

The Homelessness Review 2013

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1 Abstract/Statement

Homelessness for some people is primarily a housing problem but for many the reasons are complex and their problems cannot be resolved by bricks and mortar alone.

Homelessness has been on the political agenda, with a series of legislative and policy initiatives including:-

- No Second Night Out, July 2011
- Making Every Contact Count: A joint Approach to preventing Homelessness, August 2012
- Localism Act 2011, S153, 7th June 2012
- 'Local decisions - A fairer future for social housing' December 2010
- Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives (2005): Homelessness Prevention, reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010, from 2010 B&B no longer suitable for 16/17 year olds.
- Sustainable Communities: Homes For All (2005): Choice Based Lettings schemes in all local authorities in England by 2010.
- Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM), September 2009
- No One Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping (Nov 2008)

This report presents the findings of the Review of Peterborough's homelessness services. The report provides the foundations for building a comprehensive profile of homelessness in Peterborough in the future. The Review findings will be used to inform the development of Peterborough's five-year Homelessness Strategy.

2 Summary

The homelessness provisions of the Homelessness Act 2002 came into force on 31 July 2002. It placed new duties upon Local Authorities to adopt a strategic approach to tackling and preventing homelessness.

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all housing authorities to:

- Carry out a review of homelessness in their areas
- Formulate and publish a Homelessness Strategy based on this review within 12 months of the Act coming into force
- Keep the Strategy under review
- Consult other local or public authorities, or voluntary sector organisations before adopting or modifying the Strategy.

3 Objective

The aims of this Homelessness Review are:

- To develop a clearer profile of levels of homelessness and homelessness services in Peterborough;
- To identify the root causes of homelessness locally;
- To identify gaps in and duplication of services;
- To identify weaknesses in homelessness policy and procedure; and
- To inform the development of the Homelessness Strategy 2013 to 2018

4 Our Approach to the Homelessness Review and our Guiding Principles

The Homelessness Review sets out clear findings of our review of Homeless Services in Peterborough. The next stage is the development of a five-year Homelessness Strategy. The Homelessness Strategy will be informed by the Review outcome.

5 Methodology

We carried out a variety of desktop research on statistics held relating to homelessness, housing advice records and housing need in Peterborough. Data was also collated from children's services, national and regional research findings and local voluntary and supporting agencies and on demographics, housing and local incomes.

In order to develop a local profile of homelessness we held 4 focus groups in November dealing with all aspects of homelessness throughout the city. We approached voluntary and statutory organisations linked to homelessness to participate in the groups.

A steering group of representatives from Peterborough City Council and other relevant statutory and voluntary organisations was established.

The members of the steering group are:

Denise Lewis	Manager	Peterborough Streets
Chris Mackett	Manager	St Giles Trust
Karen Chambers	Assistant Director of Operations	Axiom Housing Association
Anne Keogh	Housing Strategy Manager	Peterborough City Council
Pete Middlemiss	Manager	The New Haven Night Shelter
Kim Lawrence	Housing Support Manager	Cross Keys Homes
Emma Foley	ACE project	Cambridgeshire Independent Advocacy
Ali Manji	Area Manager North	Cross Keys Homes
Sam Tucker	Police Constable, City Centre	Cambs Constabulary
Allison Sunley	Head of Commissioning & Targeted Services	Children's Services
Sister Mary Clare Mason		Faith & Cohesion Network
Alison Snelling	Service Manager	Aspire
Andy Barringer	Community Recovery Manager	Safer Peterborough Partnership
Sarah Hebblethwaite	Deputy Housing Needs Manager	Peterborough City Council

6 Profile of the Region

Peterborough has seen consistent population growth since 1971 and is the second fastest growing city in the country after Milton Keynes. The Census 2011 shows a further population growth from 156,059 to 183,961. Overall there has been a population growth of around 18% in Peterborough, whilst England and the East of England have seen a total growth of 8% and 9% respectively. According to the 2010 Sub national Population Projections the city's population is due to increase to around 230,000 by 2035 which is an increase of 25%.

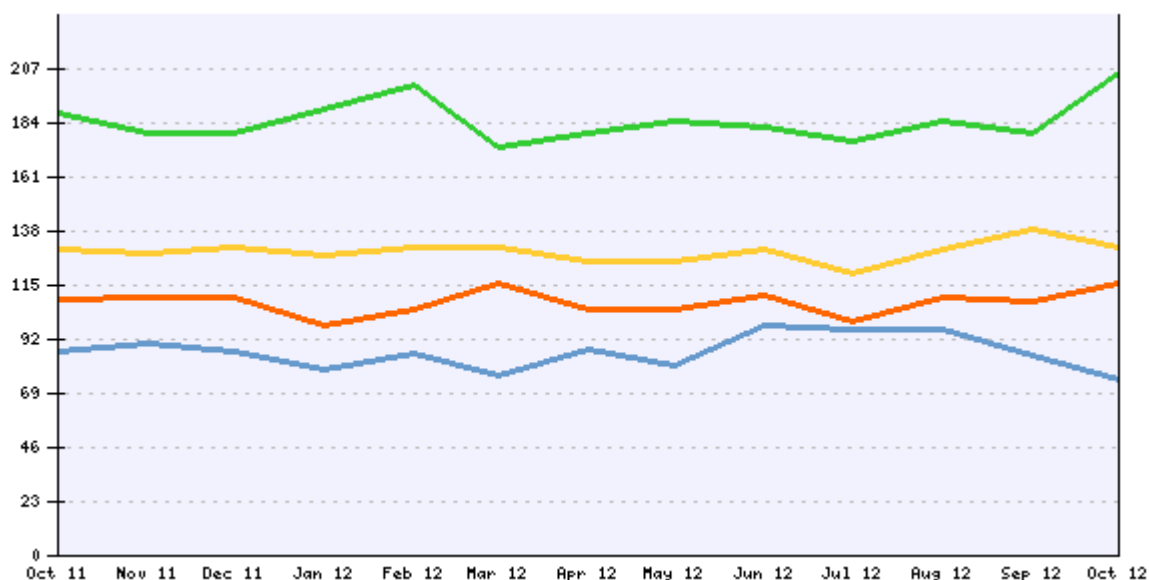
Peterborough is a multi-cultural city. The 2011 Census identified approximately 71% of Peterborough's population classifies themselves as White British. The largest increases in ethnic minority groups were identified in White and Other White ethnic (10.6%) and Asian or Asian British, Pakistani (6.6%). Central and Paston wards have seen the largest increases to the proportions of Asian or Asian British Pakistani while Orton with Hampton shows the biggest increase in all of the ethnic groups.

In the period following the expansion of the European Union in May 2004 large numbers of Eastern European Nationals moved to Peterborough. These persons can be shown in the increase in White: Other White to 19,495.

7 The Housing Market Context

Property prices in Peterborough have steadily risen over recent years and affordability is becoming an increasingly difficult problem in the city for a growing number of people. Whilst the recession has resulted in the recent downturn in the housing market and a small decrease in the selling prices of some properties in Peterborough. This recent fall in house prices is consistent with the national picture.

Graph 1: Median Property Selling Prices in Peterborough (£000's)



Source: www.home.co.uk

Table 1: Median Property Selling Prices in Peterborough in between October 2011 and October 2012 by Percentage change

Property Type	Oct 2011	Oct 2012	Change
 Detached	£187,500	£205,000	+9%
 Semi	£130,000	£131,000	+1%
 Terraced	£108,500	£116,250	+7%
 Flat	£87,000	£75,250	-14%

The cost of home ownership has substantially increased over recent years, resulting in home ownership becoming unaffordable for many households who require housing. A Peterborough resident's average weekly income is lower than the national average (£508) and regional average of (£529) at £436. The median selling price for a detached property in Peterborough is £205,000 over 9 times the average income, whilst semi-detached properties are over 5.5, terraced 5.12 and flats

Lloyds Lend a Hand Scheme

Peterborough is part of the Lloyds Lend a Hand Scheme. The council committed to participating in the scheme in July 2011 and has initially set aside £1m to support the scheme. The scheme became available to Peterborough residents from 15 December 2011 and the latest statistics released at the end of Sept for the mortgage scheme since its launch in Dec 2011 are:

- 23 properties have had their purchases completed
- Another 5 mortgages have been approved, and are progressing to the completion of purchase

Once these 5 mortgages have completed approximately, £550k of the initial £1m indemnity will be allocated so there is further scope for the scheme to support more first-time buyers.

Housing need and affordability

Housing affordability is a key issue within the Peterborough housing market. In 2010 the city council and its partner neighbouring local authorities commissioned a study into local levels of housing need.

This study identified the following;

- 27 per cent of households in Peterborough cannot afford to rent or buy market housing without some form of subsidy. This is compared with 22.6 per cent of households across the sub-region.
- 81 per cent of lone parents in Peterborough are unable to afford market prices or rents without subsidy.
- 38 per cent of single persons are unable to afford market prices or rents without subsidy.
- 37 per cent of single pensioners are unable to afford market prices or rents without subsidy.
- At the current rate of household formation and housing supply, an average of 1,008 households will fall into housing need in Peterborough on an ongoing annual basis
- In rural areas, housing need as a proportion of supply is ten times higher than it is in the urban area of the city

Empty Homes

Peterborough City Council employs an Empty Homes Officer to work with partners to bring empty properties in the city back into use. Since 1st July 2011, the local authority have played at least some part in bringing back a total of 233 properties. This includes properties that have been taken off the list by simply sending a letter to enquire about the property's occupancy, to helping the owner sell or new owners refurbish.

In the last 18 months, Peterborough has seen a significant drop in the number of long-term empty properties left standing by their owner's. With the exception of around 15 properties, all of those left empty long-term are privately owned, meaning action taken to get these properties back into use is much harder to pursue.

The reduction in the number of long-term empty properties can be attributed to a number of factors. The increased resource of having a full-time Empty Homes Officer within the council, dedicated to tackling this issue, has meant that the pursuit and action against owners has been persistent, but also the support offered can be consistent throughout.

Private Sector Accommodation

The Private Sector housing stock in the city is varied and represents a tremendous asset to the local community but this asset needs substantial targeted investment to ensure that the condition of the stock is raised and maintained to acceptable levels. The 2011 Census showed households renting from a private landlord or letting agency per ward to be an average of 20.5% and was most prevalent in the Central Ward with 38.1% and Northborough was the lowest at 7%.

The demand for affordable rented property in the District is high. In particular the demand for 1 and 2 bedroom properties is very high. Across the Peterborough area the supply of properties is marginally lower than demand. Especially highlighted were 1 and 2 bed properties being in short supply. There are still barriers with regard to landlords accommodating persons in receipt of Local Housing Allowance, mainly due to the delays in the processing of claims and payments.

Private sector accommodation is anecdotally becoming more expensive due to the higher demand within this sector. Many households who may previously have purchased a property are now renting. These households find themselves with less disposable income to build towards a deposit and therefore are unlikely to be able to purchase a property in the future.

In recent years the Housing Needs Department has had considerable success in encouraging households to access private rented sector accommodation, instead of making a homeless application, temporary accommodation and social housing.

There has been a steady increase in the number of households accessing private sector accommodation through Peterborough City Council's Rent Deposit Scheme and Peterborough Streets Crisis PRS Scheme.

Rent Deposit Scheme

The Housing Needs Service based at Bayard Place, Broadway, Peterborough offers a Rent Deposit Scheme which enables persons to access an interest free loan to be used for the up front costs associated with securing a property in the private rented sector. This has created a real opportunity for the prevention and relief of homelessness and also increased access to permanent accommodation. In 2011/2012 a total of 191 households were assisted into private rented sector accommodation with assistance with rent deposit so far this year, since April 2012, we have been able to assist 276 households.

Peterborough Streets Crisis PRS Scheme

Peterborough Streets were successful in receiving funding from the Crisis PRS Access Development Programme. This programme funds new community based services that help single people find and sustain good quality accommodation in the private rented sector (PRS). It provides sustainable solutions to single homelessness and enables single persons to resettle in the Private Rented Sector Scheme and enables Peterborough Streets to prevent homelessness. During 2012/13 a total of 21 persons were assisted into accommodation.

Tenancy Relations Service

Peterborough City Council has a Tenancy Relations Service based within the Housing Needs team. This service offers support to both tenants and private sector landlords. It aims to promote good relations between tenants and landlords and encourage good practice in the private rented sector. The service provides advice on disrepair, possession, deposit protection, security of tenure, rent and rent arrears and unlawful eviction. The service has been successful in establishing a framework for illegal evictions and utilised its power to prosecute under The Protection of Eviction Act 1977 by successfully prosecuting 3 landlords through the court system alongside supporting 194 households since January 2012.

Mortgage Rescue Scheme

Peterborough City Council has been actively promoting the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme. This Scheme enables a homeowner who is at risk of losing their home through non payment of their mortgage to be assisted by working with a local housing association to purchase their property who then rents it back to them. This Scheme enables both homeless prevention and increases the number of properties owned by our partner housing associations. Peterborough City Council has been successful in assisting 27 households who would have become homeless without this intervention.

Social Housing

Peterborough City Council transferred its housing stock on 4th October 2004 with the aim to ensuring that its housing stock is used effectively to meet the housing needs of those in the area or, wishing to live in the Peterborough area. Cross Keys Homes promised to invest £108 million in improving tenants' homes over the first five years fitting new kitchens and bathrooms, front and back doors, double glazing and central heating systems. In addition they promised to spend nearly £5 million on estate and environmental improvements.

Peterborough City Council (PCC) is required by law to have a housing allocations scheme that demonstrates how the council priorities applications for housing and the procedures they follow in allocating those homes. PCC operate the city's social housing register on behalf of their Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) including Cross Keys Homes, Axiom Housing Association, Circle Anglia, Hyde Minster, ECHG, L&H Group, Muir Housing, Accent Nene, BPHA and Home Group. Peterborough City Council operates a choice based lettings approach to the allocation of accommodation. All of the properties, which become available through the housing associations in the Peterborough homes partnership are advertised through the choice based lettings scheme. Each week RSL's advise Peterborough City Council of the properties that are available to let and they are then advertised. The advert is usually released on Tuesdays and the edition closes on the following Sunday at midnight. Applicants with a live application on the Peterborough Housing register can express interest (place a bid) in the properties, which they would like to be considered for. You may bid for up to 3 properties per week.

Following The Localism Act 2011 and the subsequent amendment to the Housing Act 1996, that gave Local Authorities the power to set their own qualifying criteria for people who are able to join the housing register. This enables councils to restrict their housing register to consider entry from only those in the most urgent housing need as well as exercising their right to set exclusions for other reasons based on locally set criteria.

In addition to recent government guidance highlighted that councils have the power to frame their allocations policies to give additional preference to particular groups of people. The guidance recommends that councils consider how they can use their allocations policy to support households who want to work, as well as those who, whole unable to engage in paid employment, are contributing to their community in other ways, for example through voluntary work.

The introduction of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 has made changes to housing benefit entitlements, which will have a direct impact on social housing tenants from 1st April 2013. The amendments will result in tenants of working age receiving housing benefit according to the number of bedrooms the household needs.

The Council is currently consulting on a new Allocations Policy to reflect these Welfare Reforms and embrace Localism. The proposed amendments include;

- Setting the entry criteria to the housing register to those in the most urgent housing need, this includes; Homeless households, those who are threatened with homelessness, those living in insanitary or unsatisfactory housing conditions, those who need to move for social/welfare reasons or where failure to assist in moving will cause particular hardship.
- Only accept applications from those who have a local connection with Peterborough by; having lived in the area for 6 of the last 12 months or 3 of the last 5 years, those who are working in the city, those who need to move to the area for special reasons
- Excluding applicants who own suitable accommodation or those who have sufficient financial resources to secure suitable accommodation by other means from joining the housing register. (This will not apply to those over 55 and eligible for sheltered accommodation)
- Those who have behaved in an unacceptable manner will continue to be excluded from applying. This will be determined by; The Council or RSL is satisfied that the applicant or a member of their household has previously been guilty of unacceptable behaviour which would make them unsuitable to be a tenant, or the applicant or member of the household has been served with an injunction by the council or their landlord to stop them behaving in a way which causes nuisance or annoyance to others, or the applicant or a member of the household has current tenancy arrears in excess of 8 weeks rent, or the applicant or a member of the household has any outstanding former tenant arrears.

Additionally, the bedrooms standards policy that has previously been generous will be brought in line with the criteria that will be applied to housing benefit claims from April 2013. It is hoped that this will reduce the risk of placing families into poverty, as a reduction of their housing benefit would result in them having to find the rent shortfall from their other income.

This places an additional burden on our RSL partners as they are likely to see an increase in families in rent arrears if they are unable to meet the shortfall in housing benefit. This could ultimately lead to households becoming homeless.

There are also proposed additional preference categories for applications from; persons who are working or are in training for work, are making a community contribution, have strong local connections with Peterborough, and are members of the armed forces.

Housing Supply

The supply of affordable housing provides some context for the ability of the Local Authority to discharge its duty.

Table 2: Total RSL stock in Peterborough 21.11.12

Housing Association	Total as at Feb 2011	New builds since 1 March 2011	Acquisitions 2011-12	Losses 2011-12	Total stock as at 21 Nov 2012
Accent Nene	1664	25	0	3	1686
Axiom	1313	61	0	10	1364
BPHA	476	55	1	3	529
Cross Keys Homes	9484	145	9	31	9607
Home	435	0	0	0	435
Minster	973	3	0	1	975
Total	14345	289	10	48	14596

The social housing stock in the city has continued to increase. The current funding for Housing Associations will result in the building of a further 132 units over the next three years.

Additionally, the local Housing Associations provide low cost homeownership schemes such as shared ownership and Homebuy. The Homebuy scheme is run through the Orbit Group and the shared ownership schemes are being developed by a number of Housing Associations in Peterborough.

Affordable Rent Model

The affordable rent model introduced for the delivery of affordable housing by Registered Social Landlords and councils that have retained their housing stock could result in marked increases in rent up to 80% of market rents. This may result in households wishing to move into these properties needing to be means tested at the point of allocation.

The Peterborough Strategic Tenancy Policy seeks to ensure that rents remain affordable, that homelessness levels do not increase, that tenancy flexibilities are applied in a sensitive manner, and that tenant mobility is protected. The policy has been developed within the context of the council's overarching strategic objectives for housing, as set out in the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2011 to 2015.

Demand - There is a high demand for social housing in the city.

Graph 2: Total number of applicants on the Housing Register from April 2011 to March 2012

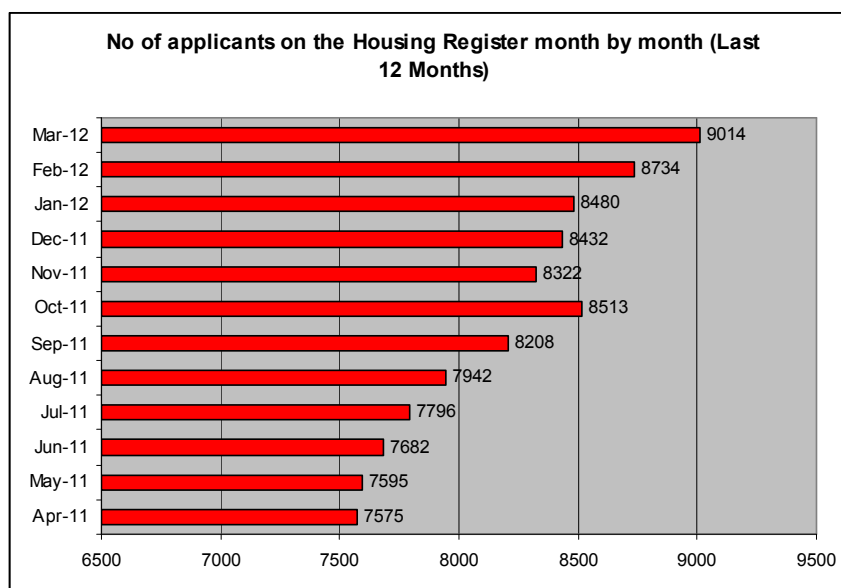
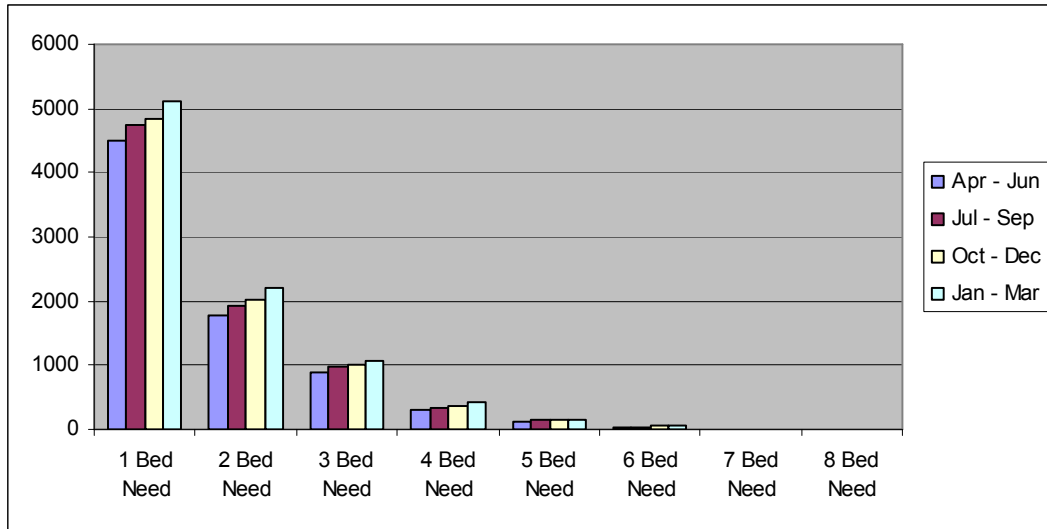


Table 3: Ethnicity of homeless applicants on the Housing Register between October 2012 and December 2012

Ethnicity	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Jan – Mar 12		Apr – Jun 12		Jul – Sep 12		Oct – Dec 12	
African	206	2.26%	206	2.19%	217	2.25%	218	2.25%
Bangladeshi	12	0.13%	13	0.14%	13	0.13%	13	0.13%
British	5862	65.03%	6229	66.00%	6380	66.25%	6409	66.07%
Caribbean	41	0.45%	44	0.46%	40	0.42%	38	0.39%
Chinese	9	0.09%	11	0.12%	12	0.12%	12	0.12%
Indian	42	0.46%	40	0.42%	39	0.40%	38	0.39%
Irish	60	0.65%	61	0.65%	60	0.63%	60	0.62%
Italian	33	0.36%	31	0.33%	34	0.35%	38	0.39%
Kashmiri	4	0.04%	4	0.04%	3	0.03%	3	0.03%
Not stated	5	0.05%	5	0.05%	5	0.05%	5	0.05%
Other	371	4.22%	384	4.07%	386	4.01%	370	3.81%
Other Asian	331	3.77%	325	3.22%	316	3.29%	329	3.39%
Other Black	74	0.81%	76	0.81%	77	0.80%	78	0.80%
Other White	1359	15.08%	1391	14.72%	1425	14.80%	1458	15.04%
Other Mixed	63	0.69%	62	0.66%	69	0.72%	71	0.73%
Pakistani	224	2.45%	224	2.37%	226	2.35%	232	2.39%
Portuguese	283	3.1%	295	3.13%	296	3.07%	295	3.04%
Traveller	4	0.04%	4	0.04%	4	0.04%	4	0.04%
White Asian	9	0.09%	12	0.13%	9	0.09%	10	0.10%
White/Black African	8	0.08%	8	0.08%	8	0.08%	9	0.09%
White/Black Caribbean	14	0.15%	14	0.15%	12	0.12%	13	0.13%
		100.00%		100.00%		100.00%		100.00%

The two largest groups are highlighted in Table 3. These are persons who describe themselves as British and Other White. The Other White will include persons with European origin including Lithuanians, Polish, Slovakian and Latvians and reflects the population of the city.

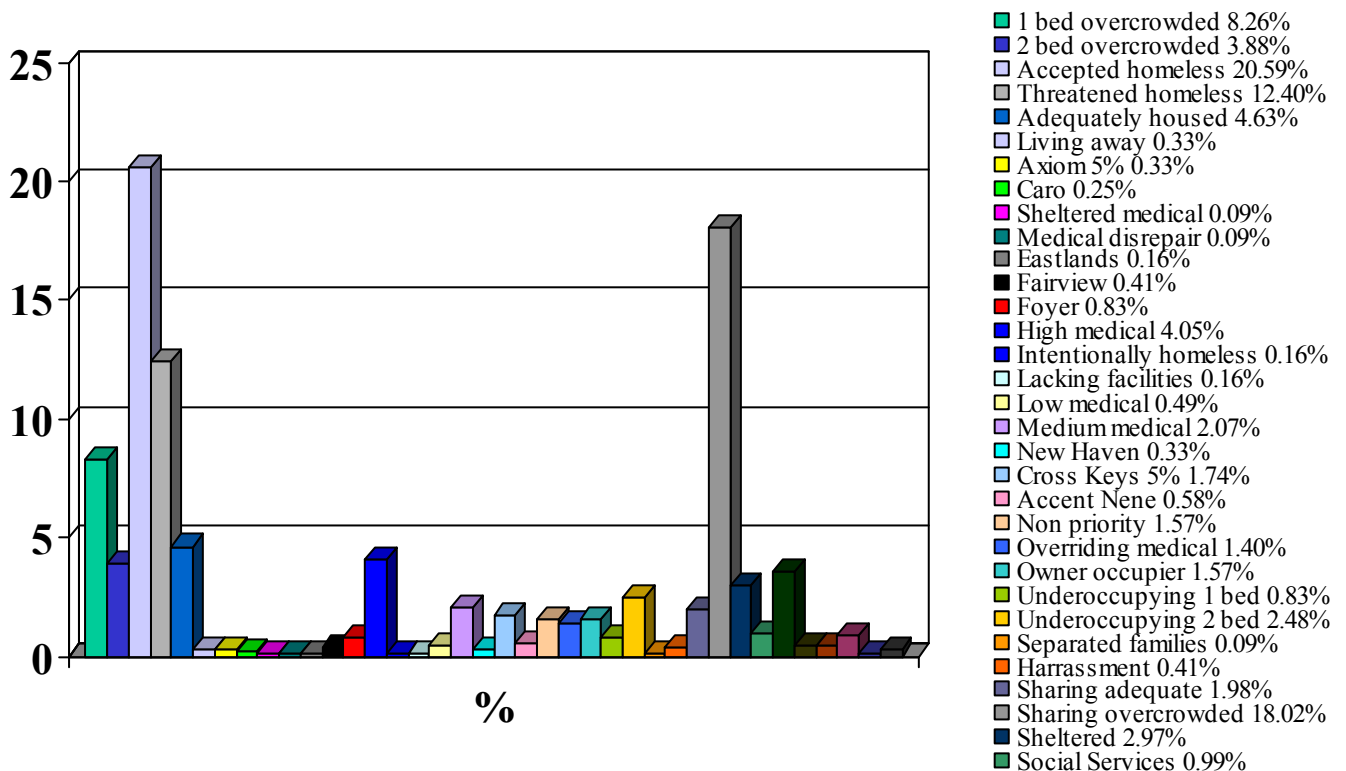
Graph 3: Bedroom requirement of applicants on the housing register by quarter between April 2011 to March 2012



The majority of applicants (5111) registered on the housing register require a 1 bedroom property, followed by 2189 applicants requiring a 2 bedroom property, 1083 applicants requiring a 3 bedrooms, 415 requiring 4 bedrooms, 154 for 5 bedrooms, 51 for 6 bedrooms, 9 for 7 bedrooms and 2 for 8 bedrooms.

Between April 2011 and March 2012 a total of 1258 properties were advertised. Graph 4 represents the breakdown of lettings by the applicant's priority on the housing register.

Graph 4: Breakdown of lettings by priority category between April 2011 and March 2012



A total of 249 properties were let to homeless households during this period and 150 properties were let to households accepted as threatened with homelessness, and 2 to households found to be intentionally homeless. This figure represents a considerable increase in the number of properties let to homeless households in the previous year by 99.

Other Options

For those households and individuals unable to afford to buy a home or rent privately and who do not have sufficient priority to be offered a council or housing association home, remaining options are may sometimes be precarious. These options include renting a single room in a home privately or from friends and family, living in a hostel, sofa surfing and rough sleeping.

Other information held by local authorities to build on the profile

In order to gain a clearer profile of homelessness throughout Peterborough we have used other statistical information from a variety of sources.

8 Reasons for Homelessness

Individuals with a combination of trigger and welfare factors but no protecting factors are particularly at risk of homelessness.

The majority of people live successfully in accommodation and manage housing transitions effectively; a minority do not and can end up homeless. Certain trigger factors can be used to help identify people most at risk of homelessness. Even when these trigger factors occur, the vast majority of people are able to resolve their housing problem without assistance. However there are a number of welfare factors that indicate a greater likelihood of homelessness. Experience has shown that people who avoid homelessness, even when their lives have both trigger and welfare factors present, have what are described here as protecting factors.

TRIGGER FACTORS	WELFARE NEED	PROTECTING FACTORS
At risk of eviction or abandonment	Mental ill health.	Strong networks of family and friends
Family Dispute / Breakdown	Substance misuse	Employed, in education
Leaving an institution	Anti-social behaviour Lack of coping or Practical skills	Co-operating with or actively seeking assistance.
	Learning disabilities. History of Rough Sleeping.	Statutory or voluntary help.

9 Profile of Homelessness

The purpose of this section is to review the levels and needs of homeless people within Peterborough. The review must take into account all forms of homelessness. The Homelessness Act (2002) definition of homelessness remains the same as stated in the Housing Act (1996) *‘Under s.175 a person is homeless he or she has no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere which is available for his or her occupation and which that person has a legal right to occupy. A person will also be homeless if where she or he has accommodation but cannot secure entry to it, or where he or she has accommodation that is a moveable structure (such as a caravan or house boat) and there is no place where it can be*

placed in order to provide accommodation. A person who has accommodation is to be treated as homeless where it would not be reasonable for him or her to continue to occupy it.’1

Peterborough City Council homelessness statistics are based on the monitoring forms that are completed for the DCLG. These are known as P1E’s and are based around decisions and priority need. These statistics are limited but do give an insight into issues that are affecting local people and resulting in homelessness.

Table 6 - Total number of households making homelessness applications to Peterborough City Council

Year	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Total Number of applications	1326	1019	1154

Peterborough City Council has seen a small increase in the number of homeless applications in 2011/12 this is in line with the national picture.

Table 7 - Total acceptance and number of households in temporary accommodation per 1000 during October to December 2011

Local Authority	Number of Acceptances	Per 1,000 Population	Number of household in temporary accommodation	Per 1,000 Population
Peterborough	70	0.97	74	1.0
Norwich	42	0.68	43	0.69
Ipswich	25	0.45	30	0.55
Cambridge	31	0.69	76	1.69

The percentage of applicants accepted by Peterborough is marginally higher than other regional Local Authorities. The number of households in temporary accommodation during this period was lower than Cambridge.

Table 8 - P1E returns to government. Numbers of people accepted as homeless in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-2012 by household type

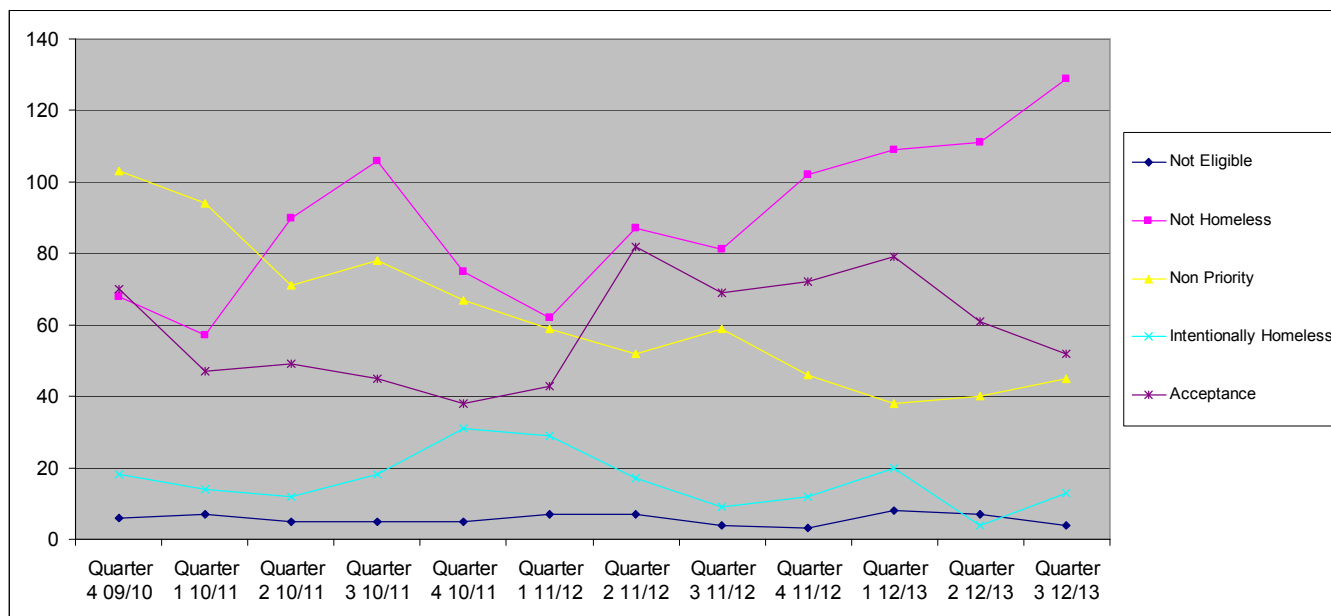
	2009-10	2010-2011	2011-12
Families	183	65	149
Pregnant with no other children	54	26	28
Singles and Couples	158	89	99
TOTAL	395	180	276

A large number of homeless applicants to Peterborough City Council are families or households with a pregnant member. The majority of homeless families are households with 1 or 2 children. There is a statutory duty placed on local authorities by the Housing Act 1996 Part VII, to provide suitable temporary accommodation for homeless families if they are homeless and in priority need. The responsibilities outlined under the Children’s Act 1989 mean that Children’s services also have a duty

to support families in certain situations. Therefore Children’s services also have a crucial role in preventing homelessness and sustaining tenancies.

The needs of children must be considered alongside those of the parents in the delivery of services to homeless families. The traumatic effects of upheaval of homelessness on children are considerable. Peterborough City Council has four family hostels, which provide short-term accommodation for families.

Graph 5: P1E returns: Homeless Decisions made between 2009/10 and 2012/13 by quarter



The number of not eligible decisions has remained consistent over the period, whilst there are a number of peaks with regard to not homeless decisions. This may reflect the increases in the relief of homelessness through Housing Needs Officers assisting households to find alternative accommodation. The numbers of acceptances have reduced over the last quarter along with the number of intentionally homeless decisions. There has been a small increase in the number of persons found to be not in priority need.

Table 8: Reasons for presenting as homeless by number of households 2011-2012

<i>Reason for homelessness</i>	<i>Number of Households presenting</i>
<i>Parents no longer willing to accommodate</i>	236
<i>Other relatives or friends no longer willing to accommodate</i>	277
<i>Non-violent relationship breakdown</i>	103
<i>Violent relationship breakdown (partner)</i>	80
<i>Violent relationship breakdown (other)</i>	16
<i>Racially motivated violence</i>	0
<i>Other forms of violence</i>	18
<i>Racially motivated harassment</i>	0
<i>Other harassment</i>	14
<i>Mortgage arrears</i>	37
<i>Rent Arrears (LA)</i>	4
<i>Rent Arrears (RSL)</i>	43
<i>Rent Arrears (Private sector)</i>	40
<i>Termination of AST (Private)</i>	178
<i>Loss of private rented/tied accommodation (other)</i>	3
<i>End of NASS supported accommodation</i>	22
<i>Prison leaver</i>	61
<i>Hospital discharge</i>	24
<i>Leaving LA Care</i>	23
<i>Left HM Forces</i>	3
<i>Other reason</i>	66
TOTAL	1248

The greatest reason for people presenting as homelessness is friends or relatives unable to accommodate, the second greatest is parents no longer willing to accommodate. This suggests that prevention of homelessness work and resources should initially be aimed at addressing these issues.

A total of 178 presentations were due to termination of Assured Short hold tenancy suggesting that there is further work that could be done in terms of understanding the reasons for homelessness in this area and the development of prevention tools to reduce the number of presentations. Anecdotally, Housing Needs Officers reported that the most common reasons for the loss of an assured short hold were:

- The Landlord wishing to take the property back for own use, or to sell.
- The non-payment of rent.
- The property is in a poor state of repair.
- The tenant not conducting the tenancy satisfactorily.

Single Homeless

There are only very limited statistics about single homeless people as the P1E forms do not record detail about those people who are not in priority need.

Peterborough City Council employs a Single Homeless Officer to provide single homeless persons with advice and support and assist them into accommodation. This accommodation is commonly a room in a shared house, mainly due to the Local Housing Allowance restrictions placed on persons under the age of 35. Support is provided in the form of assistance with seeking accommodation and tenancy support to both the landlord and tenant for the first three months. Since November 2011 the Single Homeless Officer has received 161 referrals and assisted 82 people to access and sustain accommodation in the private rented sector.

Childless Couples

In 2011/12 53 childless couples presented as homeless. The majority of these couples were assisted with a Rent Deposit Loan to access accommodation in the private rented sector.

Housing Advice

The Housing Needs service delivers a range of services to assist people in need of alternative accommodation or advice on their current accommodation. Advice is free and confidential it is provided to everyone despite their housing tenure. The service can be accessed our services by calling (01733) 864064. Housing Advice is also provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau and Peterborough Streets day centre.

In 2011/12 the Housing Needs team based at the Customer Service Centre, Bayard Place, provided housing and homelessness advice to 14,568 people. The prevention of homelessness is the primary focus for the team. Preventing homelessness is both cost-effective and provides positive outcomes for homeless persons. The service aims to ensure that everyone can access the help that they need, when they need it, and to find sustainable solutions to their housing difficulties

Elderly People

A very small number of elderly people present as homeless. In 2011/12 a total of 35 people over the age of 60 years presented to the Housing Needs Service. The majority of this client group can quickly be assisted into sheltered accommodation.

People with Physical and mental disabilities

The Housing Needs Survey (2000) identified that 22% of all households in Peterborough contain someone with a disability. This suggests that there are a total of approximately 14480 households that contain someone with a physical disability.

There are a number of projects throughout the city providing accommodation and support to persons with learning disabilities, autism and physical and sensory disabilities. These include projects at Crowhurst supported by Mencap, Copsewood, Paston Lane, Baron Court, High Street, Eye and DBUK Rainbow Court. The support element of the project is part funded by the housing related support services and adult social care.

These include;

- Residential care homes
- Independent living in the community in general needs housing, where the person lives alone with floating support or with a care package or with on site care
- Group homes (renting a room in a shared house with others and receiving support, either from onsite staff or housing support)
- Supported housing (accommodation within a specific complex with support staff on site during the day or 24/7)

Housing related support services also provide funding for accommodation for persons with mental disabilities these include Eastlands, 277 Eastfield Road and outreach through Axiom Steps.

Additionally, Genesis Housing provides a supported housing project at Mayors Walk. There are 15 rooms within the main house and 10 additional flats. Referrals are made from local agencies and residents include persons with poor mental health, drug and alcohol addictions and learning difficulties.

In 2011/12 28 households were accepted as homeless due to physical disability and 38 households due to mental illness/disability.

Disabled Facility Grants

The Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 made provision for mandatory Disabled Facility Grants to provide adaptations to meet the needs of disabled residents. The Local Housing Authority must decide what are reasonable and practicable adaptations taking into consideration the age and condition of the dwelling and what is necessary and appropriate. The Local Housing Authority has a duty to consult with adult social care on what is necessary and appropriate and this is usually achieved through an Occupational Therapy Assessment of need.

The purposes for which mandatory disabled facilities grants may be given fall into a number of categories, namely:

- Facilitating Access and Provision
- to and from the dwelling
- to a room used/usable as the principal family room
- to a room used/usable for sleeping
- to a room in which there is a WC, bath or shower and a wash hand basin
- to the preparation and cooking of food
- Making a dwelling/building safe
- Providing a room suitable for sleeping
- Providing a bathroom
- Facilitating preparation and cooking of food
- Heating, lighting and power

- Enabling a disabled person to care for a dependent resident
- Access to a garden

In 2011/2012 the DCLG allocated £750,069 to Peterborough for Disabled Facility Grants. The final amount spent (which included monies from Peterborough City Council's capital programme) was £1,674,015. The total number of Disabled Facility Grants delivered by the Care & Repair Home Improvement Agency was 303. This year so far, the DCLG's grant allocation is £691,000 which the Council have made up to £1,725,860. On 30/11/2012 a total of 186 grants have been completed with a total spend of £994,880.

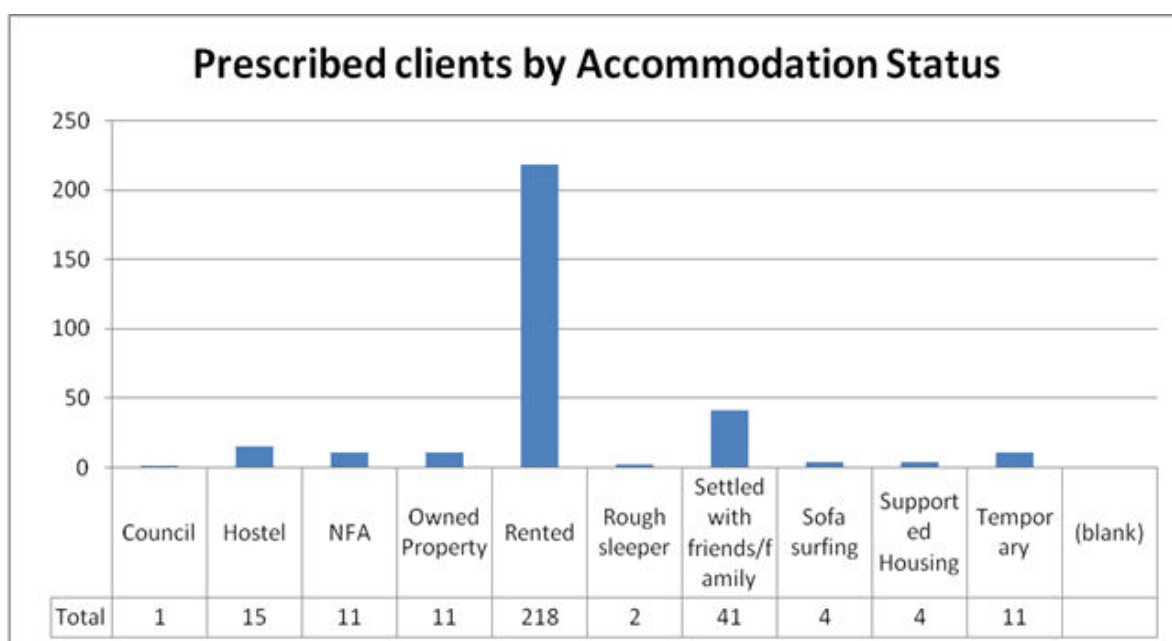
The Housing Needs Service needs to continue to work in partnership to enable that the programme continues to prevent homelessness whilst ensuring that vulnerable persons housing needs are met.

Drug and alcohol misuse and homelessness

Substance misuse has been an important health issue identified for all homeless groups. Aspire Drug Treatment Service provide a community recovery resource which supports people who misuse drugs. They work with individuals to develop life skills to help people enter education, training and employment so that each individual can build their personal recovery and reintegrate into the community. The name Aspire was chosen by service users and stands for service providing Inspirational Recovery Empowerment. Aspire offer the following services;

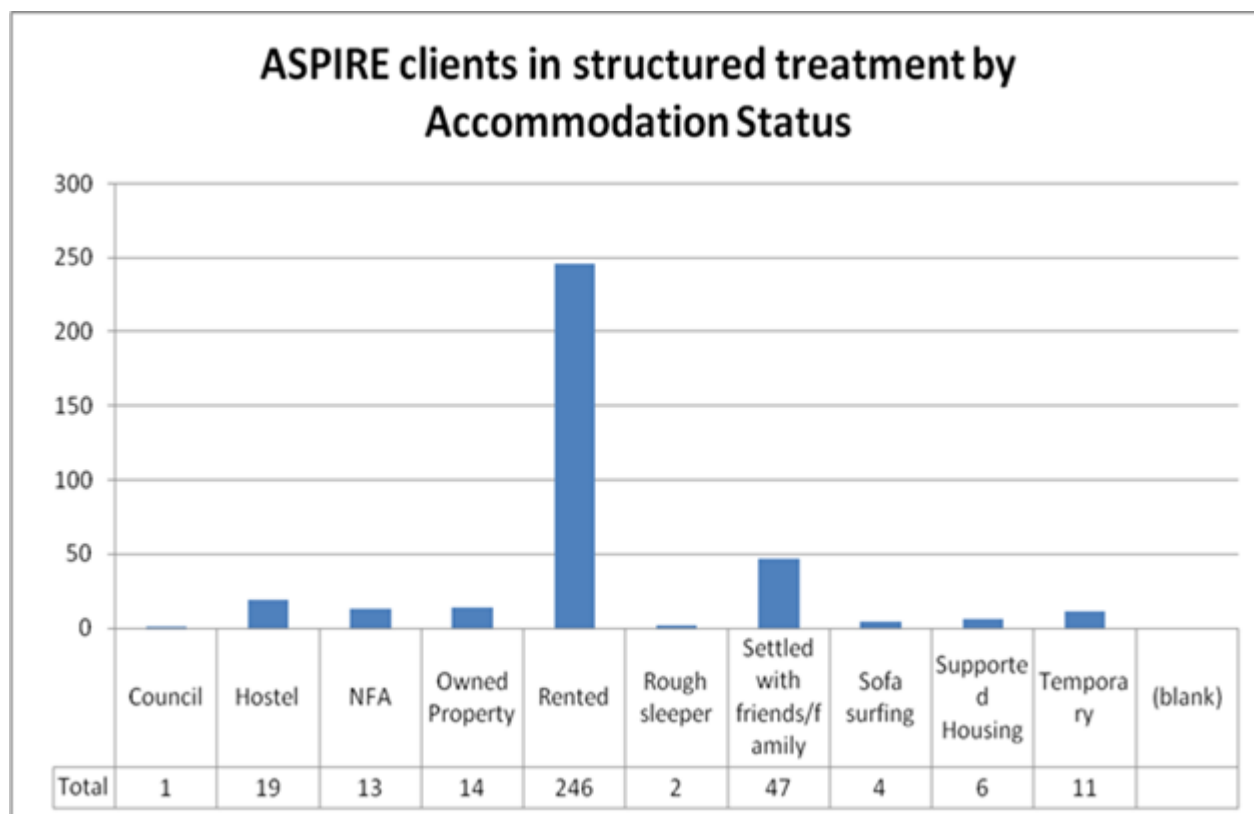
- Needle exchange and harm reduction
- Open access assessment services and referral to other agencies
- Advice and information
- One-to-one sessions and group programmes
- Services for cocaine, crack, ecstasy and amphetamine users
- Recovery and reintegration services
- Access to prescribing
- Parent and family support
- Opportunities to become a peer mentor or volunteer
- 24 hour free phone service

Graph 6: Accommodation status of prescribed clients supported by Aspire



Note: These figures represent a snapshot from November 2012

Graph 7: Accommodation status of clients supported by Aspire in structured treatment*



Note: These figures represent a snapshot from November 2012

*some clients may also have been counted in Graph 6

Drinksense is a non-statutory support agency offering support to people whom misuse alcohol through a number of services including a drop in. Drinksense takes an active role in working with homeless clients with alcohol problems. They provide adult treatment and support services, a hospital alcohol liaison project, criminal justice services and workforce development for professionals.

Rough Sleepers

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) requires local authorities to submit an annual figure indicating the numbers of people sleeping rough in their area. They can do this by means of an estimate or a count. Local Authorities can decide whether to count or estimate in order to determine their single figure and are encouraged to use the method that they think will reflect the number of persons sleeping rough in the local area.

In 2010 the Government widened the definition of rough sleeping:

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations or 'bashes.')

The general perception of rough sleeping is usually based on the numbers of people seen begging or sitting in doorways during the day or in the evening; this is not usually a true reflection of the numbers of people actually sleeping rough.

Peterborough City Council consulted with Cambridgeshire police, faith groups, Peterborough Streets Day Centre, HMP Peterborough, and Aspire in November 2012 through the Task and Targeting Group to reach a decision on whether to carry out a formal count or an estimate. A decision was reached that the most accurate figure would be achieved through an estimate. In autumn 2012 Peterborough City Council submitted a multi-agency lead Rough Sleeper Estimate to government of 12. This estimate was reached with the guidance and support of Homeless Link. The estimate records a single figure for the number of people thought to be rough sleeping in the local authority area on a typical night between 01 October and 30 November. The figure should be as robust as possible and using the guidance provided will help to get the most accurate estimate.

Table 9: Results of Rough Sleeper Count Autumn 2012

Nationality	Age	Length of time on streets
British	53	2004
British	Unknown	Unknown
British	49	Jan-11
British	65	Jun-12
British	40	Mar-11
British	50	Nov-11
British	38	Dec-11
British	53	Jun-12
Lithuanian	35	Oct-12
Lithuanian	31	Oct-12
Slovakian	49	Aug-12
Lithuanian	45	Sep-12

Rough Sleeper Outreach Service

Peterborough City Council employs a Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer to assist individuals who find themselves sleeping rough after losing their accommodation. The Rough Sleeper Outreach officer has made great strides in ensuring that those who hit the streets are assisted before they reach a point where they are entrenched. In 2010, Peterborough was highlighted in the national media as a rough sleeping hotspot, with reported figures in excess of 70 individuals sleeping rough on any one night. Following the set up of a Task and Targeting group and a joint approach this number was quickly reduced with many being assisted to find work and accommodation, or being assisted to return to their country of origin. This work is continuing and we now have a hardcore of long standing rough sleepers in the city, which we are working with to assist them through a personalised approach to leave the streets.

Homelessness and other related themes

Homelessness is complicated and any response to it involves working with other agencies. Tackling homelessness needs a multi-agency approach.

Health and Homelessness

The homeless community often face many health inequalities. There is a lack of joined up working between health and Peterborough City Council. Homeless people access health services through the GP service at 63 Lincoln Road and the NHS Walk in Services in the city.

Focus Groups

During the month of November 2012 four focus groups were held to discuss the prevention of homelessness, rough sleeping, increasing access to accommodation and promoting settled lifestyles and sustainable communities. There were a number of re-occurring issues;

Preventing Homelessness

- Concerns rose over the length of time that housing benefit claims are processed.
- Court desk identified approximately 50% of claims are linked to housing benefit claims.
- GP letters are costly - reported up to £150 there is a need for a city wide agreement to reasonable charges.
- Homelessness prevention could be increased by generic floating support.

Rough Sleeping

- Partnership working has improved over recent years.
- No accommodation services for rough sleepers who are chronically excluded.
- Mental health services are unable to assess rough sleepers whilst they are on the streets.
- Flow from HMP Peterborough in particular persons with no local connection needs to be managed.

Increasing access to accommodation

- One of the identified barriers to private sector accommodation is the large housing benefit delays.
- Suggestion of small part of PCC's rent deposit is given to the accommodation provider and recycled.
- Persons with a poor housing history often end up in poor quality accommodation.
- There is a considerable waiting list for Peterborough Foyer.
- Need for more education in schools with regard to homelessness, and prevention.
- Concern over decrease in accommodation due to Universal Credit.
- The city needs a more accessible credit union to enable more private sector landlords to consider homeless households.

Promoting settled and sustainable communities

- Floating support needed for people who do not fit into specific support categories.
- Need for homeless persons to have essential items and support to resettle in the community.
- Need for more training, volunteering and education to give people a purpose.

Care Leavers

Care leavers are often vulnerable and prone to becoming homeless. Under the Leaving Care Act 2000, Children's Services have a duty to accommodate and provide financial support until they reach the age of 18 years. They are also required to support all care leavers until they reach the age of 21. Under the Homelessness Act 2002 priority is given to vulnerable 18 to 21 year olds who are homeless care leavers.

16/17 year olds

In 2011/12 a total of 17 persons aged 16/17 years old presented as homeless. The vast majority of this group were homeless due to parents no longer willing to accommodate.

It is difficult to accurately establish the levels of youth homelessness within Peterborough. This is due to the 'hidden homelessness' situation and the lack of recording or monitoring of approaches to organisations by homeless young people.

Children in need

Sixteen/seventeen year-olds may be the responsibility of Children's Services, if they are a "child in need". The prime causes of homelessness are breakdown of relationship with parents or stepparents and leaving care.

Following a review of procedures we have developed a protocol with children's services, confirming the responsibilities of the authority towards 16 & 17 year olds who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Young people who present to the authority as homeless will now be referred into the Adolescent Intervention Service who, with the support of Housing Needs, will work with the young person and their family to enable the young person to return home with high level support to improve relationships. Those youngsters who are not able to return home will be provided with appropriate accommodation while the council determines whether they are a child in need and owed a duty under s.20 of the Children's Act 1989.

However, if they are not owed a duty they are offered help and assistance through the Housing Needs service.

Accommodation available for young people

YMCA Timestop

Temporary accommodation is available for young people through YMCA Timestop. However it is important to note that the YMCA Timestop have turned away 161 people this year as there is no bed spaces. During 2011-2012 125 young people were accommodated at Timestop, and 115 people were assisted into alternative accommodation and 19 people were assisted to return to their family home. The main reason for homelessness amongst this group is relationship breakdown. There was no data available on where residents held their local connection.

Peterborough Foyer

The Peterborough Foyer run by Axiom Housing Association provides accommodation for up to 49 young people between the ages of 16 and 25 years old. Support is available to develop independent living skills and advice and support in connection with training, education or employment. The 49 bed project has 35 dedicated foyer rooms and 14 move on rooms for residents who are ready to make the step towards independent living. During 2011-12 the foyer received 231 applications and had 74 vacancies, and 56 positive move ons.

Connexions

Connexions operate a service for all young people aged 13-19 (13-25 for people who have a learning disability). This service is designed to integrate existing advice and support services for young people by creating a single point of access through personal advisers. Connexions have a one-stop-shop service; offering advice and information to young people from the age of 13 onwards and are helping to identify homeless issues at an early stage.

Victims of domestic violence

Domestic violence is perhaps one of the most complicated of homelessness issues.

The number of presentations from people presenting as homeless due to 'relationship breakdown (violent)' in 2011/12 was 80. Although it is important to note that women experiencing domestic violence often present as homeless for other reasons due to the stigma attached to domestic violence.

The MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee) has traditionally met on a monthly basis to discuss the highest risk victims of domestic abuse in the area at that given time. Risk is usually determined by a score from the CAADA DASH risk assessment but cases can also be referred on the basis of professional judgement or as a result of repeat incidents. Peterborough MARAC is currently participating in a trial whereby meetings are held weekly via conference call in an attempt to reduce the number of cases discussed at each meeting and also to reduce the potential delay between the referral and the meeting. The meetings / calls are attended by a number of agencies including but not restricted to; Cambridgeshire Police, Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, Children's Services, Probation, Education, Mental Health, Health Visiting Team, Cross Keys Homes and Housing Needs. The purpose of the meeting is to share information held about both the victim and the perpetrator and to formulate action plans to decrease the risk to the victim

The Housing Needs Service has an essential role to play by providing information on housing rights and advise how the service can assist. This joined-up approach helps to prevent victims of domestic abuse simply waiving their housing rights before getting advice on what assistance we can give. The meetings may also identify that the victim would be suitable for the sanctuary scheme.

Offenders

Research has found that addressing the housing and support needs of ex-offenders is crucial in reducing repeat offending and social exclusion. It is important to note that priority need does not apply to all homeless offenders, only those who are found to be vulnerable.

Offenders will often not identify themselves when making an application for housing. The majority of offenders will present as homeless rather than applying to the housing register. Release from an institution is a recorded reason for becoming homeless but the type of institution is not specified.

The Bail Hostel based in Peterborough is the only hostel in Cambridgeshire and offers accommodation and support to offenders who are considered to be high risk to the public. People who are not considered to be in priority need, and whose offending or housing history has excluded them from accessing social housing are most likely to become homeless. This group of people often ends up 'sofa surfing' or staying in hostel.

HMP Peterborough

HMP and YOI Peterborough have 1008 places and is the country's only dual purpose-built prison for both men and women. The prison also has 12 places in the Mother and Baby unit for convicted female offenders. The prison accepts adult male prisoners from Cambridgeshire, and female prisoners from Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Northants and Warwickshire. This often results in prisoners from other areas without a local connection being released on the streets. Anecdotally, we are unable to ascertain the number of prisoners released without accommodation as there is a myth within the prison population that you will receive a larger release grant if you are no fixed abode.

The One Service

The One Service supports short sentenced male prisoners by offering early engagement, through and beyond the gate and individualised support in the community to address needs and prevent re-offending.

The One Service are members of the rough sleeper Task and Targeting Group and work closely with the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer to prevent their clients from rough sleeping and empower them to leave the streets.

People leaving the armed forces

There are only a small number of persons who present to Peterborough City Council due to leaving the armed forces. In 2011/12 there were 3 recorded presentations from people leaving the armed forces. The Housing Needs officers work with SAFFA and the Royal British Legion to offer support to this client group.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME Groups)

Black and ethnic minority groups (BME) will often deal with issues arising within the community instead of approaching statutory organisations. The few people from this client group who do approach services are usually presenting at the point of crisis.

Day Centres for the Homeless

Peterborough Streets runs a day centre offering housing and welfare advice, positive activities, and Crisis PRS Scheme to support homeless persons into private sector accommodation. The day centre is used regularly by homeless persons and vulnerable people. The day centre sees on average 5 -8 persons per day.

Future Levels of Homelessness

One of the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002 is for local authorities, in reviewing the homelessness situation in the district, to assess future levels of homelessness.

Impact of Welfare Reform

The direct impact of welfare reform and homelessness are currently unknown. Anecdotally there are suggestions that it will lead to increased homelessness as households are unable to afford increased rents created by access bedrooms in their accommodation or reductions in housing benefit. Additionally the introduction of Universal Credit could result many landlords no longer receiving safeguarded payments and in turn lead to rent arrears and eviction.

Supported Housing

This review requires that we consider all current activities which contribute to the provision of support for people in the city who are, or who may become homeless and people in the city, who have been homeless and need support to prevent them from becoming homeless in the future.

The Housing Related support service aims to ensure an ever improving range of housing related support services to the benefit of the most vulnerable sectors of the community. The annual budget for Peterborough is £2.3million.

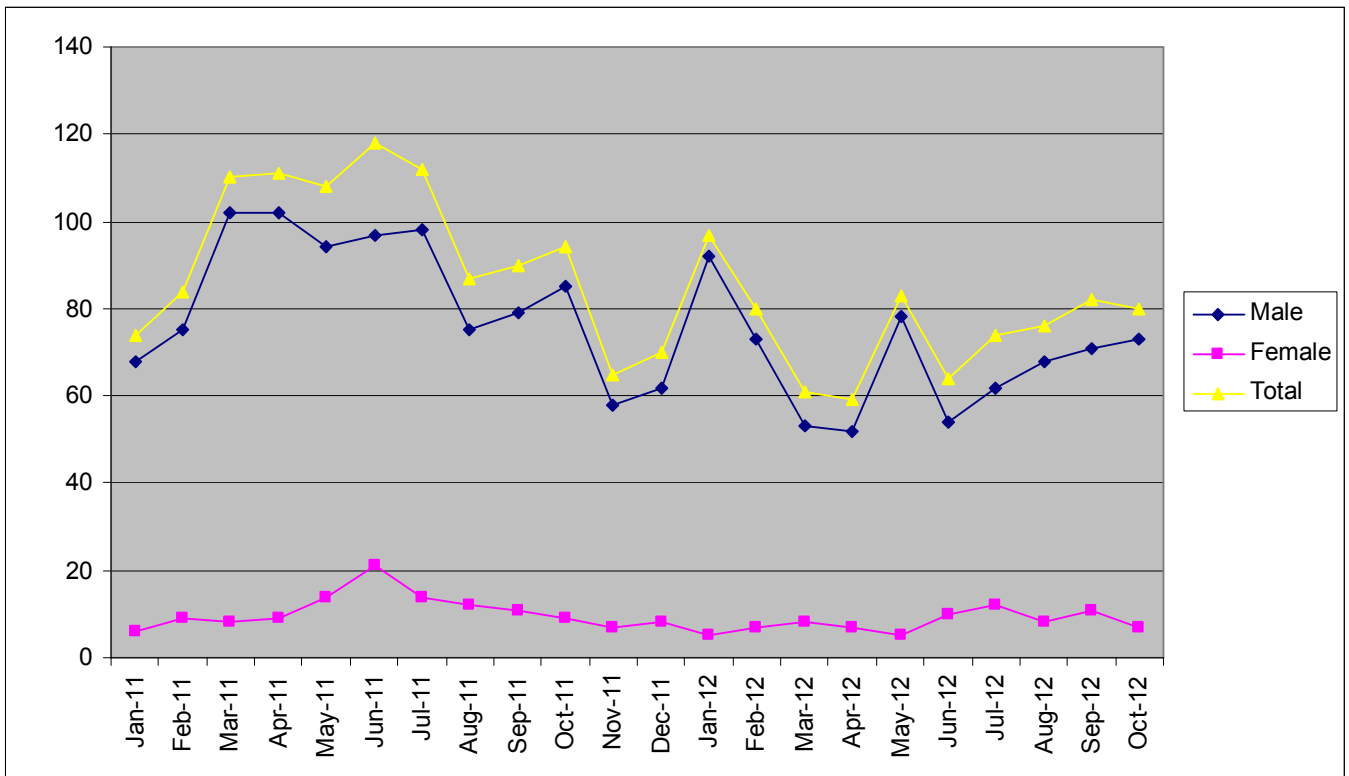
New Haven Night Shelter

The New Haven Night Shelter is the city's direct access hostel. The shelter is owned and managed by Axiom Housing Association and provides temporary accommodation for single homeless persons. There are 17 bed spaces within the shelter. During 2011/12 the most frequent reasons for homelessness were; eviction from private sector tenancy, relationship breakdown and friends no longer willing to accommodate.

The shelter is usually full and during 2010/11 there are only 4 voids recorded and in 2011/12 2 voids recorded. All these voids were due to late departures.

The majority of persons accessing the shelter are supported into private rented sector accommodation by the Homeless Hostel Resettlement Officer.

Graph 8: Single presentations mad at the New Haven Night Shelter between January 2011 and October 2012*



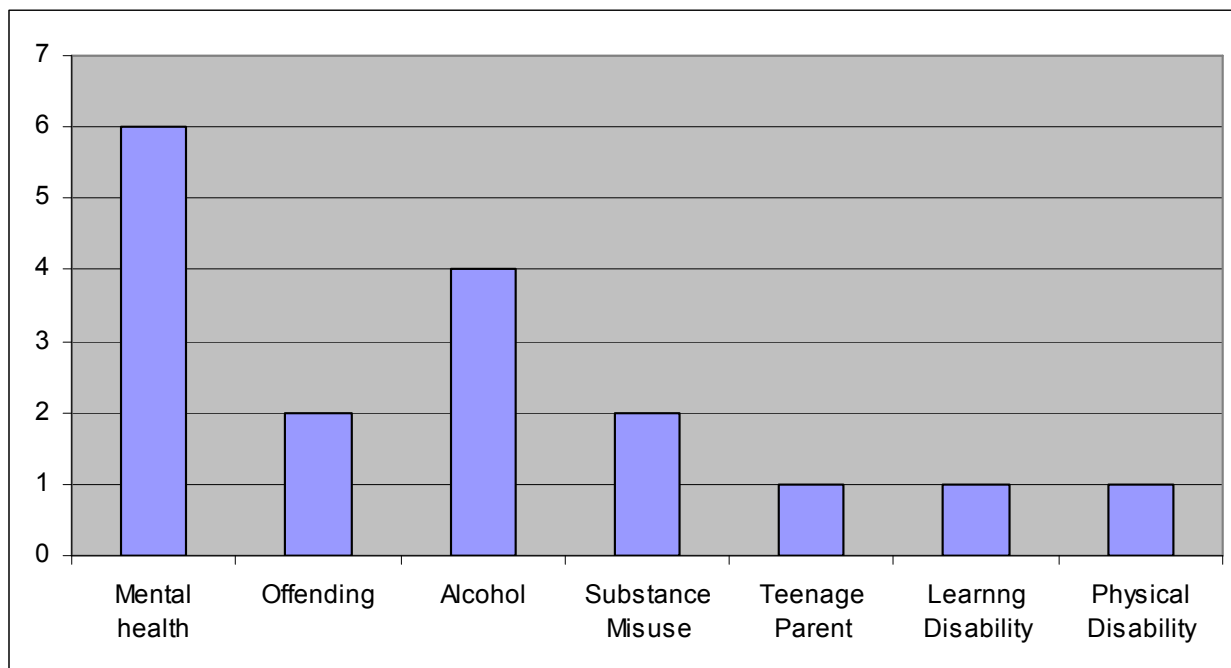
* persons may have presented on more than one occasion

The demand is high for bed spaces at the shelter. Persons are often turned away before they are able to secure a bed.

Fairview Court

Fairview Court is a supported housing project for people who have previously experienced tenancy failure. The project provides support for 17 people aged 17 +. The project through the support of partner agencies empowers people to move forward through training, support, and key working individuals to enable them to move through the support stages and into sustainable long term accommodation.

Graph 9: Snapshot of resident's primary support needs in November 2012



The majority of residents in Fairview Court were receiving support for their poor mental health.

Hope into Action

Hope into Action provides houses for the homeless in partnership with local churches. They train and enable churches to engage with and mentor those living in the house, whilst providing the necessary professional support. Hope into Action currently have 12 houses and accept referrals from agencies in the city including; Peterborough Streets, Housing Needs and HMP Peterborough.

Temporary Accommodation

At present there are a number of households in temporary hostel accommodation and a small number of households are placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. The Council believes that the use of bed and breakfast is unsuitable and is only used as emergency provision. The Government identifies a particular difficulty for families with children staying in bed and breakfast accommodation. Therefore it has set a target that, except when urgent, that is where the housing authority has less than 21 days notice of impending homelessness, no families with children should be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation after 31st March 2004. At the time of the report² the different forms of temporary accommodation in use and the numbers of households are as follows

- Bed and Breakfast: 8 households
- Hostel accommodation: 75 households

10 The Way Forward

Peterborough City Council is committed to preventing and relieving homelessness as well as improving partnerships with service providers in all sectors. The Housing Needs Service recognise that in order to provide a cost-effective and responsive service the Housing Needs team cannot achieve this in isolation. We need to continue to deliver our services in partnership with our statutory and voluntary partners.

² 1st February 2012

The multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Steering Group will be key to the development of the new draft Homelessness Strategy. Whilst the Local Authority recognises the need to lead on the draft Homelessness Strategy it also acknowledges that the success of the Strategy will only be achieved through shared ownership and a joint approach.

The key findings of this review will be feed into the development of the Draft Homelessness Strategy 2013- 2018.

11 Key Findings

Support Services

- Housing Advice is delivered by the Housing Needs Service, Citizens Advice Bureau and Peterborough Streets.
- The majority of clients prescribed by Aspire Drug Services are renting accommodation in the private rented sector.
- The majority of clients in structured treatment services with Aspire are renting accommodation in the private rented sector.

Resettlement Support

- There is very little resettlement support provided to people moving on from hostels or temporary accommodation to prevent the loss of tenancy, and the cycle of homelessness.

Provision of Support

- Homeless persons access health services at the NHS Walk In and at GP service at 63 Lincoln Road.
- Mental health services are unable to assess rough sleepers.
- Floating support is needed for people who do not fit into specific support categories.
- There is a need for more training, volunteering and education to give homeless persons a purpose.

Temporary Accommodation

- The number of applicants is temporary accommodation during October and December 2011 is lower than one regional local authority.

Information and Advice

- Partner agencies identified delays in the processing of housing benefit contributing to homelessness.
- Partner agencies reported GP letters are costly reported up to £150 there is a need for a city wide agreement to reasonable charges.
- The city needs a more accessible credit union to enable more private sector landlords to consider homeless households.

Preventing Homelessness

- Mortgage Rescue Service is essential in preventing homelessness amongst homeowners.
- Partner agencies reported homeless prevention could be increased by generic floating support.
- There is a need for more education in schools with regard to homelessness, and prevention.

Access to accommodation

- Peterborough Strategic Tenancy policy ensures that rents remain affordable.
- There is a high demand for social housing in the city.
- The draft Allocations policy will restrict new applicants to the housing register whilst reducing the number of applications.
- The majority of applicants on the housing register require a one bedroom property.
- The majority of applicants on the housing register will never receive an offer of accommodation

- A total of 20.5% of all letting through the housing register are made to homeless households.
- The percentage of applicants accepted by Peterborough City Council is marginally higher than other regional local authorities.
- Single Homeless Officer has been successful in assisting 82 people into accommodation while supporting them during the early stages of their tenancy.
- The majority of homeless persons aged 60 years and over are assisted into sheltered accommodation through an offer from the housing register.
- One of the identified barriers to private sector accommodation is the large housing benefit delays.
- Persons with a poor housing history often end up in poor quality accommodation.
- There is a considerable waiting list for Peterborough Foyer.

Sufficient Accommodation

- There is a need to secure that sufficient accommodation is available for people who are, or who may become homeless.
- There are no accommodation services for persons who are chronically excluded.
- There is an identified concern raised by partners over decrease in accommodation due to Universal Credit.

Private Rented Sector Accommodation

- Rent Deposit Scheme is essential to enable the continued access to the PRS.
- Mortgage Rescue Service is essential in preventing homelessness amongst homeowners.
- Childless couples presenting as homeless are usually assisted into the private rented sector.

Homelessness

- Welfare Reform will impact on the number of persons unable to meet their housing costs.
- Peterborough City Council has seen an increase in the number of homeless applications in 2011/12.
- The majority of homeless applications made to Peterborough City Council are from homeless families.
- The number of not eligible decisions made remain constant from 09/10 until the third quarter of 12/13.
- The number of intentionally homeless decisions has decreased over the last quarter.
- The number of applicants that Peterborough City Council had a full housing duty to assist has decreased over the last quarter.
- There has been a small increase in the number of persons found to be non priority homeless.
- The most frequently reported reason for households presenting as homeless to Peterborough City Council is 'parents no longer willing to accommodate.'
- The second most frequently recorded reason for households presenting as homeless is 'other relatives or friends no longer willing to accommodate.'
- The third most frequently recorded reason for households presenting as homeless is 'termination of AST (private).'
- The rough sleeper estimate for Autumn 2012 identified 12 rough sleepers.
- The Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer has continued to reduce rough sleeping.
- Court Desk identified approximately 50% of all claims are linked to housing benefit delays.

Repeat Homelessness

- There is no data available on the number of households experiencing repeat homelessness due to lack of data. More robust recording systems need to be established.

Partnership working

- There are identified delays in the processing of the payment of housing benefit.

- Partners suggested of small part of PCC's rent deposit is given to the accommodation provider and recycled.

Effective Partnerships

- There is a need for joint protocols and partnerships to be strengthened between housing and adult social care to further enable homeless persons to be supported.

Linking with other strategies

- There is a need for the homeless Strategy to link in with all appropriate strategies including health, housing, education and community safety.

12 Recommendations

The Homelessness Strategy will be informed by the findings of the Homelessness Review. The key areas that the Homelessness Strategy needs to consider are:

The prevention of homelessness

To develop services to ensure that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people who are, or who may become homeless

To secure that there is satisfactory provision of support for people who are or who may become homeless again.

To promote and maximise the Mortgage Rescue Scheme through the Housing needs team.

There is a need to develop prevention initiatives to respond to the main causes of homelessness.

Accommodation for chronically excluded persons

There is a need to develop accommodation for this group.

Repeat Homelessness

We cannot demonstrate the number of households experiencing repeat homelessness due to lack of data. Robust recording systems need to be established to show levels of repeat homelessness.

Support Services

Training, education and volunteering opportunities for homeless persons need to be developed.

Explore options for generic floating support services to be developed to prevent homelessness.

Housing Benefit

There is a need to explore reasons for housing benefit delays and develop solutions.

Health Services

Research needs to be carried out to assess the feasibility of a city wide agreement for GP information letters for homeless persons.

Information Services

There is a need to consider introducing homelessness education sessions in schools.

Access to accommodation

Consideration needs to be given to developing services to respond to the one bedroom need identified through the Housing Register.

There is a need to explore alternative ways for the rent deposit scheme finances to be maximised

Effective Partnerships

There is a need for joint protocol and partnership to be further developed between housing and HMP Peterborough.

Provision of Support

There is a need for adequate support for people who are, or who may become homeless.

Bed and breakfast accommodation

Bed and breakfast accommodation should continue to be used as emergency accommodation only.

Sufficient Accommodation

- There is a need to secure that sufficient accommodation is available for people who are, or who may become homeless.

Resettlement Support

- Support services need to be mapped and where possible there needs to be a focus on tenancy support and homelessness prevention.
- Floating support is needed to prevent the impact of welfare reform.

Rough Sleepers

- There is a need for mental health services to be developed to enable rough sleepers to be assessed.

Linking with other strategies

- There is a need for the homeless Strategy to link in with all appropriate strategies including health, housing, education and community safety.

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