical problems such as asthma, chest pain and poor mobility. He also suffered from impaired brain function due to long term alcohol abuse. This took the form of poor short-term memory and difficulty in understanding and dealing with support agencies such as benefits and welfare advice.

Needs

Mr X's most immediate need was to access suitable settled accommodation. He also needed support in tackling his alcohol use and treatment for his health problems. Mr X was lacking most independent living skills and needed support in developing these.

Support

1. Milestone House staff provided temporary accommodation and helped with personal organisation in his room, money management and general health and hygiene issues.
2. He was quickly referred to Social Services as he was prone to accidents and needed personal care.
3. Following assessment and assistance from Social Services he was referred to an extra care unit in Derby run by Housing 21.
4. Action Housing was engaged to provide additional tenancy support and Derbyshire Housing Aid helped furnish his new flat. Assistance was given in applying to DWP for a community care grant for additional fixtures and fittings
5. A review meeting was held which included all agencies and family members, in which a 'division of tasks' was agreed. Following the meeting, DHA provided tenancy support and money-management services until floating support provided by Action Housing was in place.

These events took place over roughly a 6-week timescale, during which time Mr X moved from being a 'chaotic' street drinker and rough sleeper to a more stable contented person, sustaining a tenancy with continued support.

Agencies involved

Milestone House

Social Services

Housing 21

Action housing

Derbyshire Housing Aid

Dept Work & Pensions (financial support through a CC grant)

APPENDIX B - Glossary of Terms

| | |
|-----------|---|
| A2/A8/A10 | Eastern European Accession Countries* |
| ASB | Anti Social Behaviour |
| AST | Assured Shorthold Tenancy |
| BME | Black & Minority Ethnic - all community groups not classed as 'White British' according to the 2001 National Census |
| CAB | Citizen's Advice Bureau |
| CBL | Choice Based Lettings |
| CC | Community Commission |
| CLAC | Community Legal Advice Centre |
| CSP | Community Safety Partnership |
| CYP | Children and Young Person's (Services) |
| DASH | Decent and Safe Homes |
| DCLG | Dept. for Communities and Local Government |
| DCP | Derby City Partnership |
| DHA | Derbyshire Housing Aid |
| DV | Domestic Violence |
| FIP | Family Intervention Project |
| HB | Housing Benefit |
| HLG | Hostels Liaison Group |
| HOAMS | Housing Options Advice Management System |
| HOC | Housing Options centre |
| LA | Local authority |
| LAA | Local Area Agreement |
| LHA | Local Housing Allowance |
| LSP | Local Strategic Partnership |
| MOPP | Move On Plan Protocol |
| NASS | National Asylum Support Service |
| ODPM | Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now DCLG) |
| PCT | Primary care Trust |
| PRS | Private Rented Sector |
| RSL | Registered Social Landlord |
| SCS | Sustainable Community Strategy |
| SMART | Specific, measurable, accountable, realistic, time bound |
| SP | Supporting People |
| SPE | Single Point of Entry |
| TA | Temporary Accommodation |
| UKBA | UK Border Agency |
| YMCA | Young Men's Christian Association |
| YOT/S | Youth Offending Team/Service |

* 'A8' countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia. 'A2' countries: Bulgaria and Romania. A10 is a collective term for the aggregation of the A8 and A2 countries