

**A PREVENTION OF HOMELESSNESS
STRATEGY**

FOR

WAVERLEY

2008 - 2013

Draft

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Foreword by Richard Gates

Housing Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council

Being a leafy borough in Surrey, Waverley can be seen as a very prosperous and affluent area. However, such relative affluence does not tell the whole story. For many, the high property prices that result from its idyllic rural location, mean that securing affordable housing in Waverley is a massive challenge.

Demand for Social Housing far outstrips supply. The Council has over 3,000 households on its housing register and but only has around 300 vacancies in its stock each year. Even with the additional capacity of around 40 Housing Association vacancies each year, there are far too few properties to meet the need. This means that many households have to live in circumstances where they either have to share a home with other households and/or are lacking sufficient bedroom and living space in their own home.

Not only do these conditions impact on people's ability to thrive and prosper but they can also lead to tensions in the home that can sometimes cause homelessness. In addition, people can be made homeless through struggling to meet the rising costs of their mortgage or rent or because their landlord is forced to sell their home due to rising mortgage costs. Other households struggle to sustain their tenancy through reduced capacity resulting from mental health or learning difficulties or addictions to drugs or alcohol. For others it could be the result of domestic abuse.

Whatever the reason for homelessness, it could argued that homelessness in Waverley hits households even harder considering how Waverley is perceived by the media and public generally.

Since the last Strategy, the Council and its partners have done much to reduce the numbers of homeless households having to be placed in temporary accommodation by either preventing their homelessness or by helping them secure alternative accommodation. But as this Strategy outlines, there is still much to be done.

We are indebted to the many people and organisations that have assisted us in producing this Strategy and would like to thank them for contributing to its content and their commitment to achieving its aims.

I am pleased to commend this Strategy and hope it will help the Council and its partners build on the good work that has already taken place.

Richard Gates
Leader of the Council and Housing Portfolio Holder

1. Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that all local authorities produce a homelessness strategy at least every 5 years. The Strategy must be the result of multi-agency working and be informed by a thorough Review of homelessness in the area and of the services currently available to address it.

The purpose of the Review is to highlight where there are gaps in service provision and/or where services can be improved. The Strategy should be a realistic, jointly agreed statement, as to how the agencies intend to plug the gaps and improve the services over a period of up to 5 years.

The Government has published various recommendations as to specific areas Local Authorities are encouraged to tackle in their Homelessness Strategies. These include the following:

- Maintaining the target set in March 2004 not to use bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children
- Maintaining the reduction in the levels of rough sleeping by two thirds of the level recorded in 1998
- Halving the numbers of households in Temporary Accommodation by 2010 from the levels in December 2004
- Plans to ensure that bed and breakfast accommodation is not used for 16-17 year olds by 2010
- Measures to address overcrowding
- Measures to address worklessness
- Measures to help sustainment of tenancies and reduce levels of repeat homelessness
- Supporting key Government agendas such as reducing re-offending, Tackling Social Exclusion, Respect Agenda, Every Child Matters and Safeguarding Children etc

In addition to addressing these government priorities, strategies are expected to link to other Council strategies as well as those of its partner agencies.

There has been a considerable change in the area of tackling homelessness, both nationally and locally, since the production of Waverley's first Homelessness Review and Strategy in July 2003. The most significant change is reflected in the revised title of this document, highlighting *Prevention* of Homelessness Strategy. The Council's progress in preventing homelessness and providing alternative housing options for households has meant that many of our priorities in the action plan from five years ago have either been achieved or are now no longer relevant.

The Strategy firstly highlights the progress made since the last one in 2003 and the actions that have brought about this progress. It will then outline the priority areas to tackle over the next five years, as identified by the Homelessness Review, with an accompanying action plan. The Review

document is attached as appendix 1 of this strategy and provides the basis from which the strategy has developed.

In line with Government guidance, the document endeavours not to repeat background contextual information from the first Strategy that remains the same e.g. Waverley being a rural borough in an affluent area of the country etc.

Whilst the Council has taken the lead in co-ordinating and producing the Strategy, we would like to thank service users and the representatives from the statutory and voluntary agencies for their invaluable contribution to the Strategy through the consultation process and through the day to day partnership working to address homelessness.

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2. Progress in tackling Homelessness since the last Strategy

Table 1 below outlines that since the last Strategy the number of homeless applications and acceptances and the number of households in temporary accommodation, have significantly reduced:

Table 1 – Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation figures

	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
Homeless Applications	NA	NA	219	182	185	158	123	72	35	12
Homeless acceptances	91	73	65	92	86	81	75	32	22	3
Numbers in temporary accommodation at 31st March	129	106	133	115	116	107	80	53	28	17
Numbers in bed and breakfast at 31st March	1	1	0	0	4	7	4	1	0	3

These reductions have been achieved as a result of the Council embracing the Government agenda of moving from *processing* homelessness to *preventing* homelessness. This is in line with the spirit of the homelessness legislation that was originally intended to be a safety net when all other measures to address homelessness were unsuccessful.

The Council has focussed its resources on providing a housing options advice service that first seeks to prevent homelessness through advice or negotiation or by providing additional services. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, alternative housing options are explored such as securing accommodation elsewhere.

In reducing the numbers of households in temporary accommodation we have already met the Government target of reducing the numbers by 50% - over 3 years ahead of the target date of 2010. In addition, since the last strategy, we have also been successful in fulfilling the Government requirement of not using bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children for more than 6 weeks. The number of rough sleepers in Waverley has also remained below the Government's 2 thirds target figure from 1998 figures.

The Council and its partners have also been successful in improving the quality of accommodation and support for homeless households since the last strategy.

Some of the specific actions that have contributed to these achievements are outlined below and *AP* indicates where these actions were highlighted in the action plan from 2003 :

1. Reconfiguring its services. The Council has re-deployed staff resources into the housing advice/housing options area from the homelessness area, focussing on preventative housing advice rather than processing homelessness. For example, when one of our Homelessness Officers retired in 2005, the post was made into a Housing Options Officer role. *AP*
2. Our Housing Options Team take a hands on, proactive approach in identifying and securing housing solutions for customers, whether in the private rented sector though the deposit scheme or in supported accommodation. *AP*
3. A number of households threatened with homelessness are assisted into the private sector through use of our rent deposit bond scheme and use of cash deposits and rent in advance. This has been underpinned by a sustained effort to build lasting relationships with private landlords and letting agents in the local area that has been vital to our success. Participation in a joint private landlords forum with Guildford and Woking Borough Councils contributes to maintaining a good working relationship with the private sector. *AP*
4. On certain cases the Council adopts a 'Spend to Save' approach, where this will prevent homelessness. For example, if a household is threatened with homelessness due to rent arrears it can be more cost effective to pay off the arrears (where the tenancy is suitable and sustainable) rather than try to secure alternative accommodation or process a homelessness application and provide temporary accommodation. *AP*
5. We use our bed and breakfast budget and Central Government grant of £30,000 as flexibly as possible to fund 3 & 4 above.
6. Whilst having a negligible impact to date on reducing homelessness, the Council has secured access to mediation services to help prevent homelessness in certain situations such as family conflict. *AP*
7. We regularly promote our cash incentive scheme to encourage Council tenants under-occupying family sized accommodation to move to smaller, more suitable homes; to release family sized homes. *AP*
8. We carried out a major overhaul of our housing advice leaflets to present the information in a clear and attractive format, as well as providing access to the information on our website. *AP*
9. Along with the other Surrey Borough and District Councils, we have signed up to a protocol with the probation service and Police to ensure

improved housing assessment and risk assessment of ex offenders in need of accommodation. *AP*

10. The Council has forged a closer working relationship with the Citizens Advice Bureau that has contributed to the success in preventing homelessness. The 4 separate Bureau in Waverley have now merged to form one Waverley service known as Citizens Advice Waverley. Having one organisation helps in terms of joint working and consistency and the service has developed a mobile advice service to better serve the rural areas in the borough. *AP*
11. We have worked with our colleagues in Social Services to develop protocols to provide improved help and assistance to 16-17 year olds, careleavers and intentionally homeless households. One of the challenges to this has been that reorganisation within Social Services has meant changes in staff and structures. However, both the Council and Social Services are working hard to ensure that these protocols are embedded within each others working procedures. *AP*
12. The Council is represented on the Surrey Supporting People Joint Management Board and Commissioning Board to ensure that the provision of supported housing and floating support to the most vulnerable in Surrey is maintained and targeted at the groups in most need. *AP*
13. We have developed our deposit bond scheme in an innovative way to include a free inventory and DVD service to private landlords, as well as periodic inspections of the properties that protects the Council's interests and provides re-assurance to landlords. The development of this service has been possible through adapting the role of our temporary accommodation officer following the reduction in use of temporary accommodation. *AP*
14. Our Housing Options Team have developed close liaison with colleagues in the Housing Benefit Section to maximise the use of discretionary housing payments to help tackle homelessness and to accelerate the payment of housing benefit in certain cases. *AP*
15. To maximise officer time and to help avoid customers missing Housing Options interviews, the Housing Options Team make use of a text reminding service for customers with mobile phones.
16. Through joint work with the Local Crime and Disorder Partnership (Safer Waverley Partnership) and Waverley's Domestic Abuse Outreach Service, we have developed a Sanctuary Scheme for victims of domestic abuse. This service provides additional security measures to a victim's home to enable them to remain at home rather than have to move elsewhere with the expense and disruption that this can cause.

17. The Council is represented at the regular meetings of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences set up to discuss and address the legal, support and accommodation needs of households suffering from domestic abuse.
18. We made available an additional unit of furnished accommodation to assist in short term emergency re-housing. On occasions this has been used a safe house for victims of domestic abuse whilst the household's housing options are explored further. *AP*
19. The Council co-ordinates a regularly single housing panel where representatives from probation, Youth Justice, Social Services, Community Mental Health and Drug/Alcohol Teams and supported housing providers, discuss the housing needs of vulnerable single people. The panel members can then try to identify possible housing solutions for the different clients.
20. We have established a referral procedure with the health visiting team to advise them of families moving into temporary accommodation in order to ensure continued help and support for young children. *AP*
21. Waverley has been reliant on using expensive private leased properties to supplement its own temporary accommodation. As a result of the success in preventing homelessness and reducing numbers in temporary accommodation, we have been able to reduce our portfolio of leased properties from around 50 in 2003 to 5 in March 2008. This has generated considerable savings. As a result, in 2006, Members agreed that some of these savings could be re-invested in creating an additional Housing Options Officer post to help maintain and build on the preventative work. This achievement in reducing its temporary accommodation stock is even more remarkable considering that in the 2003 Strategy, one of the action points was the anticipated need to increase our portfolio of leased properties.
22. In line with the 2003 action plan, we appointed a Housing Advice Assistant to help expand our advice service and this expansion has developed subsequently, as outlined above. *AP*
23. We carried out a major refurbishment of one of our homeless hostels to create self contained accommodation and the success of homeless prevention has led to a number of the units being let as permanent homes. *AP*
24. An introduction of a new allocation policy alongside a newly introduced Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme compliments the Council's housing options approach. It does this by not reducing the priority of housing register applicants who move from shared accommodation with friends or relatives into self-contained private rented accommodation. Under the old points based system there was, by default, a perverse incentive for applicants not to look to improve their

housing situation through fear of reducing their priority on the housing register. This is no longer the case and helps our Housing Options Officers encourage households threatened with homelessness to see that private rented accommodation is a viable housing option.

25. Choice Based Lettings itself helps the Housing Options Officers in preventing homelessness and exploring alternative options. By advertising the Council and Housing Association vacancies, applicants are able to see the scarcity of social housing stock in the borough. In addition, the system feedbacks to clients, at point of bidding, where they are in relation to other bidders. This helps housing applicants grasp the reality of how long they may have to wait before social housing becomes a realistic option.
26. Our achievements in preventing homelessness have been done with among the smallest of Central Government contributions toward preventing homelessness (£30,000, previously £20,000).
27. We have continued to support the development of new affordable housing in Waverley through working closely with our housing association partners. *AP*
28. Since the previous strategy, a young persons project (Weyforward) has been launched in the neighbouring Borough of Guildford and this is the result of joint working between Waverley and Guildford Borough Councils, Stonham Housing Association and Surrey Supporting People. *AP*
29. A supported housing scheme for single homeless households in Farnham (Simmonds Court) has been launched through Waverley's partnership working with Rushmoor and Hart Councils, Surrey Community Development Trust and Surrey Supporting People. *AP*

In highlighting the above achievements in preventing homelessness it is very important to stress that **homelessness has not disappeared**. What has changed is **how homelessness is tackled**.

Table 2. below illustrates that the number of households seeking housing advice is generally increasing. It is also a fact that providing preventative advice is a skilled, time consuming and challenging job for our Housing Options Team. It generally takes more time and effort to prevent homelessness than it does under the old way of working of processing homelessness, hence the need to devote increased staff resources to it.

Table 2: Homelessness prevention activity

Activity	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Housing Advice Cases	606	658	634	683
Homelessness Prevention BVPI213	N/A	110	141	147

The predicted economic downturn, impact of the 'credit crunch' and increase in mortgage repossessions are likely to result in increased demand on the range of homelessness prevention services in Waverley.

Whilst the progress and positive change outlined above is very encouraging there is still much to be done to maintain and improve on this progress as outlined in the new Strategy.

3. Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2008-2013

In producing this Strategy the Council has taken into account the following:

- Government priorities in terms of homelessness and housing options e.g. reducing numbers in temporary accommodation, tackling youth homelessness, addressing overcrowding and worklessness etc
- The Council's Corporate Plan and related strategies e.g. Housing Strategy, Community Safety Strategy, Equal Opportunities Strategy, Social Inclusion Strategy, Older Persons Housing Strategy, Asset Management Strategy etc
- Related Strategies of its partners e.g. Surrey Supporting People Strategy, Surrey Domestic Abuse Strategy etc
- The analysis carried out by Housing Quality Network in regard to the Council's original 2003 Homelessness Strategy
- A self assessment exercise using the Government's Homelessness Prevention Toolkit
- The Homelessness Review as contained in Appendix One and, in particular, **the consultation with customers, staff and statutory and voluntary agency stakeholders.**

The mapping of existing services and resources in the Review, together with the consultation and consideration of key government priorities; highlighted the following areas to develop in the Strategy:

- Commission a Supported Lodgings Scheme to ensure that homeless 16-17 year olds are not placed in bed and breakfast
- Commission a Schools Education Project to help prevent youth homelessness
- Develop closer working with Citizens Advice Waverley by signing up to the National Homelessness Advice Service Protocol
- Maintain and develop the good work in accessing private rented accommodation through the deposit bond and spend to save schemes
- Ensure the effective working of the joint protocol with Social Services in regard to homeless 16-17 year olds so they receive suitable

accommodation and appropriate assessment and support from Social Services

- Ensure the effective working of the joint protocol with Social Services in regard to intentionally homeless households
- Develop closer partnership working with other agencies to ensure consistent services, less duplication, clearer sign posting and increased knowledge base and understanding of client needs between the agencies
- Ensure that there is effective information sharing and referral processes so that homeless households continue to access health and educational services
- Ensure that there continues to be an adequate supply of accommodation options to prevent homelessness or deal with homelessness e.g. private sector accommodation, supported accommodation and flexible temporary accommodation
- Continue to keep temporary accommodation numbers as low as possible
- Examine opportunities to further reconfigure Housing Options Section taking into account changes in staffing structure of the Housing Section as a whole, retirements and review of Choice Based Lettings
- Increase the supply and maximise the use of social housing and supported housing
- Work to Increase supply of supported housing for single homeless/complex needs cases
- Increase Move-On opportunities for households in supported housing schemes
- Increase supply of drug treatment places to reduce instances of revolving door/repeat homelessness and entrenched rough sleeping
- Maintain and improve on rough sleeping levels
- Monitor accessibility of the Housing Options Service to ensure vulnerable groups / minorities are not disadvantaged and appropriate measures are in place to assist
- Monitor the impact of Local Housing Allowance and liaise closely with Housing Benefit Section to ensure measures are in place to deal with non payment of rent by vulnerable households

- Continue to make best use of Discretionary Housing payments and Spend to Save
- Ensure that the new South West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service links in well with Waverley's housing department
- Improve tenancy sustainment through adopting measures such as a vulnerable persons protocol and exploring opportunities to provide additional support to households placed in private rented accommodation or temporary accommodation
- Develop understanding of the housing and support needs of vulnerable, disadvantaged and minority groups and adjust services accordingly
- Develop closer joint working between Housing Options Section and other Housing Sections e.g. rents, housing management, repairs and maintenance etc
- Explore how the issue of worklessness can be addressed in the provision of services to customers
- Ensure that the new prevention strategy is properly monitored and reviewed
- Review the impact of the Council's new allocation scheme to ensure that the needs of those on register are properly assessed and prioritised to prevent recourse to emergency help
- Improve customer care by developing service standards and adapting services in response to customer and stakeholder feedback
- Ensure Housing Options staff receive on going training to ensure they are up to date with changes in legislation and good practice.

From the above, 4 main themes dominate:

1. **Prevention** - Maintain and build on the excellent progress made in preventing homelessness and working with other agencies
2. **Supply** - Increase and maximise the supply of affordable housing and supported housing to meet housing need
3. **Improve** – Develop and improve the quality of services provided
4. **Support** -Improve the levels of support to households who are vulnerable or under threat of homelessness to enable them to maintain/sustain their housing.

These 4 themes make up the key strategic priorities to help take forward the prevention of homelessness in Waverley:

1. ***Prevention*** - Improve Multi Agency Working to *prevent* homelessness
2. ***Supply*** - Increase and maximise the *supply* of affordable housing and supported housing
3. ***Improve*** - Develop and *improve* the Housing Options Service operated by the Council
4. ***Support*** - Develop and improve *support* and access to services for vulnerable and hard to reach groups.

The following action plan outlines the actions the Council and its partners will take to deliver these priorities in order to maintain and improve on the progress in homeless prevention and address the gaps in service and accommodation provision:

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4. Prevention of Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2008-2013

Strategic Priority One: Improve multi-agency working to prevent homelessness

No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
1.1	<p>Arrange staff visits to other agency offices and other agencies to visit the Council Offices – could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Attendance at team meetings -Joint training / open house visits from other agencies -Work Shadowing 	<p>Year 1 Establish key contacts to co-ordinate and agree programme and frequency of visits</p> <p>Year 1-2 Commence programme and monitor outcome –feedback from staff and impact on services/customers</p> <p>Year 2-5 Adapt joint protocols in the light of assessment of their effectiveness</p>	<p>Enhanced co-operation between services</p> <p>Less duplication of work</p> <p>Better sign posting between agencies / Customer expectations set at realistic level</p> <p>Customers receive consistent co-ordinated services</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Social Services</p> <p>Citizens Advice Waverley</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Outreach</p> <p>Probation</p> <p>Health</p> <p>Youth Justice</p> <p>Traveller Liaison</p> <p>Health Visitor Teams</p>	<p>Staff time/travel costs</p>	<p>Prevention of homelessness and increased support to homeless households through better co-ordinated services</p>

No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
1.2	Establish and monitor effectiveness of joint protocols with Social Services for 16-17 year olds, care leavers, intentionally homeless households	<p>Year 1 Clarify the content of the protocols and the key contact personnel</p> <p>Year 1-2 Monitor the effectiveness/impact of the protocols – feedback from staff and service users.</p> <p>Year 2-5 adapt protocols in the light of assessment of their effectiveness</p>	<p>Care leavers not approaching as homeless</p> <p>Homeless 16-17 olds receiving support and assistance in addition to accommodation</p> <p>Intentionally homeless households receive assessment of children's needs and assisted to find housing solutions</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Social Services</p> <p>Rainer 18 Plus</p> <p>Surrey Youth Justice Service</p>	Staff time	<p>Tackling Youth Homelessness</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
1.3	Establish and monitor effectiveness of ex offender protocol	<p>Year 1 Ensure relevant staff receive training and implement protocol</p> <p>Year 2 Monitor the effectiveness/impact of the</p>	<p>The housing needs and risks posed by ex offenders correctly assessed</p> <p>Ex-offenders receive the appropriate level of housing</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Probation</p>	Staff time	<p>Crime reduction</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>

		protocol – feedback from staff and service users Year 2-5 adapt protocol in the light of assessment of their effectiveness	assistance as identified through the assessment process Reduced re-offending and repeat homelessness of ex-offenders	Police Prison Service Citizens Advice Waverley Drug / Alcohol Services Surrey Youth Justice Service		
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
1.4	Expand the existing temporary accommodation protocol between the Council and health visitor team to include households helped into private rented accommodation.	Year 1 Establish procedures for referral Year 2-5 Monitor its effectiveness and adjust as required	Homeless households with children continue to receive the health services that they need	Housing Options Section Health Visitor Teams	Staff time	Social inclusion Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan Supporting the vulnerable
1.5	Ensure smooth transfer of the Council's Domestic Abuse Outreach Service to	Year 1 Transfer of service and publicise new arrangements. Ensure key	A good quality outreach service to victims that co-ordinates well with the	Housing Options Section	Staff time	Social inclusion, crime reduction

	the new South West Surrey Outreach provider	staff are aware of the new arrangements. Year 1-5 Monitor effectiveness of new arrangements and adapt training and referral systems as needed	Council's Housing Options Section	Community Safety Team South West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service		Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan Supporting the Vulnerable Surrey Supporting People priority
1.6	Develop partnership work with Citizens Advice Waverley by signing up to The National Homelessness Advice Service protocol.	Year 1 Meet to discuss, agree and sign up to joint working protocol Year 1-5 Meet regularly to develop joint working arrangements and monitoring effectiveness	Better referral arrangements/ sign posting for customers Consistent advice and approach on tackling homelessness Sharing of statistical information identifying need and outcomes.	Housing Options Section Citizens Advice Waverley	Staff time	Prevention of Homelessness Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
1.7	Maintain Housing Service representation and participation at multi agency meetings e.g. Surrey Housing Needs Managers Meeting, CBL sub regional meetings, Surrey	Years 1-5 Ongoing	Raised awareness of housing best practice elsewhere in the County Economies of scale on jointly commissioned projects / initiatives	Waverley Housing Section Surrey Supporting People	Staff time	Prevention of Homelessness Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan

	Homelessness Officers group, South West Surrey Domestic Abuse Forum, Learning disability sub group, Surrey Supporting People Joint Management Board, Drug / Alcohol Housing Task group, Community Incident Action Group, MARAC, MAPPA, Social Services case conferences, Housing Association Forum, Waverley Single Housing Panel		Information sharing	Surrey Boroughs/Districts Hart and Rushmoor Councils Surrey County Council Surrey Police Surrey PCT Housing Associations		Value for Money priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan
1.8	Launch a Schools Education Project for local schools dealing with the issue of homelessness and young people	Year 1 Explore options for delivery of such a project, progress discussions with Step by Step, select provider and commission project. Year 2-5 Review outcomes of Schools project through feedback from Schools and future impact on homelessness numbers	Prevention of homelessness among young people Step by Step Education project (if commissioned) is delivered by homeless young people following training and therefore helps in terms of future employment opportunities.	Housing Options Section Step by Step	£5,000 a year from Government's homelessness grant to Waverley	Preventing Homelessness among Young People Step by Step project helps link to Government's Worklessness agenda Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link

<p>1.9</p>	<p>Agree with Statutory and Voluntary partners how best to monitor the implementation of the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy</p>	<p>Year 1 Arrange a launch event and consult on the best way to regularly review the strategy</p> <p>Year 2-5 Monitor and review implementation of action plan</p>	<p>Ensure that the relevant agencies work in partnership to achieve the aims of the Strategy</p> <p>Carry out the work contained in this action plan</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Statutory and Voluntary agencies</p>	<p>Staff time, costs of launch event and travel costs to future meetings</p>	<p>Prevention of homelessness through partnership working</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
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Strategic Priority Two: Increase & maximise the supply of affordable housing and supported housing

No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
2.1	Maximise use of existing stock by addressing under occupation.	<p>Year 1 Continue to promote existing cash incentive scheme, use information from tenant census to identify tenants under - occupying Council properties</p> <p>Year 1-2 Carry out consultation and research as to initiatives that would encourage householders to downsize, monitor outcomes of Government funded pathfinder Councils</p> <p>Year 2-3 Identify resources to fund enhancement of existing incentive scheme</p> <p>Year 3-5 Implement enhanced scheme and monitor</p>	<p>Increased number of family sized properties available to let</p> <p>Older tenants moved to accommodation more suitable to their needs meaning less expenditure on disabled adaptations</p> <p>Reduction in number of households living overcrowded situations</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Management Section</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Additional money to enhance scheme</p>	<p>Measure to tackle overcrowding</p> <p>Maximise use of stock</p> <p>Subsidised Affordable Housing priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Value for Money priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>

No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
2.2	Review designation of Council properties and explore options for letting/use of family sized units in Sheltered Housing schemes	<p>Year 1-2 Carry out an audit of family sized units within sheltered schemes and accommodation considered to be designated for over 50's. Clarify future letting arrangements taking into account need for sensitive letting & balanced communities</p> <p>Year 2-5 Monitor impact of any changes in letting arrangements and adapt as needed.</p>	<p>Maximise use of stock for those in most need.</p> <p>Lowering of age profile within Council stock to better reflect the profile on the housing register</p> <p>Improved re-let times due to accommodation in greater demand.</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Management Section</p>	Staff time	<p>Maximise housing stock</p> <p>Meeting the needs of those on the Housing Register</p> <p>Value for Money priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
2.3	Review future use of Council owned temporary accommodation.	<p>Year 1 Explore options to maximise usefulness of the temporary accommodation – options could include leasing to Housing Association, sale, use as supported accommodation or move on</p>	<p>Reduced void loss</p> <p>Leasing to HA would mean more flexible use to help prevent homelessness</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Management</p> <p>Repairs and</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Increased capital or revenue expenditure depending on</p>	<p>Maximising housing stock</p> <p>Reducing numbers in temporary accommodation</p> <p>Preventing homelessness</p>

		<p>accommodation for supported housing schemes, retention for continued use as temporary accommodation</p> <p>Year 1-5 Implement outcomes from review</p>	<p>Use as move on accommodation can free up much needed supported accommodation</p> <p>Sale would release capital to fund decent homes work</p> <p>Review outcome should result in the Council being well placed to meet its future obligations to the homeless.</p>	<p>Maintenance</p> <p>Housing Association partners</p> <p>Surrey Supporting People</p>	<p>outcome of review</p>	<p>Subsidised Affordable Housing priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Value for Money priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
2.4	<p>Continue to support and enable development of more affordable/Supported housing</p>	<p>Year 1 Handover of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 affordable homes in Chiddingfold -11 in Dunsfold -54 Farnham Hospital -3 in Farnham for people with learning disabilities leaving supported housing <p>Year 2 Dependent on relevant permissions granted, handover of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -38 affordable homes in Godalming -3 affordable homes for people with learning 	<p>Provision of more affordable housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68 year 1 58 year 2 104 year 3 	<p>Housing Strategy and Enabling team</p> <p>Housing Association Partners</p> <p>Housing Corporation</p> <p>Planning Department</p> <p>Town & Parish Councils</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Housing corporation funding</p> <p>General fund monies</p>	<p>Subsidised Affordable Housing priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Government priority</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Surrey Supporting people Strategy</p>

		<p>disabilities leaving supported housing -10 in Chiddingfold -7 in Hindhead</p> <p>Year 3 handover of: -4 affordable homes at Chiddingfold -72 in East Street Farnham -28 in other sites in Farnham</p> <p>Year 1-5 Ongoing liaison with agencies / housing associations in regard to addressing gaps in provision for special needs groups – e.g. learning disabilities, complex needs, mental health etc</p>		<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Single Housing Panel</p>		
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
2.5	Through the work of the Council's Asset Management Group, monitor & review the use of the Council's housing stock, taking into account housing need and demand and cost of provision/maintenance.	<p>Year 1-5 Ongoing analysis & monitoring.</p> <p>Identification of units to de-commission, sell or re-develop, transfer to Local Housing Company etc</p>	<p>Maximise use of stock/assets</p> <p>A stock profile that better represents the needs of households on the Housing Register</p> <p>Improved relet times as</p>	<p>Asset Management Group</p> <p>Housing Strategy and Enabling Section</p> <p>Housing</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Potential void loss resulting from de-commissioning but potential capital gains through re-</p>	<p>Subsidised Affordable Housing priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Value for Money priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>

			stock better matches need	Association Partners	development /sale	
2.6	Commission the provision of 2 Supported Lodgings Placements for young people in Waverley	<p>Year 1 Continue negotiations with Step by Step, enter into contract and launch scheme</p> <p>Liaise with Surrey Supporting People regarding help with funding</p> <p>Year 2-5 Monitor effectiveness of the scheme and adjust/expand as necessary</p>	<p>Achieve target of not placing homeless 16-17 year olds in Bed and breakfast by 2010</p> <p>Additional accommodation with support to help homeless young people</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Step by Step</p> <p>Surrey Supporting People</p>	<p>£10,000 a year plus staff time to set up and monitor</p> <p>£10,000 to be sourced from Surrey Supporting People and /or the Council's homelessness grant from CLG.</p>	<p>Government target not to place homeless 16-17 year olds in bed and breakfast accommodation by 2010.</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Surrey Supporting people Strategy Priority</p>
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
2.7	Actively support the commissioning of a year	Year 1 Continue to assist Surrey Heath in exploring	Year round hostel to replace the loss of	Housing Options Section	£200,000 a year from	Reduced Rough Sleeping

	<p>round, same day access homeless hostel in Waverley or surrounding areas</p>	<p>possibility of converting under used temporary accommodation in Camberley into a year round hostel.</p> <p>Year 2-5 Depending on outcome of Surrey Heath option either help in the setting of the hostel or explore alternative sites.</p>	<p>Waverley Winterwatch</p> <p>Increased accommodation provision to reduce need to use bed and breakfast accommodation for complex need cases</p> <p>Maintain and improve on low numbers of rough sleepers in Waverley and surrounding boroughs/districts</p>	<p>Surrey Heath Borough Council</p> <p>Surrey Supporting People</p> <p>Peerless Housing Association</p> <p>Surrey Housing Needs Managers</p>	<p>Surrey / Hampshire Supporting People plus bids for capital finance to CLG/Housing Corporation.</p> <p>In event of need for additional capital there may be a need for a capital contribution from Waverley Borough Council</p>	<p>Tackling Social Exclusion</p> <p>Reduced levels of re-offending</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Surrey Supporting People Strategy Priority</p>
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2.8	Actively support the re-provision of a drug / alcohol project in Surrey following the closure of the Cranstoun project in Elmbridge.	Year 1 onwards Participate in meetings/discussions to explore alternative sites for provision	Increase in much needed drug treatment provision Reduction in repeat/cyclical homelessness Maintain and improve on low numbers of rough sleepers in Waverley and elsewhere in Surrey.	Housing Options Section Surrey Supporting People DAAT Surrey Housing Needs Managers	Staff time Surrey Supporting People Funding	Reduced Rough Sleeping Tackling Social Exclusion and Anti-Social Behaviour Reduced levels of re-offending Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan Surrey Supporting People Strategy Priority
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
2.9	Develop and build on partnership working with Housing Associations to maximise use of stock and nomination opportunities	Year 1 Clarify existing nominations arrangements and consult on how well these are working. Consult on effectiveness of common Allocation Scheme Year 2-5 Maintain and develop closer working arrangements to maximise use of stock and achieve balanced sustainable communities	Better use/maximisation of housing stock Allocation Scheme that fairly prioritises housing need and helps achieve balanced and sustainable communities	Housing Options Section	Staff time	Maximisation of Housing Stock Balanced and sustainable communities Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan Subsidised Affordable Housing priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan

2.10	Implement Mutual Exchange module on Choice Based Lettings system to maximise use of stock	<p>Year 1 Test Mutual Exchange module, publicise and launch</p> <p>Year 2-5 Monitor effectiveness of the new system and impact of number of exchanges. Adjust as required</p>	<p>Better use/maximisation of Social Housing Stock</p> <p>Enhanced Choice and housing options for Social Housing tenants</p> <p>Help tackle overcrowding under occupation issues</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Management Section</p> <p>IT Section</p> <p>Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Partners</p>	Staff time and publicity / printing costs	<p>Maximisation of Housing Stock</p> <p>Measure to address under-occupation and over-crowding</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Subsidised Affordable Housing priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>

Strategic Priority Three: Develop and Improve the Housing Options Service operated by the Council

No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
3.1	Review & Improve Housing Options content on the Council's Website to maximise usefulness	<p>Year 1 Review content, research content in other Council sites, amend site as appropriate</p> <p>Year 2-5 Include website in future customer consultation, monitor and amend content in the light of customer feedback and best practice.</p>	<p>Improved housing options content</p> <p>Increase in number of visits to the site</p> <p>Positive feedback on helpfulness of the site from customers</p> <p>Housing options staff use the site as a tool to help prevent homelessness</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Council's Website Manager</p>	Staff time	<p>Prevention of homelessness</p> <p>e-government</p> <p>Customer Care</p>
3.2	Review content of customer advice booklets as part of corporate re-branding of leaflets	<p>Year 1 Review content and amend to reflect best practice and corporate layout</p> <p>Explore alternative suppliers</p> <p>Year 2-5 Amend and update leaflets in the light of customer consultation and</p>	<p>Improved homeless prevention information for customers</p> <p>Cost savings on producing leaflets</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Council's Communications Department</p>	Staff time and printing budget	<p>Prevention of Homelessness</p> <p>Customer Care</p> <p>Value for Money priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>

		best practice				
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
3.3	Improve communication and joint working with Housing Benefit Section, particularly in regard to managing the introduction of local housing allowance (LHA) and use of discretionary housing payments.	<p>Year 1 Set up series of regular bi monthly meetings to discuss issues arising around introduction of LHA and discretionary housing payments.</p> <p>Year 1-5 Monitor the effectiveness of regular meetings and adjust as appropriate in terms of invitees and frequency etc</p>	To monitor any potential negative impact of LHA allowance and put measures and procedures in place to help mitigate any negative impact on customers and private landlords.	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Benefit Section</p> <p>Rents Section</p>	Staff time	<p>Prevention of homelessness</p> <p>Ensuring equality of access to benefits</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
3.4	Improve the joint working between and Housing Management and Rents Section with the Housing Options Section	<p>Year 1 Establish procedures for notification of enforcement action regarding possession orders and monitor effectiveness of procedures for managing management transfers</p>	Ensuring that Council tenants under threat of homelessness receive the necessary advice, support and assistance to ensure number of evictions kept to absolute minimum.	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Management Section</p> <p>Rents Section</p>	Staff time	<p>Homelessness prevention</p> <p>Respect Agenda</p> <p>Managing antisocial behaviour</p> <p>Improving Lives priority</p>

		Year 2-5 Monitor effectiveness of joint working and adjust procedures accordingly.	Ensuring that management transfers are used and managed appropriately & effectively.			from Waverley's Corporate Plan
3.5	Review the staff structure of the Housing Options Section in the light of the review of Choice Based Lettings, corporate and housing department re-structuring, anticipated retirements, customer service feedback and adjust/re-configure service as required.	Year 1 Carry out review of Choice Based Lettings, analyse feedback from customer questionnaires, consult staff and devise any alternative structures in the light of these. Year 2-5 Monitor and review effectiveness of service in the light of customer, stakeholder and staff consultation	More co-ordinated customer focussed housing options service Less duplication of work More efficient way of working	Housing Options Section Head of Housing	Staff time	Value for Money priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
3.6	Use customer consultation to improve services and identify training needs for staff	Year 1 Analyse outcome of Housing Options customer consultation and implement necessary changes or training needs as appropriate Year 2-5 Carry out regular customer consultation, analyse results and amend services as appropriate.	Using customer feedback to shape service Increase in customer satisfaction	Housing Options Section	Staff time and printing / postage costs	Customer care
3.7	Agree and publish Housing Options Service Standards to compliment and build on	Year 1 Agree and publish standards taking into account recent customer consultation.	Consistent/fair service	Housing Options Section	Staff time/printing costs	Customer care

	recently published corporate standards	Year 2-5 Develop/amend the standards taking into account feedback from staff and customers				
3.8	As part of the review of Choice Based Lettings, review the effectiveness of the new Allocation Scheme	Year 1 Review Choice Based Lettings scheme and implement necessary Allocation Scheme changes Year 2-5 Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Allocation Scheme taking into changes is legislation and feedback from Customers, Staff and Stakeholders	An Allocation Scheme that fairly and correctly prioritises the housing needs of those on the Housing Register to minimise the need for emergency interventions	Housing Options Section and other Housing Sections Housing Association partners Statutory and Voluntary Partners	Staff time	Prevention of Homelessness Fair allocation of Social housing Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan
3.9	Ensure Housing Options Staff receive regular training to ensure up to date knowledge of appropriate legislation and good practice e.g Safe Guarding Children, Domestic Abuse etc	Year 1 Audit of training needs through appraisal process establish training programme to address need Years 1-2 Ongoing review / monitoring	Staff follow agreed procedures in regard to referral to and joint working with other agencies.	Housing Options Section Human Resources Section	Staff time and training / travel costs	Customer Care Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan

Strategic Priority Four: Develop and improve support and access to services for vulnerable / hard to reach groups.

No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
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4.1	As part of review of Choice Based Lettings, adapt procedures and ways of working to address any issues that arise about equal and fair access to the service for minority/vulnerable groups.	<p>Year 1 Review CBL. Identify and implement necessary improvements in support and help for vulnerable/minority groups.</p> <p>Year 2-5 Monitor, review and adjust CBL service taking into account feedback from customers and stakeholders.</p>	<p>Adequate support for those that need additional help to bid.</p> <p>Positive feedback regarding CBL and the ease of use and fairness of the system.</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Statutory and Voluntary Partners</p>	Staff time	<p>Equal Opportunities</p> <p>e-government</p> <p>Customer Care</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
4.2	Investigate cost implications of having a freephone number for the CBL telephone advertising hotline.	<p>Year 1 Carry out costing exercise, make a decision based on assessment of customer care and costs.</p> <p>Year 1-5 Identify budget and promote/implement freephone if this is the agreed decision.</p>	Reduced customer costs in using the service this removing potential disadvantage	Housing Options Section	Staff time	<p>Equality of access to services to help prevention of homelessness</p> <p>Customer Care</p> <p>Financial inclusion</p>
4.3	With Sub Regional partners explore options for CBL properties to be advertised via DIGITV	<p>Year 1-2 Discuss at Sub Regional CBL board and investigate practicalities and costs and timescales</p> <p>Year 1-5 Monitor the effectiveness of regular meetings and adjust as appropriate in terms of invitees and frequency etc</p>	Increased accessibility of services to those without computer access or with mobility issues	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>IT department</p> <p>CBL partners</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Cost to upgrade system</p>	<p>Equality of access to services</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner	Resources	Comments/Strategic

				Agencies		link
4.4	Develop better understanding of domestic abuse	<p>Year 1 Undertake in-house training for housing staff on domestic abuse – delivered by former Senior Domestic Abuse Outreach Worker.</p> <p>Year 2-5 Promote multi agency domestic abuse training for front line staff</p>	<p>Better understanding by Housing staff of the issues faced by victims of domestic abuse</p> <p>Clear understanding of the referral arrangements to and work of the new South West Surrey Outreach Service</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Department</p> <p>South West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service</p>	Staff time	<p>Homelessness prevention</p> <p>Outreach Support</p> <p>Equality of Opportunity</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
4.5	Develop understanding of Gypsy / Traveller issues among housing staff	<p>Year 1 Arrange for the Surrey Traveller Liaison officer to attend staff meetings to advise about her work and develop staff understanding of Gypsy/Traveller culture/issues</p> <p>Year 2-5 <i>Review effectiveness of joint working between Surrey Gypsy Liaison Officer and Housing through consultation and amend as needed</i></p>	<p>Improved staff knowledge and awareness of gypsy/traveller issues</p> <p>Fair and improved access to housing services from member of the Gypsy / Traveller community</p>	<p>Surrey Traveller Liaison officer</p> <p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Department</p>	Staff time	<p>Equality of Opportunity</p> <p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p>
4.6	Carry out Equality Impact assessments on services/policies/procedures	<p>Year 1 <i>Analyse Equality and Diversity feedback from customer</i></p>	<p>Increased understanding of needs of minority groups</p>	<p>Housing options section</p>	Staff time	<p>Equality of Opportunity / access to services</p>

		<p><i>from customer consultation to assess accessibility of services to minority groups</i></p> <p>Year 1-5 Adapt and improve policies practices & procedures in the light of equality impact assessments</p>	Measures put in place to ensure services are accessible to minority groups			Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan
No.	Actions	Action Targets	Outcomes	Partner Agencies	Resources	Comments/Strategic link
4.7	Develop a Vulnerable Persons Protocol to ensure that the needs of vulnerable clients are known in advance of re-housing and support measures in place to ensure sustainment of their tenancies	<p>Year 1 Arrange series of meetings with key housing staff to devise a protocol</p> <p>Meet with other support agencies to develop and agree the protocol</p> <p>Years 2-5 Monitor and review effectiveness of the protocol and adjust as required</p>	<p>Improved support for vulnerable clients</p> <p>Early intervention to tackle tenancy issues</p> <p>Reduced number of evictions</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Housing Management</p> <p>Rent Section</p> <p>Citizens Advice Waverley</p> <p>Housing Associations</p> <p>Community Mental health teams</p> <p>Learning Disability Teams</p>	Staff time	<p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Tenancy sustainment</p>

4.8	Explore opportunities to increase level of support to homeless households placed in private sector accommodation and temporary accommodation	<p>Year 1 Submit Enhanced Housing Options bid to Government for funding for a housing advice specialist to be based with Citizens Advice Waverley</p> <p>Years 1-5 If bid unsuccessful, explore with Supporting People Team any other funding opportunities to provide tenancy support</p>	<p>Households supported in early stages of tenancies to ensure tenancies sustained</p> <p>Help and advice to ensure households maximise their benefit entitlement and receive debt advice where needed</p>	<p>Housing Options Section</p> <p>Citizens Advice Waverley</p> <p>Surrey Supporting People</p>	Staff time and funding for support/advisor post	<p>Improving Lives priority from Waverley's Corporate Plan</p> <p>Reduce repeat homelessness</p>
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Comms/council/2008-09/012 homelessness strat

