Harrow Homelessness Strategy
2008 – 2013

Tackling homelessness and high demand,
While reducing the use of temporary accommodation

Contents

Message from portfolio holder

Welcome to Harrow's homelessness strategy 2008 – 13.

Much has been achieved since the first homelessness strategy was published in 2003. This is demonstrated by:

- A steady reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation
- The continued success of the Sanctuary Scheme in enabling survivors of domestic violence to remain in their own homes
- The development of a range of supported housing options for young people (including a foyer at Roxeth Gate, offering employment and training, as well as housing and support)
- Participation in West London initiatives, such as the development and distribution of a Housing Options DVD and benchmarking and mystery shopping exercises, to inform future service development.

This new strategy for 2008 -13 seeks to build on the early achievements in Harrow, but also recognises the increasing challenges that we face in terms of the size of the demand for affordable housing, relative to the small council and RSL (registered social landlord) housing stock, the relatively high cost of housing in Harrow and the limited opportunities for new development.

In these circumstances we must rely increasingly on the private housing sector in Harrow, and out of borough opportunities where these offer reasonable, alternative housing options for people at risk of homelessness. We will also work with partners to offer services targeted at people's particular needs e.g. for housing related support, mediation and employment/ training advice, so as to offer a holistic response to their particular housing circumstances. We recognise and embrace the diversity of people facing homelessness and the Strategy seeks to address the inequalities experienced by different minority groups.

This strategy has been produced as a result of a thorough review and consultation with customers, front line staff and partners. I commend it to you and ask for your support in its delivery.

Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Portfolio Holder, Adults and Housing

Message from Divisional Director, Adults and Housing Services

I am pleased to introduce the Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 and would like to thank the many customers, partners and staff who have contributed to its development. We value your contribution and rely on you to help its implementation.

This is an exciting time for the Housing Service in Harrow. We have successfully completed recruitment to several key posts within the service, including the Housing Needs Manager. We are about to go live with a major IT project, which will deliver service improvements and efficiencies in Housing and enable better sharing of information with other council services. This, combined with a range of information sharing and training programmes for staff, customers and partners and improved ways of working, should improve service delivery. These measures, together with the comprehensive Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, will make sure we continue to tackle homelessness in Harrow effectively for the benefit of all the borough's residents.

Gwyneth Allen

Divisional Director, Adults and Housing Services

1.   Introduction

1.1   Strategic context

Every local authority has a duty to produce a Homelessness Strategy under the Homelessness Act 2002. Harrow produced its first Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan in 2003. This Homelessness Strategy 2008 builds on the achievements of the first strategy and sets out our road map for meeting the challenges of homelessness over the next five years. In doing so, it links with and supports a number of key local strategies.

The Harrow Homelessness strategy addresses the Council's vision to:
- Deliver cleaner streets, better environmental services and **keep crime low** e.g. by working with partners to reduce homelessness due to domestic violence and reduce re-offending by meeting accommodation needs
- **Improve the well-being of adults and children and the care of those who most need our help**, e.g. by offering a range of services targeted at young people at risk of homelessness
- **Improve the way we work for our residents**, e.g. actions to improve customer service and deliver better value for money
- **Develop communities where people from different backgrounds get on well together**, e.g. by ensuring that service users are referred to appropriate housing related support provision funded by Supporting People; supporting the Council's 'place shaping' and community cohesion roles in relation to the commissioning of temporary and permanent housing

It supports the Sustainable Community Strategy objectives to:
- **Encourage affordable housing to be developed in accessible locations**, by exploring innovative ways of increasing the affordable housing supply e.g. the Temp to Perm scheme
- Have reduced the pockets of deprivation that affect parts of our Borough, to **increase social inclusion** e.g. by offering money advice to people at risk of homelessness, by referring households for employment/ training advice
- **Ensure continuous improvement in the quality of housing, affordability and choice of type, size and tenure**, e.g. by reducing the use of emergency and temporary accommodation, by offering a housing options approach to the prevention of homelessness, by tackling severe overcrowding, by working with private landlords to improve standards of rented housing
- Deliver the targets of the Local Safeguarding Children Board together with the voluntary and community sector, to **ensure sound multi- agency communication and practice around protecting children from harm and**

promoting their welfare e.g. by our active promotion of the multi-agency NOTIFY scheme to record the movement of families in temporary accommodation

It reflects some of the key elements of the Adults and Housing Services Transformation Programme Plan, namely:

- **Developing accommodation opportunities** – by decreasing the use of temporary accommodation, and by increasing housing options for older people and those with learning disability, mental health, physical disability and people with multiple disabilities into mainstream housing

- **Effective working practices** – conclude the HARP IT project to deliver increased customer contact, more effective working, better information sharing and efficiency savings

This 2008 strategy sets out in detail how we will address Objective Two of the Harrow Housing Strategy 2007: to **tackle homelessness and high demand, while reducing the use of temporary accommodation**. It also supports the other housing strategic objectives relating to meeting the needs of vulnerable people, improving neighbourhoods & the quality of life, increasing the supply of housing and delivering high quality services.

The homelessness strategy has important links to Harrow's education, health, community safety, planning, and social care strategies. It is also the parent strategy to Housing Needs work streams such as the Temporary Accommodation Reduction Plan 2008 –10 and the Overcrowding Action Plan.

1.2   Housing Needs context – Harrow & West London

As in the rest of West London, Harrow's housing need reflects the economic growth that characterises the area. There is a high demand for skilled workers, house prices are high and there is increasing pressure on transport systems. West London has the highest rate of single person households in London. Greater London Authority (GLA) research projects that population and employment is likely to grow at a much faster rate than housing capacity, predicting a shortfall of 35,000 by 2016. This growth and existing high levels of home ownership mean that there is a major and growing shortfall in affordable housing. The equity gap between average incomes and average house prices in 2002 was in excess of £180,000. There is also an affordability gap in meeting private sector rents. All of this poses challenges to the homelessness strategy in terms of: the quantity and availability of affordable housing, the implications of high private sector rent levels for working households and benefit dependency, and the imperative to consider moves outside the sub region to satisfy housing needs.

Among the seven West London boroughs (Harrow, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea) Harrow's housing need is characterised by having the second lowest level of homeless acceptances and the second lowest level number of homeless households in temporary accommodation (2007-8). Harrow also has the smallest social housing stock, so its ability to meet housing affordable need is limited. In value for money terms, a recent West London benchmarking exercise suggested Harrow had some of the lowest costs for homelessness prevention and costs of temporary accommodation. However, Harrow's Audit Commission near neighbour analysis suggests that the homelessness service is expensive. This is an area requiring further detailed analysis.

There is further information on the local, national and regional context, within the accompanying Harrow Homelessness Review 2008 document.

1.3   The 2003 Homelessness Strategy and developments since

The first Harrow Homelessness Strategy (2003) was produced at a time when Harrow was just starting to implement its innovative approach to tackling housing need via homelessness prevention. In 2003/4 this work was recognised nationally by the Council being awarded Beacon status for tackling homelessness. In the first two years of the 2003 homelessness strategy's existence, homelessness acceptances dropped significantly and for a considerable time there were no households in bed and breakfast hotels. This was a major achievement, enabling the Council also to reduce its use of other temporary accommodation (typically private rented properties leased to housing associations – HALS) and to make significant cost savings on the homelessness budget.

In December 2004 CLG introduced a target to reduce the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation (TA) by 50% by 2010. As a consequence the Council curtailed its leasing of HALS units. The drive to constantly reduce TA usage, combined with some difficulties in procuring other private sector rented homes for use in preventing homelessness acceptances, has led to a steady increase in the level of homeless acceptances over the last 3 years. This Strategy sets challenging targets to reduce homelessness acceptances, whilst at the same time stimulating private sector lettings to potentially homeless households, and thus bring the borough back into line to meet the CLG 2010 TA reduction target. TA reduction is a National Indicator and a key corporate target.

The 2003 Strategy was well rated by the ODPM in its assessment of fitness for purpose. The Action Plan 2003 was an ambitious one, containing over 100 actions, and the Review 2008 includes a detailed progress report against the 2003 Action plan. Some items from 2003 are carried through into this Strategy Action Plan 2008

(e.g. the Sanctuary scheme for people at risk of domestic violence). Other initiatives (e.g. the Freshstart scheme for moves to other social housing out of London) have ceased to be viable due to external drivers in the housing market elsewhere. In some ways the context for homelessness has changed and become more challenging; many of the quick wins available in 2003 no longer apply. However the central themes of the 2003 Strategy are valid; its emphasis on early prevention, partnership working and the need to constantly review our approach in response to the changing external environment are carried through into this successor strategy.

1.4   Strategy development

This Strategy takes a comprehensive approach to tackling homelessness in Harrow. The Strategy has been based upon research and service review, as well as interviews and extensive consultation with partners and stakeholders, including service users. The evidence base for the strategy draws upon local performance and needs data, and research from sources such as Communities and Local Government (CLG) to predict future levels of need and demand. Finally, we have reviewed our performance against the Action Plan for the first Harrow Homelessness Strategy 2003 – 8 and the CLG "Preventing Homelessness Strategy Health Check".

Both the Strategy and the Review have been written to take account of all relevant guidance, such as the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities, and the assessment carried out for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the 2003 Harrow Homelessness Strategy.

Details of the consultation with staff, partners and customers are given in the Homelessness Review document. All information gathered through this process has been used to shape the Strategy, and participants in the consultation have been kept informed of the progress of the work throughout its development

1.5   Structure of the strategy & future reviews

This Strategy document is intended to be concise and focused, with the background information being available in the accompanying Homelessness Review 2008. There are 4 key strategic objectives, which we have developed from the Housing Strategy objective 2 during the review process. These are underpinned by an action plan with SMART targets.

The Homelessness Strategy Action Plan is linked into Harrow Council's strategic and service plans and will be monitored through the corporate performance management system.

The strategy and action plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that our targets continue to reflect local need and national policy.

2.   Key Priorities

2.1   Objective one

To prevent homelessness, and to tackle high demand and the wider causes of homelessness

What the review told us:

- The loss of private rented accommodation is the largest single cause of homelessness presentations in Harrow, making up roughly 50% of applications since 2005. This is probably due to the size of the private rented sector (12% of total housing) and the relatively small supply of social housing stock (11% of total housing). We must therefore focus our homeless prevention efforts on working with private sector tenants and landlords to sustain tenancies.

- Performance on tackling homelessness has slipped recently with a steady rise in homelessness applications and acceptances since 2005. As of July 2003, Harrow had 0 households in B&B, whereas at year end 2007/8, there were 73 households in bed and breakfast hotels. The reduction of B&B usage is an important target for this Homelessness Strategy and, in particular, the elimination of its use for 16-17 year olds and a significant reduction in the length of time spent in B&B for families with children.

- Overall the number of households in TA has reduced by 18% since the CLG reduction target was introduced; this is positive, however a greater reduction is required if Harrow is to meet the target of 646 households by March 2010. Our 2008 TA Reduction Plan sets challenging targets for how we will do this and it is an area that will require close monitoring and early intervention to keep on track. Good housing advice and early homelessness prevention are the key to reducing the use of TA.

- Private sector rents are substantially higher than those offered by social landlords: weekly rents on a 1 bedroom property are 58% higher in the private sector, while rents on a 3 bedroom property are 61% higher. There is a risk of benefit dependency for housing applicants taking up high cost tenancies and initiatives that refer customers for employment and training advice / support are important in addressing this.

- Repeat homelessness has remained low, with only 4 cases recorded since 2003/04, and we hope to maintain this position.

What stakeholders told us:

- Need for early intervention techniques, including making presentations about homelessness issues to schools and colleges
- Need to do more work around prevention of rent arrears as a cause of homelessness
- Need to increase the supply of larger properties
- Increase partnership working with the Housing Advice service and Connexions mediation service
- Improve mediation and money advice services
- Increase focus on the 'home'. Training for parents and children will assist them in the future when they become independent
- Make best use of the Housing Benefit Discretionary Housing Payment fund to prevent homelessness

What we plan to do and how

Priority: Ensure access to effective housing advice services
Action: - Minimise homelessness through effective housing advice by Council and partners   - Review current Housing Advice service and put in place arrangements for April 2009   - Ensure early identification of money problems which may cause homelessness, and refer for advice
Priority: Sustain tenancies & existing housing arrangements
Action: - Refocus staff resources on early intervention and homelessness prevention   - Provide an effective mediation service to minimise exclusions by family/ friends   - Maximise appropriate use of the Sanctuary Scheme to enable survivors of domestic violence to remain in their homes
Priority: Provide housing options to people at risk of homelessness
Action: - Ensure effective housing options information and assistance is provided by the Council and partners   - Use the West London Domestic Violence reciprocal agreement where people

cannot remain in their own homes, due to risk of domestic violence, and explore its extension to other forms of violence

- Promote intermediate housing options to people in housing need

Priority: Tackle high demand and the wider causes of homelessness
Action:
• Give regular, targeted messages to the wider public about affordable housing demand and supply in Harrow, and the housing options approach
• Support programmes of awareness raising for young people, about the realities and risks of homelessness
• Review the allocations scheme to ensure fair and balanced access between the competing groups of housing applicants
• Refer customers for employment and training advice / assistance to avoid the trap of homelessness and worklessness

2.2   Objective Two

To secure accommodation for homeless people across a range of tenures, and to manage and reduce the use of temporary accommodation

What the review told us:

- There is a significant shortfall in affordable housing in Harrow, principally affordable rented housing. The projected shortfall is 2,303 units per annum and we must work with partners to maximise the development of new affordable rented housing, improve the take up of intermediate housing by housing applicants, and make best use of the existing social rented housing stock.

- There has been an increase in the BME population of Harrow since the 2003 strategy, particularly in the Somali and Polish community. 64% of households in TA are from a BME background and the average length of time spent in TA is 4.5 years, although this varies considerably depending on the bedroom size required.

- We need to increase the supply of affordable housing in Harrow to meet the growing demand, particularly for larger housing (3 bedrooms and larger); this will particularly address the needs of BME households who are disproportionately represented in larger sized temporary accommodation and wait longest for permanent rehousing. We must also use creative housing options for larger

households e.g. offering independent housing options, with training & employment support, to adult family members where appropriate.

- 56% of working households in Harrow could not afford to buy their own home, according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2005 report "The Geography of Affordable and Unaffordable Housing". House prices rose by 60% between 2001 and 2006. Low cost home ownership schemes need to be aimed at households with incomes in the range of £21,000 - £38,000 to be accessible to families in housing need and we need to promote the take up of intermediate housing options by social housing tenants and housing applicants.

- The Housing Register records significant levels of overcrowding (almost 25% of applicants lack one bedroom and nearly 5% lack 2 or more bedrooms and are classed as being "severely overcrowded".) At the same time 71 households are recorded as under-occupying their existing homes and wishing to move. Our overcrowding and under-occupation action plan seeks to address this imbalance by promoting schemes to support and meet the needs of under-occupiers and thus alleviate severe overcrowding and free up chain properties for use by larger households.

What stakeholders told us:

- Need to manage expectations of the public on the supply of council/ RSL housing
- Open up opportunities to move out of Harrow, should the household express an interest in doing so
- Need to address affordability issues with private sector properties - offer a range of attractive, viable options in the private sector
- Work with landlords to address concerns, and promote initiatives such as the new Housing Benefit system (Local Housing Allowance)
- Maximise use of existing social rented stock
- Work with RSLs, and develop a robust strategy to tackle overcrowding and under-occupation

What we plan to do and how

Priority: Facilitate private sector housing options
Action:
• Promote Harrow's private sector letting scheme (Letstart), to applicants and landlords, as a mainstream housing option for households in priority need
• Facilitate private sector housing options for single people and young people

Priority: Make best use of the permanent social rented housing stock
Action:
• Maintain current low levels of void times in Council stock • Work with RSLs and West London partners to maximise the supply of new social rented housing • Pursue new housing solutions e.g. Temp to Perm Initiative • Promote and support under-occupation moves, and use chain lettings to assist overcrowded households and, in turn, homeless households • Encourage full use of the range of mobility schemes to enable choice of area, particularly out of London
Priority: Reduce the use of temporary accommodation
Action:
• Manage the use of all forms of temporary accommodation in line with the CLG target of 50% reduction between 2004 - 2010
Priority: Review the use of emergency accommodation
Action:
• Minimise the use of bed and breakfast hotels, particularly for families and young people • Review the requirement for hostel provision from January 2010, and plan to meet that need

2.3   Objective Three

To support vulnerable homeless people, including young and single homeless, in accessing settled homes and sustaining their tenure

What the review told us:

- Harrow has an increased score in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, however, it is still ranked 27th least deprived borough in London out of 33

- There is a direct correlation between the areas in Harrow that are most deprived in terms of health and education, and concentrations of people in TA

- Households including a vulnerable resident (with mental health needs or a physical disability) are more likely, on average, to be living in unsuitable housing

- Harrow Council and its partners currently provide housing related support to 1859 vulnerable people at any one time, to enable them to retain their independence

- Housing related support is provided through either accommodation based services (74%) or floating support (19%) to: single homeless people and families (68 units); older people (1320 units); people with drug and alcohol dependency (35 units); women fleeing domestic violence (22 units); young people at risk and leaving care (93 units); ex-offenders (101 units of support); teenage parents (6 units); refugees and asylum seekers (20 units); people with learning disabilities (57 units); people with mental health needs (137 units); people with physical and sensory disabilities (36 units); people with HIV and AIDS (12 units).

What stakeholders told us:

- Some service users felt that the constant moving between temporary accommodation properties was leading to an increase in anti-social behaviour, due to there being no cohesion within communities, and suggested longer-term private sector tenancies to promote sustainable communities

- There is a lack of suitable, adapted accommodation in Harrow for disabled people

- There is a need for improved partnership working with private landlords to ensure a good standard of properties

- Work in partnership with landlords and estate agents to open up options to people on Housing Benefit

- Need for more emergency accommodation, as the homeless process can take too long

- Handholding service would assist both tenants and landlords in sustaining their tenancies

- Focus services towards the most vulnerable and at risk groups

- Holistic approach to vulnerable groups, offering education, advice and support. This needs to look at groups such as young people, drug and alcohol dependency, elderly people and those with multiple needs

What we plan to do and how

Priority: Support young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
Action:
- Work with partners to provide a range of supported housing options for young people, including medium & low support; access to training/ employment; supported move on accommodation; an emergency 'crash pad'

• Support multi agency work to maintain the low rates of teenage pregnancy in Harrow and provide supported housing for teenage parents
Priority: Support families & single people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
Action: • Work with partners to provide support to families in hostel accommodation, and those in private sector letting schemes, to sustain tenancies   • Support single people in private sector letting schemes to sustain tenancies
Priority: Support vulnerable adults & other identified groups who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
Action: • Maintain the current low level of rough sleeping in Harrow by providing access to housing advice and referral to appropriate specialist provision   • Work with partners to address the housing needs of ex offenders via early advice and assistance   • Provide housing related support to promote and sustain independent housing options for older people, people with mental health issues, drug & alcohol dependency, learning & physical disability   • Carry out an equalities impact assessment and address the issues identified to mitigate the differential impact of homelessness on particular groups

2.4   Objective Four

To regularly review the homelessness strategy, to ensure it is effective, adapts readily to the changing external environment, and that the Housing Needs service provides good value for money.

What the review told us:

- VFM data & need for further analysis

- Feedback from customer satisfaction surveys highlighted 60% of respondents felt that the information they received was useful and 59% felt the information and advice they received was clear enough for them to understand. 52% were satisfied that they received the service they came in for. General feedback included comments about the amount of time it takes for households to obtain a permanent accommodation and a lack of knowledge about Locata and banding.

- The CLG Strategic Health Check has highlighted where there would be scope for improvements in the service, most notably in:

    - More effective partnering arrangements and prevention

    - Improving communications and referrals for vulnerable single persons

    - More effective management and identification of the needs of homeless applicants

    - Providing further support for sustaining tenancies

    - Identifying the best way of serving the needs of diverse local communities

    - Considering new "value for money" initiatives including access to welfare benefits

    - Continuing learning and development for front line practitioners

- There is a need to capture information about disability for monitoring purposes and appropriate staff training, to ensure the council can assess any differential impact on services provided.

- There is a need to increase knowledge around groups including ex-service personnel, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) community and Faith Groups.

What stakeholders told us:

- Create a homelessness 'network' throughout the Borough

- Programme of education/training for staff, customers and members

- Improved communication between agencies

- Training for landlords, specifically around the Local Housing Allowance

- Evaluate staffing resources in both the Housing Needs staff teams

- Policy briefings for staff

- Information sharing protocols

- Improve the customer reception area

- Improve communication/updates for those on the waiting list

What we plan to do and how

Priority: Work with partners to tackle homelessness
Action:
• Work with local and sub regional partners to address the priorities in the

Priority: Work with partners to tackle homelessness
Homelessness Strategy and deliver the action plan via forums, networks and the pursuit of joint initiatives
• Review and further develop protocols between agencies for dealing with applications from homeless people
• Ensure the objectives of the homelessness strategy are fully reflected in local and sub regional strategies and action plans
Priority: Continuously review and improve service delivery
Action: • Carry out regular customer surveys and address the issues arising • Improve customer service and value for money via investment in technology, staff learning and development, and review of customer care standards • Embed performance management throughout the service to ensure we meet the objectives set • Promote and share good practice in tackling homelessness within the Housing Needs service and with Council colleagues and external partners
Priority: To further develop the homelessness strategy
Action: • Publicise the homelessness strategy widely to customers and partners • Review the strategy and action plan annually, with stakeholders, and link to the housing and corporate strategy review groups • Carry out research to address identified data gaps

3. Implementing the strategy

3.1 Outcomes & delivery

We will monitor the outcomes of the strategy in partnership with the Homelessness Strategy Project Board, and will use past performance, as well as other West London performance as a baseline for measurement. Wherever possible we have included SMART actions in the action plan and these can be readily measured. However, where some targets are broader or less certain, these will be refined through the annual review of the Strategy and Action Plan.

The aim is to deliver the strategy through partnership. All agencies that have taken part in the consultation process are aware of this, and have been consulted on the targets in the action plan.

The strategy will be launched and disseminated widely. This will ensure that all agencies and individuals responsible for tackling homelessness in Harrow will be given ample opportunity to be part of the ongoing process.

3.2 Monitoring and review

Harrow Housing Services will be responsible for reviewing the Strategy document annually to ensure that the targets identified within the action plan still reflect the true local need and demand. These annual reviews will be carried out in partnership with the agencies that have assisted in the development of both the review and the strategy, including the Harrow Single Homelessness Forum, the proposed Harrow Homelessness network and the Homelessness Strategy Project Board.

3.3 Resources

The resources available for implementation of this strategy include: Harrow Council homelessness revenue budget, specific CLG revenue grants, Harrow affordable housing fund capital and Housing Corporation capital, plus privately raised finance for new housing schemes delivered by RSLs.

The total net revenue budget for homelessness in 2008-9 is £2.7m, and includes £204k specific CLG revenue grants and £320k HB income. In 2009-10 cost savings of £160,000 will be made to support the HARP IT project.

As noted throughout the strategy the homelessness service is subject to changing external forces and a number of budgetary pressures associated with the costs of temporary accommodation and prevention initiatives. Where new initiatives have revenue cost implications these will be managed within the overall homelessness budget or within the corporate medium term financial strategy.

3.4 Risk

The homelessness strategy operates in an environment that is fluctuating and highly susceptible to change due to external factors. In response to this there has been a risk appraisal of key elements of the Strategy and Action Plan and controls are in place to mitigate and manage the highest risks.

Specific factors currently impacting on the delivery of the strategy include the 2008 "credit crunch". This could significantly increase the number of households presenting as homeless and reduce the supply of new affordable homes. A detailed risk management matrix has been developed as part of this Strategy (included in the Homelessness Review 2008).

3.5   Equalities impact

An equalities impact assessment (EIA) has been developed and is included in the Homelessness Review 2008. The EIA assesses the impact the Strategy will have on defined groups based on an analysis of current evidence. It reflects actions required to address differential impact, which has then been included in the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.

The assessment has shown that although higher proportions of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) households are presenting as homeless and on waiting lists for suitable accommodation, particularly larger accommodation, there is no evidence from the data to suggest that this group is directly discriminated against in the homelessness process (12.3% of applications from BME households are accepted, compared with an overall average of 12.2%). However, it is important to note that there will continue to be an imbalance in the proportion of larger BME households waiting for accommodation with so few larger properties becoming available for letting each year.

Key findings from the assessment have been reflected in the action plan, particularly the need for larger accommodation (Action Plan objective 2 action 5), the need for access to adapted properties for physically disabled people (objective 3 action 23), improved collection of data on disability for more accurate monitoring on disability (objective 4 action 12) and research into the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) groups, faith groups and gypsies and travellers (objective 4 action 15).

In addition to the EIA, the Council needs to demonstrate that it has had due regard to promoting the equality of opportunity of disabled people and other persons in accordance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Section 49 also requires the Council to take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons. Equality of opportunity in this case would be represented by the specific needs of disabled people for suitable temporary and permanent accommodation being recognised and prioritised.

Data is not currently routinely collected on the numbers of disabled people, or households containing a disabled person, presenting as homeless to assess whether or not this is disproportionate to the number of disabled people in the community. In

addition, the council's ability to find suitable temporary accommodation for people with mobility impairments is restricted by the limited availability of such accommodation that has been designed or adapted for use by people with mobility impairments. There are similar difficulties concerning the provision of permanent accommodation, although there is scope for adaptations, subject to resource availability.

The Strategy has recognised these issues and, at objective 4 action 12 addresses the need for improved collection of data on disability for more accurate monitoring. In addition, at objective 3, action 23, the Strategy specifically addresses the need to increase the availability of suitably adapted temporary property.

In the case of other disabilities, the Strategy recognises the needs of people with learning disabilities and mental health issues by a range of actions at objective 3, actions 15, 16, 17, 21 and 22.

The actions set out in the Homelessness Strategy should positively address any existing differential impact on specific groups. Any change, positive or negative, will be identified through the annual review process by the multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Project Board, and will be addressed in future updates to the action plan.

4.   Appendices

4.1   Action plan

Objective one: To prevent homelessness, and to tackle high demand and the wider causes of homelessness					
Priority - Ensure access to effective housing advice services					
We will:	**Lead / s**	**Partners**	**When**	**Resources**	**Performance indicators & targets**
1. **Review the housing advice service** Review existing arrangements for cost, effectiveness and overall value for money Put in place arrangements for the service from April 2009	Housing Needs Manager	Housing Advice Centre Other potential providers	2008-09	Revenue budget	Number of cases of homelessness prevention Cost of service and effectiveness of prevention, benchmarked against others Contractual arrangements in place for April 09
2. **Provide effective housing Advice** Work in partnership with stakeholders/ providers in offering comprehensive advice services to residents to - - Minimise levels of homelessness - Avoid the use of emergency	Housing Assessment Manager	Housing Advice Centre West London	2008-09	Revenue budget SLA with advice provider Bid for CLG	Regularly benchmark performance/outputs from service providers (Housing Advice Centre) Set focused targets and outcomes in line with locall and national indicators

	accommodation for vulnerable households - Support the West London enhanced housing options bid for a sub regional telephone advice line and database		partners		pilot funds for enhanced housing options service	Move to joint initiatives and collaborative working to ensure good quality standards
3.	**Money Advice referrals** Ensure early identification of money problems which may cause homelessness, and work with others to offer debt advice in a focused and proactive way to - identify **all** threatened homeless households from debt data provided by Housing Advice Centre Money Advice Referral Project or Capitalise - refer **all** residents with debt management issues - irrespective of tenure – to relevant provider for advice and assistance - coordinate a public information campaign where those who are at risk of homelessness can have access to effective housing money/ welfare rights advice - Supporting People services support the need to achieve economic wellbeing through outcome based support	Housing Assessment Manager	HAC CAB Manager MARP Capitalise HB & DWP partners Resident Services Manger RSLs	2008-10 2009	Revenue budget SP funding	Record and monitor data on debt management to anticipate the likely impact on housing Ensure providers and all referral parties are working effectively to prevent homelessness Assist and promote awareness of debt prioritisation to prevent loss of accommodation

	planning.					
Priority - Sustain tenancies and existing housing arrangements						
4.	**Refocus resources on early intervention** Refocus staff resource focussed on prevention and ensure that Homelessness Prevention Officers: - Negotiate agreements with landlords to encourage the grant of fixed term tenancies of up to three years (and beyond) - Save 25 tenancies through direct negotiation with landlords - (Where appropriate) provide financial assistance to clear rent and mortgage arrears in partnership with Money Advice - Place 50 households directly in alternative private tenancies through the private rented sector initiative (Letstart) before formal eviction Refer potentially homeless households for floating support Ensuring that Service users are referred to	Housing Assessment Manager	Supporting People Manager Private landlords	2008-09	Homeless Prevention Fund Supporting People grant Letstart landlord incentives	Prevention officers increased from 3 to 3.5 by September 08 Staff trained and have tools to carry out effective prevention 25 private sector tenancies saved 50 households placed in private sector tenancies before formal eviction 40 households referred for floating support (Look Ahead) Homeless acceptances reduced to 150 per year in 2008/9 and 2009/10

	appropriate preventative Housing related support provision funded by Supporting People e.g. lookahead floating support scheme.					
5.	**Homelessness prevention** Actively assist and advise residents in maintaining their tenancies In the face of threatened homelessness by - Maximising use of LHA regime to sustain shorthold tenancies and seek to reduce homeless approaches on this basis from 46% to 30% by 2010 - Resolving HB issues as and when they arise - Being proactive with landlords when there is a threat of homelessness - Arranging for "fast tracking" of HB claims and working with our HB partners to make the fullest use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) where homelessness is threatened or imminent within 28 days - Ensure social housing tenancy 'sign ups' are thorough and informative to promote tenancy sustainment	Housing Assessment Manager Housing Provision Manager	Housing Benefits Manager Private landlords Resident Services Manager RSL partners	2008 - 13	Housing Benefit Discretionary Housing Payments Staff time Information packs	Provide data/records of effective liaison/ dialogue with landlords Provide clear and accurate advice on customers tenancy rights Dealing directly with landlords to establish underlying causes of the loss of accommodation Fewer homelessness approaches from social housing

6.	**Mediation**
	
	Provide an effective mediation service for young people with the following objectives:
	
	   - To minimise parental exclusions
	
	   - To support successful outcomes of mediation on the relationships between young people and their families
	
	Review current arrangements and put in place new arrangements following the expiry of the current SLA
	
	   Partner with Connexions to meet and understand the needs of young people
		Housing Assessment Manager	Relate mediation service
			
			Connexions
				2008-10	Revenue budget
					
					Staff time
						Gauge performance in both quantitative and qualitative form
						
						Prevent homelessness for 50% of parental/family exclusions
						
						Measure therapeutic outcomes of mediation
						
						Records at least 20% of mediation casework and intervention as successful
						
						Define expected standards in performance terms from service providers
						
						Contractual arrangements in place
						
						Regular monitoring in place to maximise outcomes

| 7. | **Sanctuary Scheme**

Expand/ provide more practical and effective assistance for survivors of domestic violence by ensuring

- Easier access to a broader range of advice from advocates/representatives to achieve 30% more Sanctuary completions in 08-9

- Offer the full range of legal/practical advice to reduce homeless acceptances due to DV by 50% by 2010

- Housing to be fully integrated into multi agency working on DV

- Coverage in all areas within local authority control to assist clients (including the tenancy relations role in relation to harassment)

- Ensure appropriate use of tenancy clause in Harrow Council tenancies re DV

- Continuing support for the Domestic Violence Forum & action plan

- Encouraging RSL's to support safe tenancy policies | Housing Assessment Manager | Harrow DV forum steering group

Resident Services Manager

Harrow RSL forum & partners | 2008-10 | Sanctuary Scheme budget £53k in 08-9 | Continue to promote the Sanctuary Scheme

Offer **all** applicants the options of a full assessment under Sanctuary arrangements

Liaise with partner agencies to provide ongoing support following completion of Sanctuary initiatives

Reduce repeat instances of DV

Cultivate links with local courts to ease access to legal remedies for clients |

8.	**Housing related support for DV survivors** Delivery of the recommendations of the West London Domestic Violence review undertaken by Supporting People: - Including commissioning of a WL Floating Support service for DV. - Reconfiguring accommodation based contracts and Commissioning a service for those suffering DV with complex needs	Supporting People Manager	West London partners Support and advice providers Harrow DV forum Housing sub-group	2008-10	SP grant	New West London service in place. Accommodation based contracts reconfigured DV targets

Priority – provide housing options to people at risk of homelessness

9.	**Reciprocal agreement on West London moves due to domestic violence** Train staff and monitor participation in the West London DV reciprocal arrangement Consider extending coverage of scheme to include **all** approaches on basis of violence (including incidences of hate crime)	Housing Assessment Manager	West London DV sub group	2008 -13	Staff time Learning & development budget	Number of effective referrals between West London boroughs
10.	**Intermediate housing options**					

	Ensure **all** working households in housing need are registered for shared ownership option/ assessment and follow up their interest Promote intermediate housing options to existing social housing tenants	Housing Assessment Manager	Enabling Manger RSLs Resident services manager	2008 -13	Staff time Learning & development resources	Number of referrals Follow up on referrals Moves into intermediate housing from homeless applicants and social housing tenants Promotional campaigns
11.	**Effective options information by all partners** Ensure effective housing options information and assistance is provided by Council and partners	Housing Needs Manager	All advice agencies	2008 -13	Staff time Learning & development resources	Regular information sharing Joint learning & development sessions

Priority – Tackle high demand and the wider causes of homelessness

12.	**Communications** - Review literature, publicity material, website & reception displays to strengthen message about high demand and to promote housing options - Agree a communications plan and	Housing Needs Manager	Strategy & Performanc e Manager Corporate PR	2008-10	Staff time Revenue Budgets	Literature and website regularly reviewed Regular press articles

	ensure regular items in the press and on the website - Investigate scope for text messaging housing applicants to progress case work and prevention/ options follow up - Hold Housing Options days for customers to include e.g. training on how to bid on Locata, Letstart & intermediate housing options		manager Capita BTP Housing needs customers Partner agencies		HARP IT project	Targeted text messaging Attendance at Housing Options Days
13.	**Young people** Raise awareness of causes, realities & risks of homelessness and make links to other issues e.g. sexual health, teenage pregnancy, drugs misuse, mental health & crime Tackle the underlying causes of social disadvantage and improve outcomes for young people most at risk of becoming homeless and socially excluded, and their families, for example by: – Supporting the roll out of the Prodigals Education Programme in schools, youth clubs & community organisations	Housing Needs Manager	Childrens Services & schools Youth clubs & community organisations The Prodigals Education Trust	2008-10	Revenue budget CLG funding	Use of Prodigals resource pack in schools, youth organisations and the community Reduction in youth homelessness
14.	**Allocations of social housing** Review allocations scheme to ensure fair and	Housing	Housing	2009-10	Staff time	Scheme review complete

	balanced access between competing groups of housing applicants	Needs Manager	applicants Social housing tenants Locata partners			by March 2010 and recommendations made
15.	**Employment & training advice** - Actively promote West London HELP (Homelessness Employment Link Project) – ensure staff are trained to make referrals and monitor the referrals - Via referrals to HELP, promote the Off the Streets & Into Work (OSW) project for job coaching households in temporary accommodation in West London - Support the proposed West London Triple Action Project to offer short term accommodation linked to training / employment for emerging households in social housing	Housing Assessment Manager Housing Provision Manager	Resident Services Manager West London partners RSL partners	2008-10	Staff time	Number of referrals per year plus outcomes: - HELP referrals - OSW referrals 10 Triple Action moves per year Individual staff targets set for referrals to HELP, OSW

Objective two: To secure accommodation for homeless people across a range of tenures, and to manage and reduce the use of temporary accommodation					
Priority - Facilitate private sector housing options					
	Lead / s	**Partners**	**When**	**Resources**	**Performance Indicators & targets**
1. **Letstart scheme** Promote Letstart scheme to applicants and landlords via: - Team, phone line & literature - West London website - Out of London arrangements - Forums & surgeries - Joint working with partners - Link to financial assistance to bring empty homes back into use, as well as ensuring private sector stock meets the DHS - SP funded Lookahead support as part of the Private Sector Letstart package. Maximise use of West London Letstart arrangements for out of London moves	Housing Provision Manager	West London partners Environmental Health Housing Benefit Advice agencies Supporting People	2008-10	Staff time Revenue budget – Harrow & West London Letstart	174 Letstart sign ups by March 2010 Regular marketing campaigns Active use of West London Letstart website

2.	**Single people** Continue to support Single Homeless advice and assistance - Weekly drop in surgeries - Rent deposit scheme	Housing Assessment Manager	Single Homelessness Forum partners	2008 - 13	Staff time Revenue budget – Harrow & partners'	Number of single people homeless preventions
3.	**Young people** - Facilitate the Supported lodgings scheme	Housing Needs Manager	West London YMCA	2008 - 09	CLG grant Housing needs revenue budget	At least 6 young people in supported lodgings at any one time in Year 1
	- Investigate the scope for a 'crash pad' in Harrow	Housing Assessment Manager	Supporting People		Supporting People Grant	Produce options for a 'crash pad' in Year 1
Priority – Make best use of permanent social rented housing stock						
4.	**Maintain low void turnaround** Minimise void turnaround time in the Council's social housing stock	Housing Provision Manager	Property Services Manager Kier	2008-09	Staff time Revenue Budgets	Average turnaround 27 days

			Resident Services Manager			
5.	**Support delivery of new RSL housing** Work with RSL's and West London partners to - Provide additional housing association homes for rent to local authority nominees (specifically large family size properties) - Identify homes for affordable housing options (e.g. shared ownership) and ensure that target for new developments is met on all new sites - Work with West London Partnership to identify and highlight sub-regional demand and housing need making the most of opportunities for new development	Enabling Manager	Planning RSL partners Housing Corporation Developers West London partners	2008-13	Staff time Capital budgets	At least 116 social rented units produced for letting to homeless families in temporary accommodation by March 2010
6.	**Maximise use of existing RSL stock** Identify current performance against nomination agreements with RSLs Maximise the proportion of RSL nominations to ensure increased levels of lettings available to	Housing Enabling Manager	RSLs Housing Provision Manager	2008 and ongoing	Revenue budgets and staff time	Baseline established Monitoring reports produced and actions identified

	Harrow					
7.	**New housing solutions – Temp to Perm scheme** Pursue implementation of the Temp to Perm initiative in Harrow	Enabling Manager	West London partners Scheme provider Funders	2008-10	Housing Corporation Grant Housing Benefit Private finance	100 temporary units acquired by March 2010, for conversion to permanent housing in 2025
8.	**Promote & support under occupation moves in social rented stock** Implement the Overcrowding and Under-occupation action plan by - Appointing an Officer to work on tackling overcrowding and under-occupation - target cases for possible under occupation moves, extensions and deconversions - making better use of stock by using chain moves to assist severely overcrowded households and, subsequent units for, homelessness households	Housing Assessment Manager Housing Provision Manager	West London partners Kier RSLs	2008-10	Staff time CLG overcrowding grant £110k Harrow affordable housing fund £500k Consider underocupation incentives for RSLs	50 moves in 2008 – 9 Number of improved homes 2 extensions/ deconversions in 2008-09

	- working with RSLs to publicise and target underoccupying households; facilitate downsizing into other social rented stock or moves out of social housing - working with energy officer/ fuel poverty advisors to consider rehousing options and promote downsizing				offering 100% nomination rights to Harrow Council	
8.	**Mobility schemes** Encourage full use of mobility schemes to enable choice of area (particularly out of London) by - engaging in local and sub-regional initiatives to promote moves out of area for clients to any form of tenure **-** provide financial assistance for households wishing to move out of social housing either on grounds of under occupation or other factors (e.g. to provide family support or employment reasons)	Housing Assessment Manager	Housing Provision Manager Resident Services Manager Enabling Manager Intermediate housing partners	2008-10	Under occupation incentive budget	Monitor all activity of mobility moves out of London Achieve target number of moves out of London per year Confirm households are registered for affordable housing options (such as shared ownership) Increase take up of intermediate housing options by social housing tenants/ homeless applicants by x units per year

Priority – Manage and reduce the use of temporary accommodation						
9.	**Meet 2010 target and ensure good quality and value for money**					
	Reduce use of all forms of temporary accommodation by 50% (from December 04 to March 2010)	Housing Needs Manager	Housing Provision Manager	2008-10	Staff time	No more than 646 households in TA at March 2010
	Regular contact with homeless families to discuss options - Targeted options e.g. move on for 1 bed households, discussion of housing options with large households - Promotion of qualifying offers to families in temporary accommodation		RSL partners Private landlords		Revenue budgets	60 1 bed moves from temp accom to alternative housing by March 2009 Implement TA Reduction Plan targets
	Ensure temporary accommodation is good quality and provides value for money - Use Acclaim benchmarking analysis to review costs and improve vfm - Regularly liaise with RSLs and hoteliers to ensure good standards of accommodation - Ensure all forms of temporary accommodation used, including HMO's, meet required standards under the Housing Act 2004		Environmental Health Single Homeless Forum			VFM benchmarking data Reduction in number of complaints regarding quality of temporary accommodation
10.	**Housing Related support**					

	Develop a housing support service to support 10 families at any one time to move out of TA	Supporting People Manager	Support providers Housing Provision Manager	2008-09	SP Grant	10 families in TA receive floating support
Priority – Review and reduce the use of bed & breakfast and hostels						
11.	**Homeless hostels** Review the requirement for hostels Have a strategy in place for the continued use, or replacement, of Anmer Lodge beyond 2010	Housing Needs Manager	Enabling Manager RSL partners	2008-10	Staff time	Hostel requirement planned, consulted upon & resourced Strategy in place by January 2009 for provision after January 2010
12.	**Bed & breakfast hotels** Minimise use of B&B for families & young people Ensure B&B is of good quality	Housing Assessmen t manager Housing Provision Manager	RSLs HAC Childrens Services Hoteliers Environme ntal Health	2008-10	Revenue budget Staff time	0 16 – 17 year olds in B&B by March 2010 0 families in B&B for longer than 6 weeks by March 2010. Reduction in number of complaints about quality of

						B&B

Objective three: To support vulnerable homeless people, including young and single homeless, in accessing settled homes and sustaining their tenure						
		Lead/ s	**Partners**	**When**	**Resources**	**Performance indicators & targets**
Priority: Support young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness						
1.	**Accommodation based support** Commission an additional 9 units of accommodation for Young Homeless People in 2008 through a combination of HCHA and the YMCA.	Supporting People Manager	HCHA YMCA	July 2008	SP Grant	Service in Place contributing to NI 141 and the TA target
2.	**Liaison re services** We will continue to work closely with the leaving care team and youth offending team to ensure that services meet the range of young people's housing related support needs.	Supporting People Manager	LCT YOT	Ongoing	SP Grant	Review service in Place
3.	**Generic floating support – young people** To develop a generic floating support service to pick up the housing support needs of people such as the younger generation with a physical disability who fall outside of the existing floating support eligibility criteria.	Supporting People Manager	Providers	By December 200	SP Grant and WL Framework	NI 141 & 142

4.	**Teenage Parents** Continue the work that has led to Harrow having the second lowest rate of teenage pregnancy in the London region, and thus tackle teen pregnancy as a cause of homelessness, by - further partnering and coordination in innovative outreach projects such as 'Clinic in a Box' to reduce presentations to the Council - Communicating effectively with applicants and clients to provide better information on health, the risk of homelessness, range of housing options, budgeting and debt advice - Develop and deliver outreach programme with sessions in schools, colleges and youth groups locally - Awareness raising with staff around issues of teenage parents (as identified from consultation)	Housing Needs Manager	Teenage Pregnancy co-ordinator Mediation Service Single Homeless Forum RSLs	By March 2011	Revenue budget Staff time	Fewer homeless acceptances of teenage parents Improved satisfaction with services amongst teenage parents
Priority – Support families & single people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness						
5.	**Floating Support – families in TA** A floating support service will be developed to support the delivery of the TA reduction target.	Supporting People Manager	Housing and Providers	October 2008	SP Grant/ WL Provider Framework	Service in Place contributing to NI 141 and the TA reduction target
6.	**Floating Support – Vernon Lodge hostel**	Supporting People	Housing and	July 2008	SP Grant	Service in Place contributing to NI 141 and

	A short-term support service will be delivered to homeless families in Vernon Lodge.	Manager	Providers			the TA reduction target
7.	**Review all TA floating support** All Temporary Accommodation support services to be reviewed at an early stage of the Supporting People procurement timetable.	Supporting People Manager	Housing and Providers	April 2009	SP Grant	Review undertaken and procurement plan in place
8.	**Review single homeless floating support** We will monitor the Lookahead single homeless floating support service and evaluate if it should be continued beyond 2009.	Supporting People Manager	West London colleagues	March 2009	SP Grant	Service in Place contributing to NI 141 and prevention of repeat homelessness
Priority – Support vulnerable adults & other identified groups who are homeless or at risk of homelessness						
	Adults with longer term needs					
9.	**Drug based detox** Buy into a West London project to provide harrow with units of accommodation based drug detox	Supporting People Manager	Drug Action Team (DAT)	Date to be confirmed	SP Grant	Targets in relation to Drug rehabilitation.
10	**Dual diagnosis floating support** Combine the Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol floating support services into a dual diagnosis service to ensure lack of duplication and maximization of provision.	Supporting People Manager	DAT / Metropolitan Support Trust (MST)	August 2008	SP Grant	Service in place and NI 142 & 149
11	**Generic floating support – vulnerable adults** To develop a generic floating support service to	Supporting People	Providers	By December	SP Grant and WL Framework	NI 141 & 142

		Manager		200		
12	**Supported independent living** Generally to provide more supported independent living accommodation for people with long term needs but in a generic setting.	SP Manager/ Joint Commissioning Managers	Learning Disability (LD) and Mental Health (MH) commiss-ioners	Ongoing in line with the Adult Transformation Project Plan for Accommodation	SP Grant & Joint commissioning social care funding	NI 149 and other LAA indicators
13	**Dual diagnosis supported accommodation** Develop an accommodation based service for dual diagnosis in consultation with DAT and MST using the delivery vehicle of the West London Lookahead Each project.	Supporting People Manager	MST / DAT	Dates to be confirmed	SP Grant	NI 149
14	**Evaluate Mental Health pilot** Evaluate the longer term MH pilot scheme and plan for future needs	Supporting People Manager	MST / DAT	By March 08	SP Grant	NI 149
15	**Shared ownership for LD** Develop more Shared Ownership options in the first instance for people with a Learning Disability	Supporting People Manager	HLDT / Enabling Team	Ongoing	SP Grant	Services in place
16	**Independent Living for LD** Ensure the delivery of 6 new units of Independent Living provision for LD at the Strongbridge estate.	Supporting People Manager	MST / HLDT	September 2009	SP Grant	Service in place
17	**Adapted housing for Physical Disability (PD)** In the areas of PD, work with housing to ensure that there is appropriate adapted	Supporting People Manager	Housing / Housing Adaptation and	Ongoing	SP Grant	Services in place

	accommodation through Home Improvement Agency (HIA) and Telecare services.		Repair Team (HART) / Telecare			
18	**Monitor needs of people with HIV / AIDS** Continue to monitor the need for specific housing related for individuals with HIV/ AIDS	Supporting People Manager	PD team	Ongoing	Staff time	Recommendations made
	Older People					
19	**Review floating support – older owner-occupiers** The older owner-occupied sector in Harrow, comprising 80% of the 60+ population, will need to be appropriately catered for. Therefore we will continue to monitor the uptake of the floating support services that SP commissions and consider increasing floating support to older people in future	SP Manager & Housing Senior Project Manager	Health and Social Care colleagues and providers	April 2009	SP Grant	Adult Transformation Project targets
20	**Older People's Housing Review** Deliver against the Older Persons Housing review recommendations : - Particularly to develop extra care provision and remodel support services and assessment for Older People.	SP Manager Adult Transformation Project lead	Health and Social Care colleagues and providers	April 2009	SP Grant	Adult Transformation Project targets
	BME Households					
21	To ensure that BME households are able to access the full range of Supporting People provision regardless of ethnicity.	Supporting People Manager	Providers	Ongoing	Staff time	Monitoring and reporting in place
	Rough Sleepers					
22	Provide access to homelessness outreach and	Housing	Providers	Ongoing	Staff time	Numbers of rough sleepers

	identify and contact rough sleepers and arrange appropriate specialist provision	Assessment Manager				identified and referrals in place
23	Monitor levels of those sleeping rough and maintain at zero via Single Homeless Forum	Housing Assessment Manager	Single Homeless Forum partners	Ongoing	Staff time Revenue budget	0 rough sleepers each year
	Ex offenders					
24	Ensure that we provide access to housing advice/information on range of housing options	Housing Assessment Manager	Probation/ Prison Services/ HAWK/ Youth Offending Team (YOT)	Ongoing	Revenue budget Staff time	Re-offending/Licence targets/KPI 2/ Repeat Homelessness (BVPI 214 as was)
25	Complete assessments for vulnerability prior to discharge from prison and arrange for direct referrals to appropriate services	Housing Assessment Manager	Probation/ Prison Services/ HAWK/ YOT	Ongoing	Revenue budget Staff time	Re-offending/Licence targets/KPI 2/ Repeat Homelessness (BVPI 214 as was)
26	Liaise with prisons to provide preventative housing advice and consider measures for the early assessment of prisoners for vulnerability and housing entitlement	Housing Assessment Manager	Probation/ Prison Services/ HAWK/ YOT	Ongoing	Revenue budget Staff time	Re-offending/Licence targets/KPI 2/ Repeat Homelessness (BVPI 214 as was)
27	Make literature available at courts for access to housing advice and prospects of accommodation	Housing Assessment Manager	Probation/ Prison Services/ HAWK/ YOT	Ongoing	Revenue budget Staff time	Re-offending/Licence targets/KPI 2/ Repeat Homelessness (BVPI 214 as was)
28	Work actively with YOT, Probations & PPO Panel to coordinate prison discharges and	Housing Assessment	Probation/ Prison	Ongoing	Revenue budget	Re-offending/Licence targets/KPI 2/ Repeat

		Lead/s	Partners	When	Resources	Performance indicators & targets
	housing advice and develop referral/assessment protocol	Manager	Services/ HAWK/ YOT		Staff time	Homelessness (BVPI 214 as was)
29	To monitor the introduction of the HAWK worker that SP funds. Particularly against targets for enabling Offenders to move into the private sector.	Supporting People Manager	Housing. Probation	June 2008 and ongoing	SP Grant and Monitoring	Re-offending targets Licence targets KPI 2
	Refugee and Asylum Communities					
30	Ensure an ongoing analysis of need and that all SP services are accessible to the refugee and asylum communities: - Conduct a review of the Somali needs pilot. This project will be evaluated and may evolve to examine other refugee groups needs.	Supporting People Manager	BME reference group	April 2009 and ongoing	SP Grant and Monitoring	NI 141 and BME analysis
	Gypsy and Traveller Communities					
31	To continue to work with Housing colleagues to review housing related support for Gypsy and Travellers.	Supporting People Manager	Providers	Ongoing	SP and Housing monitoring	Report and recommendations made

Objective four: To further develop the homelessness strategy and service
Priority - Work with partners to tackle homelessness

		Lead/ s	Partners	When	Resources	Performance indicators & targets
1.	**Forums** Work with existing forums to tackle	Housing	Statutory &	2008 - 13	Staff time	Information sharing leading

	homelessness, share good practice and pursue joint initiatives e.g. - Single Homeless Forum - Private Landlords Forums - Harrow Single Homeless Forum - DV Forum - Supporting People consultative arrangements - West London homelessness strategy & implementation groups	needs Manager	voluntary sector RSLs West London partners		Revenue budget	to service improvements Joint initiatives on common issues
2	**Practitioner network** Create and maintain a Harrow Homelessness Network of practitioners & partners: - to exchange information/ good practice and report on performance/ newly emerging issues - to arrange joint training sessions for partners and stakeholders	Housing Strategy & Performance Manager	Statutory & voluntary sector RSLs West London partners	2008 - 13	Staff time Revenue budget	Information sharing leading to service improvements Joint training sessions held

3.	**Protocols**
	
	Maintain and develop information sharing protocols to enable exchange of information with all relevant agencies including RSLs, Adults & Childrens Services, DV Forum members (PCT, Refuge, Support Groups, Police) to improve service delivery to specific groups including:
	  − Institutionalised/vulnerable adults (e.g. discharged prisoners, mental health patients et al)
	  − Young persons (16/17 year olds)
		Housing Needs Manager	RSLs
			
			Adult Services
			Children's Services
			
			Health
			
			Police
			
			Crime
				2008-10	Staff time	Action plans developed
						
						Protocols in place and working effectively

	− Teenage parents − Survivors of domestic violence − Chemical dependency − Rough sleepers and other "non priority" homeless Develop a protocol for tackling harassment and illegal eviction with clear allocated responsibilities for all agencies involved in the process (c/f from 2003-08)		Reduction Unit DV Forum Housing sub-group Enviromental Health			
4.	**NOTIFY information** Ensure that NOTIFY is updated and maintained and enables partner organisations (Social Services, PCT, Education) to be fully aware of activity and/or movement of homeless families in emergency //temporary accommodation	Housing Assessment manager	Partner agencies	2008-13	Staff time	NOTIFY information being updated and used by all partner agencies
5.	**Move On** Embed the Move On provider panel process to ensure effective assessment and prioritisation of social housing move on from supported accommodation alongside consideration of Move On options into the private sector through LetStart.	SP Team. SP Providers.	Housing Needs teams Partners	Ongoing	Staff time	Increased NI141 and uptake of private sector move on options
6.	**RSL homelessness strategies** Ensure that the Homelessness Strategy is interlinked with RSL Homelessness Action Plans	Housing Needs Manager	RSLs Homelessness Strategy Project Board	2008-13	Staff time Revenue budgets	Strategies and action plans aligned Monitoring information shared Action plans reviewed where necessary

7.	**Local & sub regional strategies / action plans** Ensure that the Homelessness Strategy is fully reflected in Harrow Council & partnership and West London strategies and action plans	Housing Needs Manager	Council departments Harrow Strategic Partnership West London partners	2008-13	Staff time Revenue budgets	Representation of Homelessness Strategy in consultation on key strategies
Priority – Continuously review and improve service delivery						
8.	**Customer surveys** Carry out regular customer surveys and address the issues arising e.g. West London mystery shopping	Housing assessment manager, Housing Provision Manager RSLs for their own stock	Customers Voluntary sector Statutory agencies West London partners	2008-13	Staff time Revenue budgets	Survey information used to improve customer satisfaction and service efficiency/ effectiveness
9.	**Customer service** Improve customer service by: - Implement HARP information technology project to improve service efficiency - Review customer service standards	Service Development Manager Housing	Capita	2008-9	Corporate & Housing revenue budgets	Cost savings & efficiencies – improved service, shared of information, streamlined processes

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		Needs manager Housing Needs manager	Access Harrow	2008 - 10	Staff time Corporate & Housing revenue budgets Staff time	Staff training on new standards Monitoring Improved customer satisfaction
- Improve customer reception area - Create champions for specific groups, e.g. teenage parents						
10.	**Value for money** Investigate measures of value for money (e.g. West London exercise, Audit Commission near neighbour analysis) and improve where necessary	Housing Needs Manager Housing Strategy & Performance Manager	Finance Team	2008-09	Staff time	Improved Audit Commission VFM scores
11.	**Performance management** Embed monthly performance management throughout the Housing Needs Service – from strategic plans, through service plans to individual staff performance and development plans	Housing Needs Manager	Staff	2008-10	Staff time	Golden thread from Strategy to individual IPADs Staff understand and can see how their work contributes to the delivery of the strategy
12.	**Staff involvement** Continue staff involvement in implementation and review of homelessness strategy via strategy review and regular briefings/ workshops	Housing Needs Manager	Staff	2008-10	Staff time	Staff understand and can see how their work contributes to the delivery of the strategy Improved performance demonstrated by KPIs

13.	**Good practice** Use practitioner network, joint training events & forums to promote and share good practice within the Housing Service, with Council colleagues and external partners	Housing Needs Manager	Housing & corporate colleagues Voluntary, statutory & West London partners	2008-10	Staff time Revenue budgets	Regular sharing of good practice and demonstrable service improvements
14.	**Data quality** Agree definition of disability and provide training to staff on importance of completing Anite field. Amend housing enquiry form and homelessness application forms to include question about disability and conduct TA census Include disability monitoring reports in quarterly homelessness monitoring reports	Housing Needs Manager Housing Strategy & Performance Manager	Housing & corporate colleagues	End Sept 2008	Staff time Revenue budgets (existing)	Evidence available to highlight any differential impact on disabled homeless people of homelessness process
Priority – To further develop the homelessness strategy						
15.	**Publicise the strategy** Launch the strategy and publicise its aims widely to customers, partners, staff and wider stakeholders	Housing Needs Manager	Staff Partners Customers Members	2008-9	Staff time Revenue budgets	Launch 2008 held Positive feedback Regular communications on progress
16.	**Annual strategy review** Review the strategy annually with stakeholders	Housing Needs Manager	Staff Project	2008-10	Staff time	Annual reviews completed and new plans agreed

			Board			
	and link to corporate strategy review groups - Staff sounding board & workshops - Service user focus groups - Homelessness Strategy Project Board - Housing Strategy Review Group - Adults & Housing Transformation Plan		Customer representataives			
17.	**Research** Carry out research into: - identified data gaps ie Faith groups, Ex-service personnel, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and transgender groups - Ongoing research into levels of need and demand (local & regional/ sub regional) - Appraisal of the private rented sector and its capacity to meet future housing needs	Housing Strategy & Performance Manager	Partners Customers	Ongoing	Revenue budgets	Data to address gaps Up to date research on emerging / changing housing needs issues Appraisal of private sector rented capacity completed