

APPENDIX 1

The Homelessness Review
2014

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1. Introduction

1.1. Changing Context for Homelessness Services

Since the general election in May 2010, the government has implemented a programme of change and reform. The national reform agenda has meant that local homelessness services needed to adapt quickly to deliver services more efficiently, and to mitigate potential homelessness impacts arising from welfare reforms such as those affecting Housing Benefit and the impending introduction of universal credit.

The list of developments in national policy below pick out some of the key changes that have had, and will have, a direct impact on the way in which local housing authorities deliver allocations, lettings and homelessness services.

- Comprehensive Spending Review – October 2010
- No Second Night Out – July 2011
- Localism Act - November 2011
- Welfare Reform Act - March 2012
- Allocations Code of Guidance – June 2012
- Making Every Contact Count – August 2012
- The Allocation of Housing (Qualification criteria for Armed Forces) Regulations – August 2012
- The Homeless (Suitability of Accommodation) Order – November 2012
- The Housing Act 1996 (Additional Preference for former Armed Forces Personnel) – November 2012

1.2. Preventing Homelessness Strategies – The Legal Imperative

This is the third Homelessness Strategy for Peterborough City Council and it reviews the current situation in the district, looks back at the achievements since the last strategy and sets out the work we will carry out with other organisations to reduce and prevent homelessness.

The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a requirement on all councils to formulate a Homelessness Strategy every five years. Councils are required to carry out a homelessness review of their area and produce a strategy to:

- Address the causes of homelessness in the area;
- Introduce initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible;
- Provide sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless; and
- Ensure that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it from happening again.

1.3. Benefits of Preventing Homelessness Strategies

Homelessness has a detrimental effect on individuals, families and communities and can undermine social cohesion. Homelessness is linked to alcohol and drug abuse, poor physical & mental health, crime & anti-social behaviour, poor educational attainment, debt, unemployment and the breakdown of support networks. Tackling the effects of homelessness can be costly to the public purse when compared to the costs associated with proactively seeking to prevent homelessness in the first place.

The Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG) continues to recognise the importance of preventing homelessness and set out 10 “local authority challenges” in the “Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness” report.

“So the vision of this report is simple, but bold. There is no place for homelessness in the 21st Century. The key to delivering that vision is prevention – agencies working together to support those at risk of homelessness” Grant Shapps, August 2012

1.4. Review of the Homelessness Strategy 2008 to 2013

The Council produced its first Homelessness Strategy in 2003 which was updated in 2008 with a strategy for the following 5 years. The Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 identified four priorities around:-

- Service Standards
- Health & Emotional Wellbeing
- Education, Training & Employment
- Choice & Self Participation

The Previous Homelessness Strategy expired in 2013 and therefore an assessment of the current situation has been necessary to inform the strategic direction of the homelessness function for the next five years, 2013 - 2018.

1.5. The New Review and Strategy Documents

The Homelessness Review and Strategy 2013 - 2018 is contained within one document and provides an assessment of the current situation regarding homelessness, both nationally and locally, and a five year action plan for meeting the strategic objectives identified as part of the review.

The Homelessness Strategy is an annex to the Peterborough Housing Strategy 2011 - 2015.

Section 153 of the Localism Act 2011 came into force by commencement order on 7th June 2012 and prescribes the relationship between schemes and strategies that local authorities must have regard to in developing or modifying their local preventing homelessness strategies:

In formulating or modifying a homelessness strategy, a local housing authority in England shall have regard to—

- (a) its current allocation scheme under section 166A of the Housing Act 1996,*
- (b) its current tenancy strategy under section 150 of the Localism Act 2011*

1.6. Methodology of the New Review and Strategy

The review focuses on the following:

- Analysis of national and local homelessness trends and indicators of service user demands.
- An audit of existing provision e.g. use of temporary accommodation and provision of housing-related support.
- Review of current permanent accommodation options
- Review of demand
- An audit of advice and prevention services
- Using analysis and research to provide projections for how we anticipate homelessness is likely to manifest locally over the next 5 years.
- Insight from stakeholders eg. organisations we work with, members and local agencies.
- Review of partnership working
- The future provision

1.7. Consultation – Research & Information Gathering

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.

Partner/stakeholder focus groups took place during November 2012 dealing with all aspects of homelessness throughout the city. We approached voluntary and statutory organisations linked to homelessness to participate in the groups.

The Peterborough Homelessness Strategy Steering Group

As part of the Homelessness Strategy 2008 - 2013, a Homelessness Strategy Steering Group (HSSG) was established. One of the core functions of the group has been to lead on the

implementation of the strategic aims identified within the strategy and to monitor the outcomes and achievements. The steering group is made up of representatives from Peterborough City Council and other relevant statutory and voluntary organisations was established.

The members of the steering group are as follows:

Name	Role	Organisation
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	PCC
Pete Middlemiss	Manager	The New Haven Night Shelter
Kim Lawrence	Supported Housing Manager	Cross Keys Homes
Emma Foley	Advocate	Cambridgeshire Independent Advocacy (Ace Project)
Ali Manji	Area Manager	Cross Keys Homes
Sam Tucker	City Centre Policing	Cambs Constabulary
Allison Sunley	Head Of Commissioning And Targeted Services	PCC
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	PCC

2. Homelessness in Context

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.'

In addition to the above local authorities will also have to consider whether households presenting to them are eligible for assistance (e.g. have a right to reside in the UK), in priority need (e.g. have dependent children or are assessed as vulnerable) and homeless unintentionally. Only once these criteria are satisfied is a household considered to be “statutorily homeless”.

2.1. The National Picture

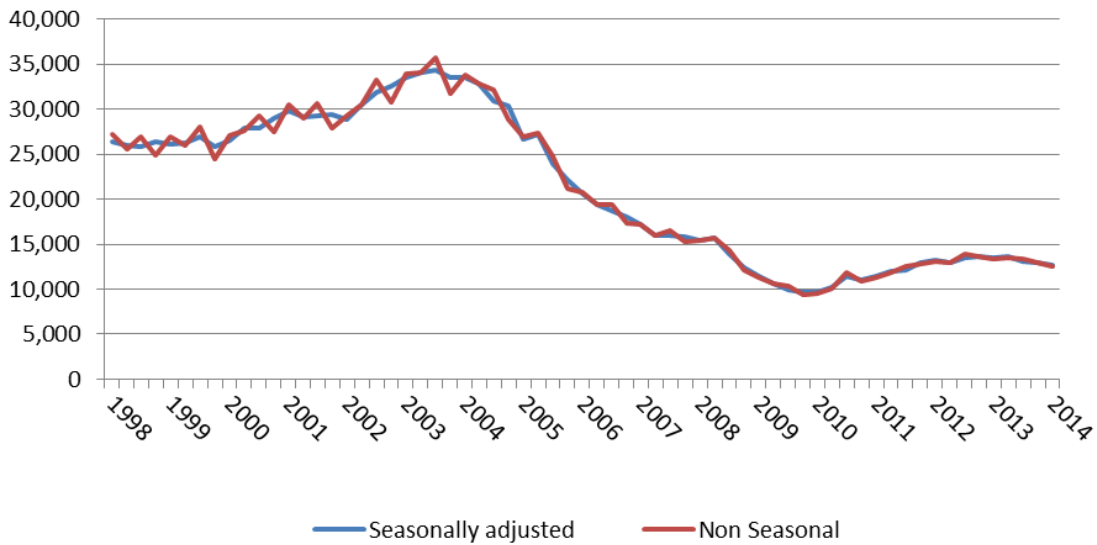
The number of households accepted as statutorily homeless by Councils in England peaked in 2003/04 at 135,430. Between 1997 and 2004 the number of households accommodated by Councils in temporary accommodation doubled, breaking the 100,000 mark in 2004.

Homelessness moved further up the political agenda with the recognition that urgent action had to be taken to address the housing crisis, in particular the rate of homelessness within the country and the number of households in temporary accommodation.

The government’s policy briefing released in June 2005 focused on ways of achieving this target, particularly the increased use of preventative measures and utilising the private rented sector as a source of settled accommodation. This drew together the examples of good practice where Councils had successfully introduced homelessness prevention measures and increased access to the private sector for many clients who may otherwise have been reliant on the limited stock of social rented housing.

The chart below shows the number of households who were accepted as “statutory homeless” and demonstrates that these measures had a significant impact in reducing the numbers of households who were accepted as homeless. However since the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in 2010 numbers had been slowly increasing until a slight reduction this year.

CHART 1- Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main homelessness duty 1998 – 2014 (England)

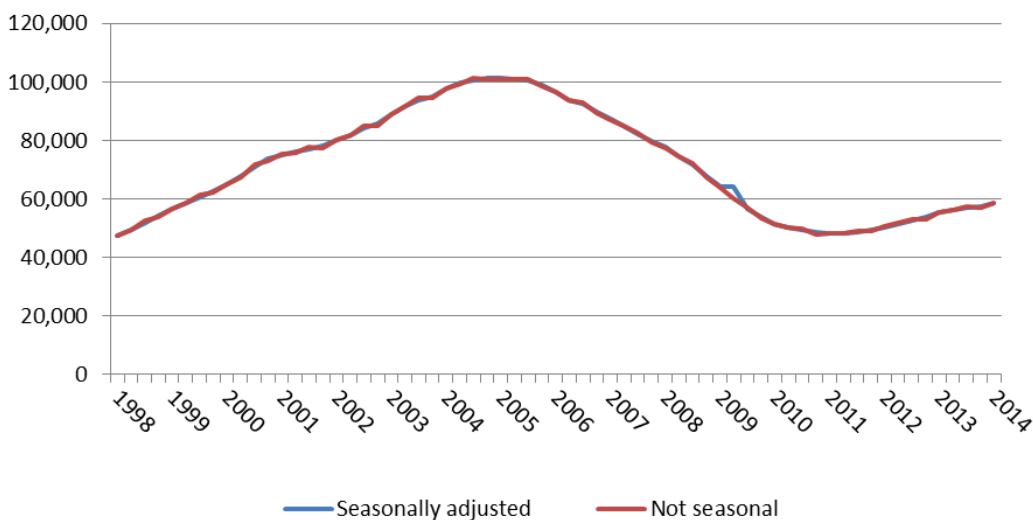


Source: DCLG Housing Statistical Release June 2014

2.1.1. Temporary Accommodation

In the last 4 years since the CSR demand for accommodation the increased demand for accommodation means it has become more difficult to secure suitable permanent accommodation for households who have presented to local authorities as homeless. The impact of this has meant that local authorities have had to spend increasing amounts of money on accommodating households in temporary accommodation while they wait for a suitable offer of accommodation to be made. The chart below shows the number of households that are currently accommodated in temporary accommodation and how that has slowly increased over the last 4 years.

CHART 2 – Number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter 1998 – 2014 (England)



Source: DCLG Housing Statistical Release June 2014

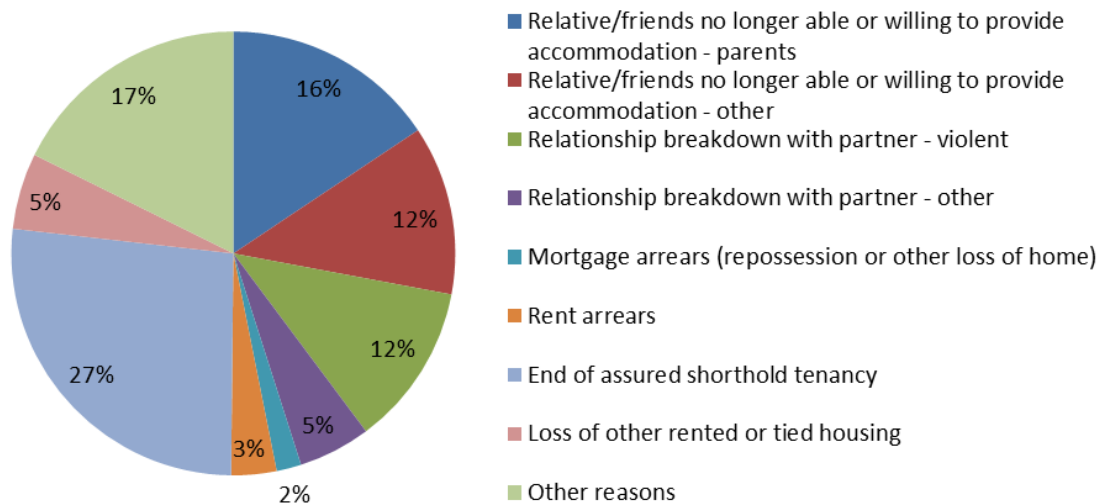
Of the 58,590 households in temporary accommodation on 31 March 2014, 12,430 (21%) were in accommodation in another local authority district. This is an increase of 36 per cent, from 9,130 (17%) at the same date last year.

Of the 12,430 accommodated in another local authority district, 11,540 were from London authorities (93% of the England total). This is an increase of 40% from the same date last year when 8,270 such households were in London.

2.1.2. Reasons for homelessness

Historically the main reason for homelessness amongst those who were accepted as statutory homeless was parents, relatives/friends not being able, or willing, to accommodate applicants any longer. However for the last 2 years this has changed and the most common reason is now the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy. The chart below illustrates the main reason for homelessness in the last quarter of 2013/14.

CHART 3 – The main reason for homelessness Qtr 4 2013/14



Source: DCLG Housing Statistical Release June 2014

2.2. The Local Picture

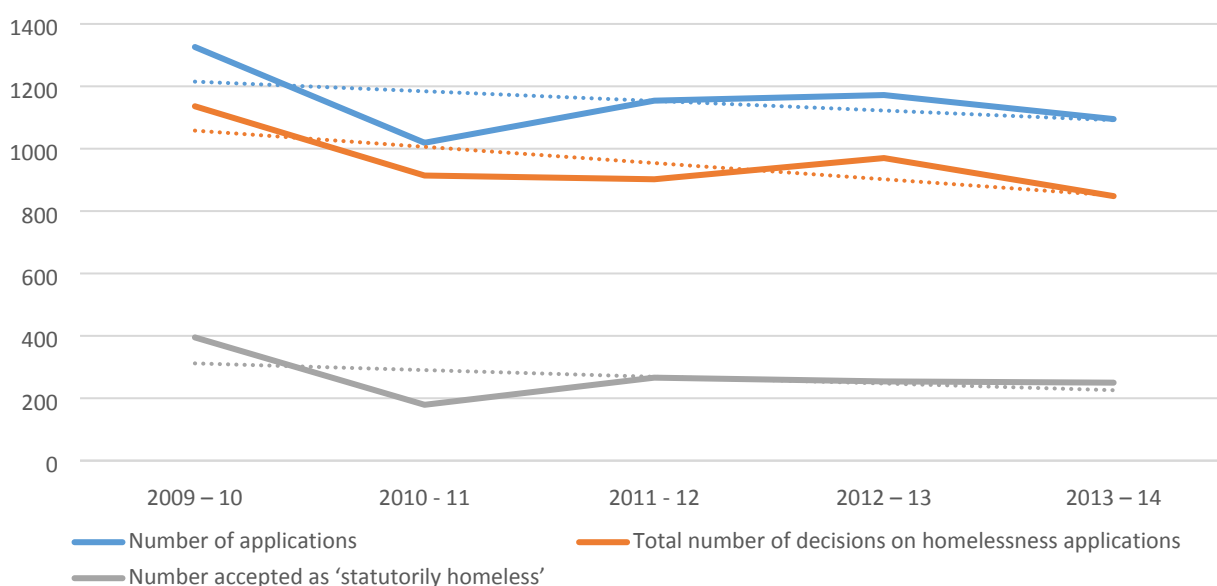
Peterborough has seen consistent population growth since 1971 and is the second fastest growing city in the country after Milton Keynes. The Census 2011 shows a further population growth from 156,059 (2001 census) to 183,961. Overall there has been a population growth of around 18% in Peterborough, whilst England and the East of England have seen a total growth of 8% and 9% respectively. According to the 2012 Sub national Population Projections the city's population is due to increase to around 230,000 by 2037 which is an increase of 25%.

Peterborough is a multi-cultural city. The 2011 Census identified that 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.

Peterborough has seen consistent levels of homelessness throughout the lifetime of the previous homelessness strategy. The chart and table below show the number of homelessness applications, decisions and homelessness acceptances since 2009-10. The chart demonstrates a trend of slight reduction in all areas. This has been maintained against a national picture of slight increases in the same period of time.

CHART 4 - Number of applications, decisions and acceptances 2009 - 2014



	2009 – 10	2010 - 11	2011 - 12	2012 – 13	2013 – 14
Number of applications	1326	1019	1154	1172	1095
Total number of decisions on homelessness applications	1136	914	902	970	848
Number accepted as 'statutorily homeless'	395	179	266	254	250

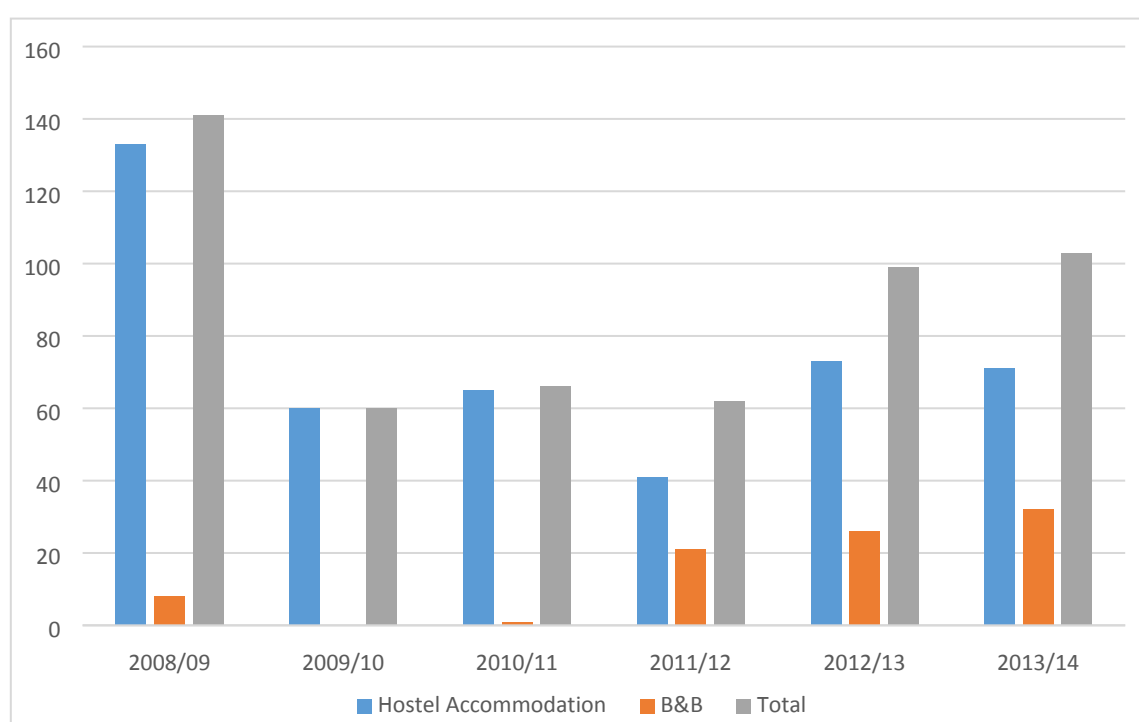
SOURCE – Local homelessness data

2.2.1. Temporary Accommodation

The council has been really successful in reducing the number of households who are accommodated in bed and breakfast from the highs of 2005/06 when expenditure on bed and breakfast accommodation peaked over 1 million pounds. We have been able to maintain numbers accommodated in temporary accommodation in much the same way that we have maintained homelessness presentation figures. The last 2 years have shown an increase in households provided with temporary accommodation, but these increases have been a seasonal high. The numbers have reduced soon after the end of March.

The table below shows the number of households accommodated by Peterborough City Council at the end of the financial year between 2009 – 2014

CHART 5 – TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION NUMBERS 2009 - 2014

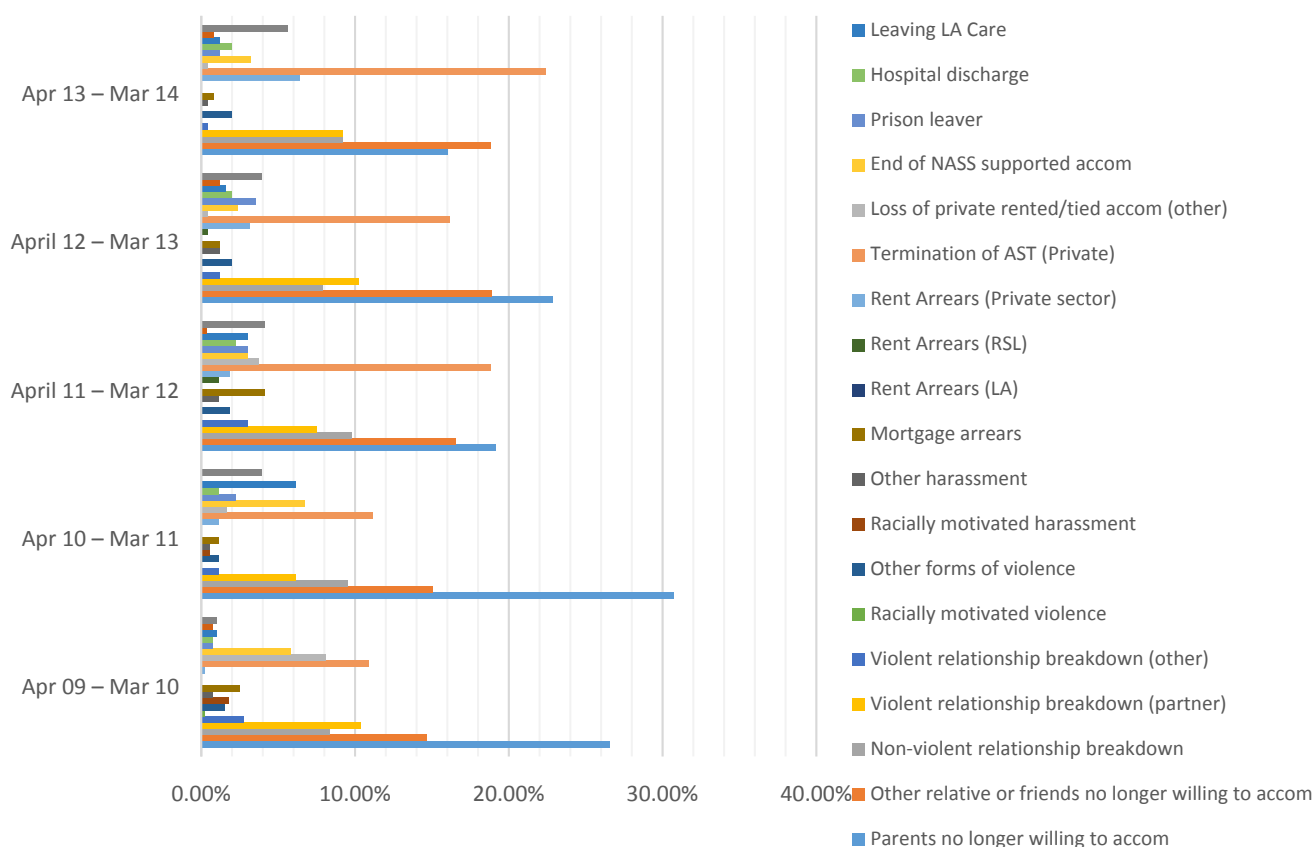


Peterborough City Council has not been placed into a position where we have had to find temporary accommodation outside of the city.

2.2.2. Reasons for homelessness

Peterborough has seen a similar trend to the national picture in terms of the reasons for households becoming homeless. The chart below shows the breakdown of reasons for homelessness and how that has changed over the last 5 years. The chart shows that over the last year the termination of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private sector has overtaken parents unable to continue to accommodate as the main reason for homelessness.

Chart 6 – Reasons for homelessness 2009 - 2014



SOURCE - LOCAL HOMELESSNESS DATA

While the approach of the Housing Needs service is to try and prevent homelessness where possible this can be difficult where private sector landlords are concerned. Many do not have the financial capital to be able to support a household who experience some form of income shock, when they have a change in employment status of a member of the household for example and have no option but to seek possession of their property. There is further work that could be done in terms of understanding the reasons for homelessness in this area to further develop the prevention tools we have in order to try and reduce the number of presentations from this area. Anecdotally, Housing Needs Officers reported that the most common reasons for the termination of an assured shorthold were:

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

2.2.3. Homelessness Household Composition

Peterborough is no different from the national picture when it comes to the type of households who are accepted as homeless. In the 1st quarter of 2014/2015 75% of households

had dependent children or were expecting their first child. Single people with either a physical disability or a mental illness accounted for 22%.

2.2.4. 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 to *'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.

In November 2012 Peterborough City Council consulted with Cambridgeshire police, faith groups, Peterborough Streets Day Centre, HMP Peterborough, and Aspire 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. This approach was also adopted when we conducted the most recent count in November 2013 when the total number of rough sleepers was 11.

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 are rough sleeping 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 are now taking steps to tackle a hard core of long standing rough sleepers in the city who we are working to assist through a personalised approach to leave the streets.

3. Audit of Existing Provision

3.1. Temporary Accommodation

Local Authority Provided Temporary Accommodation

The Council has a duty to provide certain homeless households with temporary housing whilst it assesses homelessness applications and attempts to help them resolve their housing difficulties. As with many high demand areas, the limited number of social rented properties available for letting and the increasing demands on these properties leads to homeless households having to spend longer than would be desirable in temporary accommodation.

As part of the housing stock transfer in October 2004, the Council managed hostels were transferred to Cross Keys Homes who continued to manage and maintain them for use by the council to accommodate homeless households. Temporary accommodation, and in particular bed and breakfast, is recognised as being unsatisfactory for households. In many cases it provides accommodation with shared facilities away from families' usual support networks at a cost to both the Council and household. As a result, reducing the use of temporary accommodation and minimising the length of time households have to stay in this accommodation will remain a key priority for the Council.

Unfortunately the Council still has to use temporary accommodation for households where limited notice of impending homelessness or lack of availability of suitable alternative accommodation would mean that the household would be street homeless without the provision of accommodation. Over the last few years we have maintained capacity in the hostels, but we have often had to rely on local B&B providers to support clients when there has been no vacancies in the hostel accommodation or the clients have been barred from the hostel accommodation due to previous behaviour.

At the end of June 2014 we were accommodating 58 households in hostel accommodation and 2 households in B&B accommodation.

Alternative Supported Accommodation

Although the council supports households who are considered to be homeless and are assessed as vulnerable and in priority need, households who do not meet this criteria are generally not provided with accommodation and will be referred to one of the direct access hostel settings in the city.

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 18 bed spaces and one crash bed as part of No Second Night Out Project within the shelter. There is a Learn Direct suite on site and residents are encouraged to participate in training, volunteering and work seeking. The most frequent reasons for

homelessness were; eviction from private sector tenancy, relationship breakdown and parents/friends no longer willing to accommodate. There is daily Drop Service that enables homeless persons or persons threatened with homelessness to be assessed and signposted to appropriate services.

The shelter is usually fully occupied and residents are supported to secure permanent accommodation by key workers before their stay comes to an end. The majority of persons accessing the shelter are supported into private rented sector accommodation or into a supported housing setting within the city. Unfortunately demand is high for bed spaces at the shelter. Persons are often turned away before they are able to secure a bed.

Fairview Court

Fair View Court is a supported housing project managed by Axiom Housing Association in Oundle Road, Peterborough. It provides modern accommodation for up to 17 people who have previously experienced tenancy failure. 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. The majority of residents in Fairview Court were receiving support for mental health needs.

The accommodation consists of furnished studio flats, a communal garden and lounge. There is also an on-site skills and development Centre, managed by Axiom Academy, which provides an innovative and quality learning training experience, meet individual needs. Social events and days out are also a part of the project's calendar. Residents are assigned a dedicated key worker who supports them to take positive steps towards living independently by providing emotional support and confidence building. We also work closely with partner agencies to support individuals with additional support needs such as drug and alcohol addictions.

Hope into Action

Hope into Action provides houses for the homeless in partnership with local churches. They train and enable church members 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.

The YMCA Timestop

Timestop offers direct access short term accommodation for single people aged 16 to 25 years old. They provide accommodation and support for up to 22 young people who are in housing need. All residents are supported for up to 3 months by an allocated key worker who helps them identify their needs and positively move forward with their lives. Residents are also provided with practical assistance in the form of emotional support, budgeting and work seeking. The majority of residents move on to supported accommodation provided by Peterborough Foyer or private rented sector accommodation.

Peterborough Foyer

Peterborough Foyer provides supported accommodation for young people aged 16 to 25 years old. It is owned and managed by Axiom Housing Association and provides 49 single rooms, including 14 low support move on beds. The Foyer provides extensive support through individual keyworkers and development of action plans and agreed outcomes. There is an on-site learning centre with Information Technology and study areas and Learn Direct and City and Guilds advice. Young people can stay in the accommodation for up to 2 years and usually move on to independent living.

Chronically Excluded Adults

Peterborough has a small number of individual resident who are considered to be very high needs and have usually experienced some form of previous tenancy failure due to anti-social behaviour or rent arrears, which has rendered them ineligible for the housing register or to chaotic to maintain stable accommodation. Many of this client group are also to high need to be accommodated by the supported housing projects listed above.

Peterborough is lacking support for this client group and they continue to go unsupported. There is a need for the city to establish a project similar to the CEA project in operation in Cambridgeshire, which works with the most chaotic and excluded adults in the county to improve outcomes for individuals and for society as a whole. It targets clients who have fallen between services in the past and employs a coordinator who uses a person centred approach to tailor a support package around each client's needs.

Case concerns and flexible approaches are discussed at operational level and escalated to commissioner level on occasions where barriers cannot be overcome at an operational level. The project is considered a national example of good practice and provides support to those setting up projects elsewhere.

Client's service use was measured 12 months prior to them entering the project, and found that of those entering the pilot (15 people) in the first year 46% had had a professional mental health intervention, and 43% had self-reported mental health issues. 75% had had a criminal justice intervention, and 43% had been in prison. All were homeless.

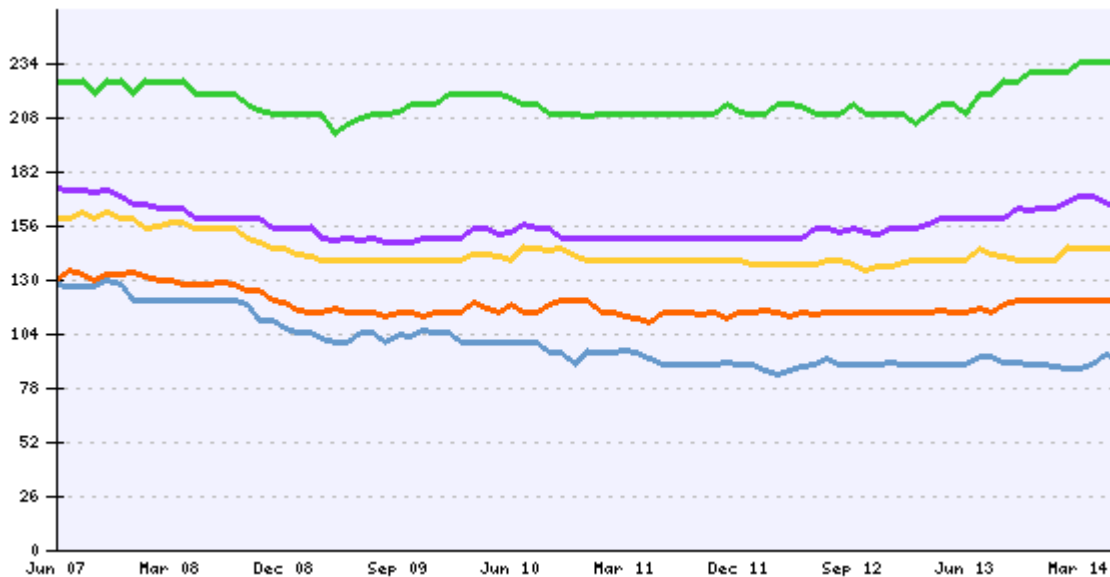
3.2. Permanent Accommodation

3.2.1. The Wider Housing Market






Since the financial crisis the property market in Peterborough has seen house prices drop quite significantly in some cases. However recent shoots in economic recovery have meant that house prices in Peterborough have steadily increased back to just below or around level that they were at in 2007.

However changes to the lending criteria of banks and lower income levels in Peterborough has meant that it is becoming increasingly more difficult for buyers to obtain the required mortgages in order to purchase a suitable property. The chart below shows the median property asking prices by type in Peterborough since 2007.

Chart 7 – Median Property asking prices in Peterborough 2007 - 2014



Legend

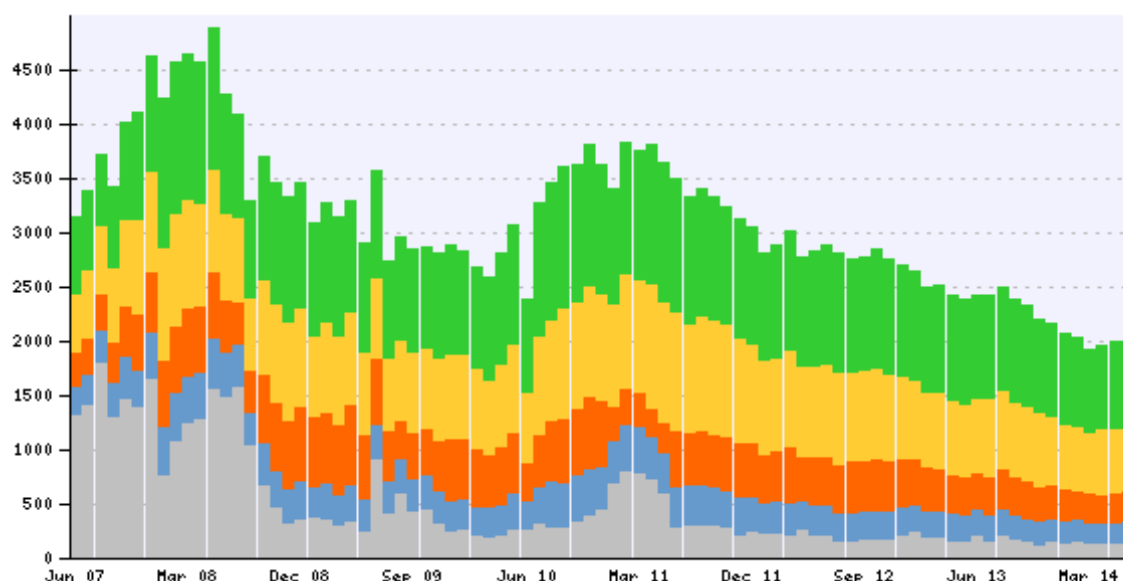
		Jun 2007	Jun 2014	Change
	Detached	£224,995	£235,000	+4%
	Semi	£159,995	£145,000	-9%
	Terraced	£130,000	£120,000	-8%
	Flat	£127,995	£92,000	-28%
	All	£173,995	£165,475	-5%

Source: www.home.co.uk

The cost of home ownership has substantially increased over recent years, resulting in home ownership becoming an unaffordable for many households who require housing. A Peterborough's resident 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 £235,000 over 10 times the average income, whilst semi detached properties are over 6.3 times, terraced properties over 5.2 times and flats 4 times the average annual income.

At the same time the number of properties found advertised for sale has also reduced. The table below shows the differences in the number of properties advertised for sale in Peterborough over the same time. The combination of all of these factors. The more recent steady increases in average house prices, low income levels in the city, reduced availability of property to buy and the more stringent lending criteria has meant that more and more households are becoming reliant on affordable housing options.

CHART 8 – Number of Properties found advertised for sale in Peterborough by type



LEGEND

	Jun 2007	Jun 2014	Change
Detached	697	795	+14%
Semi	531	574	+8%
Terraced	310	285	-8%
Flat	265	209	-21%
Unknown	1336	141	-
Total	3139	2004	-36%

Source: www.home.co.uk

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

3.2.2. 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 privately rented property in the District is high. In particular the demand for 1 and 2 bedroom properties. 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. While the Housing Needs Service has good relationships with many private landlords in the city. There are still barriers with regard to landlords accommodating persons who will be in receipt of Housing Benefits. While many clients are able to manage their finances effectively, some experience issues with their claims due to non-provision of documentation required in order to process a claim and frequent changes in state benefit entitlements that result in suspension of their housing benefits claims. Unfortunately some landlords will not consider applicants who are in receipt of housing benefits at all because of these issues and some will not accept them because of the inherent delays in the processing of claims.

Private sector accommodation is 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 Service 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 through Peterborough Streets' Crisis PRS Scheme.

3.2.3. Social Housing

Peterborough City Council transferred its housing stock to Cross Keys Homes Housing Association 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.

As part of the transfer Peterborough City Council & Cross Keys Homes made agreements on nominations to vacant properties, which currently allows PCC to nominate suitable potential tenants to 90% of their vacant properties. PCC has similar arrangements with the other Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) who have available accommodation in Peterborough.

In order to ensure fair allocation of the available properties that PCC has been asked to nominate to, the council is required by law to have a housing allocations scheme that demonstrates how the council priorities applications for housing and the procedures that they follow in allocating those homes. PCC manages the city's social housing register in partnership with the RSL's, which allows for there to be one central point for applications for new potential tenants and current tenants wishing to transfer.

The Peterborough Homes Partnership is made up of PCC, 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.

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. Applicants may bid for up to 3 properties per week. Successful applicants are then contacted the following week and invited to view the properties.

Following The Localism Act 2011 and the subsequent amendment to the Housing Act 1996, Local Authorities were granted the power to set their own qualifying criteria for people applying to join the housing register. This power 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, 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, while 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 resulted in tenants of working age receiving housing benefit according to the number of bedrooms the household needs.

In April 2013 the council embarked of a comprehensive review of the Housing Register and made the following changes to the allocations policy.

- Setting the entry criteria to the housing register to allow only those in the most urgent housing need to join, 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 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 more generous was changed and brought in line with the criteria that will be applied to housing benefit claims from April 2013.

In order to support the RSL's in managing the issue of the removal of the spare room subsidy ("bedroom tax") the allocation policy also made provision to give band 1 priority to those who were assessed as under occupying their social housing tenancy. This has been relatively successful, but the continued demand for 1 & 2 bedroom properties has meant that many households are still unable to move into smaller accommodation.

In addition to the above changes we also included a number of additional preference categories, which gave increased priority for those who had a long standing local connection with the city (through 5 years continuous residence), those making an economic contribution to the city through employment or voluntary work in the area and ex-servicemen and women who have been discharged from service in the last 5 years.

These changes have been implemented over the last year and having reviewed all application on the housing register has meant that the number of applications on the register has been greatly reduced.

Social Housing Supply

As detailed earlier in the review, home ownership is becoming more difficult to access for many households in the city and the increase dependence on the private sector has resulted in rent costs increasing and some households who are reliant on some form of benefits to support their income are unable to access this sector. Therefore there has become an

increased demand on affordable housing. Most recent figures from November 2011 shown below detail the rented housing stock by RSL. The table also shows the number of rented units completed in the last 3 years.

	Total stock as at 21.11.12	New Builds 2011/12	New Builds 2012/13	New Builds 2013/14
Accent Nene	1686	0	16	0
Axiom	1364	0	22	0
BPHA	529	44	3	40
Cross Keys Homes	9607	20	140	70
Home	435	0	0	2
HYDE Minster	975	3	49	0
Longhurst	124	0	0	7
Total	14720	67	230	119

Development is continuing this year and it is forecast that a further 350 units will be completed by the end of March 2015.

Affordable Rent Model

The introduction of the affordable rent tenure has a range of implications for future and existing housing provision in Peterborough. Firstly, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has set out an intention that the affordable rent tenure will 'form the principal element of the new [housing] supply offer', and that 'social rented housing will only be supported in limited circumstances'. This means that the supply of new HCA-funded social rented accommodation is likely to all but cease as the affordable rent tenure establishes itself as a funding priority.

Secondly, in order to maximise revenue and decrease reliance upon public subsidy, the HCA is encouraging its housing association delivery partners to convert a proportion of their existing social rented housing stock to the new affordable rent tenure as units become vacant for re-let to new tenants. This change has resulted in a reduction in the level of social rented housing stock available in Peterborough.

The introduction of the affordable rent model has resulted in an increased number of properties being assessed and rent levels being set at up to 80% of the eligible market rent.

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.

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 520 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.

Since recruiting an empty homes officer, Peterborough has seen a significant drop in the number of long-term empty properties left unoccupied 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.

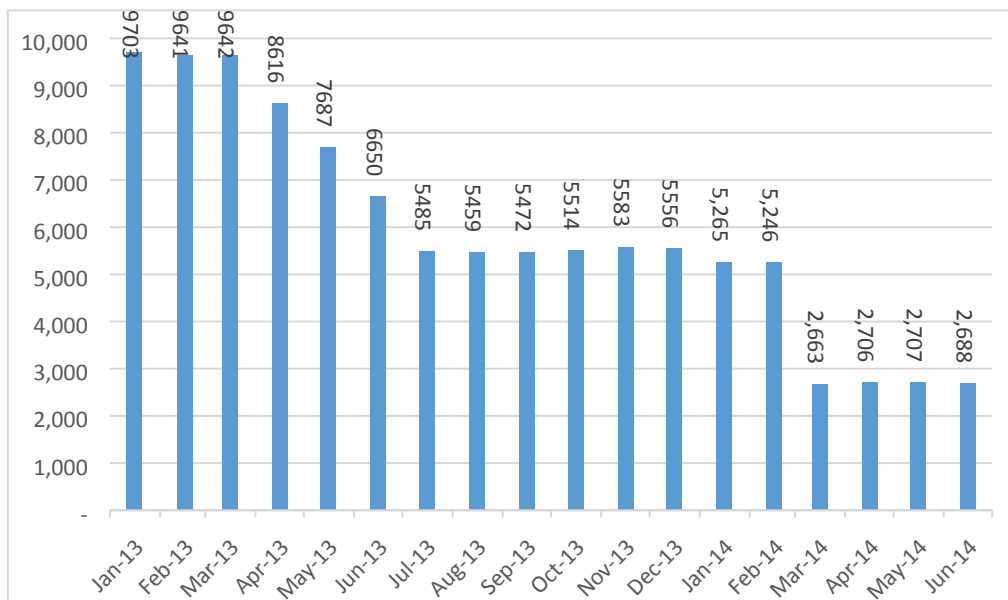
The reduction in the number of long-term empty properties can be attributed to a number of factors: The increased resource of a full-time Empty Homes Officer within the council dedicated to tackling this issue has meant that the pursuit and action against owners has been persistent, and also the support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

In June 2014 Peterborough's empty homes officer, Adam Cliff was awarded the Empty Homes Practitioner of the Year Award by the Empty Homes Network in recognition of his achievements since joining the authority in 2011, following on from his Highly Commended award in June 2013.

4. Demand

As previously mentioned the demand for housing rented from a social landlord remains high. The table below shows the variation in the number of applications on the register since the aforementioned amendments were made to the Peterborough Allocations policy were applied.

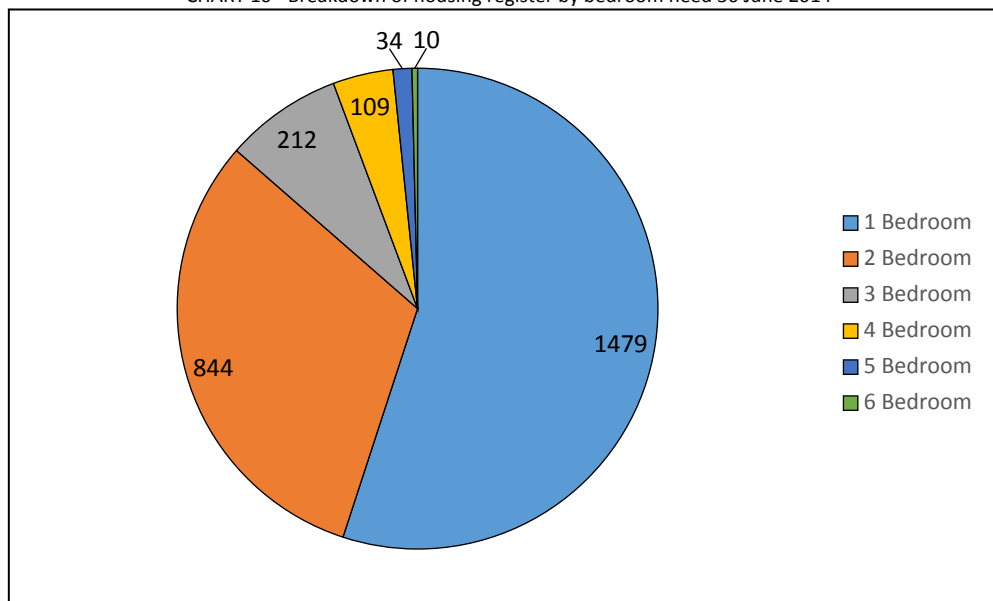
CHART 9- Live applications on the Peterborough Housing Register Jan 2013 – Jun 2014



Source – Local Housing Register data

Of the 2688 current live applications the majority are single person households or couples who have a 1 bedroom need. The chart below shows the breakdown of the housing register by bedroom requirement.

CHART 10 - Breakdown of housing register by bedroom need 30 June 2014



Source – Local Housing Register data

There is a common misconception that the majority of social housing is allocated to households who are not of British origin. While we have worked hard to dispel this myth this is still regularly quoted to us by clients who approach the council for assistance.

The table below shows the breakdown of the housing register by ethnic origin and includes the breakdown of the city as reported in the most recent census in 2011 as well as the percentage of allocations made by ethnic origin.

TABLE 11 - Ethnic origin data

Census		Allocations 2013-14	Housing Register Jun-14
70.9%		White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	70.8%
0.7%		White: Irish	0.3%
0.3%		White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.1%
10.6%		White: Other White	17.3%
0.8%		Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	0.1%
0.5%		Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	0.2%
0.8%		Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	0.0%
0.7%		Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed	0.4%
2.5%	% distribution	Asian/Asian British: Indian	0.2%
6.6%		Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	1.7%
0.1%		Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.0%
0.5%		Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0.1%
2.0%		Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	3.0%
1.4%		Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	2.0%
0.6%		Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	0.1%
0.3%		Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	0.7%
0.2%		Other ethnic group: Arab	0.0%
0.6%		Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	3.2%

Source – 2011 census & local housing register data

The table demonstrates that both live applications and allocations data does not vary significantly from the population breakdown of the city. The minor exception is the marginally increased number of applications and allocations made to the White: Other group, which will be made up of households of mostly Eastern European origin including Lithuanian, Polish, Slovakian & Latvian nationals who are generally residing in poor quality overcrowded accommodation in the city.

The council still maintains its nominations agreements with the Housing Associations who have accommodation available in Peterborough and these properties continue to be allocated through the council's choice based lettings scheme (Peterborough Homes).

Each week our partner Housing Associations advise us, which properties they have available to let and we advertise them to the people on our housing register. Applicants can then choose, which of the available properties they would like to be considered for.

Properties are then shortlisted by:

1. Who has expressed interest (eligible applicants)
2. Highest priority band
3. Who has been in their band longest
4. Who has been on the register longest

In 2013/14 we allocated 1217 properties through the choice based lettings scheme.

5. Advice & Prevention Services

The Housing Needs Service adopts a housing options approach when dealing with clients who approach the authority for assistance and will seek to prevent a household's homelessness wherever possible.

The number of clients contacting the service remains high. In the last financial year we were contacted 25,009 times by clients for advice and assistance. Of which 5418 were seen face to face by an officer. We have a number of options when preventing homelessness and have been successful in a large number of cases, which may have otherwise resulted in the household becoming homeless and the council having to accommodate in temporary accommodation, while seeking alternative accommodation.

We have done this by:

- Negotiating with householders/landlords to allow resolve the issues, which led to the threat of homelessness
- Liaising with Housing benefit to resolve payment issues
- Taking steps to improve security in the home to allow victims of domestic violence to remain in the home (Sanctuary Scheme)
- The Mortgage Rescue Scheme / Mortgage debt advice
- By supporting households to move to alternative affordable accommodation in the private sector

The team of specialist officers focussing on homelessness prevention are currently made up of 11 officers, however 3 of these posts are funded temporarily through grants received from the DCLG. The funding for these posts is due to end on the 31 March 2015 with no likelihood of further funding being made available.

The loss of these officers is likely to have a detrimental effect on the number of homelessness preventions achieved and will likely mean an increase in statutory homelessness acceptances and potentially longer stays in temporary accommodation while suitable permanent accommodation is found.

5.1. Rent Deposit Scheme & DHP

The Housing Needs Service continues to offer 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 2013/2014 a total of 232 households were assisted into private rented sector accommodation through this scheme totalling £100,521.

In addition the increased Discretionary Housing Payments fund (DHP) made available to all local authorities has been used to support households who were in receipt of housing benefits and may be at risk of homelessness to move to alternative private sector accommodation by paying up front fees such as deposits, rent in advance and reasonable administration fees. In 2013/2014 a total of 196 households were assisted into private rented sector accommodation through this scheme totalling £168,127.

5.2. Peterborough Streets Crisis PRS Scheme

Peterborough Streets were successful in receiving funding from the Crisis Private Rented Sector (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. To date a total of 59 persons were assisted into accommodation.

Unfortunately we have recently been advised that Peterborough Streets are having to close down due to financial difficulties after just being successful in securing funding for this project for a further 2 years. At the time of writing this report we are in discussions with Crisis in the hope that we will be able to either, take on the project and deliver the outcomes in house through the Housing Needs Service or by finding an alternative voluntary sector partner.

5.3. Tenancy Relations Service

Peterborough City Council has a Tenancy Relations Officer 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 dealing with illegal evictions and utilised its power to prosecute under The Protection of Eviction Act 1977 by successfully prosecuting 3 landlords through the court system with another 4 cases currently pending alongside supporting 592 households since January 2012.

5.4. 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 because of mortgage arrears 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 stock levels of our partner housing associations. At the end of March 2014 we had completed on 24 mortgage rescues and had a small number, which were pending completion and funding had been agreed to ensure that these cases completed. We were the best performing authority in the East & South East areas and the reputation of the officer in

the Housing Needs team was further enhanced by the HCA zone agent who referred a number of authorities to us for advice and guidance.

Unfortunately the Governments Mortgage Rescue scheme closed down on the 31 March 2014. However we still have a number of tools available to us to support households who find themselves in financial difficulty and where we are unable to keep them in their home we are able to support them to exit home ownership and move to alternative accommodation.

5.5. 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 2013/14 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. In 2013/14 a total of 186 grants were been completed with a total spend of spent £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.

6. Partnership Working

Hospital Discharges

The Health to Home Project was launched in January 2014 following a successful bid to the Department of Health Homeless Hospital Discharge Fund. The fund was set up to tackle the health inequalities faced by homeless persons and prevent homeless persons being discharged to the streets. The project was a partnership between Peterborough City Hospital, Axiom Housing Association, Peterborough Streets, Housing Needs and employed one Hospital based nurse and two outreach workers. Outcomes include; 50 homeless persons were assisted into accommodation, developing a Hospital Discharge Protocol, providing training and information sessions to nurses and a Homeless Persons Patients Charter.

Prison Releases

The Housing Needs Department have designated officers to ensure joint working between resettlement staff at HMP Peterborough and the Housing Needs service and promote homelessness prevention. This prevents offenders being discharge onto the streets and in turn making a crisis homelessness presentation at Housing Needs. The main aim of this work is to ensure that there is planned approach to the prison discharge and accommodation need. The early identification of those in housing need is essential in order to carry prevention intervention can avoid homelessness before individuals reach crisis point. This service will be further enhanced by the development of a Prison Discharge Protocol in late 2014.

16/17 year old protocol

The introduction of the Homelessness Act 2002 made a significant change to way that housing authorities dealt with homeless 16 & 17 year olds. Prior to 2002 16 & 17 year olds who became homeless not eligible for housing assistance and if homeless would have been supported by children's social services. The Homelessness Act 2002 amended Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (homelessness) and included a new category of who the housing authority should consider to be in priority need for accommodation.

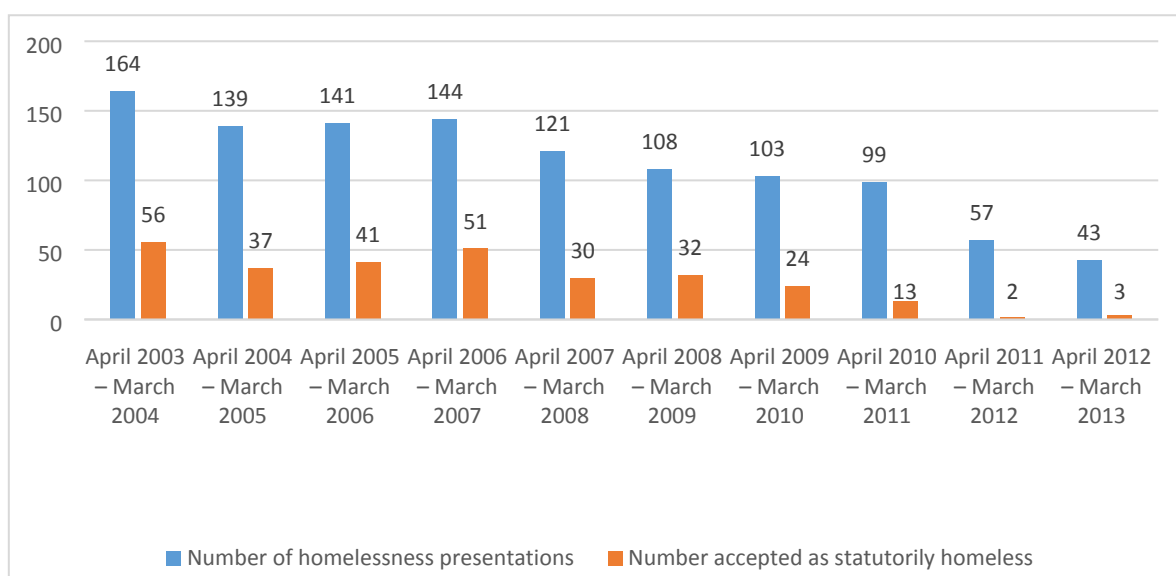
While housing authorities maintained close links with Children's Services many 16 & 17 year olds were not considered to meet the threshold for care and were not owed a duty under the Children's Act. Soon after the change in legislation the Housing Needs service saw a large number of young people becoming homeless and were under a duty to them.

Following a legal ruling in 2009 Housing Needs and Children's Services developed a joint working protocol, which focussed on preventing young people from becoming homeless. The main intervention in the protocol was to provide emergency expert support from the Adolescent Intervention Service (AIS). This support was focussed on supporting the young person to return home to parents and ensuring the relevant support was available for the young person and their parent to ensure the situation did not reach crisis point again. Prior to the development of the protocol many of the referrals to Housing Needs came from AIS,

connexions and other youth services so this new way of working was a significant shift in previous practices & thinking.

While the protocol has not been successful in every case it has demonstrated that preventative action has positively reduced numbers of those being accepted as homeless. The table below shows the impact the protocol has had on reducing homeless presentations and acceptances amongst this age group.

TABLE 12 – The number of homelessness applications and acceptances from those aged 16-17 2003-2014



SOURCE – LOCAL HOMELESSNESS DATA

7. The Future

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.

The multi-agency Homelessness Strategy Steering Group will be key to the ongoing development and success of the new Homelessness Strategy. Whilst the Local Authority recognises the need to lead 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 are summarised below:

Support Services

- The Housing Advice delivered by the Housing Needs Service continues to receive high volumes of customer contact, which is unlikely to reduce with the further impending changes to the welfare system.
- The closure of Peterborough Streets has left the city with a gap in voluntary sector provision for rough sleepers, which the council will have to fill.

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 repeat 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 would benefit people who do not fit into specific support categories.
- There is a need for further provision for the Chronically Excluded client group

Information and Advice

- Partner agencies identified delays in the processing of housing benefit as possibly contributing to homelessness.

Preventing Homelessness

- Mortgage/Debt advice services are 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 aims to ensure that social rents remain affordable.
- There is a high demand for social housing in the city.
- The majority of applicants on the housing register require a one bedroom property.
- Homelessness acceptances in Peterborough remain stable while nationally they are increasing slowly.
- One of the identified barriers to accessing private sector accommodation is the subsequent lengthy inherent delays in processing housing benefit claims.
- Persons with a poor housing history often end up in poor quality accommodation.
- There are blockages in move on from supported housing projects, which need to be resolved.

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.

Private Rented Sector Accommodation

- Rent Deposit Scheme is essential to enable the continued access to the private rented sector.
- The ending of funding for the private sector accommodation officer in March 2015 will have a negative impact on homelessness prevention.

Homelessness

- Welfare Reform will impact on the number of persons unable to meet their housing costs.
- The majority of homeless applications made to Peterborough City Council are from families.
- The emerging most frequently reported reason for households presenting as homeless to Peterborough City Council is 'termination of assured shorthold tenancy'
- The rough sleeper estimate for Autumn 2013 identified 11 rough sleepers.
- The Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer has continued to reduce rough sleeping.
- Court Desk identified approximately 50% of all homelessness prevention claims are linked to housing benefit delays.

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.

The Homelessness Strategy 2013 – 2018

Visions and Strategic Aims

Our Vision is: To prevent and respond to homelessness by ensuring that we provide a range of effective targeted services that respond to our customer needs

We have 4 key strategic aims:

Strategic Aim 1 – Preventing and relieving homelessness through a robust partnership approach

We are aware that in order to provide cost-effective and responsive services we cannot work in isolation. We will deliver our services in partnership with our voluntary and statutory sector partners to provide the best possible solutions.

Strategic Aim 2 - Increasing access to accommodation

We will continue to maximise the opportunities for a range of accommodation choices for homeless persons and person threatened with homelessness and continuing to increase the accommodation choices available persons in housing need.

We will continue to develop and deliver a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups that includes support for both clients and landlords. We need to ensure that those most affected by the welfare reforms are able to access a range of accommodation solutions and we will make best use of the private rented sector.

Strategic Aim 3 – Reduce and prevent rough sleeping

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and where people are the most vulnerable. We will continue to build on our partnership approach to reducing and relieving rough sleeping. This work will include projects that will enable the city to deliver the No Second Night Out principles.

Strategic Aim 4 – Promoting settled lifestyles and sustainable communities

Ensuring that homeless households are given the support to resettle within the community and thrive through purpose and encouragement.

Introduction

This is our third refresh of the Homelessness Strategy and sets out the strategic aims for Peterborough City Council and its partners for tackling and preventing homelessness between 2013 and 2018.

The strategy has been developed within the context of national and local issues and identifies four strategic aims that will drive forward the homelessness agenda in the coming years in Peterborough.

The 2002 Homelessness Act placed a duty on local authorities to develop a Homelessness Strategy to be renewed every five years.

The previous Homelessness Strategy published in 2008 made an important contribution to both tackling and preventing homelessness in Peterborough. The strategy built on partnership working whilst maximising homeless prevention opportunities and contributed to an increase in homeless prevention.

The key achievements from the 2008 Strategy include;

- Mortgage Rescue Scheme established and assisted 24 households who would have become homeless without intervention.
- Multi-Agency rough sleeping Task and Targeting Group established in April 2010.
- All homeless persons provided with information on where they can register with a GP.
- Framework established for tackling Unlawful Evictions and 3 successful convictions achieved.
- Rough Sleeper database established with multi-agency viewing rights.
- Tenancy Relations Officer post created and recruited to.
- Set up and success of the joint working protocol between Housing needs and Children's Services in order to assist 16 & 17 year olds who become homeless.
- Notification system established to notify the Local Education Authority (LEA) within 10 working days when children in temporary accommodation are not attending school.
- Continued joint working on prevention of homelessness with partners.
- Waiting times reduced by new delivery of Housing Needs Service.

This strategy will build on our achievements whilst strengthening our partnerships and seek to address our new challenges.

With the 2002 Homelessness Act, the government made homelessness prevention a priority by providing increased funding to tackle homelessness, setting challenging targets for prevention and placing requirements on local housing authorities to produce Homelessness Strategies. Homelessness strategies should be informed by a review of performance, current service provision and estimated future need. The Act states that these strategies should focus on prevention measures, as well as emphasising the importance of offering advice to all

people in housing need.

There are a number of National strategies and guidance that have helped to shape this Homelessness Strategy these include:

Making every contact count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness (2012) This report sets ten local challenges for housing authorities to ensure that every contact local agencies make with vulnerable people and families really counts to ensure that we prevent households, regardless of household make up from reaching a crisis point where they are faced with homelessness.

Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives (2005) This report focuses on homelessness prevention, reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010, from 2010 and B&B no longer suitable for 16/17 year olds.

Sustainable Communities: Homes For All (2005) This document introduces the requirement for Choice Based Lettings schemes in all local authorities in England by 2010.

Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM), September 2009 Too often people with multiple needs and exclusions fall between the gaps of services to the margins of our society. This manifesto proposes how the next government, statutory services and the voluntary sector can change that for good.

Tackling Homelessness (2006) This document recognises the role of registered providers of social housing in preventing homelessness through partnership working, sustainable communities, allocation and management policies and better use of existing stock.

No One Left Out: Communities Ending Rough Sleeping (Nov 2008) This strategy aimed to end rough sleeping in UK for more than one night by 2012.

No Second Night Out. This government plan sets out six joint commitments to ensure multi agency working to give local people the tools to tackle rough sleeping and put an end to second nights out on the street.

We have embraced homelessness prevention and have made considerable progress with developing tools and services that are able to maximise our opportunities to prevent homelessness.

We will continue to build on our partnerships and will develop innovative ways to deliver services and prevent homelessness alongside addressing the impact of Welfare Reform.

On the 8th March 2012 the Welfare Reform Act received Royal Assent. The Act legislates for the biggest changes to the welfare system in over 60 years. Many of these changes will have an impact on homelessness and homelessness prevention;

- 1 **The move towards a Universal Credit** - Direct payments to landlords will cease. This will result in landlords having no guarantee that rent will be paid and will directly impact of the numbers of private sector landlords willing to consider claimants alongside a possible increase in rent arrears that may lead to eviction and

homelessness.

- 2 **Restricting payments for people below the age of 35 years old** -Persons under the age of 35 years old will only be able to claim assistance to the level of shared room rate. This will mean that many young people leaving home for the first time will only be able to access shared accommodation. There will be an additional pressure on services working to house single people in the private rented sector as there are issues with supply and quality of this type of accommodation.
- 3 **Capping of total benefit received per household** – The benefits cap was implemented across the country in October 2013 and saw the total amount of benefit awarded to non working households capped at no more than £26,000 per annum. Larger families may see an unexpected reduction in their income, which in turn will affect their ability to meet their housing costs.
- 4 **Capping of Local Housing Allowance** - Could make households in receipt of benefits less attractive to landlords and could place strain on residents in areas of high rent who may choose to move to places like Peterborough because we are considered more affordable.
- 5 **Linking Housing Benefit entitlements for social housing tenants to the number of bedrooms needed per household for working age persons** - Tenants within the social housing sector who are under occupying their homes will have a reduction applied to their housing benefit entitlement. Households will have to meet this reduction from their other income. This could lead to an increase in rent arrears, eviction and homelessness.
- 6 **Up-rating Local Housing Allowance in line with the Consumer Price Index instead of the Retail Price Index** - This may mean that benefit claimants entitlement may not increase in line with the average rents in the city therefore reducing the number of affordable properties available in the private rented sector.
- 7 **Ceasing of Council Tax Benefit** - As part of Localism enabling Local Authorities to develop their own discount schemes with protection for pensioners. Leaving some vulnerable groups who have not previously paid any council tax with a bill.

All the above could place additional strain on the Housing Needs Service. Whilst households struggle to cope with their income reductions and struggle to meet their housing costs. Additionally, public spending cuts, changes to Housing Allocations to reflect localism, the introduction of affordable rents, new forms of tenure and the impact of un-ring fenced supporting people funding and imminent reductions to housing related support services that this will bring offer further challenges for the delivery of services. We will continue to monitor the impact of these changes through the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group and when necessary update the Strategy to tackle the impacts.

Changes to the homelessness duty – In November 2012, as a result of the Localism Act 2011, the law changed and gave Council's the power to discharge their homelessness duty into

suitable accommodation with a private landlord.

However, in order for the offer to be considered suitable the property and landlord must meet certain minimum standards.

The Council must be of the view that the accommodation is in a reasonable physical condition; that the landlord has taken reasonable fire safety precautions; has taken reasonable precautions to prevent the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning in the accommodation; the landlord is a fit and proper person; the property has a valid energy performance certificate (EPC) and gas safety certificate and that the tenancy is for a minimum fixed term of 12 months. Also, where applicants become homeless again within two years, the duty will be retained by the original authority.

Strategic Aim 1 - Prevent homelessness and reduce levels of homelessness against the main causes for presentations through evidence based research and resource allocation.

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Deliver early intervention to prevent homelessness	1.To increase the number of households where homelessness is prevented by advice	Increase in number of homelessness preventions annually reported in P1E return	We were successful in increasing the numbers of homeless preventions during 2014/15, however a reduction in the availability of the DHP fund from £200,000 to £108,000 in 2015/16 hampered ongoing efforts. The available fund in 2016/17 has increased to £120,000 and will support the team in increasing current preventions and maintaining those levels moving forward.	On-going	Housing Needs Team Joanne Colverson – Information & Data Officer

<p>Develop self- help tools for those able to turn information into action.</p>	<p>1. Utilise websites and kiosks in the customer service centre to provide information relating to private sector landlords, social housing, tenant and landlord rights, direct access hostels, supported accommodation and homelessness.</p> <p>2. Develop information pages for non-priority homeless persons</p>	<p>Self help tools created and available on the website and Customer service centre kiosks.</p> <p>An increase in the numbers of people accessing the website self help tools and CSC kiosks.</p>	<p>This objective has not yet been achieved. A review of the Housing Needs webpages will be undertaken in 2016/17.</p> <p>The development of the Housing Needs database using salesforce technology and linking to the councils website should improve interaction with the service for customers using the website to communicate and push vital information at the point of application.</p>	<p>March 2017</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Serco ICT</p> <p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Joanne Colverson – Information & Data Officer</p> <p>Rob Smith – Review & Procedures Officer</p>
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Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Work with RSL partners to develop an action plan to minimise homelessness as a result of welfare reform and the introduction of universal credit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish working group through the Financial Inclusion Forum. 2. Carry out research to establish 'jam jar' scheme. 3. Set up 'jam jar' scheme for RSL tenants in receipt of welfare benefits. 	<p>Working group established by October 2012.</p> <p>Complete Research by November 2012</p> <p>Establish 'jam jar' scheme prior to the introduction of universal credit</p>		<p>October 2012</p> <p>March 2013</p> <p>March 2013</p>	<p>RSL partners</p> <p>Financial Inclusion Forum</p> <p>Sharon Malia – Housing Programmes Manager</p>
Improve partnership working, joined up services, communication and understanding at operational level.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a joint training programme for front line staff. 2. Ensure all forums and meetings focus on improving communication, dispelling myths, joint working and assessing good practice. 	<p>Establish a rolling training programme for all partners.</p> <p>Encourage front line teams in customer services and children's services to introduce new starters to housing to gain an understanding of the systems and practices.</p> <p>Attendance at all housing related meetings.</p>		<p>April 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Rob Smith – Review & Procedures Officer</p>

Develop specific projects to tackle the main causes of homelessness

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
<p>Reduce number of homeless presentations as a result of private landlords taking possession through s.21 accelerated procedure to end of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce questionnaire to establish reasons for evictions, etc. 2. Contact Court to establish top 10 private sector landlords applying for possession orders. 3. Distribute questionnaires to Top 10 and through the Landlords Forum 4. Responses collated and key findings used to develop prevention tools. 	<p>Questionnaire produced by December 2014.</p> <p>Details obtained from the court.</p> <p>Questionnaires sent by June 2015</p> <p>Findings recorded and reported produced with recommendations for the development of prevention tools.</p>		<p>Dec 2014</p> <p>June 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p> <p>November 2015</p>	<p>Joanne Colverson – Information & Data Officer</p> <p>Gareth Brighton – HNO Tenancy Relations</p> <p>Private Sector Landlords</p>

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Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
<p>Provide tailored advice to homeowners at risk of homelessness Reduce the number of homeless presentations due to mortgage arrears.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to maximise the use of the Governments Mortgage Rescue Scheme 2. Develop systems to identify households at risk of homelessness due to mortgage arrears at an early stage 3. Develop the role of a Housing Needs Officer specialising in mortgage advice. 	<p>Promote the Governments mortgage rescue scheme amongst partners and increase uptake by 20% until the scheme ceases</p> <p>Develop procedures for dealing with pre action notifications received from mortgage lenders to engage with households before possession action in the courts is taken</p> <p>Provide training to the mortgage specialist to assist clients in exiting homeownership where homelessness prevention is not possible</p>		<p>Annually Ongoing</p>	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Hayley Flaxman – HNO Mortgage Specialist</p> <p>Rob Smith – Review & Procedures Officer</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Reduce the number of homeless presentations due to parents no longer willing to accommodate.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop literature to dispel myths relating to youth homelessness 2. Work with supported housing providers to maximise opportunities for young people to access accommodation 3. Work with voluntary sector organisations to support a bid to re-establish education in schools programme 4. Work with social services to develop a protocol to ensure all 16/17 year olds who present to the authority are dealt with via joint assessment process at the point of crisis 	<p>Literature produced and distributed.</p> <p>Develop referral processes and pathways to ensure appropriate allocations of accommodation at supported housing projects</p> <p>Appropriate bids supported and funding used to deliver education in schools.</p> <p>Protocol created and implemented.</p>		<p>January 2015</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>October 2014</p> <p>March 2014</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Peterborough Foyer</p> <p>YMCA Timestop</p> <p>Voluntary sector</p> <p>PCC Children services</p> <p>Education services</p> <p>Connexions</p> <p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Review the prison release procedure to maximise the opportunities to prevent homelessness	<p>1. Investigate (and monitor?) number of applications to join the housing register from HMP Peterborough</p> <p>2. Investigate (and monitor?) the total number of homeless presentations following release from HMP Peterborough</p> <p>3. Work with HMP Peterborough to develop a procedure for persons due to be released with no fixed abode</p> <p>4. Draft, agree and implement prison discharge protocol</p>	<p>Report demonstrating demand on housing services from HMP Peterborough produced</p> <p>Procedure for NFA persons agreed and implemented.</p> <p>Protocol implemented.</p> <p>A reduction in the number of homeless presentations from people leaving prison with no local connection with Peterborough or without accommodation.</p>		<p>May 2015</p> <p>June 2015</p> <p>August 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>HMP Peterborough</p> <p>The One Service</p> <p>Hope into action</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Take steps to reduce the number of homeless presentations due to friends and relatives no longer willing to accommodate	<p>1. Integrate home visits into the process of taking a homeless application.</p> <p>2. Consider options for developing a bond scheme for this particular client group to enable them to move directly into private sector accommodation.</p>	<p>Integrated visits established.</p> <p>Bond Scheme implemented.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of homeless presentations due to friends and relatives no longer able to accommodate.</p>		<p>October 2015</p> <p>January 2016</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Voluntary Sector</p>

Promotion of prevention of homelessness through an effective Housing Needs Service and a strengthened safety net.

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Take steps to reduce the number of homeless presentations due to hospital discharges.	1. Refresh, agree and implement Hospital Discharge Protocol. 2. Stop Hospital discharges to Bayard Place	Hospital Discharge Protocol implemented		October 2013	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager Peterborough City Hospital CPMHT Jeanette Gibson – Housing Medical Advisor Adult Social Care

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Research the development of an eviction prevention fund using funds from Homelessness Grant to prevent families becoming homeless.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out research to establish average level of rent arrears for families presenting as homeless. 2. Project cost of piloting scheme to provide interest free loan to repay rent arrears and stay in current accommodation. 3. Present cost of establishing scheme against cost of accommodating in temporary accommodation. 4. Establish scheme. 	<p>Research completed.</p> <p>Report produced with clear recommendations.</p> <p>Scheme established.</p> <p>Reduction in homeless presentations and use of temporary accommodation.</p>		<p>May 2013</p> <p>December 2013</p> <p>January 2014</p> <p>March 2014</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Carole Wheatley – Intelligence & Data Officer</p>
Carry out quarterly Mystery shopper exercise of the Housing Needs Service.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with partner agencies to carry out quarterly mystery shopper exercise. 2. Utilise results of mystery shopping experience to improve service 	<p>Mystery shopper exercises completed.</p> <p>Effective Housing Needs Service.</p>		Ongoing	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Partner Agencies</p>
Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key

					Partners
Research reasons for repeat homelessness and develop an action plan to work to reduce levels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse applications and produce report for the reasons of repeat homelessness within the last 12 months. Develop action plan 	<p>Reasons for repeat homelessness established</p> <p>Action plan developed</p> <p>Repeat Homelessness numbers reduced</p>		April 2015	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Carole Wheatley – Intelligence & Data Officer</p>
Review staff training and requirements for all Housing Needs staff and develop staff training plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review individuals training history and training needs. Establish individuals training plan. 	<p>Training identified and completed by all staff.</p>		Ongoing	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Rob Smith – Review & Procedures Officer</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Invest time and resources into regional and national joint working through appropriate representation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend Regional Homelessness meetings. 2. Attend national and regional seminars. 3. Work with Homeless Link to ensure knowledge of national and regional good practice. 	<p>Attendance at both regional meeting and national and regional seminars.</p> <p>Good practice used to shape Housing Needs service.</p>		Ongoing	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p>
Promote homelessness prevention as the cornerstone of the Housing Needs Service and & maximise prevention opportunities through utilisation of the available homelessness prevention grant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximise opportunities to prevent homelessness by Housing Needs staff utilising Homelessness Prevention Fund in innovative and creative ways. 2. Promote homelessness prevention amongst other council departments and partners 	<p>Reduction in homeless presentations.</p> <p>Homelessness Prevention Fund utilised to prevent homelessness.</p>		Ongoing	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>All Housing Needs Officers</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Carry out a review of the current homelessness prevention tools and their effectiveness	1. Map prevention tools and impact on reducing homelessness through statistical data.	Report produced outlining impact of prevention tools.		October 2015	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager
	2. Produce report to highlight effective prevention tools. 3. Utilise report to identify gaps and further develop current prevention tools.	An increase in homelessness prevention by utilising prevention tools.		January 2016	Joanne Colverson – Intelligence & Data Officer
Maximise opportunities for persons accessing private rented sector accommodation	1. Promote and develop Rent Deposit Scheme.	Increase in the number of Rent Deposits awarded.		Ongoing	Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager Axiom Housing Association
	2. Maximise referrals of single persons to Crisis Private Rented Sector scheme.	Increase in the number of persons assisted through the Crisis PRS Scheme.		Ongoing	
	3. Work with partners to make best use of funding sources	Increase in the number of persons accessing the private rented sector.		Ongoing	
Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners

<p>Ensure applicants experiencing difficulties in meeting their housing costs are able to access appropriate specialist advice</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map current debt advice provision available in the city and analyse referral data 2. Investigate the possibility of prioritised advice for those who are threatened with homelessness within the next 28 days because of debt management issues 3. Consider funding where necessary to facilitate prioritised debt advice. 4. Produce an information leaflet for service users to advise what is available and where 5. Ensure all clients experiencing financial difficulties are referred to debt advice service. 	<p>Increase in the number of clients accessing debt advice services.</p>		<p>April 2015</p>	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Hayley Flaxman – Housing Needs Officer</p> <p>Citizens Advice Bureau</p> <p>Salvation Army</p>
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Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Take appropriate steps to ensure the removal of the eligibility for the 1 bedroom LHA rate for people aged between 25 – 34 does not lead to an increase in homelessness.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish who is affected by the LHA reforms. 2. Communicate with those affected and invite them to make contact with the service for advice and assistance. 2. Create and maintain a list of hostels that meet the DWP guidance to be excluded from housing benefit reforms. 	<p>Affected clients register established</p> <p>All affected claimants written to or visited</p> <p>List produced</p>		August 2015	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>All Housing Needs Officers</p> <p>Serco – Housing Benefits</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Work with partner RSL's and private sector landlords to develop a tenant at risk panel to identify at earliest opportunity vulnerable tenants at risk of homelessness.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a working group including RSL's and key private sector landlords in the city. 2. Develop procedures to increase opportunities to prevent homelessness. 3. Utilise information through a Task and Targeting working group. 4. Pilot procedures for 3 months and review. 	<p>At risk panel established.</p> <p>Maximise opportunities for preventing homelessness.</p> <p>Pilot project established</p>		December 2015	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Gareth Brighton – HNO – Tenancy Relations</p> <p>RSL partners</p> <p>Private Sector Landlords</p> <p>Sarah Scase – HNO – Rough Sleeper Outreach</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Work with RSL partners to develop a training flat for those who have experienced previous tenancy failure.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact LA's and Homeless Link to establish good practice when setting up training flat. 2. Investigate outcomes from MEAM training flat in Cambridge. 3. Establish a working group including partner agencies and RSL's to develop training flat. 	<p>Pathway developed for those who are excluded from accommodation because of behaviour or previous tenancy sustainment issues</p> <p>Accommodation and support is available for vulnerable persons whose behaviour does not meet social norms and who are currently excluded from hostels.</p> <p>MEAM flat established.</p>		<p>March 2015</p> <p>December 2015</p> <p>January 2016</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>RSL partners</p> <p>CPMHT</p> <p>Housing Related Support</p> <p>Adult Social Care</p>
Develop a preventative approach and challenges through education programme.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate funding streams to enable voluntary sector organisation to bid to deliver schools program. 2. Support voluntary sector to submit bid for funding. 	<p>Funding stream identified and voluntary sector bid supported</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Serco – Central Funding Team</p> <p>All Voluntary Sector partners</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
<p>Utilise the media to maximise opportunities to prevent homelessness,</p> <p>Publicise welfare reform, the Housing register, and the Private rented sector</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with the media team to establish a plan for promoting homelessness prevention, welfare reforms, housing register, and the options within the private rented sector. 2. Update the PCC website to display all the required information 3. Investigate the possibility of advertising accredited private landlords properties through the PCC housing needs website pages 	<p>Working relationship established with local media to promote homelessness prevention.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Christine Spooner – Homeless Link</p> <p>PCC Media Team</p>
<p>Explore options for Housing Needs Service to utilise part of DHP pot as homelessness prevention tool.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research good practice with regard to utilising DHP pot to prevent homelessness. 2. Ensure that Housing Needs contributes to the review and development of the DHP policy. 	<p>DHP pot used to prevent homelessness.</p>		<p>October 2013</p>	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Christine Spooner – Homeless Link</p> <p>Serco – Housing Benefit</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Raise awareness of Impact of welfare benefit reforms and discharging of duty into the private rented sector.	1. Deliver information workshop to partner agencies.	Information workshops delivered. Dispel myths.		Ongoing	Housing Needs Officers
Set up and facilitate quarterly Homelessness Strategy review & steering group meetings	1. Facilitate Homelessness Strategy Steering Groups on a quarterly basis.	Strategy Steering Groups delivered.		Ongoing	Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager
Promote homelessness prevention on a strategic level with partner RSL's through the CBL Operations Board	1. Continue to develop prevention agenda through the RSL partners Operations Board 2. Develop and implement pre eviction protocols with all partners	A reduction in RSL arrears, tenancy failure		Ongoing	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager RSL Partners

Strategic Aim 2 - Maximise the opportunities for differing accommodation choices for persons seeking accommodation.

To continue to increase the accommodation choices available to persons in housing need.

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Maximise use of the Care & Repair service to assist people to remain in their homes.	1. Continue to utilise Care and Repair as a homelessness prevention tool.	Increased take up of scheme.		Ongoing	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager Janette Gibson – Housing Needs Medical Advisor Russell Carr – Care & Repair Manager
Research alternatives to the rent deposit scheme in order to maximise the available funds to assist as many households as possible.	1. Carry out research to establish good practice. 2. Produce report highlighting savings to make alongside costs for administering Bond Scheme. 3. Identify and implement appropriate scheme.	Research carried out and report produced. Bond Scheme established.		December 2014 February 2015 August 2014	Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager
Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners

<p>Develop relationships with private sector landlords.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve relations with private sector landlords through education delivered by Tenancy Relations Officer. 2. Ensure attendance at the Housing benefit private sector landlords forum & the quarterly NLA meetings. 3. Carry out survey with private sector landlords to establish barriers and suitable solutions in encouraging them to rent to benefit households. 	<p>Increase in the number of private sector landlords working with the Housing Needs service.</p>		<p>April 2014 April 2013 December 2014</p>	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager Gareth Brighton – HNO Tenancy Relations Private Sector Landlords</p>
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Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Promote and support the Empty Homes Strategy	1. Work with Empty Homes officer to maximise opportunities for bringing empty homes back into use.	Increase in the number of empty homes brought back into use annually.		Ongoing	Adam Cliff – Empty Homes Officer Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager
Train Housing Needs staff to utilise the Disabled Facilities Grants to prevent homelessness	1. Promote Disabled Facilities Grant as homelessness prevention tool. 2. Maximise opportunities for disabled persons to remain in their current accommodation.	Disabled facilities grants used to prevent homelessness.		Ongoing	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager Sharon Malia – Housing Programmes Manager

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Ensure the needs of homeless people are considered in relevant strategies	1. Attend meeting and events to ensure homeless persons are considered in all local strategies.	Housing representations at key meetings and events		Ongoing	Belinda Child – Strategic Housing Manager Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager
Ensure effective referral processes between Housing Needs and Children’s Specialist Services	1. Develop protocol and joint working procedures. 2. Deliver joint training to Housing Needs and Children’s Services. 3. Implement protocol and joint working. 4. Review on a quarterly basis.	Protocol and joint working procedures established. Joint training delivered. Protocol implemented. Quarterly reviews completed.		May 2013 August 2013 September 2013 Quarterly from December 2013	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager Wendi Ogle Welbourne - Children’s Services
Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key

					Partners
Continue on-going support, advice and enforcement with private sector landlords to improve housing conditions and management.	1. Continue to work with private sector landlords providing both support and enforcement to improve housing conditions.	Fewer homeless presentations as a result of accommodation being unreasonable for persons to continue to occupy.		Ongoing	Jo Hodges – Senior Housing Enforcement Officer Housing Needs Team
Investigate the viability of introducing a private sector leasing scheme	1. Research good practice in this area. 2. Produce report establishing feasibility of scheme in Peterborough.	Report produced outlining feasibility of scheme in Peterborough.		December 2014	Belinda Child – Strategic Housing Manager Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Promote and encourage private landlords to become accredited with the NLA and develop an Approved Register of Private Sector Landlords in the city.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and produce report to establish the feasibility for establishing an Approved Private Sector Landlords list. Reintroduce landlord accreditation scheme to promote and encourage good practice within the private rented sector in the city. 	<p>Report produced with clear recommendations.</p> <p>Landlord accreditation scheme introduced with a substantial base of landlords to further market and promote the scheme</p>	<p>Increased access to private rented sector.</p> <p>Launched in February 2013, with some landlords already signed up, and further enquiries received</p>	December 2014	Adam Cliff – Empty Homes Officer
Work with Regional LA Partners to investigate a Local Lettings Agency	1. Work with regional partners to utilise regional homelessness grant to develop a regional Social Lettings Agency	Social Lettings Agency established.		January 2015	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Regional Local Authority Partners</p> <p>Homeless Link</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
To increase housing stock availability through the reuse of empty homes.	<p>1. To promote and actively market the Empty Homes Partnership to empty home owners.</p> <p>2. To increase interest in the scheme through members, the public and through media release</p>	<p>To increase stock availability by introducing a minimum of 100 properties to the scheme, and have them let through the CBL system.</p> <p>Promote the scheme so that all those eligible are aware of what is on offer to them.</p>	Currently, there is one lease signed and in the hands of Cross Keys for refurbishment, with a further two in the pipeline to join the scheme in the near future.	March 2015	Adam Cliff – Empty Homes Officer
To encourage bids from registered charities and providers, for funding from central government through the empty homes programme.	<p>1. To make aware those eligible and suitable for funding that the programme is available to them, and actively help with the bidding process and procedures.</p> <p>2. Work with those who bid to source and locate suitable properties from the empty homes database, and encourage the purchase or lease if successful in bidding.</p>	<p>To help in the bidding for two properties to be secured by the charity Hope Into Action, building on their success of the previous round of funding.</p> <p>Source and encourage charities of a similar nature to those who have secured funding, to bid for the available funding.</p>	Hope Into Action have secured their first of two properties under the first round of funding gained, and are currently working on a second bid to secure funding for a further two properties, with the potential to house 3 people at any one time.	March 2015	Adam Cliff – Empty Homes Officer

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Explore options for the development of supported lodgings scheme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact YMCA to discuss the feasibility of establishing supported lodging in line with model currently operated in Cambridgeshire. 2. Develop report to outline costs, savings to be made and recommendations for establishing model of supported lodgings. 3. Establish a supported lodging scheme in Peterborough. 	Supported Lodgings Scheme established.		<p>January 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>YMCA</p>
Maximise the opportunities for the best use of social housing stock	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refresh of Bedrooms Standards Policy in line with welfare reforms. 2. Promote the benefits of CBL2 and maximise the opportunities it brings to improve the CBL experience for customers 	<p>Bedroom Standards Policy refreshed.</p> <p>CBL2 established.</p>		August 2013	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Dogs Trust supporting people to move into accommodation	Provide statements of positive impact dog has on clients stability Dog reference Veterinary certificates Pathway working group to pursued housing providers to develop positive pet policies	1. Create template to be used. 2. Establish procedure for providing statements		February 2015 April 2015	Sarah Scase – HNO – Rough Sleeper Outreach Dogs Trust
Refresh of allocations policy	1. Re-write allocations policy to reflect Localism Bill, and housing needs within the city.	New Allocation Policy agreed and implemented.	Completed	Ongoing	Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager
Explore options for rooms in a Home where the Landlord befriends	1. Investigate good practice in this area. 2. Explore feasibility through voluntary and faith based groups. 3. Identify suitable Landlords and pilot for 6 months.	Investigations complete. Feasibility established. Scheme piloted.		December 2016 January 2017 April 2017	Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager All voluntary sector and faith based partners

Strategic Aim 3 - Continue to reduce levels of rough sleeping

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Reduce flow of rough sleepers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with partner agencies to identify persons at risk of rough sleeping. 2. Deliver training sessions to partner agencies to prevent homelessness including tenant rights and responsibilities. 	<p>Training delivered.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of rough sleepers and street based activities.</p>		Ongoing	<p>Sarah Scase – HNO Rough Sleeper Outreach</p> <p>Aspire</p> <p>Drinksense</p> <p>Police</p> <p>UKBA</p> <p>Housing Forum members</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Reduce incentives for people to remain in street based lifestyles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with police and city centre services to reduce begging and busking. 2. Work with faith-based sector to ensure services are accessed by the needy not the greedy to sustain street based lifestyles. 3. Work with police and UKBA to continue to carry out enforcement action. 	Reduction in anti social and the numbers of persons becoming entrenched in street based lifestyle		Ongoing	Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager Police City Centre Manager Safer Peterborough Partnership UKBA

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Develop point of arrest service to persons with no fixed abode.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact police to discuss risks, positives, negatives of establishing a point of arrest service. 2. Create and agree protocol using good practice evidence. 3. Establish services to enable all rough sleepers in custody are contacted by the rough sleeper outreach officer. 	<p>Meet with police to discuss feasibility of the service.</p> <p>Protocol agreed.</p> <p>Service established.</p>		<p>January 2015</p> <p>March 2015</p> <p>June 2015</p>	<p>Sarah Scase – HNO Rough Sleeping Outreach</p> <p>Police</p> <p>UKBA</p>
Work with voluntary sector organisations to deliver 'No Second Night Out.'	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support partner agencies to deliver NSNO through the funding of the HTF. 	NSNO implemented.		Ongoing	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Partner Agencies</p> <p>Axiom Housing Association</p> <p>Peterborough Streets</p>
Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key

					Partners
Continue to work with faith sector to develop services to empower rough sleepers to leave the streets and not sustain street based lifestyles.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map current service provision provided by Faith Sector. 2. Identify gaps and duplicated services. 3. Contact all Faith Based Groups to deliver information training including service awareness and referral routes. 	Faith sector provision mapped, gaps identified and training delivered.		<p>January 2015</p> <p>May 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Sarah Scase – HNO Rough Sleeper Outreach</p> <p>All faith based groups</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Develop personalised budgets for entrenched rough sleepers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and produce reports identifying good practice and cost based outcomes for personalised budgets. 2. Identify persons to be considered for personalised budgets and project cost in line with pilot projects. 3. Produce report on outcomes, associated costs and feasibility of establishing in Peterborough. 	Personalised budgets established for entrenched rough sleepers.		October 2015	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manger</p> <p>Christine Spooner -Homeless Link</p>

Strategic Aim 4 - Promoting settled lifestyles and sustainable communities

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Work with Job Centre Plus to identify key persons as a contact for all homeless persons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify contact at Jobcentre and arrange to meet. 2. Establish joint working procedures. 3. Protocol agreed and implemented. 	Contact identified and protocol established.		<p>October 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>January 2015</p>	Sarah Scase – HNO Rough Sleeper Outreach
Explore developing resettlement programme for people with substance misuse	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange meeting with Aspire to discuss resettlement programme. 2. Conclude on feasibility of establishing programme. 	<p>Meeting arranged, and discussions completed.</p> <p>Feasibility established.</p>		<p>November 2015</p> <p>January 2016</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Aspire</p>
Work with Drink sense to consider community detox for alcohol dependant tenants at risk of homelessness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange meeting with Drinksense to establish feasibility of community detox. 2. Conclude on feasibility of establishing community detox for this group. 	<p>Meeting arranged and discussions completed.</p> <p>Feasibility established.</p>		<p>November 2015</p> <p>January 2016</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Drinksense</p> <p>RSL Partners</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Work with partners on a strategic level to promote and develop access to mental health services for homeless persons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify referral routes into mental health assessment services 2. Ensure clients are referred into services where required 	<p>Referral routes identified.</p> <p>Referrals made and mapped to progress provision</p>		Ongoing	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>CPMHT</p>
Work with partners to improve mental health amongst homeless persons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify level of support and map services alongside opportunities for improving mental health. 	Supported mapped and opportunities identified.		Ongoing	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite</p> <p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>Assertive Outreach Team</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Explore the need for detoxification facilities in Peterborough	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify key partner agencies. 2. Map existing services and levels of need. 3. Quantify cost of alcohol misuse to the city. 4. Produce report outlining findings and detailing clear recommendations 	Aims to enable that detoxification facility are accessible to vulnerable adults in the city.	The investment in detox services should reduce costs to homelessness and health service by contributing to minimising harm and chaos experienced by service users.	<p>March 2016</p> <p>July 2016</p> <p>January 2017</p>	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Drinksense</p> <p>Safer Peterborough partnership</p>
Explore options for employment of unemployed homeless persons	1. Carry out survey to explore the feasibility of housing needs service or partner agencies employing ex-service users	The service may decide that the risks out weigh the benefits	Value for money savings to the public purse moving people out from benefit reliance	November 2014	<p>Sarah Hebblethwaite - Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Peterborough Streets</p> <p>PCVS</p> <p>Salvation Army</p>

Objective	Key Actions/Milestones	SMART targets	Progress	Timescales	Lead Officer/Key Partners
Work with partner agencies to refresh the Youth Homelessness Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify lead officers in Children's Services 2. Work with Children's Services to ensure that the housing needs of young people are identified and met 	Strategy reviewed and refreshed		<p>December 2014</p> <p>August 2015</p>	<p>Sean Evans - Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Youth Offending Service</p> <p>Adolescent Intervention Service</p> <p>Connexions</p>
Continue to develop joint working with the Learning Disabilities Partnership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue representation on the learning disabilities partnership board and associated forums 2. Ensure that service users with learning disabilities receive the required support to make applications and obtain suitable accommodation through the choice based lettings scheme 3. Develop literature relating to services offered by 	<p>Continued attendance at the LDPB</p> <p>Link into the service for the accommodation officer in adult social care to assist clients in applying for accommodation</p> <p>Literature produced and uploaded to the PCC website</p>		December 2014	<p>Hayley Flaxman – Housing Needs Officer</p> <p>Learning Disabilities Partnership Board</p>

	Housing Needs in easy read formats				
Supporting People to maximise the opportunities for creating a flexible floating support service to address the changing needs of vulnerable client groups.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out review of current floating support provision. 2. Identify gaps in current provision. 3. Produce report detailing gaps and provision identified. 	Focused services who are focused on homelessness prevention		<p>November 2014</p> <p>January 2015</p> <p>February 2015</p>	<p>Sean Evans – Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Sarah Hebblethwaite – Deputy Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Sharon Malia – Housing Programs Manager</p>