

North Somerset Council Preventing Homelessness Strategy (PHS) Action Plan – First year Progress report

A number of actions in our Housing Strategy support preventing and tackling homelessness. However rather than repeating these here if you are reading this PHS on-line you can link to the Housing Strategy Action Plan and other Housing Strategy documents here <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-council/policies/people-communities-housing/> This PHS Action Plan (PHSAP) is a 'live', ongoing plan which continues to be developed throughout the five years of the PHS.

We have put the actions in the PHS Action Plan under three themes, which mirrors the PHS as a whole. As well as commentary we have used a 'traffic light' system to simply summarise progress; Green for 'satisfactory progress/ action completed'; Amber for delayed or stalled progress; and Red for 'no/little progress'. Other options are not applicable and not started yet in this five-year Strategy.

• Supply
• Support
• Prevention

Glossary of terms and abbreviations is available at the end of this report.

Ref.	PHS Actions and performance measures	Target Date	Lead (and partners)	1 st year progress	Traffic light
SUPPLY					
Work with partners to improve existing and develop/innovate new accommodation solutions to meet the need of homeless people					
SY1	Reduce length of stay in temporary accommodation (TA) to no higher than an average of 16 weeks ¹	Mar 2018	Housing Solutions	End of 2017/18 avg. 13 weeks (down from 17 weeks at end of 2016/17); end of second quarter 2018 16 weeks	
SY2	Develop shared housing options for single people with private and social landlords	Dec 2019	Housing Solutions, partner RPs	Initial discussions with Alliance Homes have taken place who are investigating how this could be achieved	

¹ Responding to this, specifically addresses issues raised in consultation

Ref.	PHS Actions and performance measures	Target Date	Lead (and partners)	1 st year progress	Traffic light
SY3	Increase the supply of affordable PRS accommodation and encourage landlords to provide 12-month tenancies by developing an enhanced suite of incentives for landlords	June 2018	Housing Solutions	Enhanced incentives launched and joint working with NSC Communications Team to advertise and promote incentives to private landlords Landlord Breakfast meetings organised to further promote the NSC lettings service and incentives. Regular attendance by Senior Lettings Officer at Landlords Forum 2017/18 prevented homelessness with 74 PRS tenancies. In the first six months of 2018/19 have already secured 84 PRS tenancies Note: future reporting will include how many of the PRS tenancies were for 12 months	
Y4	To make our TA budget stretch further, investigate recovery processes of B&B charges for those people in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) who are placed in emergency accommodation	Mar 2018	Homeless Prevention Team (HPT), NSC Finance	Initial discussions taken place. Finance Team to investigate	
SY5	Plan to meet the housing needs and impacts on housing supply arising from the Hinkley Point C (HPC) development (mitigation funding provided through S106 agreement). Initial plan developed - to be reviewed and further developed over the lifetime of the project.	Ongoing	Housing Solutions	Progress with HPC is reported in our Housing Strategy Action Plan (HSAP), link on page 1 of this Plan. Good progress being made with implementation of a range of initiatives	Reported in more detail in HSAP 4.4
SY6	Investigate the possibility of developing a 'Property Guardianship' (temporary housing solution) schemes for rough sleepers/homeless people in NS	2019	Housing Solutions, St Mungo's (subject to service funding), PSHS	Guardianship scheme not progressing as not considered likely to deliver the benefits required.	N/A

Ref.	PHS Actions and performance measures	Target Date	Lead (and partners)	1 st year progress	Traffic light
SY7	Explore the feasibility of developing an ethical letting agency to increase the amount of PRS housing available to the council to fulfil its prevention role	Sept 2017	Housing Solutions	Feasibility study completed. Extended offer put in place for private rented sector landlords. Full agency not being progressed currently due to positive impact on supply of extended offer and resource constraints	N/A
SUPPORT					
Provide a range of support services that sustain independent living and reduce or avoid the risk of households becoming homeless					
ST1	As supported housing is commissioned/re-commissioned, seek to ensure it better meets the needs of homeless people e.g. higher support where required, especially for vulnerable young people (care leavers and 16/17 year olds), disabled people, people with complex needs/ mental health needs	2018	Housing Solutions, Contracts and Commissioning Team	Around 200 bedspaces ² of short-term (up to 2 years) accommodation is to be recommissioned by 1 July 2019. Homeless and referral stats help to identify services most in demand. ST6 and the HSAP 6.1 give more detail of some of the new and reconfigured supported housing.	
ST2	Develop partnership working with Family Support to support young people.	Ongoing	Housing Solutions	Ongoing – Homeless Prevention Officer co-located within childrens social care team. 16/17 year old homeless protocol updated to take account of new Department of Education Guidance <i>'Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation'</i>	

² Around 8 providers in around 30 locations

Ref.	PHS Actions and performance measures	Target Date	Lead (and partners)	1 st year progress	Traffic light
ST3	Set up multi-agency panel to manage and co-ordinate the response to homeless people with complex and multiple needs ³	Mar 2018	Housing Solutions, CCG, CSDAT	Street Communities meeting established to manage and co-ordinate responses and membership extended to include mental health services. Further work being done to look at case conferences for priority cases	
ST4	Continue to work in partnership to mitigate adverse effects of welfare reform relating to housing (e.g. benefit cap, UC); improve links with relevant agencies	Ongoing	HPT, DWP, employment advice, 'Skills for Life' tenancy training, Liberata (DHP)	Single and Street Homelessness Partnership established and includes the DWP Partnership Manager. Responsible Tenant Course developed in partnership with Weston College and weekly surgeries held in Town Hall. HPT now has a DHP budget enabling more effective and streamlined homelessness prevention. Initial links established with Weston Works to provide employment advice to homeless clients	
ST5	Explore potential of assessment centre for 'new to the streets', rough sleepers for short-term placements which encourages engagement ⁴ . Continue to work with service providers to develop existing services that meet this need	Mar 2019	Strategic partnership, rough sleeper outreach	A Night Assessment Centre Steering group and working group have been established. A proposal has been developed and temporary planning permission has been agreed for the centre to operate between October 2018 and March 2019 and centre recently opened.	
ST6	Deliver housing actions arising from the Housing With Support Strategy (HWSS), which included analysis of the housing and support requirements of people with mental health needs ⁵	As per HWSS	Contracts and Commissioning Team	On track. Key achievements include: On target for 20 new units of housing in South of NS for people with learning disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New high level mental health provision delivered in north of NS 	Reported in HSAP 6.1

³ E.g. combinations of issues such as mental health needs, misuse of alcohol, misuse of drugs i.e. dual diagnosis etc.

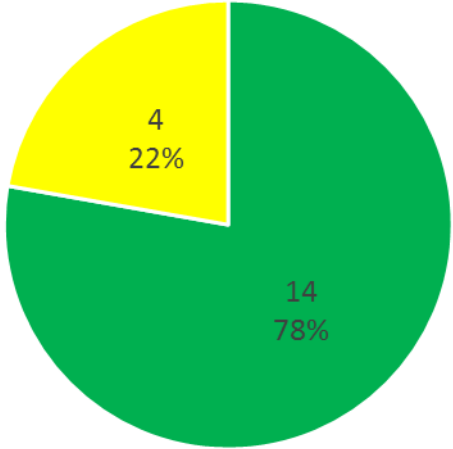
⁴ There may be insufficient number of potential service users who could benefit currently from the development of new provision

⁵ Some changes to mental health provision have already been enacted as a result of this report

Ref.	PHS Actions and performance measures	Target Date	Lead (and partners)	1 st year progress	Traffic light
PREVENTION					
Act to prevent homelessness and help sustain independent living by enabling household to remain in their current home or achieve a planned move to new housing					
P1	Continue to improve the arrangements for the discharge of homeless people from hospital.	Mar 2018 then review	HPT, AWP, NHS, CCG	We continue to work closely with the Home From Hospital Team, ensuring clients can leave hospital into suitable accommodation as quickly as possible. Hospitals are now also one of the specified public bodies included in the new 'Duty to Refer' regulations of the Homelessness Reduction Act '17.	
P2	Establish a new strategic partnership to monitor and develop services for rough sleepers, single homeless people, those begging and street drinking	Dec 2017	NSC Housing, CSDAT, St Mungo's	Single and Street Homelessness Partnership established bringing statutory and voluntary agencies together. Action plan drawn up using actions from the PHS and the feedback from the Homelessness Summit held Oct '17.	
P3	Establish new systems to meet our obligations from the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 and monitor impact including on resource requirements	Act expected to come into force Apr 2018	Housing Solutions	Staffing review undertaken, in light of HRA, new team processes and ICT system procured and performance reporting updated to reflect new duties. Good progress made on implementation of new duties	
P4	Widely promote Streetlink.org.uk as the preferred referral route for rough sleepers (RS) and ensure a focus beyond Weston c/f ST5	Ongoing	New strategic partnership (at P2), all housing partners	Streetlink is being promoted locally by voluntary agencies and by the Police/Street Wardens to local businesses. The link is included on promotional material and will shortly be sent to local parish councils. Article to be included in forthcoming edition of North Somerset Life and Public bodies made aware of Duty to Refer and on-line tool developed and implemented.	
P5	Explore the role of Childrens Centres to help to prevent family breakdown and homelessness	Ongoing	NSC CSS	HPT work closely with childrens social care in general and attend case conferences and strategy meetings as appropriate. Further measures to be developed to improve links	

Ref.	PHS Actions and performance measures	Target Date	Lead (and partners)	1 st year progress	Traffic light
				between the homelessness service and Childrens Centres.	
P6	Work in partnership with Childrens Support and Safeguarding to maximise the benefits from new 'edge of care' service (utilising social impact bond funding) to reduce and prevent homelessness	Ongoing	HPT	Homeless Prevention Officers (for care leavers and 16/17 year olds) are co-located within childrens social care teams and can refer Young People to the Edge of Care service and take referrals from the team. HPT will be part of the new 1Front Door initiative which is a multi-agency approach to helping families affected by domestic abuse	
P7	Deliver actions arising from the care leavers' housing action plan	Ongoing	CSS, HPT	Action plan largely complete	
P8	Continue to work towards the Government's 'Gold Standard' for homelessness prevention	Bronze by Dec 2017	HPT	No longer being progressed as the Gold Standard programme is no longer being promoted due to the new duties under HRA. Target to be reviewed in future the light of any new programme launched by Government.	N/A
P9 NEW	Review and re-badge our PHS in the light of the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy Aug 2018; more emphasis on rough sleeping and include in title	By Oct 2019	HPT	N/A	N/A

Chart showing overall progress



Other Performance Indicators (PIs) relevant to Homelessness

N.B. Some performance indicators have changed to take account of new duties under HRA.

Ref.	Performance Indicators (PIs)	PI time -scale	Lead (and partners)	Latest	Traffic light
H16	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Monthly	HPT	30 Sep 2018 - 72; Target - 60	
H17	Percentage of young people who present as homeless and are prevented from needing to enter long-term LA care	Monthly	HPT	2017/18 74 young people helped, 100% prevented from needing LA care 1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 – 100%	
H19 1)	Number of households with a positive Prevention outcome as a % of all cases where a Prevention duty was accepted	Monthly	HPT	1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 - 155 households, 67.1% positive prevention;	NEW HRA TARGET
H19 2)	Number of households with a positive Relief outcome as a % of all cases where a Relief duty was accepted	Monthly	HPT	1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 - 63 households, 50% positive prevention;	NEW HRA TARGET
H19a	Number of households housed in the private rented sector by the Lettings Team	Monthly	HPT	1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 - 84 households housed	NEW TARGET
H43	The total number of:				
	Prevention decisions	Monthly	HPT	1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 – 231 decisions	NEW HRA MEASURE
	Relief decisions	Monthly	HPT	1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 – 12 decisions	
	Main duty decisions	Monthly	HPT	1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 – 25 decisions	
	General advice	Monthly	HPT	1 Apr to 30 Sep 2018 – 320 cases	

Contact

If you have any questions arising from this Plan or need further information contact Housing Solutions, housing.solutions@n-somerset.gov.uk or 'phone 01934 427487

Glossary

Housing Solutions – the service which contains the Homeless Prevention Team (HPT), Housing Assessment Team (HAS) and the Housing Development and Strategy Team

RPs – Registered Providers (usually housing associations)	DWP – Department for Work and Pensions
NSC – North Somerset Council	DHP – Discretionary Housing Payment
PSHS – Private Sector Housing Service	CCS – Childrens Support and Safeguarding
CCG – Clinical Commissioning Group (part of the NHS)	AWP – Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership
CSDAT – Community Safety and Drug Action Team	HRA – Homelessness Reduction Act